

EDUCATION — DECENTRALISATION — IN INDONESIA

Community Participation, Market,
Politics and Local Identity

Education decentralisation has been a global trend and many countries are experimenting certain degrees of decentralisation. As in the case of Indonesia, the fall of the New Order regime forced many to have lost the faith in centralisation, which had been a prominent feature during the regime. The decentralisation framework under the Law 22/1999 on regional autonomy was introduced in a 'big bang' fashion to a society that had been previously deeply accustomed to heavy centralisation. This book, using Indonesia's experience, scrutinizes the relationship between education decentralisation policy and its practice and simultaneously sheds light on critical debates and controversies within this field. Although education decentralisation has unfolded in various modes and is unique from one country to another, it has offered common promises such as the improvement in the area of efficiency in resource provision and the improvement of central government responsiveness to local needs with increased local participation. Therefore, the research findings of this book show valuable lessons not only for Indonesian policy makers, but also for those of other countries, and contribute to important debates within this field.

Prof. Dr. H. Abdul Mu'ti, M.Ed., Faculty of Education, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University.

The book discusses important aspects of Indonesian education policies: the impacts and consequences of decentralisation in the area of community participation, marketisation of education, politicisation of education, local identity and measures to improve education quality. This is an important book for us to critically reflect on how educational decentralisation is conceptualized and implemented to ensure utmost benefit for all stakeholders.

Prof. Dr. Ir. H. Fatah Sulaiman, S.T., M.T., Rector of University of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa.

This book is an urgent reminder that decentralisation has a profound and destabilising impact on local education in Indonesia. Uneven access to funding, a low performance in the field of quality improvement, the emergence of exclusionary identity politics, and, worst of all, predatory attitudes of politicians and the politicisation of local bureaucrats tend to undermine the foundations of education at the local level. Alpha Amirrachman analysed these processes with great clarity. His book is a powerful appeal to rethink once more the basic assumptions of educational decentralisation in Indonesia.

Prof. Henk Schulte Nordholt, Leiden University.

This book has uncovered the implication of decentralisation of education in Indonesia. It reminds us of how the degree of authority among all layers of governments should be arranged more evenly to ensure good governance and the best output of education.

Prof. Dr. H. Muhadjir Effendy, M.A.P., Coordinating Minister for Human Development and Cultural Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.

The author's analysis with regards to the impact of decentralisation of education on local education is important as lessons learned. Among others is the fact that wider public involvement of the formulation of educational policies is paramount to ensure the policies are implementable. Education decentralisation is perceived to have resulted in increased local participation, but this should also be accompanied with adequate knowledge and skills. Policy makers should use this book as a critical reference to ensure that local context and condition are taken into account.

Prof. Dr. H. Zainuddin Maliki, M.Si., Member of Indonesia's House of Representatives.

The book shows how the implementation of education decentralisation needs not only comprehensive concept of the policy, but also unyielding responsibility of the involved stakeholders with conducive environment. When it is implemented too hurriedly and without adequate public consultation, it would only bring prolonged unexpected impacts to education. This book is a notable contribution to the field of educational policy and implementation.

Prof. Drs. H. Suyanto, M.Ed., Ph.D., State University of Yogyakarta.

**SUARA
MUHAMMADIYAH**
Melayani Ilmu dan Amal



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MUHAMMADIYAH
Melayani Ilmu dan Amal

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Preface

This book is the result of field study in the provinces of West Kalimantan and Banten, Indonesia with regards to the impacts and consequences of education decentralisation. The goal of this book is not to make generalisation of the impact of decentralisation, but rather to ignite further discussion and debate on this issue. I fully realize that this book is confined to limitation among others due to the fact that every area or every country has distinctive challenges when conceptualising and implementing any educational policies. This is despite the fact decentralisation of education has offered common promises such as the improvement in the area of efficiency in resource provision and the improvement of central government responsiveness to local needs with increased local participation.

The completion of this book would not have been possible without generous funding from the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) Singapore during which I was granted a one-year post-doctoral fellowship at this institute (2013–2014). I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to Coordinator of Indonesia Studies Programme Hui Yew-Foong, Ph.D. whose guidance and patience have led me to complete the manuscript. I would like to apologise to him that it took a while to finally publish the research findings.

Deepest appreciation was presented to various parties who helped me during field study in the provinces of West Kalimantan and Banten, among others Dr. H. Ikhsanuddin, M.Pd. of the Provincial Board of Muhammadiyah of West Kalimantan who kindly took a role as a gate keeper during my field study. He introduced me to various important people who gave me permission to collect data via interviews and other collecting data techniques in the province of West Kalimantan. He also advised me to take an unforgettable and thrilling boat trip through Bengkayang river to reach far-away schools within the border with Malaysia. Also Prof. Dr. H. Sholeh Hidayat, M.Pd., the then Rector of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University who gave me valuable advice and golden opportunities to meet many people who contributed significantly to my field study in the province of Banten. My gratitude also goes to Dr. Dody Firmansyah, M.Pd. of Faculty of Education, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University who generously let me stay at his house during my research in the province.

I also would like to convey my warmest gratitude to Secretary General of the Central Board of Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. H. Abdul Mu'ti, M.Ed. from Faculty of Education, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, who kindly wrote a very insightful foreword for the book, also Rector of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University Prof. Dr. Ir. H. Fatah Sulaiman, S. T. M. T., Prof. Henk Schulte Nordholt from Leiden University, Coordinating Minister for Human Development and Cultural Affairs of Republic of Indonesia Prof. Dr. H. Muhadjir Effendy, M.A.P., Member of Indonesia's House of Representatives Prof. Dr. H. Zaenuddin Maliki, M.Si., and Prof. Dr. H.

Suyanto, M.Ed., Ph.D. from State University of Yogyakarta who kindly wrote big-hearted endorsement for the book. Sincere gratitude also goes to Aditya Pratama, S.S. from Suara Muhammadiyah and Nurhajati from Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisations Regional Open Learning Centre (SEAMEO SEAMOLEC) who have worked tirelessly to make this publication possible.

Last but certainly not least, I am grateful to my beloved family: my wife Peni Kusumawati, and my children Yasmin Azzahra Rahman, Baskoro Saputra Rahman and Seno Pamungkas Rahman who have provided me with ongoing love and support. I also owe a debt of gratitude to my parents who have showered me with love and passion for knowledge. •

Jakarta, December 8, 2021

R. Alpha Amirrachman

Foreword

Educational policies comprise the principles and government policies in the education sector and the compilation of laws and rules that mandate the implementation of education system. In this case, in order to build workable education systems and achieve educational development goals, countries definitely need compact and comprehensible policies.

A long term vision and engagement are needed to close the gaps in access to quality education, particularly at a time of growing inequality in various parts of the world. Substantial reforms in the area of education management and governance including decentralisation, public-private partnerships and autonomy of education institutions have been made by various countries suffering from financial constraints. Nevertheless, one particular country might not be that successful when compared to other countries. Most importantly, each country has unique challenges when undergoing substantial educational reform. Within this context, governments are more than willing to learn about effective policies and their subsequent implementation.

Education decentralisation has been a global trend and many countries are experimenting certain degrees of decentralisation. As Chapter Two of this book noted that the

swing towards decentralisation in Indonesia did not come out of the blue, “it emerged as an antithesis of centralisation, which had been previously perceived as an effective way of governance but was later increasingly regarded as inefficient and undemocratic.” As in the case of Indonesia, the fall of the New Order regime forced many to have lost the faith in centralisation, which had been a prominent feature during the regime. The decentralisation framework under the Law 22/1999 on regional autonomy was introduced in a ‘big bang’ fashion to a society that had been previously deeply accustomed to heavy centralisation.

The implementation of decentralisation saw the process of transfer of decision-making power from the central government to local governments, communities and even schools with greater accountability. The degree of the process varies from one country to another, from administrative de-concentration to much broader financial control. Arguably, the process needs solid political commitment in order to succeed and it also depends on the interaction of various parties within education sector. Decentralisation also contributes to the strengthening of local identities. This book, using Indonesia’s experience, scrutinizes the relationship between education decentralisation policy and its practice and simultaneously sheds light on critical debates and controversies within this field. The book covers aspects that might not have been thoroughly discussed in previous qualitative researches on Indonesian education policies: the impacts and consequences of decentralisation on community participation, marketisation of education, politicisation of education, local identity and measures to improve education quality.

The book elaborates the link between the notion of education decentralisation and education marketisation as schools found themselves in a competitive atmosphere. Hence, schools might be forced to divert too much energy into marketing strategies rather than improving their pedagogical aspects. Community participation in the form of parental involvement is encouraged and increasingly more powerful school committees are instituted at school level. This is contrary the previous New Order's centralised regime where community participation was confined to mere parental financial contribution. This business-like environment has suddenly become school eco-system. Interestingly, the book proposes quasi-market approach to mix market and bureaucracy. But, is this possible?

The book also discusses the political aspects of educational policy such as the dissemination of national values and the sources of political influence, such as the role of teacher association in determining national education policy and how politicians politically capitalize teachers to advance the former's political ambition. Another important issue with regard to decentralisation is the impact on local politics. The book shows how local elites tried reap political benefits by capitalizing local identity to advance their political interests. For example, cases of the appointment of head of education offices, which in some cases were based more on societal alliances rather than meritocracy and the dismissal of school principals or teachers due to accusation that they were not supporting certain political candidates for strategic positions in local government structure. Likewise, the strengthening of local identity also has influenced local curriculum, showing the perceived cultural superiority

of certain societal groups. In this case, not only school marketisation and tensions among political stakeholders, the implementation of decentralisation has also resulted in what seemed to be an inclusive local identity politics. As the book shows, this can be problematic as people might be put in a tricky situation where they need to strike a balance between national and local identities. The influence towards character building upon students cannot be underestimated, and this can be an area of further research.

With regard to the impact on education quality, it was believed that school-based management would result in better classroom instruction and improved student performance. While the book tries to unveil the possible impact of decentralisation on education quality, it somehow fails to elaborate convincing causality between the two. In this case, two factors should have been thoroughly addressed: the educational contribution from teachers and parents and how this contribution is translated into action. Besides, contemporary learning theories suggest that the interactions between students and their broader and immediate environments could affect student learning outcomes. This can also be an important further research area.

Indeed, although education decentralisation has unfolded in various modes and is unique from one country to another, it has offered common promises such as the improvement in the area of efficiency in resource provision, the release of central authority from its financial burden, the increase of education revenue for local government, the improvement of capacity of local government with improved transparency and accountability, and the improvement of central government responsiveness to local needs with

increased local participation. Among problems that can be found are widening gap of education quality and poor human resources in exercising newly granted authority. Therefore, the research findings of this book show valuable lessons not only for Indonesian policy makers, but also for those of other countries, and contribute to important debates within this field. •

Jakarta, December 8, 2021

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Glossary

- AMAN = *Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara* or Archipelagic Alliance of Adat Communities
- BOS = Bantuan Operasional Sekolah or School Operational Assistance
- BOSDA = BOS Daerah or Regional School Operational Assistance
- BAPPENAS
= *Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional* or National Planning and Development Body
- DAU = *Dana Alokasi Umum* or General Allocation Fund
- EDS = *Evaluasi Diri Sekolah* or School-self Evaluation
- Inpres = *Instruksi Presiden* or Presidential Instruction
- ICW = Indonesian Corruption Watch
- IKBM = *Ikatan Keluarga Besar Madura* or Association of Madurese Big Family
- Kanwil
- Kemenag= Kantor Wilayah Kementerian Agama or Provincial Office of Ministry of Religious Affairs
- Kantor
- Kemenag= Municipal or Regency Office of Ministry of Religious Affairs
- KPPS = *Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara* or Voting Organizing Committee Group
- KPK = *Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi* or Committee of Corruption Eradication

KTSP	= Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan or School Based Curriculum
KKG	= <i>Kelompok Kerja Guru</i> or Working Group Teachers
MGMP	= <i>Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran</i> or Subject Matter Teacher Group
LPMP	= <i>Lembaga Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan</i> or Educational Quality Enhancement Agency
MA	= Madrasah Aliyah or Islamic Elementary School
MABM	= <i>Majelis Adat dan Budaya Melayu</i> or Association of Malay Tradition and Culture
MGMP	= <i>Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran</i> or Subject Matter Teacher Group
MTs	= Madrasah Tsanawiyah or Islamic Junior High School
MI	= Madrasah Ibtidaiyah or Islamic Elementary school
MNE	= Ministry of National Education – old abbreviation
MoEC	= Ministry of Education and Culture – new abbreviation
MoRA	= Ministry of Religious Affairs
SBI	= Sekolah Berstandar Internasional or Internationally Oriented School
SD	= Sekolah Dasar or Elementary School
SMP	= Sekolah Menengah Pertama or Junior High School
SMA	= Sekolah Menengah Atas or Senior High School
Tidayu	= <i>Tionghoa, Dayak, Melayu</i> or Chinese, Dayaks, Malays
TIMSS	= Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

Chapter One

Introduction

Decentralisation: An irreversible experiment

As the twenty-first century unfolds, Indonesia has evolved into one of the world's emerging markets. As the biggest economy in Southeast Asia and a G-20 member, Indonesia certainly offers promising investment opportunities; nevertheless, one should not overlook how the country is preparing its population. Boasting 240 million citizens with a burgeoning middle-class, Indonesia needs to be scrutinised to see if the country has done enough in preparing better-educated human resources to meet the ever-increasing demand for labor and management in its rapidly growing and industrialising economy. The minister of education and other officials seemed to realise that Indonesia need to seriously invest in human resource development, particularly with regard to the fact that the population of the productive age (15-64 years old) would reach 70 percent, while the other 30 percent consist of non-productive age population (below 15 and after 65 years old) during the period of 2020-2030 (Akuntono, 2013; Sasongko, 2013). Under the New Order's regime, while quantitatively education achievement might have been obvious, as shown in the increased number of students in elementary school and the building of elementary school buildings (Suharti,

2013; Suryadarma & Jones, 2013a), qualitatively it was not as satisfactory as it had been expected. The result of his underachievement can be observed within a constant period of time. For example, result from Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) shows that the average of eighth grade of Indonesian student achievement in mathematics was significantly below the international average. In 1999, Indonesia was ranked 34th out of 38 countries. In 2003, it was ranked 35th out of 46 countries and in 2007 it was ranked 36th out of 49 countries. In science, Indonesia was ranked 32rd in 1999, 37th in 2003 and 35th in 2007 (Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2011c). This is not to mention Indonesia's 2012 Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.629, which is below the average of 0.64 for countries in the medium human development group and even below average of 0.683 for countries located in East Asia and the Pacific. Even during the period between 1980 and 2012, China and Thailand's HDI progressed better than Indonesia (UNDP, 2013). Furthermore, in a wider perspective, knowledge sector was not fully developed. For example, SCImago Journal and Country Rank recorded that Indonesia published merely 13,047 scientific papers, far below even the neighbouring countries Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. Measured by correlation of research intensity and per capita GDP, Indonesia's performance was also unfavourable compared to Vietnam and the Philippines whose per capita GDP was actually lower than Indonesia (Guggenheim, 2012, pp. 144-145).

One might wonder why Indonesia's education quality does not really go hand-in-hand with its economic development, given the fact Indonesia experienced economic

progress at some points of time both under the New Order regime and now in post-New Order era. This book attempts to examine Indonesian education development through the lens of how it is governed as the country experienced both centralised and decentralised modes of governance. As the country embraces 'big bang' of decentralisation, the book simultaneously attempts to compare the current decentralised but politically fragmented situation with past experience of heavy centralisation, particularly under the authoritarian New Order regime, to see how these two ways of governance and the shift from one to the other have affected education development. All are against the backdrop of wider global phenomenon of both centralisation and decentralisation profoundly steered by global forces of international funding agencies such as the World Bank or IMF at each given period of time.

It is undeniable that Indonesia under New Order regime was a story of economic growth, but it is also a story of an uneven development, in which the western part of the country progressed rapidly and the eastern part lagged behind. With the country's authoritarian and centralised government, regions' economy heavily depended on the central state investment and civil employment. Nevertheless, the neoliberal orientation of the World Bank had long perceived Indonesia as a model of responsible macro-economic management and one of Southeast Asia's blooming economies until the 1998 financial crisis suddenly forced the country to experience a very disparaging economic collapse (Robinson & Hadiz, 2004). The financial crisis transformed Indonesia's 'miracle economy' into a 'melted-down economy' (Wie, 2002, p. 197), forcing Indonesia to

plead for financial assistance from the IMF (Hanratty, 1997; Hill, 1999). The crisis struck against the backdrop of the global diminishing faith towards centralisation, which many policy makers increasingly believe it as undemocratic and inefficient. International funding agencies subsequently proposed decentralisation as a new method of governance. The IMF-backed reforms promised that decentralisation would bring about democratisation and an appreciation of local needs (Bray, 2003; Cheema & Rondinelli, 1983), aspects that seemed to be increasingly lacking during the final years of Suharto's rule.¹ As the laws granted sweeping autonomy to the regions in all but a few tasks that are categorically reserved to the central government, Indonesia shifted from one of the most centralised systems in the world to one of the most decentralised. A wide range of administrative tasks – which include infrastructure, healthcare, trade, agriculture, industry, investment, environmental and land issues, and education – would be the prime responsibility of regencies and municipalities. National security and defence, foreign policy, fiscal and monetary matters, macro economic policy, justice and religious affairs were the responsibility of the central government. This process involves the substantial transfer of power to more than 400 local authorities through out the archipelago. Apparently to avoid the possibility of potential separatism, the power of provinces was stripped

¹ The question whether Indonesia should be governed with centralisation or decentralisation is not something new. The Dutch colonial government introduced limited decentralisation policies in 1903, 1905 and 1922 in order to include both modern and traditional elements in managing center-region relations all over Indonesia (Erb, Sulistiyanto, & Faucher, 2005).

of and was placed at the municipal and regency level. Hence, this Law 22/1999 on regional autonomy granted local authorities with more influence and authority in dealing with their local affairs (Schulte Nordholt, 2011, p 3).

Education sector witnessed a tremendous structural change. Law 22/1999 on regional autonomy has affected the mode of relation between the central government in Jakarta, the provincial governments, the regency and municipal governments. The local education offices, which used to answer to the ministry of education in Jakarta through provincial offices, now have to answer to regency or municipal governments. A huge number of teachers, who used to be under the authority of central government, now have come under the authority of regency or municipal governments (H.A.R. Tilaar, 2000). Despite this gigantic work, regions appeared to be more than eager to embrace their new role and use their newly wider power. For almost three decades schools were ruled centrally and teachers had to travel to the education office in the capital city of the province, which plays a role as a proxy to the central government, to deal with their administrative matters ranging from salary to promotion. Because all would be decided by the central government, the process could take up for ages. Mixed-up personal documents because too many teachers to deal with also happened from time to time. For a country suffering from three decades of authoritarian rule and perceived mismanagement in the final years of the regime, the promises of decentralisation, particularly in education sector, are certainly attractive for both the central government and local governments: improved quantity and quality of inputs to schools; improved efficiency in resource

provision and utilization; releasing central authority from its financial burden; more education revenue for local government; improved capacity of local government (with improved transparency and accountability); increased central government responsiveness to local needs; and increased local participation (Karslen, 2000; McGinn & Welsh, 1999; UN, 1996; UNDP, 1997). So what are the implications at the local level? This book attempts to scrutinise the impacts and consequences through aspects of *community participation*, *marketisation of education*, *politicisation of education*, *local identity* and *measures to improve education quality*.

As authority devolved to school level, increased *community participation* is expected to help contribute to the betterment of schools. This increased community participation in schooling is usually translated into parental role in school committees. Numerous studies have been undertaken to see the effectiveness of parental role in contributing to the betterment of school. For example, Parker's (2000) study reveals that collaborative team approach is evident in school committees that yield strong influence. However, the evidence on parental involvement suggests some caution is warranted in implementation. Vincent and Martin's (2000) findings reveal how the parents' forum 'attracts a small group of 'elite participationists' ... who engage in an individualist repertoire to explain their participation' (Vincent & Martin, 2000, pp. 474-475). This corresponds to Anderson and Dixon's (1993) argument that the devolved power 'becomes shared power among already empowered individuals over less influential groups' (p. 59). Gordon's (1994) study of rich and poor schools is also relevant. The study reveals that 'the National government

encouraged boards to see themselves as ‘directors’ of ‘successful business,’ which has ‘directly benefited the ‘rich’ schools at the expense of the ‘poor’ schools’ (Gordon, 1994, p. 115). Malen and Ogawa (as cited in Driscoll, 1998) who undertook a study of themes from school reform literature found at least two important points: firstly, parents were only provided with advisory roles even when decision-making power was believed to be granted to them; and secondly, the mandates of school committees were usually unclear. Hallinger, Murphy, and Hausman’s study (1993) reveals a principals’ and teachers’ doubt on parents’ ability to deeply grasp educational issues as generally they are not experts on education. The principals even ‘feared that parental input on decisions would be based on self-interest’ and therefore ignoring the needs of broader communities (Hallinger et al., 1993, p. 28). Furthermore, Cave (1990) argues that although parents are pleased to be informed about their children’s progress and prospects, they might not have sufficient interest to be involved in school internal organisational affairs. Studies in Britain reveal that parents were generally not too enthusiastic in becoming members of school committees (Cave, 1990; Stacey, 1991). Barcan (1992) also illustrates how school committees might become reluctant to empower themselves. This is significant as Vincent and Martin’s (2000) study indicates that there was only a small portion of parents with high economic status had enthusiasm to get involved in school governance. Similar findings are also found in Indonesian context. One study in Indonesia reveals how school committee in schools located in urban areas progressed far better than that in school located in rural areas. This is because the members of

the former consisted of rich and influential parents while the members of the latter consisted of mainly the poor and less influential parents (Amirrachman, Syafi'i, & Welch, 2008).

The notion of educational decentralisation links closely to *education marketisation*, given that schools now found themselves in a competitive environment. At school level, three issues surface regarding the roles of principals and teachers in school-based management. First, how principals and teachers are able to effectively collaborate with parents. Second, the role of the school principal to display effective and decisive leadership and to provide vision for change is still important (see, e.g. Caldwell & Spinks, 1988; L. Parker & Raihani, 2011).² This is despite the shifting role of both principals and teachers: a principal 'from the 'boss' to the facilitator and of teachers from subordination and isolation to collaboration and consensus building' (Rinehart, Short, Short, & Eckley, 1998, p. 630). Third, the new responsibilities could absorb the work of the teachers (Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 1992) because under this new circumstance, teachers are also schools' 'ambassadors', no longer mere 'classroom practitioners' (Coffey, 2001, p. 33). Teachers are expected to actively take part in the betterment of schools by attracting supports from parents. This raises questions about how far teachers and principals can still serve their social function as educators that is, to quote Ball (1987), to 'produce

² Parker and Raihani(2011) describe good school principal leadership'[t]he principals' willingness to devolve power and responsibility to other teachers, to work cooperatively with parents and community leaders, to model exemplary behaviour and to institutionalize a clear vision for the future were instrumental in providing a good learning environment for students' (p. 17).

well-behaved and well-adjusted citizens' (p. 248). This corresponds to Knight's (1993) argument that the socio-educational purpose of schools might be distracted with such entrepreneurial activities and marketing strategies. As schools are forced to play a more active role in encouraging local community to give often-financial support for the betterment of schools, increased competition among education institutions is inevitable. While markets might have some perceived advantages such as forcing schools to be more responsive to local needs and providing parents with a range of more choices, the perceived disadvantages, such as making schools spend too much effort in marketing strategies and increasing inequality among schools (Angus, 1993; Carnoy, 1998; Coffey, 2001), arguably overshadowed the proclaimed advantages. One study conducted in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, also indicates that with this marketisation schools in urban areas benefit more than schools located in rural areas (Amirrachman et al., 2008).

Education decentralisation does not only seem to have widened the gap between schools located in urban and rural areas, but have also encouraged local politicians to take benefit from the situation. Education has long been an intense arena of competing not only ideologies but also political interests, Fiske (1996), for example, outlines the political aspects of education: 'embodiments of national values'; 'a source of political power'; 'vehicle for exercising power'; and 'political weapons' (p. 4) making education intimately link to power and politics (Crowson, 1998; McKenzie, 1993). In Indonesian context, this *politicisation of education* can be traced back to the colonial era where the Dutch and the Japanese imposed an atmosphere of fear, restriction and centralisation

in the way schooling was governed. Post-independence Indonesia saw the politicisation of campus under Sukarno's confrontation rhetoric, which hampered the initial efforts to educate Indonesians to become teachers, engineers, and administrators, much needed to speed up development. Later the New Order regime built many elementary schools and 20 state universities across the country, but it curtailed academic freedom with heavy centralisation (Guggenheim, 2012, p. 147). Obviously, both presidents Sukarno and Suharto continued this mode of centralisation under their respective terms to varying degrees. Perhaps, however, it was Suharto who cleverly politicised a sheer number of teachers and significantly benefitted from them in order to give legitimacy to his administration. He successfully integrated the national values of Pancasila into school curriculum, requiring all civil servants including teachers to undergo compulsory Pancasila course and to vote only the ruling political party of Golkar, practically making them his source of political power (Schwarz, 1999). Bjork (2003) correctly observed that the nation's schooling provided the New Order regime with 'the largest and most captive audience' (p. 192). Decentralisation now appeared to have shifted this sort politicisation from national down to the local level. As such, Hadiz (2011) specifically explores the appealing impact of decentralisation on creating local elites with predatory attitude (pp. 75-87). His observation is relevant as research findings in this book also show how these local elites tried to capitalize aspects of, using Maley's (2002) terminologies of 'kinship, religion, ethnicity, locality and interests' (pp. 23-37) to advance their political agenda. This book attempts to examine to what extent the local politicians with their

growing predatory attitude tried to politicize education to help legitimize their authority, given the fact that a sheer number of civil servant teachers, which used to be under the authority of the central government, now have come under the authority of regency and municipal governments. Hadiz (2011) correctly observed that '[t]hese local elites had quickly latched on to the language of localism and of asserting local identities' (p. 75).

Decentralisation saw an increase of the perceived awareness of the importance of asserting *local identity* through out the archipelago. Interestingly, regional activists established a national-based organization called AMAN (*Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara* or 'Archipelagic Alliance of Adat Communities' to promote their interests of 'traditional rights' and famed them in contemporary terminologies such as 'bottom up', 'empowerment', and 'grass roots' (Henley & Davidson, 2007; Schulte Nordholt, 2011). After three decades of authoritarian rule during which *adat* was systematically swept under the carpet, the country witnessed the 'revival' of *adat* consciousness as an alternative to the repressiveness of the New Order regime. One of the ways to examine this phenomenon is by looking at local content of school curriculum to see the inclusion of the so-called local identity. The book also attempts to see how the struggle of local elites and local elements at the school and community level in reaching a consensus to define what is meant by local identity, and how they tried to strike a balance between the perceived diminishing of national identity and the emergence of local identity. This is particularly important since the factual politics at the local level are not always represented in uniformity if not

in fragmentation, meaning even defining what is meant by local identity can also reflect the power struggle of various ethnically or religiously based local elements to articulate their identity and advance their political interests. To put it simply, how can we define one group as 'local' and others not?

Lastly, as previously explained, Indonesia's *education quality* does not seem run parallel with its economic development despite the fact Indonesia experienced economic booming at some periods of time both under the New Order regime and now in post-New Order era. Under the New Order, thanks to oil boom, Indonesia attempted to ensure that school-aged children receive proper education with the building of hundreds of thousands of elementary schools in the archipelago through Inpres (*Instruksi Presiden* or Presidential Instruction) program in 1973 (Suharti, 2013, pp. 33-34). As a result, Indonesia was regarded to have achieved a universal elementary school education in 1983. The country also saw an impressive quantitative gain at both junior and senior secondary school gross enrolment rates (GER's), which is almost in line with those of China and Thailand (Suryadarma & Jones, 2013a, pp. 2-3). How about now in the era of decentralisation after much of the authority was transferred to the local level? Indonesia's performance in international standardized test does not really show that it has achieved major improvement despite the fact that various measures have been introduced ranging from teacher certification program to decentralising education authority to the local level to make it more responsive to the local needs. This is not to mention the massive increase of education budget after the amendment of the constitution

that the governments must allocate 20% of its budget to that of education. This book among others attempts to see what measures the local governments have done and to see whether decentralisation has contributed to such an improvement if there any, taking consideration all promises being forwarded by international funding agencies such as the World Bank and IMF with regard to decentralisation policy.

Studies on Indonesia's decentralisation and its impact on education

Several studies on Indonesia's decentralisation efforts have been conducted, for example a study of problems and prospects by Alm, Aten, and Bahl (2001). Their study shows that 'a general framework within which the broad goals of the reforms are articulated and agreed upon' (Alm et al., 2001, pp. 87-100) should have been worked through before decentralisation took place, a phase that Indonesia seemed to have missed. The central government strategy of moving so quickly raised questions about the clarity of the policy's objective (Alm et al., 2001). Hull (2001), Silver, Azis and Schroeder (2001), and the World Bank (2003) studied national statistical systems, inter-governmental transfer and regional public expenditure respectively. Aspinall and Fealy (2003b), Warsito and Yuwono (2003) and Sakai (2002b) have edited books on Indonesia's decentralisation. Another edited book also scrutinises the implementation and challenges of Indonesia's decentralisation (Holtzappel & Ramstedt, 2009), which is regarded as one of the most recent ones deriving expertise from people knowledgeable in the field. Suharyo (2003) examines budget allocation, community

participation and intergovernmental coordination faced resource-poor regions. Another recent study by Hadiz (2011) specifically explores the appealing impact of decentralisation on creating on local elites with predatory attitude. Hamid (2011) examines the politicisation of bureaucracy in local election in the province of Banten. Perdana, Hamid, Akbarona and Bahri (2010) explored the politicisation of bureaucracy in local election in municipality of Depok and regency of Tangerang. Hadiz (2011), Hamid (2011) and Perdana, et.al.'s (2010) observation is pertinent as this book also show how these local elites tried to capitalize aspects of bureaucracy and local identities to advance their political agenda including in education sector. Most of the above studies, however, mainly utilised economic or socio-political perspectives and non-was specifically written to assess the impact on education, though research findings in this book can back up some of the last three studies on predatory attitude of local elites and politicisation of bureaucracy.

One pertinent study regarding the local responses to decentralisation policy in education sector, however, was conducted from 1996 to 1998 (but before the 'big bang' decentralisation) by Bjork (2003) at six junior high schools in the province of East Java. The study looked into the implementation of local content curriculum by examining local responses to limited curriculum decentralisation amid the then still heavily centralised governance of education. His study reveals that the lack of responses from teachers was due to policy makers' underestimation of 'the degree of change to convert a cadre of obedient civil servants into a collection of autonomous, independent-minded educators' (Bjork, 2003, p. 211). His study targeted mainly teachers who

were part of the New Order regime, it is noteworthy that now more and more people from current generation have also become teachers, particularly due to the attractiveness of teachers certification program, which doubles teacher salary, as this book would discuss. With regard to education board and school committee, the ministry of education has also conducted a pertinent national survey which revealed that many education boards still had problems because of the lack of support they received from local governments, and the tendency of education boards to focus more on 'controlling' rather than 'mediating.' One hundred ninety two of 385 education boards participated in this survey using mainly quantitative methodology (MNE, 2003a). In addition, the Central Independent Monitoring Unit (CIMU)—with the help of ADB, the World Bank, ASEM, AusAID, Royal Netherlands Embassy, and the British Council—has conducted surveys at hundreds of schools in Indonesia (Davison, Triaswati, Alisjahbana, Priyono, & Prabowo, 2004). The survey reveals that 'the poor were under-represented' in school committees and there was significant correlation between parents' educational background and their degree of involvement (Davison et al., 2004, p. 12). There are more studies on education in post-New Order period under decentralisation era. For example, Soewartoyo, Soekarno, M., Handayani, T., & S., D. H. (2002) presented a case study of Mataram city. The study reveals tension between province and municipality and the potential of designing regional-based curriculum. Another study which is relevant to this book, was conducted in the province of East Kalimantan, showing the widening gap between schools located in urban and rural areas as a result

of decentralisation (Amirrachman et al., 2008). Toyamah, et.al's (2010) study reveals teacher absenteeism and remote area allowance. Also relevant is the World Bank's (2010) study which examines the teacher certification program. The study scrutinises the process from pre-service training to retirement of Indonesia's teaching force. Recently one edited book has been published to examine education in post-New Order, which also dealt with various aspects of education decentralisation such as financing teacher training (Suryadarma & Jones, 2013b). The most recent one addresses the issue of education politicisation in Yogyakarta (Rosser & Sulistiyanto, 2013). The study scrutinised the political dynamics in Bantul and Sleman in Yogyakarta. The study concluded that the two regents have both operated within a context characterised by the political dominance of predatory interests nurtured during the New Order period and an institutional environment defined by the country's particular approach to democratic decentralisation" (p. 558). This book was intended to add to the literature of the study of Indonesia's decentralisation, particularly its profound impact on education sector.

The organisation of the book

Chapter one describes the summary of this book, the underpinning arguments, theories and previous pertinent studies. Chapter two elaborates the swing of centralisation and decentralisation as a mode of governance. It provides the whole backdrop against the emergence and adoption of centralisation and decentralisation in the development of both developed and developing countries at each given period of time. It traces back the genealogy of centralisation

and the global movement of international funding agencies such as the World Bank to use centralisation as their ideology, before shifting to decentralisation. The chapter delineates the perceived failure of centralisation and the emergence of decentralisation. It describes the conception of decentralisation and how community participation is in the very heart of education decentralisation. The chapter also explains the claims of decentralisation, which have attracted policy makers around the world, and how decentralisation has been increasingly perceived as a one-size-fits-all policy tool to fix bad governance and achieve national goals of development. The chapter continues to describe marketisation and the widening gap between schools located in poor and the rich areas as a result of decentralisation. The chapter also explains the tensions surrounding the decentralisation of power, which discusses the apparent tug of war between the central and the local after decentralisation was introduced. It subsequently explains Indonesia's experience with education centralisation and decentralisation throughout from era of colonialism to the era of *reformasi*. It later explains the collapse of the New Order in 1999 and the rush to implement decentralisation amid widespread and deep-seated economic and political crisis. It elaborates the significant change of relations between the central, the provincial and the local governments and structural change affecting the education sector, in which a sheer number of teachers have now come squarely under the authority of the regency and municipal governments. Chapter three delineates an overview of decentralisation of education in Indonesian and its implications. It explains the new path towards education decentralisation. This chapter

continues to describe the details of the perceived impacts and the consequences of education decentralisation through the lens of aspects of community participation, politicisation of education, local identity politics and education quality. Chapter four and five describe case studies of the provinces of West Kalimantan and Banten respectively. Each of the provinces is analyzed using the aspects of community participation, marketisation of education, politicisation of education, local identity and education quality. Chapter six ends with concluding remarks. The final chapter of this book shall summarise, conclude all analyses and discussions in previous chapters and reflect upon them. •

Chapter Two

Tracing the Swing of Centralisation and Decentralisation

The swing

A wave of decentralisation that has recently swept Indonesia is an inseparable part of global trend, which has also affected many countries. It did not come out of the blue, it emerged as an antithesis of centralisation, which had been previously perceived as an effective way of governance but was later increasingly regarded as inefficient and undemocratic. The school of thought, which perceived centralisation as an effective way of governance, was a result of an economic theory emerging in the late 1940s in the West. The theory required a strong and central role of a national or federal government to push for planned economic investment and production. This school of thought was not only referred to by many technocrats in developed countries, but also was made widespread around the world thanks to the role of the World Bank, which took a leading role in helping developing countries initiate their development after decades of civil wars or colonialism. This centralisation was soon becoming not only an 'ideology', but also a requirement for the developing countries to receive development loans

from the World Bank, which praised centralised planning as ‘promoting ‘modernisation’, accelerating social and political change, generating employment, mobilising capital for further investment’ (Cheema & Rondinelli, 1983, pp. 10-11). In the US, this theory was known as ‘scientific management’, championed by Frederick W. Taylor, upholding the principles of efficiency and standardization. At first this theory was referred to by big corporations, but soon penetrated into the education sector as well at a time when American education was fairly decentralised and was perceived to have failed to build relevant link with industry (McGinn & Welsh, 1999; Timar & Tyack, 1999). Accordingly, a great pressure was put upon school administrators, not only ‘to make education more practical in order to serve a business society better,’ but also to make sure that schools ‘were to operate efficiently’ (Callahan, 1962, p. 18). The then widely regarded ‘inefficient and impractical’ education sector had no choice but to swing from decentralisation towards centralisation (Callahan, 1962, p. 47).

Subsequently, in the after math of World War II, governments in many parts of the world played an increasingly dominant role in education governance (Bray, 2003). International resolutions also encouraged many governments to take an almost exclusive role in education governance, such as the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, and the 1996 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights all enshrined a central role for government (Bray, 2003). Particularly in developing countries, a single government body—usually some sort of ‘ministry of education’—functioned as a bureaucracy

was granted mandates to manage national education system (McGinn & Welsh, 1999). Hanson (1997) outlines the mandates of such bodies: fixing economic disparities via centralisation of finance; instituting stability and quality in programs and activities through policy standardisation; improving the whole system through the centralisation of personnel management; distributing quick adjustments through the whole system via the circulation of innovation; and improving teaching-learning with firm curriculum control. However, in many developing countries, like in Indonesia, besides external encouragement, temptation to apply centralisation was also partially due to a heritage of colonialism. New national leaders utilized a centralist tradition commonly inherited from and imposed by their former colonial governments, particularly under the pretext that the newly independent countries were still considered weak economically and politically to initiate and proceed with concrete development (Lauglo, 1995; Samarutunge, 1998). This historical direction in Indonesia has later gradually steered the country to embrace political authoritarianism, which at the edge of the end of the New Order seemed to have partially contributed to strengthening perception that a centralised way of governance is inherently undemocratic.

The failure of centralisation and the emergence of decentralisation

Predictably, the praise for centralisation did not last long. When stagflation hit Western economies in 1970s, the imagined prosperity promised by the proponents of centralisation was not fully materialized. Even Western

countries experienced painful decline in their prosperity, the escalation of global economic competition, the rise of unemployment exacerbated by the OPEC oil embargo, and recession and stagflation after the Second World War (Boyd & Claycomb, 1994). In developing countries the situation was similarly frustrating. Samarutunge (1998) wrote that in developing countries “[e]conomic growth was far below the expected level, even where growth rates were relatively high, unequal distribution of income and wealth remained unchanged” (p. 2). In education sector, policy makers and educationalists also began to feel that centralised governance was too complicated and ponderous and even gradually alienated schools from the society they served (e.g. Elmore, 1993; Karslen, 2000). The central made important decision making most of the time without involving other stakeholders, producing somehow irrelevant policies in this very public sector. As Carnoy (1990) argues, “the growth of a ministerial bureaucracy promotes educational forms and process that are inherently undemocratic” (p. 93).

Subsequently, the World Bank switched its policy from supporting centralisation to supporting decentralisation, making it its new ‘ideology’ and even new requirement for developing countries to receive much-needed loan for them to proceed with their development agenda. Developing countries, eager to speed their economic and social development and to upgrade their status from a ‘third world country’, made themselves heavily dependent on the loans from international agencies such as the World Bank. Bowing to this external advice, the countries had to choice but to undergo reform via budget reduction, greatly affecting public sectors such as health, housing, and education

(Burbules & Torres, 2000; see also Welch, 2000, pp. 11-17, on “the external influences: the political economy of structural adjustment”). The pressure upon recipient countries was so strong that Astiz, Wiseman, and Baker (2002) describe this powerful process of institutional globalization as the way of increasing influence of international agencies ‘on domestic agenda, leaving less room for widely differentiated national policy strategies’ (p.2). Decentralisation, which is ironically imposed by international development agencies upon recipient countries, can be conceptualized generally as ‘the transfer of decision-making authority, responsibility and tasks from higher to lower organisational levels or between organisations’ (Hanson, 1997, p. 112) and can be specifically categorized into four major forms: deconcentration, delegation, devolution, and privatization (Cheeme & Rondinelli, 1983). Deconcentration is when decision-making power and functions are moved from one place to another within the structure of central authority. Delegation is when functions are shifted from the central authority to parastatal bodies (which have some political authority and serve the central authority indirectly). Devolution is when decision-making power and functions are moved from the central to local authorities. Privatization is when functions are transferred from public sectors to non-governmental institutions (Cheeme & Rondinelli, 1983). Depending on the type of the institutional programs, the recipient countries practically applied this conception of decentralisation in different forms and in varying degrees.

In education sector, given its public orientation, the very heart of decentralisation actually lies on the conception of community participation. Decentralisation brought the

trend of cuts in the public sector left central governments, with their reduced authority and limited budget, little choice but to decentralize their power and authority to the local level. It is because of this that community participation and empowerment are expected to play greater role to significantly contribute not only to the betterment of education, but also to the increased awareness of the importance of education among society (Govinda & Diwan, 2003). As a result, the push towards the increased role of community in taking part in education governance was all the time more evident (Bray, 2003). Despite the fact that there was no assurance that decentralisation would by design lead to increased quality, equality, and efficiency, many developing countries seemed to share the belief (or myth?) that decentralisation was a one-size-fits-all policy tool to fix bad governance and achieve national goals of development. The following claims, although not necessarily an immediate consequence of decentralisation, help understand what makes decentralisation—particularly in education reform—an attractive concept: improved quantity and quality of inputs to schooling improvement; improved efficiency in resource provision and utilisation; shifting the sources of funding; releasing central authority from its financial burden; more education revenue for local government; improved capacity of local government (with improved transparency and accountability); increased responsiveness to local needs; and increased local participation (Karslen, 2000; McGinn & Welsh, 1999; UNDP, 1997).

Indonesia's experience with education centralisation and decentralisation

Under colonialism

At the time when the influence of liberal ideas was sweeping across Europe, Dutch colonial government in Indonesia also underwent significant changes with the introduction of the Ethical Policy in 1848 (Legge, 1980; Mauldin, 1961). This policy was fundamentally based on the perception that the Netherlands should do something gracious for the Indonesians because of all the wealth 'stolen' from the latter (Ricklefs, 1993). Dutch liberals claimed that the natives were entitled to get a proper education from their European masters (Alfian, 1989; Mauldin, 1961). The result of the Ethical Policy, however, was far from satisfactory, only a handful of natives were educated and held positions in governments (Legge, 1980; Niessen, 1999). Locally based schools were subsequently initiated by educated Indonesians who became aware that they had to provide their fellow Indonesians with decent education (Mauldin, 1961). This locally based education was mainly in the form of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools). In 1912, anxious over the increased expansion of these politicised education institutions, which also often campaigned for independence, the Dutch introduced several laws to tighten control over such schools, such as laws on teachers in 1925 and law on private schools in 1932. This effectively centralised schools under the colonial government. However, the *pesantren* persistently continued to develop and also managed to establish modern Islamic schools (*madrasah*) to attract more

students (Mauldin, 1961).¹ Later when the Japanese came, the nature of Japanese military government was heavily dictatorial and staunchly hierarchical. From 1942 to 1945, the Japanese eliminated provinces and abolished representative institutions (Maryanov, 1958). In education, the Japanese only allowed government schools to operate, and closed locally initiated schools. Military exercise was compulsory, independent thinking was restricted, and the culture of fear surrounded the Japanese supervisors posted at every school (Poerbakawatja, 1970; Seekins, 1993). Amid local initiatives to establish schools, an atmosphere of fear, restriction and centralised control had therefore been palpable in the way schooling was supervised and governed under colonial rule.

Post-Independence and the New Order Regime

Post-Independence saw the failure of Indonesia's democratic experience. During this period (1945-66), Sukarno, Indonesia's first president, introduced 'Guided Democracy,' a governing principle with heavy presidential power and strong centralisation. Under the New Order Regime (1966-98), Suharto, Indonesia's second president, emerged after the collapse of the Old Order's Sukarno, imposed '*Pancasila*'²

¹ This development in which the colonial government did not incorporate *pesantren* and *madrasah* into their colonial schools was the starting point that caused independent Indonesia continued to have dual system of education: *sekolah* (secular school) under the ministry of education and *pesantren* and *madrasah* under the ministry of religious affairs (Syafi'i, 2005, pp. 26-36).

² *Pancasila* is 'the five basic principles of the Republic of Indonesia: the belief in one God Almighty, humanity than is just and civilized, the unity of Indonesia, democracy guided by the wisdom of representative deliberation, social justice for all Indonesians' (Echols & Shadily, 1997, p. 406).

Democracy,' also with heavy presidential power and strong centralisation. After the first constitution was formed in 1945, the Basic Law on Regional Government was issued in 1948 and was considered the country's first decentralisation law. However, cultural legacies of limited devolution within the framework of a strong centralised state during the colonial period endured to post independence, making it difficult for the country to embrace genuine decentralisation (Amal, 1994; Kahin, 1994).

After the 1950 Constitution replaced the 1945 Constitution, further decentralisation efforts were introduced: Law 32/1956 regarding fiscal allocation and Law 1/1957 regarding regional government permitted election of provincial and regency assemblies (Kahin, 1994; Malley, 1999). Nevertheless, regional revolts broke out and with army support the impatient Sukarno declared martial law in 1959, and returned the country to the 1945 Constitution with a strong presidential system and heavy centralisation (Amal, 1994; Jones, 2002). After the downfall of Sukarno and in the aftermath of the alleged coup by *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI or the Indonesian Communist Party), Suharto clearly was not intent on loosening up centralisation (Malley, 1999). The New Order regime's agenda was to create economic and political stability and bring together the disjointed society under its strong rule. In achieving this, the economy was reconstructed and 'a sense of discipline within the ranks of the bureaucracy' was imposed (Bjork, 2003, p. 191). Regional autonomy was also severely restricted. For example, Law 5/1974 regarding regional government restricted nominations for local governing bodies, and accordingly local governments were nothing but expansion

of Jakarta administration³ (Amal, 1994).

Furthermore, only three political parties were permitted to contest general elections: *Golongan Karya* (Golkar or the Functional Group, which was the state party), *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP or the United Development Party) and *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* (PDI or the Indonesian Democratic Party). All three political parties and other social organisations were forced to proclaim *Pancasila* as their single ideology (Schwarz, 1999). Liddle (1999) has illustrated the mobilisation of all civil servants to vote for Golkar every five year both at national, provincial and local levels. Teachers, indeed, were not excluded. Besides being strongly guided to vote for Golkar, they were also obliged to 'deliver the national curriculum and to transmit the values [of obedience and loyalty]' (Bjork, 2003, p. 192). In fact, the nation's schools provided the regime with 'the largest and most captive audience' (Bjork, 2003, p. 192). The New Order government forced 'monoloyalty' throughout the bureaucracy and banned all civil servants in joining political activities other than in Golkar related organisations (Emmerson, 1978, p. 83). Mackie and MacIntyre (1994) claim how those who complied with the rules would be rewarded and those who opposed the government would be penalised. Bjork (2003) indicates that as a consequence, civil servants, including teachers, were cut off from their communities as they were systematically forced to show their unconditional loyalty

³ Besides the past colonial legacy arguments (see e.g. Amal, 1994), Wood (2000) argues that the New Order regime under Suharto (a Javanese), was too 'Java-centric,' as it identified Java based Majapahit empire as a 'proto-Indonesia' and placed 'too much emphasis on unity rather than diversity' (p. 104).

only to the ruling government. In the 1970s the government introduced *Pendidikan, Penghayatan, dan Pengamalan Pancasila* (P4 or the Education, Internalisation, and Implementation of *Pancasila*) program in which it was compulsory for all civil servants (including teachers), politicians, students and even soldiers to attend the courses (Schwarz, 1999). Total adherence to *Pancasila* was also manifest on education laws, for example, Law 2/1989 of the National Education System states that Indonesia's 'national education is based on *Pancasila* and the 1945 Constitution' (Chapter II, Article 2) (Molle, 2001, p. 4, translated, emphasis added). In this sense, the P4's case indicates that education is often utilised 'to reinforce a particular ideological framework (...) and to legitimise the existing political culture' (McKenzie, 1993, p. 11). As a consequence of this authoritarian political system, the education governance was conducted in a heavily centralised way, whereby all teachers and principals of public schools all over the country were subordinate to the central government in Jakarta through education offices in the provinces. Additionally, they could only join one national teachers' association, *Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia* (PGRI or Teachers' Association of the Republic of Indonesia). Parental involvement, to some degree, was allowed through *Badan Pembantu Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan* (BP3 or School Education Governance Assisting Body, a kind of school level committee comprising parents), but in practice dealt only with fundraising and had no authority to deal with school governance. Accountability mechanism of the use of the money was virtually absent.

Unlike the Dutch who educated only very few, selected Indonesians, however, independent Indonesia tried to

expand education to all levels (Drake, 1989). Since its independence, Indonesia has witnessed rapid progress in education development, particularly its universal and primary education (UNESCO, 2001). For example, less than 6% of the population was literate in 1930, while in 1990 the percentage increased to 81.1%. One of the landmarks of the New Order government initiatives was the introduction of the nine-year universal basic education program (UNESCO, 2001). The World Bank depicted Indonesia's accomplishment as one of the most successful stories with increases in student enrolment and improvement in teachers' qualification, and better student-teacher ratios (CSBE, 2001). Under the New Order regime, Indonesia's economy grew rapidly and became a paradise for foreign investors (Taylor, 1974). However, 'economic liberalisation in Indonesia was not accompanied by political democratisation' (Robison & Hadiz, 2004, p. 103). The New Order regime used the authoritarian and centralised way of governance as a 'sine qua non' for economic development (Emmerson, 1978, p. 84). As a compensation for better economic life and social stability, people seemed resigned to giving up the notion of autonomy (Bjork, 2003). As a result, Indonesia became one of the most centralised countries in the world by the end of the twentieth century (Bjork, 2003).

However, in the 1990s, despite economic progress, many young Indonesians started to feel unsatisfied with the repressive political situation and began to call for more democratic reforms (Bjork, 2003). The international community started to pay attention to the increasing human rights violation allegedly conducted by the New Order regime. The clamour for independence from long oppressed

regions became more boisterous, especially from resource-rich regions such as Aceh and Irian Jaya who believed that the central government had 'stolen' their natural resources (Aspinall & Fealy, 2003a). At the same time, putting more pressure, the international trend of globalisation forced Indonesian policy makers to seek ways to improve Indonesia's human resources in an increasingly competitive world. With increasing pressure for democratic reforms intensified and for more locally based power, Indonesia responded by reforming its national curriculum with the introduction of Local Content Curriculum (LCC) program in 1994 in which schools were encouraged to invent LCC subjects suitable to local needs. However, due to the still heavily centralised governance and the relatively passive attitude of teachers who were used to functioning merely as 'transmitters,' the LCC program drew very little response from teachers and contributed little to local people's empowerment and quality of education (Bjork, 2003; Yeom, Acedo, & Utomo, 2002). The assumptions that centralised administration is 'extensive, elaborate and slow working' (Karslen, 2000, p. 528) and that schools would be 'cut off from their clients—students, parents and community members' (Elmore, 1993, p. 34) began to come into reality.

Regional economic crisis and impacts on education

Indonesia was one of Southeast Asia's booming economies before the 1997 economic crisis, which heavily eroded the value of Asian currencies, forcing the 'miracle economy' into a 'melted-down economy' (Wie, 2002, p. 197). The crisis severely hit Thailand and Indonesia, forcing them to plead for financial assistance from the

International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Hanratty, 1997; Hill, 1999). Indonesia's economy contracted by 13.6%, the *rupiah* dropped 90% by January 1998, and inflation was over 50%. Unemployment was inevitable, and at the same time regional income inequalities and the emergence of severe poverty were becoming obvious (Akita & Alisjahbana, 2002; Hill, 1999; Wie, 2002). The impacts on the education sector were also apparent. Schools were confronted with funding difficulties due to students' withdrawal, parents postponing payment, and declining government funding (Ablett & Slengesol, 2000). The number of school children totalled 39 million in 1997, but fell to 38.64 million in 1998 (Dursin, 2001). Although the impacts appeared to be slight at first, the central government worried that the trend could become uncontrollable (Ablett & Slengesol, 2000). With the assistance of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the central government promptly announced a new education safety net program to provide block grants and scholarship (Filmer, 1999). The two banks pledged US\$382 million to the back-to-school campaign and assisted in its design and implementation (Ablett & Slengesol, 2000). There were 7.5 million children coming from poor families. The government's social safety net program was given to about 3.5 million of them, and scholarships from the foster parent movement were granted to another one million. Nevertheless, the number of dropouts and those students who never attended schools accounted for the remaining three million (Dursin, 2001). Subsequently, the economic crisis put the effectiveness of education centralisation into question.

The collapse of the New Order and the rush to implement decentralisation

The failure of the New Order regime to deal with the protracted economic crisis significantly undermined its political credibility. Amid street demonstrations, Suharto was forced to step down and to transfer his power to his Vice President, Baharuddin Jusuf Habibie in 1998 (Wie, 2002). It should be noted that, as Lane (2013) stated, there was no such explicit demand from *reformasi* figures like Amin Rais and Megawati Soekarnoputri about the need for the country to undergo decentralisation. However, a feeling of dissatisfaction in the regions with the way the New Order government had been treating them was increasingly boisterous (Sakai, 2002a). Out of fear for national disintegration, Habibie's government introduced a radical policy with the promulgation of Law 22/1999 on regional autonomy and Law 25/1999 on fiscal relation, a big bang approach of decentralisation policy (Hofman & Kaiser, 2002). An early election was called in 1999, noted by international community as one of the most democratic elections in Indonesia's history (Habir, 2002). Likewise, during this euphoric period, hundreds of political parties, NGOs, and other societal organisations emerged. Democratic life with strong civil society was endorsed, particularly under Habibie's (1998-99) and Abdurrahman Wahid's (1999-2001) governments (Aspinall, 2002). Given the particular geography of the archipelagic country, which is inhibited by hundreds of ethnic groups with distinct languages and customs, opting decentralisation seemed to be a reasonable decision (Turner & Podger, 2003). Accordingly, as the laws granted sweeping autonomy to the regions in all but a few tasks that are categorically reserved to the central,

Indonesia shifted from one of the most centralised systems in the world to one of the most decentralised. Based on Law 22/1999, Government Regulation 25/2000 regulates the division of responsibilities:

Central government remains responsible for national defense, international relations, justice, security, religion, and monetary and fiscal policies. (World Bank, 2003, p. 7, emphasis original)

The *province* as an autonomous region has a relatively minor role. It coordinates among the local governments, and performs functions that affect more than one local government. (World Bank, 2003, p. 7, emphasis original)

The *local governments* perform all functions except those assigned to the centre and the province. The local governments have obligatory sectors, including health, education, public works, environment, communications, agriculture, industry and trade, capita investment, land, cooperatives, and manpower and infrastructure services. (World Bank, 2003, p. 7, emphasis original)

This law also effectively abolished the hierarchical relationships between provinces and municipalities or regencies. Besides exercising functions that are beyond the capabilities of municipalities and regencies, the province also serves as an administrative polity representing the central government. However, with this law, 'real' communication would only occur between municipalities or regencies and the central government, bypassing the provinces (Turner & Podger, 2003). The consequence is the radical transformation of local political structures. Local parliaments were previously subordinate to mayors, but

now both are independent and equal. Articles 33 and 30 point out that mayors and regents are elected by local parliaments and can be impeached for reasons such as poor health, lack of belief in One Almighty God, abuse of power to gain personal wealth (and other related reasons). However, Indonesia has seen that local parliaments in some regions grown more powerful than mayors, which often creates political disputes between the two (Kristiadi, 2001; World Bank, 2003). Later the revised Regional Autonomy Law 32/2004 was introduced making it possible for mayors and regents to be elected directly by the people. It was expected to eliminate corrupt backroom vote buying practice in parliaments and strengthen the popular mandate of administrators. Direct elections for regional administrators (*pilkada*) were held all over the archipelago from June 2005 onwards. As many as 285 regencies head and mayors and 15 new governors were directly elected from June 2005 to June 2007 (Schulte Nordholt, 2011, pp. 15-16). This politics of *pilkada* has proven to create an appalling impact upon education, as this book will explain later.

Decentralisation has also resulted in the unforeseen consequence of splitting up of provinces and regencies, rapidly increasing the number of administrative units. This process is dubbed *pemekaran*, and mostly taking place outside Java. In this case, seven new provinces were made out of the existing 27, now totalling 33 provinces (minus East Timor which separated from Indonesia via UN-backed popular vote in 1999). The number of regencies and municipalities also amplified from 300 in 1998 to around 450 in 2005. This *pemekaran* was pushed by the blend of interests of bureaucrats, politicians and business elite (Schulte Nordholt,

2011, pp 5-6). One of the case studies being discussed in this book is a new province of Banten, which was established as a new province after separating from West Java province under the administration of President Megawati Soekarnoputri. In many cases this *pemekaran* positively brings the government closer to the people. In education sector, for example, the establishment of new school buildings was proven to be easier and faster.

Structural changes in education sector

The education structure has also been significantly affected. Law 22/1999 marked the beginning of devolving education governance to regency and municipal level. Previously, the local education office was subordinate to the ministry of national education in Jakarta through the provincial education office. With the implementation of this new regional autonomy, hierarchical relationships between the city education office and provincial education office were scrapped with the latter now functioning merely as supervisors or facilitators with coordinative relationship. The local education office institutionally integrated into the local government structures (H. A. R. Tilaar, 2002). As many as 1.9 million civil servants (of which junior and high secondary school teachers comprised 1.1 million) were transferred from Jakarta to the local level (ADB, 2001). As Bird and Vaillancourt (1998) argue, developing a viable staffing policy is a must in ensuring that decentralisation takes place smoothly without decreasing service quality. It should be noted that although regions have the right to manage their civil service including to determine the number of civil servants, Law 43/1999 gives central government great

authority to determine civil service wages with Presidential Instruction outlining basic wage, position and family stipend (World Bank, 2003). As such, the amount of salaries and incentives is the same nationwide, regardless of the socio-economic condition of each region.

Figure 1: School system in Indonesia: Dualism schooling under Ministry of

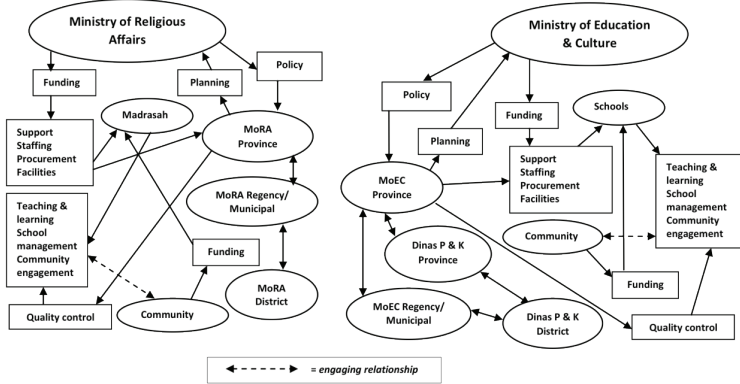


However, it would be unjust if the discussion of education of decentralisation and its impact at the local level does not touch upon *madrasahs*, which are under the Ministry of

Religious Affairs. The position of *madrasah* is somehow unique as they remained strictly centralised under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Indonesia has always been facing with problem of dualism in education: the *sekolah* (secular schools) under the ministry of national education and the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) and *madrasah* (modern Islamic school) under the ministry of religious affairs. The problem originated under the Dutch colonial rule when they refused *madrasahs* to be incorporated into their secular schooling system because they perceived this Islamic education as un-modern; as a result, this persistent reflection of tension between modern and traditional education continued until the present time (Syafi'i, 2005, pp. 26-36). While schools under the ministry of education were now devolved to the local level, *madrasahs* under the ministry of religious affairs remained strictly centralised due to the legal fact that under the decentralisation law religious affairs remained within the domain of the central government. This has resulted in problems and dilemma for the *madrasahs* because among others this has prohibited them from receiving financial and other support from the newly empowered local government.⁴ This situation has likewise exacerbated the already poorly equipped *madrasahs* with more pressing problems under decentralisation (Permani, 2011; Syafi'i, 2005).

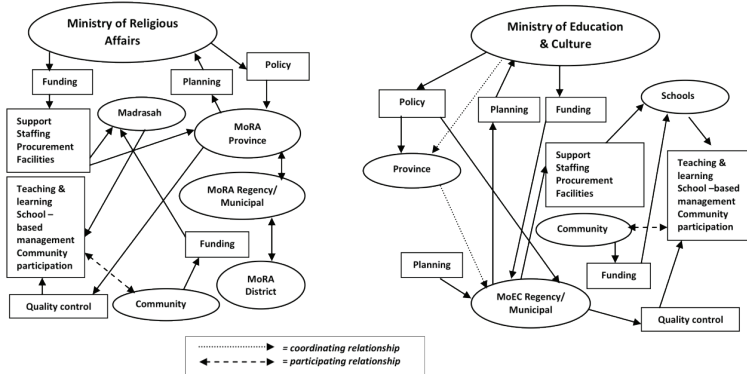
⁴ In 2005, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued a circular (903/2429/SJ) formally preventing regency and municipal governments to give financial support to 'vertical institutions, which are under the jurisdiction of the central government. *Madrasahs* are included in the category of 'vertical' institutions as they are structurally under the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Permani, 2011, p. 186).

Figure 2: Centralised schooling under Ministry of Religious Affairs and Ministry of Education and Culture



Adapted from Cohen (2004).

Figure 3: Decentralised schooling under Ministry of Education and Culture, while schooling under Ministry of Religious Affairs remains centralised



Adapted from Cohen (2004).

Indonesia’s experience with decentralisation is indeed ‘the largest decentralisation ever attempted, wide-ranging

powers to deliver the services on which people rely day to day—education, health services, infrastructure—have been transferred from central government to more than 400 local authorities’ (Ellis, 2004, p. 1). Nevertheless, by Western standards the birth of the decentralisation laws largely lacked rational policy basis: it was done hurriedly with almost no participation from stakeholders, particularly from people in the outer regions. There were ‘no commissions of inquiry, judicial reviews, research reports, mapping exercises, impact assessments, or other forecasting techniques’ with little coordination among related ministries (Turner & Podger, 2003, pp. 19-28). Besides a one-year tight schedule the central government allocated to finish all attendant regulations for implementation, the perceived ambiguity of the laws posed worrying implications: ‘increasing [social and economic] inequality between regions, declining service provision,..., and a failure to introduce accountability mechanisms’ (Turner & Podger, 2003, p. 30). According to an Asian Development Bank (ADB) report, many stakeholders in the regions left uncertain and confused about the policy. As Surakhmad (2002) has argued, the ambiguity of the law and the perceived lack of professionalism at the local level may mean that significant development, particularly in education sector, is not feasible at least in the near future. Habibie’s government, however, greatly benefited from this fast track legislation. His government was able to shore up its legitimacy by appearing to be responsive to popular sentiment (Jones, 2002). In this sense, it can be argued to have followed Weiler’s (1990, 1993) arguments about using decentralisation as a means to shore up failing legitimacy.

Nonetheless, the adoption of decentralisation was

not without consequences, particularly in the education sector where it has resulted in marketisation forcing fierce competition among schools to attract support from local community in order to improve education quality was eventually inevitable.

Marketisation and the widening gap between schools in urban and rural areas

The notion of educational decentralisation links closely to education marketisation, given that schools now often found themselves in a competitive environment. While markets have some perceived advantages such as making schools responsive to local needs and providing parents with more choices, the perceived disadvantages, such as forcing schools to divert too much energy into marketing strategies, and increasing inequality among schools (Angus, 1993; Carnoy, 1998; Coffey, 2001), arguably outweigh the proclaimed advantages. Facing increased competition, schools were forced to undergo reform by introducing school-based management. As school-based management demands increased parental involvement in school governance, school committees are instituted at school level. Parents, principals, and teachers were placed in a new collaborative, business-like environment. However, many studies indicate sobering results. Carnoy (1998) and Welch (2000), for example, have warned that decentralisation reforms, particularly in developing countries where the financially driven nature of the reforms was obvious, would likely increase inequality within societies. Welch, (2000) for example, suggested the central role of governments in bringing quality and equality in education: ‘. . . the state must assume central responsibility for providing the widest

possible access to education, especially for the poor, whose needs are arguably greater now than ever' (p. 23). In this sense, education has been increasingly dictated more by principles of economy and efficiency rather than principles of social justice (Welch, 1996). This is perceived to have happened not only in developing countries, but also in developed countries such as in the UK and US, where 'middle class parents do more choosing than working-class ones' (Gewirtz, Ball, & Bowe, 1995, p. 22), putting the very wisdom of parental choice into question. Vincent and Martin's (2000) study likewise indicates an emerging elitism where only 'a small group of 'elite participationists'' were engaged in the school committee. Gordon's (1994) study reveals how members of the school committees were encouraged to see themselves as business people, benefiting 'the 'rich' schools at the expense of the 'poor' schools' (p. 115).

Accordingly, a quasi-market approach has been proposed 'to combine both market and bureaucratic procedure' (Vandenberghe, 1999, p. 271). As such, the adoption of this approach where governments acts as mediators, may mean that the uncompromising force of marketisation will not devour those who are powerless and deprived, and at the same time will not further strengthen those who are already economically and politically powerful. The state can still play a role to mediate 'the market forces and relations present within education' (Coffey, 2001, pp. 22). The issue is therefore how to locate a suitable balance between centralisation and decentralisation, which areas played by the central and which areas by the local and the market (Hanson, 1997; Smyth, 1993). In the case of Asia, the 1997-98 Asian crisis and also the recent 2008-09

global crisis have provided many Southeast Asian countries with dear lesson about the necessity to design a social protection system to ease the burden of the people. Social protection 'functions to correct market failure when market mechanisms fail to protect people from falling into low living standards' (Ananta, 2012, p. 174). In education sector in Indonesia, the BOS (*Bantuan Operasional Sekolah* or School Operational Assistance), which was based on Government Regulation No. 48 year 2008, was an effort on the part of the government to play a role in mediating market forces by easing people's burden in sending their children to schools. This intervention has three objectives: '(a) To free all primary students and junior high school in public school from school operational expenses; (b) To free all poor students in both public and private school from any school expenses; (c) To reduce school operational expenses of students in private schools' (Widjaja, 2012, p. 187). As research finding in this book reveals, the BOS has significantly benefited schools and households in rural areas, while those in urban areas felt that it is still insufficient to further enhance their education quality. This, however, does not mean that relations between stakeholders are not immune from political dynamics as political tension surrounding the decentralisation of power is becoming more evident.

Tensions surrounding the decentralisation of power

The notion that education reform was inseparable from politics is not something new (Crowson, 1998; McKenzie, 1993). Fiske outlines the political factors of education: 'embodiments of national values'; 'a source of political

power'; 'vehicle for exercising power'; and 'political weapons' (1996, p. 4; see also McKenzie, 1993; and Reid, McCallum, & Dobbins, 1998). In the case of Indonesia, the centralised New Order government clearly used education to help shape national identity and nation building and to foster their ideology of development. When the country shifted from centralised, authoritarian way of governance to a decentralised way of governance with much more fragmented polities, these political dimensions have to be taken into account because any education reforms would naturally provoke support and opposition from the involved players (Fiske, 1996). As Lauglo's (1995, p. 7) and Crowson and Boyd's (2001, p. 22) argue, 'consensus and trust' and 'social commonness' should be adhered to among the stakeholders. In this case, decentralisation can become a contentious issue because those who have been enjoying the rewards of the previous system of governance might feel threatened by the reform (McGinn & Welsh, 1999). Key groups with their interests are therefore important to be anticipated, such as political leaders and policy makers, ministry employees, teachers, teachers unions, universities, parents, local communities, and students (Fiske, 1996).

By the same token, Weiler (1990) argues that decentralisation can be used as a strategic political tool to cope with the 'conflictual situations', to diffuse the causes of conflict and to give supplementary layers of insulation between the conflicting parties (p. 440). Weiler's argument is pertinent to Indonesia at an earlier stage of decentralisation. By issuing ambitious laws (Law 22/1999 and Law 25/1999) that envisaged a one-year frame to complete 'national' decentralisation, President Habibie's government (1998-99)

introduced a big bang decentralisation policy apparently in order to cope with conflictual situation across the country and to prevent the country from disintegration after protests that had led to the downfall of the centralised New Order. Having inherited the presidential post because he was vice-president in the previous much-hated regime, Habibie was not an elected president, and as Weiler (1990) indicates, with legitimacy in short supply, an attempt to gain compensatory legitimation is certainly a reasonable option. However, an intense political tug of war among central, provincial and local governments over the distribution of power has been unavoidable since the launch of decentralisation. For example, President Megawati Soekarnoputri urged regions not to focus on only regional income issues, but to see regional autonomy from a wider standpoint. As a nationalist from PDI-P and also a daughter of first president Sukarno, she seemed uncomfortable over the reports that the regions with their new authority appeared to be aggressively trying to increase their regional income. At the same time, the central government's plan to revise these laws received strong criticism from the former State Minister for Regional Autonomy, Ryaas Rasyid, who believed that it was actually the central government's lack of supervision, which was the real cause over the existing misunderstanding. Criticism also came from the regions arguing that any 'revision should be done in stages and must be based on general empiric data, not just on individual cases' and demanding 'public consultation and participation in the revision process' ("Discussion on Revision," 2002). As a person who was considered the brain of decentralisation during his tenure as Minister for Regional Autonomy, Rasyid (2005) firmly

believed that decentralisation is a logic consequence of democratisation. It is understandable that he would not want his legacy to be 'prematurely' jeopardised.

But later studies show that emerging problems associated with decentralisation cannot be taken lightly. Vedi R. Hadiz, (2011) for example, argues that decentralisation has given birth to growing aspirations of local elites who 'were cognisant of the new opportunities being presented in the context of the very real diminishing capacity of the central state to impose its will and agenda' (p. 75). Research findings in this book also show how these local elites tried to capitalize aspects of, borrowing Maley's (2002) terminologies of 'kinship, religion, ethnicity, locality and interests' (pp. 23-37) to foster their political agenda. Cases of appointments of school principal or even heads of education office, which were based more on personal alliances rather than meritocracy, were rampant. This is not to mention cases of the dismissal of school principals or teachers who were accused of not supporting certain political candidates in local elections. A sheer number of teachers and their influence towards society seemed to provide local elites with luring opportunities to expand their political influence. Hence, there is no guarantee that democratisation in local political landscape and professionalism at school level is being upheld. Another study shows tension between provincial and municipal or regency offices over the distribution of power (Soewartoyo et al., 2002). The study reveals that several officials in the provincial office attempted to widen their authority by continuing directly taking part in physical development, an attempt that invited cynicism from officials from regency office. The reluctance of provincial officials

to relinquish their power and the seemingly impatience of regency officials resulted in tension between the two offices. Another study shows how decentralisation encourages the emergence of local identity politics (Henley & Davidson, 2007), which proves to be problematic as various local societal groups struggle to reach consensus to define what is meant by 'local identity'. It is understandable that one particular societal group, which has played a dominant role in political and economic sphere for a long time could come out as a 'winner' in articulating its own identity and defining it as 'local identity' defying the interests of other societal groups (Amirrachman, 2012). Within this context, we can see why some elements in the Indonesian government (particularly the Ministry of Home Affairs) were arguing for a 'review' or even 'revision' of the decentralisation laws. Weiler (1993) has correctly predicted this that national governments might be tempted to demand an evaluation to assess whether things such as 'national norms' are being asserted, or to make sure that a 'certain degree of homogeneity' is still intact (p. 75). This is yet to suggest that there is an indication of a complete swing back towards centralisation, rather it could be more a re-adjustment to the power sharing distribution between the local and the central where the local could still have wider authority to produce and deal with local policies, including to define their local own local identity, which have taken a new form of development under decentralisation.

Concluding remark

The failure of the colonial powers to introduce decentralisation partly explains why post-colonial Indonesia appeared to have had difficulties embracing

decentralisation. Sukarno's Guided Democracy and Suharto's *Pancasila* Democracy are key examples of how these political leaders were always drawn to the idea of strong centralisation. Centralisation, even when Indonesia enjoyed political and economic stability, continued for almost three decades under the New Order regime. This chapter shows that education has often been used as effective political machinery, especially under the New Order regime, during which vast numbers of teachers all over the archipelago were mobilised to support the regime. The almost three decades of centralisation was more than enough to produce teachers who lacked independence of thought. This centralisation and political control have also impacted parental involvement, whose existence was always acknowledged, but previously limited only to fundraising. The notion that school affairs were government affairs was strongly held, especially in public schools, where teachers answered to the government, not to parents or students. After the collapse of the New Order regime in 1998, the decentralisation framework was introduced almost in a big bang approach—with laws that were seen as ambiguous—to a society that had been strongly accustomed to the mentality of centralisation. Decentralisation has not only resulted in school marketisation and tensions involving pertinent stakeholders, but also in the increased awareness of what appeared to be an exclusive local identity. As decentralisation has helped the widening gap between schools in urban and rural areas, the government introduced BOS (School Operational Assistance) initiative to mediate market forces, which proved to be enormously beneficial particularly for schools in rural areas. However, seen from the lens of

local political dynamics, as teachers have structurally come under the authority of local regency and municipalities, the potential of politicisation of education is high given the fact that the predatory attitude of high officials of these offices over power have grown considerably. This, however, is most likely to affect teachers under the ministry of education, and whether this significantly affects teachers under the ministry of religious, which did not undergo decentralisation, would be discussed further in this book. One thing is sure for teachers under the ministry of religious affairs that they have no luxury to receive funding from the newly empowered local government. Aside from these institutional and political problems, decentralisation has resulted in the increased local identity awareness, which could be problematic as people at the local level have to strike a balance between the perceived diminishing national identity and their emerging but still contested local identities. The next chapter would elucidate in more details an overview of the impacts of decentralisation on education in Indonesia. •

Chapter Three

Decentralising Education to the Local Level: Its Implications

New path towards education decentralisation

In the aftermath of the collapse of the New Order regime, Indonesia was in a state of political chaos. Indonesian educationalist Tilaar (2002) argues that the chaotic political situation helped strengthen the perception that the centralised system of education governance failed to produce well-minded people in establishing a strong civil society. Centralisation, which puts much emphasis on discipline and responsibility –overlooking the rights of citizens –, had been increasingly discredited as it apparently failed to generate genuine cohesion in Indonesia’s very pluralistic society, he argued.¹ Tilaar’s argument, however, reflects the general perception among Indonesian population that it was the New Order’s excessive centralisation and its authoritarian way of governance, which was the main source of the problems impeding the nation. What has

¹ It is worth noting that Wood (2000) doubts whether ‘the New Order regime identification of Majapahit as a ‘proto-Indonesia’ identity will provide a sufficient ideological basis with which to sustain an Indonesia identity in an era of economic crisis and *reformasi* politics’ (p. 104).

been probably missed out from observation of ordinary Indonesians, this mounting mistrust against centralisation had also been a global phenomenon, started even before the downfall of the New Order regime. As explained previously, pressure towards decentralisation in education sector had actually started before the collapse of the regime. Limited decentralisation with regard to local content curriculum was initiated, although the result was unsatisfactory since teachers were not well equipped with sufficient training and were not mentally ready to leave aside their centralist attitude. Consequently, education decentralisation was therefore regarded as urgently relevant to help solve the pressing problems, with popular belief that it would also address the issue of social cohesion (McClure & Triaswati, 2001).

With the clamor for democracy leading to the downfall of the New Order regime, pressure to embark upon education reform in implementing school-based management, which is considered the logic of education decentralisation, seemed to meet the momentum. Although the regime had been increasingly received hostile attitude from people, many elements in the central government understood the need for reform and, given the increasingly polarized situation, it was looming. Hence, to anticipate the reform, ministry of education, for example, in cooperation with UNICEF and UNESCO, conducted pilot projects in 1999. Seventy-nine schools in three provinces (Central Java, East Java and South Sulawesi) participated from June 1999 to December 2000, during which Indonesian president Suharto was stripped from power. The evaluation of the projects indicates that the transparency of school-based management had encouraged

the improved community participation (Subakir & Sapari, 2002), which was considered encouraging for the looming reform. In order to elicit further responses from the local community, the MNE and BAPPENAS (*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional* or National Planning and Development Body) in cooperation with the World Bank and CIDA (Canada International Development Agency) conducted regional consultations in the province of West Sumatera regarding the degree of applicability and acceptance of education boards and school committees. The subsequent report describes the expected relationship between education boards and other authorities by proposing the model where both education boards and education offices 'are decision making-entities in carefully defined roles that do not overlap, where both entities collaborate to mutual advantage' (CIDA, 2001). Regarding the proposed relationships between education boards and local parliaments, the report says that each two should have complementary roles. While education boards are expected to deal with operational educational policy at the micro level, local parliament as a legislative institution at regency and municipal level should be responsible for ensuring the enforcement of laws and regulations of educational policy (CIDA, 2001, p. 26).

The five-year national *Program Pembangunan Nasional* (Propenas or national development plan), approved by National Parliament as Law 25/2000, generally outlines important aspects of school committees and education boards. *Rencana Strategis* (Renstra or Strategic Plan) 2000-2004 was also outlined, emphasising the role of community involvement within the frame of national unity (Bappenas, 2001; MNE, 2001). Capacity building was also on the agenda

of the central government, which was already headed by B.J. Habibie. Habibie inherited the presidential post because he was the vice president in the previous regime. He introduced various radical reforms from free press to big-bag decentralisation, which resulted among the others the transfer of a huge number of teachers from the central to the local, putting them now under the authority of regency and municipal government. In education sector, his administration threw full tangible support to ensure the decentralisation process run conducted accordingly. For example, with the support of the ADB, a pilot program for Decentralised Social Services Delivery (DSSD) was conducted in three regions: Magelang, Purworejo, and West Lampung (2000-2002). The pilot program reveals that intervention and facilitation from the government were necessary, indicating the still lack of initiatives by the local people. The roles of the local parliaments and the mayors, as representatives of local communities, were seen influential in forcing changes in education management (ADB, 2001; Madya, 2002). This indicates the need for the government to still play a supportive role in decentralisation. It is worth noting, however, that Indonesia's decentralisation seemed to be characterized as 'centralised decentralisation,' meaning the efforts were centralised and imposed by the central government in Jakarta. This can be classified, in the words of Goodlad (1992), as a 'top-down, politically driven education reform' (p. 238) raising concerns about the consequences of the implementation at local level.

What are the implications?

As education system moved from centralisation under the New Order to decentralisation in post-New Order era, several aspects can be scrutinised to assess the consequences: *community participation, marketisation of education, politicisation of education, local identity and education quality*. Community participation is the very heart of education decentralisation. Under decentralisation, in which school-based management is employed, community participation is expected to help enhance education quality. *Marketisation of education* is perceived to the result of decentralisation, in which schools are competing to get financial resources from parents. Securitizing *politicisation of education* is also important to see how major political force politicised education under centralisation and how fragmented and localized political forces also follow similar moves under decentralisation. The strengthening of *local identity* is a major feature under decentralisation and it would be important to see how elements at the local level struggle to define what is meant by local identity. At the same time, to also see how national identity is being nurtured amid the strengthening of local identity under decentralisation. As such, school curriculum can be the 'venue' to see how these identities are contested. Finally, it is imperative to assess whether *education quality* has improved under the decentralisation era and what efforts have been devised to improve it.

Community participation

Under New Order's centralised regime, community participation was heavily translated in the form of and was strictly confined to parental financial contribution. At every

school, BP3 (*Badan Pembantu Penyelenggara Pendidikan* or Operational Assistance Body) was formed to collect financial contribution from parents. The body whose members are parents was meant to represent parent interests, but even its name gives strong impression that the body was actually expected to merely help the operational matters of the school particularly in the area of financing. And this is its actual role: a mere proxy of school interest in making sure that school fee is collected on regular basis. In any meeting of BP3, the school had previously determined the amount of school fee and school budget, and the BP3 meeting was a mere formality to endorse it. There is no way that BP3 has access to school financial management to control how the money was used and what was it used for. Financial accountability was clearly absent. Parents generally did not understand what was going on at school with regard to school financial situation. This is perhaps the limited role of parents expected by the authoritarian regime of the New Order. The role of government was indeed quite strong under centralisation, particularly in the area of the politicisation of education by making sure that state ideology of Pancasila was being well nurtured at school and that every student would become a '*manusia Pancasila*' (Pancasila man), an 'idealized' conception of a good, well-mannered Indonesian citizen who obeys authority. Any critical opinion towards authority was not favored, and this attitude of 'not asking too much' was well nurtured at school.

Nevertheless, some quarters had voiced concern about this passive, limited role of BP3. Just about two years before the downfall of the New Order regime, one member of Jakarta parliament Soeparno, who was also former head

of education office of capital Jakarta, said, 'BP3 should not become a 'yes man' to school principal but should have guts in correcting financial matters' (Supriyoko, 1997). Soeparno said that BP3 should have the knowledge of school financial situation and should know where the money comes from. While Soeparno's statement stirred debate among educationalists, others still have doubt whether BP3 should really have the authority to control financial matters others than collecting school fee. In anyway people began to critically think that BP3 should have wider authority than merely collecting school fee. This reflects the beginning of the changing mindset of the people in the dawn of the downfall of the centralised regime, which is also known for its un-transparent attitude with regard to financial matters. Some scholars continued to push for a wider authority of BP3. Muhammad Idrus (2001) for example, said that some functions of BP3 could be developed or invented: 1). fund raising, this can be continued but expanded by ensuring BP3's full participation in designing school budget and in determining school fee; 2). management controlling, which had not been BP3 function before, should be established to help control school management; 3). curriculum controlling, BP3 should have an opportunity to determine what sort of curriculum and subject matters to be used and taught at school; 4). public relation, meaning BP3 should have the authority to inform wider public about the school.

Most of those have been adopted by the central government, particularly after regional autonomy was introduced and Indonesia underwent 'big bang' decentralisation beginning in 1999. The Minister of National Education (MNE) promulgated Decree 088/P/2002 on the

establishment of a Facilitating Unit of Decentralisation of Education within the ministry. Through Decree 044/U/2002, the MNE decided to institute more guidelines regarding the establishment of *dewan pendidikan* (education board) at regency or municipal level and *komite sekolah* (school committee) at school level. With this decree, BP3 was abolished and was replaced school committee. It is stated that education board and school committee are supposed to be independent bodies chaired by non-government figures. Based on the guidelines of the decree, the membership of education board consists of community representatives, who can come from the following elements: 1). educational non-government organisations; 2). local figures (religious leaders, artists, *adat* leader; 3). community members who have been considered as having done great efforts in improving education quality; 4) education experts; 5) education figures from private foundation; 6). industrialist/professional; 7) teachers from teacher association; 8) representatives from school committees (MNE, 2002a, p. 11). Meanwhile, the membership of school committee can come from the following elements: 1). parent representatives from each grade; 2). local figures (such as head of neighborhood, head of village, religious leaders, artist, *adat* leader); 3). community members who have been considered as having done great efforts in improving education quality; 4). local executives (such as head of village, police, military, office of workforce, chamber of commerce and industry, etc); 5). industrialist; 6). teacher from teacher association; 7) student representative; 8) alumni representative (MNE, 2002a, p. 24). The guidelines also say that these community representatives can be supplemented by bureaucracy/executive and legislative

representatives. Bureaucracy representatives are taken from, for example, the local education office and legislative representatives from local parliament dealing educational affairs (MNE, 2002a, p. 11). According to the guidelines, both education board and school committee have four functions: advisory, supporting, controlling and bridging roles. Particularly for school committee, it should have roles in giving recommendations and consideration regarding school budget.²

A careful reading of the guidelines indicates contradiction between independence and accountability was apparent, however, as although the guidelines stipulate that education boards are independent and equal to local governments, their formations can be invoked by mayoral decrees (MNE, 2002a, pp. 15 & 28). Neither the ministerial decree, nor the attendant regulations, clearly specifies the accountability mechanism. The mechanism of election also seems to be blurred, as although democratic election is required, *musyawarah*³ is listed as the first option before a

² At the same time, the decentralisation of education does not really mean that the local government would become directly involved in school management. The current national philosophy of education is school-based management, which means schools should be able to manage themselves in terms of planning and budgeting (Priyono et al., 2008). This introduction of school-based management, which is in line with the spirit of decentralisation, had actually started before the collapse of the New Order. It was a report by the World Bank, *Education in Indonesia: From crisis to recovery*, released in 1998, which pushed for the implementation of school-based management. The report casts light on the poor performance of the Indonesian education system and suggested that schools should have more autonomy to manage themselves for improvement (Sumintono, 2006, pp. 37-38).

³ *Musyawarah* or *musyawarah mufakat* means deliberation to reach

direct and secret voting (MNE, 2002a, pp. 14 & 28). With regard to school committees' guidelines, Davison, Triaswati, Alisjahbana, Priyono, and Prabowo (2004) further argue that

the governance framework for school committees is only partially defined. It is not made clear whether their roles in finance apply solely to parent raised funds (...) or whether they are to have oversight over all financial matters. [It is not clear] whether school committees have the right to enter into contracts. The boundaries between their monitoring functions and the professional autonomy of the teacher or head teacher are not yet comprehensively defined. (Davison et al., 2004, p. 4)

Despite the perceived unclear guideline, as an effort to build capacity, the MNE further conducted a one-week induction workshop on the roles and functions of education boards and school committees in several regions in 2001 and 2003 (MNE, 2002b, 2003b). Almost three years after the National Parliament approved Propenas and with almost 387 regency or municipal education boards already mushrooming throughout the country (MNE, 2003a), the new education law, Law 20/2003 regarding National Education System, was promulgated. While still adhering to the importance of *Pancasila*, the new law has a new distinctive flavour: 'Education should be conducted democratically, with justice, and indiscriminately, by upholding the values of human rights, religion, culture and pluralism of the Nation' (Chapter III, Article 4) ("*UU*

consensus (see Echols & Shadily, 1997). While it stands as a neutral term, it was generally misused during the New Order regime to avoid voting at the expense of popular aspiration.

20/2003 [Law 20/2003],” 2003, p. 5, translated). The new law also outlines education boards and school committees as independent bodies comprising concerned community members, and describes rights and responsibilities of the communities: ‘Communities have the right to participate in planning, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of education program’ (Chapter IV, Article 8, p. 6) and ‘Communities have the responsibility to support education governance’ (Chapter IV, Article 9) (“UU 20/2003 [Law 20/2003],” 2003, pp. 6-7, translated)

Thus, the new policy tried to accommodate people wishes to expand the role of school committee and to expand its authority and to make it as independent and representative as possible. Along with euphoria of *reformasi*, schools were enthusiastically rushing to form school committee at their respective schools. Still, some have doubt about it and fear that school committee would only become a ‘neo-BP3’ (Prishardoyo, 2002). Has the establishment of school committee met the expectation? Early research shows the ‘success’ of school committee very much depends on the social status of its members. One case study on the implementation of education decentralisation in East Kalimantan shows that a school committee of a school located in urban area whose members are high officials, members of parliament, were more successful in gathering support from parents compared to a school committee of a school located in urban area. Members of school committee of a school in rural area showed critical attitude when discussing the amount of school fee together with school principal or teachers of the school. Despite the new authority bestowed on them, the mindset of members of

both school committees in schools in rural and urban clearly are still strictly confined to financial matters. They showed little interest with wider issues of school management and curriculum. It shows from the very beginning of the establishment of school committee, people's mentality about the importance of gathering financial support from parents has not changed significantly (Amirrachman, 2004a). With regard to *madrasah*, Syafi'i's (2005) study shows the too dominant role of school principal in making decision. This seemed to be partly because *madrasahs* remain under the central government, thus the centralist tradition remains intact among school staff and it is evident in the way deal with wider community. Secondly, as Syafi'i (2005) observed, the life of many *madrasah* teachers and principals are embedded in *pesantren*, which is known for its rigid highly hierarchical social order. This is not to mention the perception among *madrasah* teachers and principals that parents are insufficiently knowledgeable with regard to *madrasah* affairs, and involving them would neither help solve *madrasah* problems nor improve *madrasah* quality (pp. 204-207).

Marketisation of education: Can government intervention narrow the gap between schools in urban and rural areas?

Western authors such as Carnoy (2000) and Coffey (2001) have warned of the danger of increased inequality between schools because of the unchecked marketisation of education as schools are competing to get resources from parents. This is not isolated to Western cases. In Indonesia, decentralisation too seems to have helped widen the gap between schools located in urban and rural areas

(Amirrachman, 2004b; Amirrachman et al., 2008). As a result, as seen in many parts in the country, registration fee and school fee were soaring especially for public schools considered favourite or elite. These public schools were acting more like private schools whose fee is understandably more expensive than public schools. Parental choice was increasingly limited, only those who were relatively well-off would be able to send their children to schools with high standard of quality, usually top public or good private schools. A well known academic Azyumardi Azra said during one conference, 'One of the negative impacts of liberalization is the mushrooming of commercialization and business of education... this is the result of a free market era' (Merdeka, 2005). While competition among schools is expected to provide a wide range of choices for parents, this is not the case in Indonesia. Choices of what is considered high quality education are exclusively in the hand of rich and politically well-connected parents. Money has become almost the only factor that determines whether parents can register their children at one particular school or not (Prasetyo, 2004, p. 61). This competition among schools does not even translate into significant improvement of the quality of Indonesia's education, even compared to some other Asian countries Indonesia's education was still very much left behind as shown in the international standard examination discussed earlier. This is partially because the competition among schools, which seems to be about getting to the top in terms of academic achievement, was actually more about getting as much money from well-off parents. Worse still, amid chaotic political transition from authoritarianism to democracy, the central government's

authority with its decreased financial capacity was steadily getting weaker as it was losing power to really intervene into the spiralling problems in education sector.

Fortunately, with economy getting better and political situation stabilizing, the government moved to mediate this unfavorable market forces in education. The government budget for education finally doubled from 11 per cent to 21 percent, the largest occurred between 2008 and 2009 when the education budget increased by 17 per cent in real term. Indonesia has tripled public expenditure on education in ten years between 2001 and 2010. Samer Al-Samarrai and Pedro Cerdan-Infantes (2013) wrote, 'As a share of GDP public spending on education increased from 2.4 per cent to 3.4 percent over that period. As a share of the government budget, it doubled, from 11 per cent to 21 per cent, The largest occurred between 2008 and 2009, when the education budget increased by 17 per cent in real terms, the equivalent of additional 6 per cent of the national budget' (p. 110). The government pours more money in the form of BOS (*Bantuan Operasional Sekolah* or the School of Operational Assistance) to help people's burden, which has an impact on mediating market forces and narrowing the gap between schools in urban and rural areas. In 2005 the government reduced fuel subsidy and re-allocated most of the funds into four areas: education, health, rural infrastructure sector and direct (unconditional) cash transfer. In 2005 the government attempted to reduce fuel subsidy and re-channelled the fund mostly into education sector, particularly for operational cost of every student at elementary and junior high schools both private and public. This intervention has three specific objectives: '(a) To free all primary students and junior high school in public school from

school operational expenses; (b) To free all poor students in both public and private school from any school expenses; (c) To reduce school operational expenses of students in private schools' (Widjaja, 2012, p. 187).

However, while public schools are prohibited to ask for extra money from parents, many of them do nevertheless. Some teachers, particularly from schools in urban areas with many extracurricular activities, argued that the BOS is simply insufficient to cover all school activities. Some also argued that the BOS has limited schools' initiative in creating new programs because they have to adjust the programs to what they described as a very limited budget. Before BOS, teachers were free to offer new additional programs to parents who were willing to pay more, and my own ongoing research confirms this. The BOS itself has yet to cover senior high school level. Research findings in this book also show that school committees have not played the roles and functions as expected as they played more as a mere proxy of school interests. *Madrasahs*, however, are also entitled to receiving BOS from the central government. While the BOS was considered sufficient to cover very basic operational need of the *madrasahs*, several problems have come to the fore; among others are a failure to communicate this with wider community, a too dominant role of *madrasah* principal and the difficulty of preparing financial report. With regard to financial accountability, *madrasahs* have to make financial report both to the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the local education offices, consuming much of their time (Permani, 2011, p. 185). The failure to communicate to wider community and the too dominant role of *madrasah* principal indicate that democratisation in its real sense was not sufficiently

flourishing. As explained previously, this is partly because *madrasahs* did not undergo decentralisation, they remained under the centralised governance of ministry of religious affairs. Secondly, it is because the life of many *madrasah* teachers and principals are attached to *pesantren*, which is known for its firm highly hierarchical social relations among teachers, students and wider community (Syafi'i, 2005).

Politicisation of education: The political mobilization of teachers during local election

Politicisation of education stretched back to the colonial era. As explained in the previous chapter, both the Dutch and the Japanese imposed an atmosphere of fear, restriction and centralised control in the way schooling was supervised and governed under their colonial rule (Legge, 1980; Maryanov, 1958; Mauldin, 1961; Niessen, 1999). Later the first president Sukarno also introduced a 'guided democracy, a governing principle with heavy presidential power and strong centralisation. Suharto with his New Order regime also did not intend to loose up centralisation (Malley, 1999) as he wanted to create economic and political stability with 'a sense of discipline within ranks of the bureaucracy' (Bjork, 2003, p. 191). The central government mobilised all civil servants including teachers to vote for the ruling political party Golkar. Aside from being forced to vote for the ruling party Golkar during national election, teachers also had an obligation to 'deliver the national curriculum and to transmit the values [of obedience and loyalty]' (Bjork, 2003, p. 192). Teachers and students were also obliged to join course on national ideology of Pancasila called *Pendidikan, Penghayatan, dan Pengamalan Pancasila* (P4 or the Education,

Internalisation, and Implementation of *Pancasila*) (Schwarz, 1999). As a matter of fact, the nation's schools provided the regime with 'the largest and most captive audience' (Bjork, 2003, p. 192). Teachers also were only allowed to join one government-sanctioned teacher association called *Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia* (PGRI or Teachers' Association of the Republic of Indonesia). Clearly under the New Order regime, education was politicised 'to reinforce a particular ideological framework (...) and to legitimise the existing political culture' (McKenzie, 1993, p. 11).

Now after *reformasi* and decentralisation swept the country, everything has changed. The government, unlike the New Order government, was no longer able to force 'monoloyalty'. The P4 course was disbanded. Teachers are now free to form association other than PGRI; hence, new teacher organisations were mushrooming, such as *Ikatan Guru Indonesia* (Association of Indonesia's Teachers), *Federasi Guru Independen Indonesia* (Independent Federation of Indonesia's Teachers) and *Forum Komunikasi Guru Honorer* (Communication Forum of Non-Permanent Teachers). All claimed to bring forward teacher interests. Furthermore, decentralisation also brought significant structural change. The introduction of Law 22/1999 on regional autonomy has changed the relations between the central government in Jakarta and local government at the provincial and local level. Previously, local education office was subordinate to the Ministry of National Education in Jakarta through the provincial education offices. With the implementation of this new regional autonomy, hierarchical relationships between the regency or municipal education office and provincial education office were modified, with the latter

now functioning as supervisors or facilitators with a coordinative relationship. The local education office was institutionally integrated into local government structures (H.A.R. Tilaar, 2000). Jakarta subsequently transferred 1.9 million civil servants (of which school teachers comprising 1.1 million) (ADB, 2001). Although local authorities now have the right to manage their civil service, including being able to determine the number of civil servants, Law 43/1999 gives central government great authority to determine civil service wages with a Presidential Instruction outlining basic wage, position and family stipend (World Bank, 2003). As such, the value of salaries and incentives is the same nationwide, regardless the socio-economic condition of each region.

However, the fact that teachers are now under the *kabupaten* (regency) and *kotamadya* (municipality) has created a new problem of politicisation. Under the New Order teachers were used and treated as a political force to support the central government, now they are used politically by local politicians to benefit the latter's local political interests. Cases of the inappropriate dismissal of school principals, transferring of teachers to remote areas, dismissal of education officials, which are believed to be politically motivated, were rampant, as research findings in this book would show. One teacher, for example, who had been suspected of not supporting the incumbent or incumbent-supported candidate during local election, was transferred to a school located very far away from their home. These actions were done usually before and after local election. The decision was usually sudden without prior notice, not even warning letters were delivered as a normal procedure when

civil servants are found guilty of breaking the regulation. Also cases of appointment school principal or high official in education office, which dismissed meritocracy consideration, which seemed to have been done based more on personal closeness or intimacy with the mayor or the regent. Teachers were inevitably surrounded by unrestrained political fear when local election is looming, distracting them from seriously doing their job of teaching. However, it should be noted this situation also prompted teachers to play politics as well. If the situation were considered benefiting their career, they would not hesitate to gather support from their peers and families for supporting certain candidates (usually incumbent or incumbent-supported candidate) during local election. This is mostly seen among teachers who are civil servants; although the law prohibits civil servants to directly get involved in politics. In this case, they would be careful not making their political activity too obvious. For examples, as one teacher admitted, they would not be seen erecting a banner of a certain candidate in public space, but they would ask their friends or family members to do it. In its recent research in Padang (West Sumatera), Pontianak (West Kalimantan), Manado (North Sulawesi), Semarang (Central Java), Medan (North Sumatera), Samarinda (East Kalimantan) and Surabaya (East Java), the Ministry of Education and Culture (2011b) has found out that 'there is an indication that teachers are being used for short-term political interests, and this has relations with their promotion, placement and career development' (p. 2).

In principle, civil servants are still granted the right to vote, but if they want to run for local or national political posts, they should resign from their position of civil servant.

Government Regulation 37/2004 on prohibition of civil servants to become members of political parties stipulates that '(1) civil servants are forbidden to become members and/or executive members of political parties; (2) civil servants who become members/ and/or executive members of political parties would be fired from being civil servants.' It also stipulates that if civil servants want to be active in political parties, they should resign from their position as civil servants. The regulation was designed to maintain the neutrality of civil servant so that the politicisation that had occurred during the New Order would not repeat. But research findings show that the politicisation has even worsened after teachers fell under the authority of municipality or regency. This has caused serious fear and uneasiness among teachers. This relates to the fact that many officials were not ready to bear this new responsibility both professionally and perhaps mentally as well. One report also reveals that many officials did not yet have the capacity to carry out this massive responsibility (Priyono et al., 2008). Worse still, pressure was not only intensified during local election time, but also during the registration of new students every new school year. As favourite public schools fell under the authority of local mayor or regent, officials from the offices and even members of local parliament would use their influence to make sure their children or relatives or even their 'clients' to be admitted by the favourite schools. What makes worse is that in many cases this involves certain amount of money, which goes into either the pocket of school staff or officials or members of parliament, who turned this opportunity into moneymaking machine. The atmosphere of decentralisation seems to have resulted in

the emergence of predatory attitude of those who have authority, and the education sector, which is supposed to be a place where moral integrity is upheld, is not an exception.

By the same token, however, teachers of *madrasah*, who are under the Ministry of Religious Affairs and private foundations, were relatively sterile from local politics. This is due to the fact the Ministry of Religious Affairs did not undergo decentralisation and private foundations have their autonomy in running their schools. The reason of the Ministry of Religious Affairs to maintain its centralised structure is because religious affairs are considered the domain of the central government. Hence, local election would not result in negative atmosphere for teachers. One school principal of *madrasah* even said that he once refused a member of parliament who insisted to register his son without normal procedure.⁴ He was determined to reject the pressure because he was not under the authority of the local government. While he said he might undergo personal pressure, structurally his position should be safe. If this happened to teachers of Ministry of National Education, who fell under local government, he would have been dismissed or transferred to another school as a political punishment by local authority. Teachers under private

⁴ Despite general perception that *madrasah* education quality is not as good as that of regular schools, in one region there are usually few *madrasahs*, which are considered of good quality. This attracted some parents who have concern with the perceived insufficient religious education at regular schools to send their children to *madrasah*. In the province of Banten, for example, which is known for its history of Islamic religious education, many parents have such a concern, and there are quite several well known Islamic schools, many of them are *pesantrons*, however, which are more community based.

foundations are also protected from local political dynamic as they are strictly under the responsibility of their respective private foundations. Besides politicising teachers, local leaders might also be tempted to resort to populist policy to gather support to make them more popular, such as in the area of free education and health. Lane (2013) indicated that decentralisation might have encouraged politicians to exploit what might be called ‘social safety net populism’. In the upcoming chapters, this book will reveal more research findings on this matter.

Local identity: An exclusive local identity politics?

Decentralisation also witnessed an increase of what is perceived as an exclusive identity politics at the local level. Some regions saw the expression of these identity politics in a form of *adat* (customary law), other regions saw these in a form of the coming back of aristocratic families. During colonial times, the conservative Dutch administrators utilized *adat* as a tool to contain the spread of Islam and nationalism by stressing the unique character of particular regions in the archipelago. In this context *adat* was treated as a solution to national unity as well as political mobilization. After independence *adat* almost lost ground in society and under the New Order – known for its developmental era – *adat* was almost completely swept under the carpet; it ended up existing merely in the field of folklore, as Li (2000) posits, ‘Although colorful cultural signs have always been acceptable, localised identities, histories, and commitments have been consistently unmarked and derecognised in favour of a homogenizing discourse of development’ (p. 174).

Nevertheless, after the fall of Suharto, the country saw the 'revival' of *adat* consciousness as an alternative to the corrupt practice of the New Order regime.; and it did not take long for the 'revival' to begin. Still in 1999, Jakarta-based regional activists, who claimed to represent deprived *adat* communities, established Indonesia's first national indigenous people's lobby; AMAN or *Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara*, literally means the 'Archipelagic Alliance of Adat Communities'. In this case, they phrased their 'traditional rights' in contemporary terminologies such as 'bottom up', 'empowerment', and 'grass roots' (Henley & Davidson, 2007; Schulte Nordholt, 2011). How can we explain this phenomenon? How can we define one group as indigenous and others not? What makes one group indigenous? According to Li (2000): '...a group's self-identification as tribal or indigenous is not natural or inevitable, but neither is it simply invented, adopted, or imposed. It is, rather, a *positioning* which draws upon historically sedimented practices, landscapes, and repertoires of meaning, and emerges through particular patterns of engagement and struggle' (p. 151)

Eriksen (2001) states that identity politics 'should be taken to mean political ideology, organisation, and action that openly represents the interests of designated groups based on 'essential' characteristics such as ethnic origin or religion' (p. 42), while R. D. Parker (2005) posits that identity politics 'is motivated by our imagination of what is or ought to be mine or ours or yours' (pp. 53). For this reason, one may ask: who does belong to such a group and who is regarded as an outsider? (Schulte Nordholt, 2011). These questions revolve around the debate of the notion of

citizenship and indigenous identity, for example, Kymlicka and Norman (1994) on survey on recent citizenship theory, Kymlicka (2007) on the new debate on minority rights, Rosaldo (2003) and Blanchetti-Revelli (2003) on cultural citizenship and borders of belonging, Von Benda-Beckmann and Von Benda-Beckmann (2010) on multiple citizenship and Li (2000) on positioning and articulation of indigenous group identity. Rosaldo (2003) further points out that with regard to 'questions of social justice and the politics of difference, issues of citizenship become cultural' (p. 3). Brauchler (2010) has pointed to the dilemma emerging from the declaration of 'cultural rights' as 'human rights', with the implementation of the regional autonomy law in Indonesia.

In anyway, the decentralisation law provides legal support for such articulation. In the explanation to law No. 32/2044 with regard to the village level, it elaborates that diversity (*keragaman*) is to be acknowledged, that the original autonomy (*otonomi asli*) should be returned to the villages and that the villages should be responsible for the interests of the local population, and that they should be allowed to rename their villages, head villages and village parliaments according to their own tradition. This trend also has affected schooling whereby local contents are to be adapted in the curriculum. Some regions endorsed 'local language' to be taught as local content. Some regions would like to promote their local heroes and some other regions would like to include 'local culture' into their curriculum. Research findings in this book also show how local actors made an attempt to insert this into school curriculum amid wider effort to promote local identity at the regional level. This attempts show, on one hand, an emerging awareness of

how to really define what really contributes to local identity. In Banten province, for example, people are divided into those who speak Javanese and those who speak Sundanese. Hence, people are debating of which local language to be taught at school. In West Kalimantan societal groups are also competing to articulate their local identity, particularly three major ethnic groups: Dayaks, Chinese and Malays. How about other ethnic groups? The coming chapters will try to answer this question. It is important to note that other regions also experienced similar trends, for example in the Moluccas where the values of *pela gandong* (traditional alliance between villages, sometimes Muslim and Christian villages) are adopted into the curriculum.

It appears that with decentralisation, local regions are struggling to define what is meant by 'local identity' and inevitably found themselves being caught up with the fact that local identity could take pluralistic forms. In some cases, local groups (ethnic or religious), which have played a dominant role would be successful in forcing to define what is meant by local identity, such as in the case of the Moluccas, where sub-ethnic Moluccans from Central Moluccas was successful in defining what is meant by Moluccan local identity and inserting it into school curriculum. Other sub-ethnic groups from Southeast Moluccas failed to do the same. This attempt seems to be inseparable from the struggle and engagement of every local element to define what is really meant by local identity. This book shows that while local people were understandably enthusiastic in trying to determine or revitalize their own local wisdoms, in reality they were caught up with the fact that the so-called local tradition could take a very diverse form, dragging

them into a rather difficult negotiation among themselves to reach a consensus on what is really meant by their own local identity. Hence, while the central no longer has much authority to define national identity and impose it to the local, the local has arrived to the conflicting situation where they have to define what is really meant by local identity and to strike a delicate balance between national and local identities.

Measures to improve education quality

Under Dutch colonial era education was really not in favor for local indigenous and even though private schools were allowed they were tightly controlled. Under the Japanese, private schools were banned and education was even more highly controlled and centralised. Clearly under colonialism, larger indigenous population did not receive proper education. After independence in 1945, Indonesia has been struggling to improve its education quality and quantity. Under Sukarno's government, however, education development was not very well developed due to heavy penetration of politics into education. The revolutionary atmosphere significantly affected the educational policies, particularly five years after the declaration of independence in 1945. After so much revolutionary rhetoric from Indonesian leaders, it was actually from the beginning of the 1950s that Indonesia started to manage its educational sector in a more concrete manner. From 1953 to 1960 the number of entrants to elementary schools increased from 1.7 million to 2.5 million, nevertheless 60 per cent of these consistently dropped out before completing their school. State and (mostly religiously-oriented) private high schools,

and college-level institutions, mushroomed everywhere and many of them achieved relatively high standards, particularly in Java (Ricklefs, 1993; Thomas, 1966).

But only under the centralised New Order, particularly over the past 40 years, Indonesia has achieved much more concrete improvement in education, particularly in making sure that school-aged children receive proper education. Indonesia has seen expansion of its education both qualitatively and quantitatively. The government built an elementary school building in almost every village in the archipelago with Inpres (*Instruksi Presiden* or Presidential Instruction) program in 1973. Approximately 47,000 school buildings were constructed during the first five years of the program, and 138,940 more were built by 1984. In 2008, after some time decentralisation was rolled out, the number of junior high school rose to 41,000 from around 29,000 in 1993, just some years before decentralisation. By 2008, new public secondary schools were constructed in 94.4 per cent of the country's regencies. Meanwhile, the number of senior secondary schools increased from approximately 14,000 in 1993 to 23,000 in 2008. It should be noted that the largest increase occurring since 2000 when big-bag decentralisation was introduced (Suharti, 2013, pp. 33-34).

It is noteworthy that along with the construction of school buildings, in 1984 the government introduced a six-year compulsory education program, which is extended to nine years in 1994. Thanks to the increase of oil prices in the 1970s, Indonesia was able to invest more in education, resulting in outstanding rise in elementary school enrolment continuing into the 1980s. In 1983 Indonesia was considered to have achieved a universal elementary school education.

The country also saw an impressive quantitative gain at both junior and senior secondary school gross enrolment rates (GER's), which is almost in line with those of China and Thailand. Indonesia has defeated India in putting the rates well above the latter. In 2010, about ten years after decentralisation was introduced, the country's secondary school enrolment was approaching 80 percent compared to that of 50 per cent in the mid-1990s (Suryadarma & Jones, 2013a, pp. 2-3). Nevertheless, although the six-year compulsory program was extended to nine years and junior high school enrolment was significant, the rates were stalled since the early 2000s, at the time when Indonesia underwent political turbulence and early implementation of decentralisation. In 2010, the NER was 68 per cent and GER was 80 per cent for this level of education. This means that the nine-year compulsory education was put into halt. Approximately 63 per cent of children aged 13-15 had dropped out due to financial reasons; 57 per cent because of their inability to pay school fee and the other 6 per cent because they had to work for a living. Suharti (2013) wrote that 'In 2009, the rate [of ASER – aged-specific enrolment rates] among 13-15 years old was 72 per cent for the poorest 20 per cent of households, rising to 94 per cent for the richest quintile' (p. 25), indicating the gap of 22 per cent between the poor and the rich.

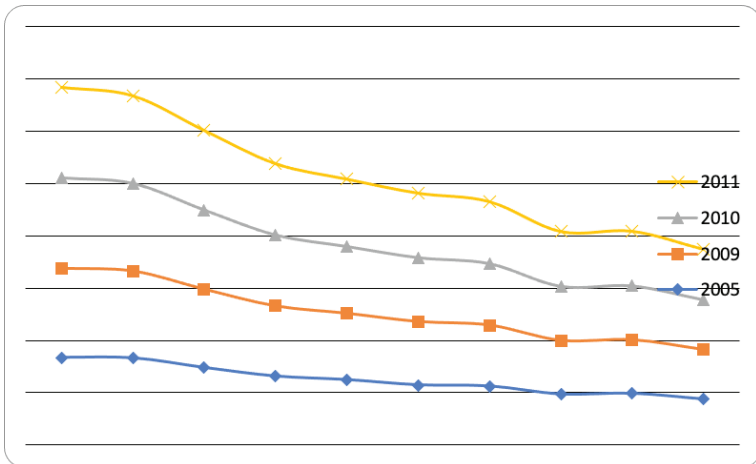
While senior secondary enrolments increased significantly, the gap between individual provinces and between the rich and the poor was even more apparent. For example, the GER's for Papua is 48 per cent and for the Moluccas 87 per cent in 2010. Meanwhile, "In 2009, 29 per cent of 16-18-year-olds in the poorest household

expenditure quintile, but 73 per cent in the richest quintile, were enrolled in senior secondary school” (Suharti, 2013, p. 25). Gender-wise, however, female and male population have similar NERs at all levels of schooling, while since 2005 more females than males have been registered in tertiary education. This indicates that gender gap does not constitute a problem compared to gap between regions and between the rich and the poor (Suharti, 2013, p. 26). This shows that decentralisation created a more pro-market environment where schools are competing to gain financial support from the community, resulting in more restricted parental choice in sending their children (Angus, 1993; Carnoy, 1998; Coffey, 2001). Consequently, the have had more opportunities to have somehow quality education than the poor. And because each region has a variety of local revenues, it is understandable that the gap among regions existed. Indonesia’s Human Development Index (HDI) shows an increase from the year of 1996 (before decentralisation) to 2006 (after decentralisation). In 1996, the index reached 67.7, which is higher than that of other Asian countries such as Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar. Indonesia’s HDI decreased to 64.3 in 1999 due to regional financial crisis, putting Indonesia at the rank of 110th out of 177 countries, plunging from previous 99th (BPS, 2007). However, Indonesia’s HDI was at the rank of 124th from 2005 to 2011 well below Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines and above Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar (BPS, 2012c). The result from the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) proves also that the average of eighth grade of Indonesian student achievement in mathematics and science was below the global average. In 1999, Indonesia

was ranked 34th out of 38 countries. In 2003, it was ranked 35th out of 46 countries and in 2007 it was ranked 36th out of 49 countries. In science, Indonesia was ranked 32rd in 1999, 37th in 2003 and 35th in 2007 (Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2011c). What makes Indonesia's HDI and TIMSS result still unsatisfactory? Arguably, among others Indonesia still suffers from very poor teacher quality, which is attributed among others to an over supply of teachers, low teacher salary, inadequate pre-service training, a weak performance assessment and a weak recruitment system. The pre-service education for teachers does not contain the latest development of teaching methods and the appraisal system, which uses civil service-based appraisal method, is insufficient to examine teacher performance. Decentralisation has further worsened the situation as regency and municipal governments tended to hire teachers more than needed. The local governments had no concern about paying teachers because the central government covers teacher salaries via block grant of General Purpose Fund (*Dana Alokasi Umum*) (Suryahadi & Sambodho, 2013, p. 145). As an effort to improve teacher quality, the government launched certification program to attract qualified candidates to become teachers. The Law 14/2005 on Teachers and Lecturers laid the foundation of this massive program to determine standards for teachers and improve their skills and knowledge. Already certified teachers will be entitled to additional allowance, which doubles their salary. This massive program also absorbs quite large amount of money. When the program is expected to complete in 2015 by certifying all eligible teachers, the whole cost of the program is estimated to reach approximately

Rp. 250 trillion, in which more than 90 per cent of cake are in the form of teacher professional allowance (Suryahadi & Sambodho, 2013, pp. 1946-147). While this might have attracted people to become teachers (World Bank, 2010), the result on student performance outcome has not shown any satisfying effect. An official in the regency of Serang, Banten, for example, admitted that teachers have not used their professional allowance to improve their professionalism, but for their personal needs instead, which had no connection to professionalism, such as changing their motorcycle into a car or even getting re-married.

Figure 4: Human Development Index of Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries 2005-2011



(BPS, 2012c).

In the area of curriculum, the government has introduced various models, which reflect either the spirit of centralisation or decentralisation or combination of both.

Under the New Order, the government introduced 1975 Curriculum, CBSA Curriculum in 1984, 1995 Curriculum, which all reflected the mode of centralisation. Under decentralisation era, a new form of curriculum was introduced in 2004, called a competence-based curriculum (*Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi* or KBK). While the central government said that the curriculum would give more room for teachers to be flexible, an early implementation research showed that most of the teachers were not ready for the curriculum as the supposed infrastructure needed to support it was insufficient. Confusingly, the curriculum was retracted by the central government and another new form of curriculum, called *Kurikulum 2006* or school-based curriculum (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan* or *KTSP*), was introduced (Sumintono, 2006, p. 45). The mode of this new form of curriculum, while referring to national standards, also demands the involvement of local stakeholders and an acknowledgement of local diversity. Here local contents should adopt local needs and culture (Pena Pendidikan, 2007). However, the implementation of the national examination, which was created and designed centrally by the education ministry in the capital Jakarta, appears to contradict the spirit of the decentralised curriculum. The Ministry of National Education regulated the threshold number in three main subject-matters (Bahasa Indonesia, English and Mathematics) in the national exam, in which students needed to pass if they wanted to continue their study at the upper level of education (Sumintono, 2006, pp. 44-45). In this case, the national examination, which was centrally designed by people in Jakarta, was perceived to be too Jakarta-centrist and ignored local potentials. This is not to

mention the still multiple-choice system of the controversial national examination, which seems to invalidate the spirit of the curriculum itself (Amirrachman, 2005). After receiving constant pressure, the government finally made a regulation, which stipulates that the passing grade of students is based on school evaluation (40%) and national examination (60%). This has received mixed reaction from teachers, some welcome the decision but some argue that it is still the schools that know their students best; hence, they argue that the passing grade should be decided by schools. Nevertheless, massive cheating allegedly involving school principals, teachers and local officials from time to time have thrown doubt into the validity of result of the national exams (Republika, 2013), this is not to mention the great depressions the students had to suffer from (Misbach, 2013).

It is also known that school principals and teachers are under pressure from their municipal or regency governments to ensure that the result of the national exam should not become a national embarrassment that would tarnish the good name of the municipal or regency governments. This might have forced them to let the cheating happen in the classroom. As a result, weird result can be found, for example, students at schools with very much left behind educational facilities in one area can score better than those located with schools with better educational facilities in another area. While the result from the national exam might be problematic, at least the result from the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and the position of Indonesia's Human Development Index is telling enough in giving picture of the quality of Indonesia's education. And at more local level, the trends of the number of students and dropouts should

also provide us with sketches of education quality at least at the provincial level by comparing urban and rural areas with their respective characteristics. Furthermore, as an apparent attempt to improve education quality, just recently the central government has also introduced 2013 Curriculum (*Kurikulum 2013*), which is more thematic-based and aims more at building and shaping students' character (Sundari, 2013). The spirit of this new curriculum, however, appears to incline more towards centralisation because teachers do not need to prepare syllabus as they are made ready by the central government unlike the previous curriculum. With this new curriculum, teachers only need to prepare lesson plans. While this seems to ease teachers' burden in teaching preparation, it appears to be an attempt to uniform the syllabus at all schools all over the archipelago. Whether this would bring benefit to the improvement of education quality needs to be seen as some argue that improving teachers' teaching skills and knowledge is much more important than having a new curriculum because even sophisticated curriculum would become futile if teachers have no sufficient knowledge and skills to teaching properly (Amirrachman, 2013).

Madrasahs, meanwhile, have difficulty to compete with other regular schools because among others they are obliged to dedicate approximately thirty percent of school hours to teaching religious courses at the expense of hours allocated for regular subject matters. Secondly, more academically able students tended to choose to go to regular schools rather than *madrasahs* (Permani, 2011, pp. 187-192). Worse still, as previously explained, decentralisation has proven to exacerbate the already complicated problems of the

madrasahs particularly with regard to limited financial resources, making them even more difficult to improve their teacher teaching quality. Indeed, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has tried to upgrade the quality of their teachers. For example, in 2007 the ministry gave scholarship to as many as 359,209 teachers to continue their study to achieve bachelor degree. The ministry has appointed 63 Islamic higher education institutions to run this program for the teachers. The ministry has also allocated subsidy to improve teacher welfare as much as Rp. 1.2 trillion for non-civil servant teachers. In 2006, the ministry also gave scholarship to 2,000 teachers to continue their study to achieve master degree, and in 2007 1,320 teachers (Ministry of Religious Affairs of Republic of Indonesia, 2012). However, at least *madrasah* teachers in the regencies and municipalities where the fieldwork was conducted for this book revealed that they received opportunities to develop their professionalism still fewer than those of regular schools. This is because the Ministry of Education and Culture has more sophisticated programs than the Ministry of Religious Affairs to enhance the professionalism of their teachers, and local education office provides trainings, if there is any, mostly for teachers of regular schools. Under decentralisation only teachers of regular schools, not *madrasahs*, are within the domain of the authority of regency and municipal government. Hence, when the local governments have enough money to improve education, they will understandably prioritise regular school teachers. It is not surprising that compared to teachers of regular schools, as Permani (2011) observed, *madrasahs* teachers are less qualified and even earn less (p. 195).

Concluding remarks

This chapter elaborated the overview of education of decentralisation in Indonesia and the possible consequences brought by its implementation. Several aspects were examined to assess the consequences: community participation, marketisation of education, politicisation of education, local identity and education quality. It explains community participation both under centralisation and decentralisation era, showing that while community participation under decentralisation is expected to also take form of controlling, in practice it still translates merely into fund raising. This means there is not much change in the mind set of the people, although parents were generally getting more critical towards school affairs. But *madrasah* suffered more drawbacks as the school principal still plays a too dominant role in deciding almost everything related to school affairs. This chapter illustrates a sharp contrast between schools under the ministry of education, which underwent decentralisation, and those under the ministry of religious affairs, which remained centralised. The subsection of marketisation of education shows how decentralisation results in the widening gap between schools in urban and rural areas and how the government finally intervened to mediate market forces by proving BOS for every student at elementary and junior high school level. Generally the BOS has benefitted schools in rural areas compared to those in urban areas. Schools in urban areas still perceived BOS as insufficient for them to be able to provide quality education for students. *Madrasahs*, meanwhile, are constrained with their inability to communicate BOS benefit with wider community due to rigid hierarchical relations between

madrasah teachers and wider community. As discussed earlier that *madrasahs*, which are under ministry of religious affairs, did not undergo decentralisation as religious affairs are considered within the domain of central government. This means 'centralist culture' is arguably remains intact within *madrasah* environment. Subsection of politicisation of education elucidates of how teachers are politically coercing both under centralisation and decentralisation. The difference is that under centralisation, it was the central government, which politically mobilised teachers to support them in power, while under decentralisation it was the local government, which politically utilised them during local election. Subsection of local identity shows how decentralisation also has resulted in an increase of the perceived exclusive identity politics at the local level. Societal groups were struggling to define what is meant by local identity and found themselves being confronted with the fact that local identity could take pluralistic forms. Finally, subsection of education quality explains how Indonesia's education quality remains stagnant despite various measures both under centralisation and decentralisation. While this chapter explicates the overview of the consequences of education decentralisation more at the national level, the next two chapters will bring us down to the local level by providing us with case studies of empirical experience at the sub-national level of the provinces of West Kalimantan and Banten. •

Chapter Four

Insights from the Province of West Kalimantan

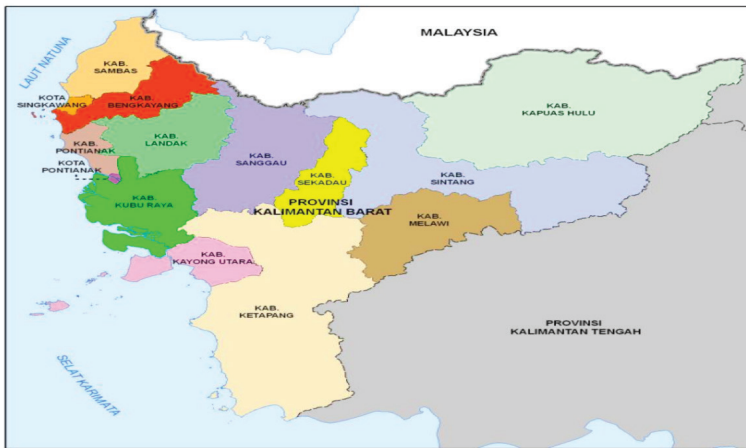
Profile of West Kalimantan

West Kalimantan province, which shares the border with neighboring Malaysia, particularly with the state of Sarawak, has been chosen to portray the impact of decentralisation on education outside Java. The province is one of the six provinces located in Kalimantan island, which are West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, East Kalimantan and North Kalimantan. West Kalimantan province's population is 4,393,239 and is situated in the area of 146,807 km² with fourteen regencies/municipalities: Sambas, Bengkayang, Landak, Pontianak, Sanggau, Ketapang, Sintang, Kapuas Hulu, Sekadau, Melawi, North Kayong, Kubu Raya, and municipalities of Pontianak and Singkawang (BPS, 2012d). Based on 2000 census, the province's religious composition is Islam (59.22%), Christian (11.38%), Catholic (22.94%), Hindu (0.06%), Budha (5.41%), Khong Hu Chu (0.68%) (BPS, 2011). The ethnic composition is Dayaks (30.0%), Malays (34.7%), Javanese (10.4%) and Madurese 5.5% (BPS, 2011). During a transition of a country from authoritarian to a democracy,

the province experienced a bloody communal conflict. It underwent two main episodes of violence in 1997 and in 1999. The first resulted in the death of about 500 and the internal displacement of 20.000 Madurese migrants. The second violence resulted in fewer dead but a greater number of the displacement of approximately 35.000 Madurese. In 2000, the number of the displaced Madurese rose to 60.000 (Van Klinken, 2007, p. 54). Now that the violence has settled down, the province is struggling to put social order right on tract and for the economy to improve. With regard to economy, the biggest contribution to economy of the province is municipality of Pontianak and regency of Kubu Raya. In 2011, the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) of the capital of Pontianak reached Rp. 13.91 trillion while Kubu Raya regency reached Rp. 9.98 trillion, each equals to 21.44 percent and 15.37 percent respectively with regards to their contribution to the economics of West Kalimantan (BPS, 2012d). The number of schools under Ministry of Education and Culture: 4,169 elementary schools (1,979 public, 190 private) with 49,797 students, 1.082 junior high school (800 public, 777 private school) with 13.301 students, 343 senior high schools (197 public, 159 private) with 8748 students (BPS, 2012d). The number of schools under Ministry of Religious Affairs: 566 *madrasah ibtdidaiyah* or Islamic elementary schools (23 public, 336 private) with 49,129 students, 469 *madrasah tsanawiyah* or Islamic junior high schools (25 public, 219 private) with 26.368 students, 11 *madrasah aliyah* Islamic senior high schools (15 public, 96 private) with 13,037 students (Ministry of Religious Affairs Office of West Kalimantan, 2013). However, among other provinces in Kalimantan island, the province ranked at

the bottom in terms of Human Development Index and it is among the lowest in the country. West Kalimantan HDI is 69.66 (2011), while Papua has the lowest HDI 65.36 in 2011, not that far away from West Kalimantan, and the highest HDI held by DKI Jakarta 77.97 in 2011 (BPS, 2012c). This chapter tries to capture insight from West Kalimantan province by zooming into regencies and municipalities, particularly municipalities of Pontianak and Singkawang and regency of Sanggau to see the impact of decentralisation in education.

Figure 5: Map of West Kalimantan with its municipalities and regencies



(BPS, 2012d)

Profiles of Pontianak, Singkawang and Sanggau

As a capital of the province, Pontianak's population is 565.856 with 158 elementary schools (114 public, 44 private), 41 junior high schools (34 public and 7 private), 14 senior high schools (8 public, 8 private) and 8 vocational senior high schools (4 public, 4 private). It has 67,034 students and 3,289

teachers for elementary school level, 25,822 students and 1,562 teachers for junior high school level, 16,094 students and 1,298 teachers for senior high school level, and 12,204 students and 996 teachers for vocational senior high school levels (BPS, 2012d). Pontianak is diverse and multicultural city where the natives Malays and Dayaks live along side the Chinese, Javanese and others. The Chinese has a considerable population of about 30% from total population and are regarded as one of the biggest ethnic minority groups in the city besides the Javanese and Madurese. Just like any other provincial capital, Pontianak also serves as a hub for economic, political and educational activities in West Kalimantan province. For the people of West Kalimantan, Pontianak is 'the centre of excellence' in education where State Tanjungpura University is located. Parents who come from relatively well off families or who hold position in either provincial or municipal offices aspire their children to receive good education and send them to favourite schools in the city. Not only that, parents from neighbouring regencies also would like to send their children to study in the capital city.¹ Pontianak progressed better than other regencies and municipalities including Singkawang and Sanggau as proven by its Human Development Index of 73.43, while regency of Kayong Utara has the lowest HDI of 65.5, Singkawang 6.21 and Sanggau 68.97 in 2011 (BPS, 2012c).

Singkawang is located at about 145 km north of provincial capital of Pontianak and is home to 190,801 people, most of

¹ Interview with Hidawaty, former Kabid Sosbud (Head of Sub-Division of Social and Culture of West Kalimantan Provincial Office), Pontianak, 21 February 2013 and interview with Khaiaril Anwar, Secretary to Parliament of Municipality of Pontianak, Pontianak, 22 February 2013.

them are Chinese descents. The city is also known as the “City of Thousands Temples” because a number of temples can be found in the city. Annual Cap Go Meh celebration is conducted in the city, attracting tourists from other parts of the county and abroad. It has 92 elementary schools (75 public, 17 private), 32 junior high schools (18 public, 14 private), 18 senior high schools (10 public, 8 private) and 11 vocational high schools (4 public, 7 private) with 27,096 students and 1,613 teachers for elementary school levels, 9,138 students and 736 teachers for junior high school levels, 4,245 students and 531 teachers for senior high school level, and 3,937 students and 389 teachers for vocational senior high school level (BPS, 2012d). Its Human Development Index has increased from 68.86 in 2010 to 69.21 in 2011 (BPS, 2012c). Sanggau, meanwhile, is located in the middle and in the northern part of West Kalimantan province and is home to 415,955 people, most of them are from Dayak ethnic groups. There are various sub-ethnic groups of Dayaks: Dayak Bidayuh in the districts of Kembayan, Noyan, Sekayam and Jangkang; Dayak Mali in the districts of Balai, Tayan Hulu, Tayan Hulir, Simpang Dua, Meliau, Noyan and Toba; Dayak Ribun in the districts of Tayan Hulu, Meliau and Parindu; Dayak Desa in the district of Toba; Dayak Iban in the area surrounding Indonesia-Malaysia border. There are also other ethnic groups such as Chinese, who are mostly concentrated in the district of Kapuas, also Malays and other smaller groups such as Javanese, Sundanese, Batak, Buginess and Minangkabauness. Due to limited government budget, land transportation in this area is extremely underdeveloped. The popular mode of transportation for people in the villages and remotes areas is water transportation because two main

rivers, Kapuas and Sekayam, are flowing through this area. The regency of Sanggau has 478 elementary schools (473 public, 5 private), 101 junior high schools (76 public, 25 private), 25 senior high schools (16 public, 9 private) and 15 vocational senior high schools (5 public, 10 private) with 59,364 students and 3,372 teachers for elementary school levels, 15,436 students and 1,188 teachers for junior high school level, 5,807 students and 425 teachers for senior high school level, and 3,614 students and 288 teachers for vocational senior high school level (BPS, 2012d). Its Human Development Index has only slightly increased from 68.55 in 2010 to 68.97 in 2011 (BPS, 2012c).

Community participation

Parental participation shows varied degrees in private and public schools and in urban and rural areas. Parents in urban areas whose children studied in public schools tended to show critical attitude with regard to financial matter. This is because parents understood now that while public schools are obliged to provide high quality education, education is now free and that schools are forbidden to ask for additional financial resources from parents. During school committee meeting, parents are generally active to give suggestions for the development of the school. But only when the discussion arrived at financial matter they became highly critical.² On the other hand, parents in private and elite schools did not seem to bother how much money they would spend as long as their children receive good education. One parent of one private senior high school Santo Petrus in the municipality

² Interview with Arif, school principal of public senior high school SMA 4, Singkawang, 2 March 2013.

of Pontianak said that she asked his son to study at this school because she would like her son to continue with good education after her family moved from Jakarta to Pontianak for her to continue her business. "I am quite satisfied with the quality of this school," she said.³ She admitted that during School Committee meeting with parents she and other parents rarely challenged the policy of the school, including when the school decided to increase school fee, because they highly trusted the school. One parent whose son studying at SMA Santo Petrus said that there was school committee at the school but it is the foundation, which decides the school fee, parents are not involved, and financial accountability does seem to be a problem here.⁴ Furthermore, teachers in one private senior high school SMA Santo Paulus in municipality of Pontianak, for example, recalled how parents kept asking teachers about the progress of their children. "There is aspiration that their children would have a better position in society, so it is not only about satisfaction on the part of the parents, but also genuine concern about the future of their children," said one respected figure of education who taught for a long time in private school of SMA Santo Paulus. "They don't care about how much money they would spend as long as they are sure that their children's life would be better than their life," he continued.⁵ It appears parents had high faith towards the schools, which are located in urban area and where the

³ Interview with Vinny, parent, Pontianak, 17 February 2013.

⁴ Interview with Karel, parent, Santo Petrus, Pontianak, 13 March 2013.

⁵ Interview with Soedarto, senior teacher, Pontianak, 12 March 2013.

students are mostly from upper middle-class family.

On the contrary, parents in rural areas did not really show their concern over their children's education development. For example, parents in the outskirts of municipality of Singkawang whose son attended a public senior high school SMAN 7, did not seem to really care about the progress of their son. Showing his ignorance he said even if his son did not progress well at school, he tended to blame his son, "it is because my son played too much." He said he is satisfied with the school and that the teachers had done a lot to educate the students. This is in contrary to what the students said as they complained that teachers often came late to school and that the schools lack facilities such as decent laboratory and library. The school is located in rural area in the outskirts of Singkawang near the border to the regency of Bengkayang while most of teachers lived in downtown Singkawang. Proving the low level of parental participation, the man continued to say that he never attended the School Committee meeting, "I sent his older sister to attend School Committee meeting to represent me," adding that he is already preoccupied working in his grocery.⁶ The Chairman of School Committee confirmed the low level of attention from the parents and argued that this is mostly because of either their unfavorable economic situation or their low level of education. This is despite the fact that many of parents are also traders from neighboring regency of Bengkayang who sent their children to study at this school because they believed that Singkawang's

⁶ Interview with Lo Fu, parent, Singkawang, 25 February 2013.

education should be better than their left behind regency.⁷ It appears that community participation in urban areas is higher than that of in rural areas among others due to parents' educational background. There are cases in urban area of Pontianak where the government was only able build two additional classrooms for one school un an urban area, but members of school committee of the school were able to raise more funding to build more classrooms. Schools in rural area do not always have this kind of opportunity.⁸ They would just need to adjust everything based on the already determined budget, and most of parents seemed to be happy or did not really care because, unlike in urban areas, they don't demand that much. Just like in any other places in Indonesia, people generally have more confidence towards public than private schools. Parents would try best to ensure that their children study at public schools. Only very few private schools excelled. Parents at both types of schools show varied degree of participation. In public schools, parents mostly show their critical attitude towards school fee, while in private, elite schools parents show their high degree of trust towards the school.

Aside from community participation at school level, community participation was also supposed to be structurally established at a municipal or regency level. Every regency and municipality should have education board, which should consist of local prominent people who have concern about education, but unfortunately although they do exist,

⁷ Interview with Nocolaus, Chaiman of School Committee, 25 February 2013.

⁸ Interview with Khairin Anwar, Secretary to the Local Parliament of Municipality of Pontianak, Pontianak, 22 February 2013.

not all seem to function as expected.⁹ Only education board at the provincial level appears to run properly. The board consists of members who are mostly university lectures and former high officials. Its office is located in the education provincial office in the capital Pontianak. The board has also been active to try to absorb people aspiration; for example, in 2011 they embarked a journey to schools in border area in the regency of Sanggau to directly see the depriving situation there. The board recommended that one-roof boarding school to be built for children in a border area (Kapuas Edukasia, 2011), although the response from the provincial government and local government in Sanggau to address the issue in the border area seemed to be very minimal.¹⁰ The board dealt with other various educational issues from secondary education to higher education. For example, the board discussed the proposal of having scholarship for West Kalimantan's students to earn bachelor degree in Germany and also attempted to solve the problem of the dispute between faculty of medicine at University of Tanjungpura and public hospital of Soedarso.¹¹

⁹ Phone interview with Salekan Marli, member of West Kalimantan Provincial Education Board, 25 March 2013.

¹⁰ Phone interview with Salekan Marli, member of West Kalimantan Provincial Education Board, 25 March 2013.

¹¹ Notes of meetings of West Kalimantan Education Board, 1 February 2013 and 15 February 2013.

Figure 6: Teacher meeting in one school in the municipality of Pontianak



It should also be noted that community participation does not only take place in schools or in the provincial education board, also in government office and parliament, hence people were given more venues to raise their concern about education. “We also provide more opportunities to people to convey their aspiration. So now there are more rooms to accelerate changes. Even parents also often came to directly convey their concern. The local parliament of Pontianak conducts monthly working meeting with school principals and their school committees. The local parliament would formulate conclusion and recommendation to be conveyed to the local government,” said one high official.¹².

¹² Interview with Khairil Anwar, Secretary to Parliament of Municipality of Pontianak, Pontianak, 22 February 2013.

Marketisation of education

The BOS (school operational assistance, government subsidy) was intended not only to help the burden of the parents, but also to mediate market forces where schools are competing to get financial resources from parents. While it has generally done enough in helping reduce competition among public schools, it did not reduce competition between public and few, reputable public schools. Among others, this is because BOS is intended for all schools private and public indiscriminately, meaning well-established private schools would also receive the fund. Private schools are able to ask for more financial contribution from parents, while public schools did not have this privilege. By law recipient public elementary and junior high schools are not allowed to ask for more financial contribution from parents, only public senior high schools are allowed to do this because they received less than what elementary and junior high school receive. Reputable private schools such as Ignasius, which has been operating for more than 50 years, were able to attract students by promising they they would give more than public schools. "We offer education with characters, such as discipline, responsibility, honesty. We believed that parents would want their children to develop with good personality. Secondly, feeling of security. We believe that parents would want a safe environment at school. The next one is quality of education, we offer the best quality of education," said a school principal of Ignasius school.¹³ Given the fact that these schools receive both BOS and parental contribution,

¹³ Interview with Lusiana, school principal of private junior high school Ignasius, Singkawang, 28 February 2013.

their education qualities is considered relatively ahead of public schools and were able to attract students from upper, middle class family.

Figure 7: Students in a classroom of their school in the municipality of Singkawang



Public schools, particularly those located in urban areas, need to struggle to use the BOS efficiently, while trying to convince parents that they also offered high quality education. However, parents at public schools would react negatively if they are asked to make more financial contribution to schools to enrich learning process. Parents at public schools would critically argue that because of the provision of BOS school fee should be free. The reaction from parents of public schools reminded the schools to be careful when dealing with financial contribution. This has created headache among school principals and teachers because parents also demanded that schools provide high quality

education like reputable private schools. But unlike BOS for elementary and junior high school, BOS for senior high schools is little; hence public senior high school is allowed to ask for more contribution form parents.¹⁴

Figure 8: Students paying attention to the lesson given in the classroom.



Indeed, BOS has helped parents to be able to send their children to go to school. Furthermore, not only providing

¹⁴ Phone interview with Arif, school principal of public senior high school SMA 5 Singkawang, 15 November 2013. He said the BOS has increased but still it was not enough. It used to be Rp. 10.000 per student per month, but now they received Rp. 500,000 for six months for ever student (218 students). Ideally Rp. 225.000 per student per month. They also received subsidy from the local government of Singkawang. The subsidy (opnal) used to be Rp. 40 million per year under Awang Ishak administration. But after he was replaced by Hasan Karman, it decreased to Rp. 11 million per year. Now after Awang Ishak was reelected, the BOSDA increased to Rp. 20 million per year. Still it is not enough, so every student still need to pay Rp. 65,000 per student per month.

subsidy, the local government also built more schools. In municipality of Pontianak, for example, the local government built more public schools in attempt to provide education for students. While this can be considered a correct measure to provide more access to education for school-aged children, it's side effect is felt badly by most of, less reputable private schools, which are losing more students as many aspired to study in public schools. The BOS did not really help most of private schools since they had fewer students and the number of students determines the amount of BOS. Hence, the fewer students they have, the less money they will get from the government. As a result, most of private schools had to work harder to lure students. This is almost impossible for most of private schools because of lack of facilities and the already unfavorable image of having low quality. Most of private schools in Pontianak, Singkawang and Sanggau are not really in fortunate position. Only very few private, religiously oriented schools, managed to compete with public schools by offering additional enriching activities to lure students. One private elementary school SD Muhammadiyah in Pontianak, for example, is one of the favourite private schools and many prospective students had to queue to be able to register themselves for an entrance test to study at the school. At one point of time the schools had to close the registration because of the overwhelming applicants. Many graduates of this school continued to study at more prestigious public junior high schools. Even though a private junior high school under the same foundation is located next to the private elementary schools, the graduates of the elementary school did not opt to continue their study at the same private junior high school. This means that once

they had good image in the eye of the public, people with enough money would opt for private schools. In general BOS has helped narrowed the gap between mostly public schools in urban and rural areas. People in impoverished area of Entikong district in the regency of Sanggau, for example, acknowledged that BOS had helped make sure that their school-aged children go to school, although other problems such as teacher absenteeism and still lack of enthusiasm to go to school still persisted.¹⁵ This means that schools in rural areas actually have the potential to upgrade their quality even though they are yet able to really compete with schools in urban areas.

Politicisation of education

Under decentralisation, education sector has further been highly politicised since it directly relates to public interests. Local politicians and bureaucrats were eager to use this sector for their political gain. Local politicians or bureaucrats to ensure their constituent and wider public commonly use slogan such as ‘free education’ even though most of the budget actually comes from the central government and most of local governments contributed almost little to the budget. The governor of West Kalimantan, Cornelis, for example, vowed to improve the embarrassing HDI of West Kalimantan, which ranked very low. Nevertheless, the power of governor is actually limited; the opportunity to improve education actually rests squarely with mayors or regents. “I became black-and-blue when the HDI is

¹⁵ Interview with Nikul, head of School Committee and Marsinus Gande, former head of School Committee, and Suratno, teacher of public elementary school in Gun Jemak, 6 March 2013.

low, while the overall evaluation actually depends of the performance of municipality and regencies,” he said (Rakyat Kalbar, 2013). Hence, it is mayors and regents who hold most of the cards to use educational issues to improve their political credential. These politicians also use local sentiment to polish their image. For example, mayor of Pontianak, Sutarmidji, vowed that he would limit the number of students coming from outside Pontianak to study in the city. “Because Pontianak is for the people of Pontianak,” he once declared.¹⁶ His policy received strong reaction from people outside the city. One teacher who teaches and works in Pontianak but lives outside the city deplored the policy as unfair because it made his son unable to study in the city.¹⁷ During one international seminar, one audience also criticized the mayor, but defended his policy, apparently realising that he received most support from people who live in the municipality. No doubt, his insistence makes him popular among people in Pontianak. The municipality also vowed to abolish school fee not only for elementary and junior high school, but also senior high school. His promise has been proven. Starting from 2013, aside from BOS from the central government, which is Rp. 1,000,000 per student per year, senior high school now also receives BOSDA (BOS Daerah) Rp. 840,000 per student per year. This means every student receives 1,840,000 per year.¹⁸ The mayor also appointed his younger brother Mulyadi as head of education

¹⁶ Speech of the mayor of Pontianak, Sutarmidji, 16 March 2013.

¹⁷ Interview with Teguh, teacher of Muhammadiyah private elementary school, 17 February 2013.

¹⁸ Phone interview with Suwandi, school principal of public senior high school SMAN 2 Pontianak, 22 November 2013.

office amid criticism of nepotism. But in one occasion he indirectly defended his decision by arguing that he always appointed people according to their relevant experience and education background.¹⁹ Clearly the mayor was trying to make strike a balance between trying to appear populist and securing his personal political interest by appointing his own brother as head of education office.

Figure 9: Mayor of municipality of Pontianak, Sutarmidji vowing to limit the number of students coming from outside of Pontianak.



One senior teacher recalled that under the centralised New Order any appointment in the government was conducted more justly, “I think it is better in the past, it was more just. Any other factors such as personal relation or closeness to high officials did not exist. Now it is almost possible for teachers, for example, to become heads of district because of their personal relations with those in power. I saw this happening in districts of Selakau and

¹⁹ Speech of the mayor of Pontianak, Sutarmidji, 16 March 2013.

Pemangant in the regency of Sambas,” said one teacher.²⁰ Decentralisation also made possible for the tension of local election to uncomfortably affect teachers. One school principal in Sanggau regency was removed from his position because he was accused of not supporting the incumbent during local election. “I was accused of playing politics in 2008 local election that I did not side with the incumbent Yansen Akun Effendy.²¹ The regent had no tangible evidence that I did not support him, but still he removed me from my position as a school principal,” he said. He was school principal of public elementary school SD 22 Paus in district of Sekayam before he was sacked and moved as an ordinary teacher to elementary school SD Manang in district of Balai Batang Tarang.²² However, he refused to teach there until he was posted at elementary school SD 12 Entikong as a teacher and now has become a *pengawas* (supervisor). This

²⁰ Interview with Mayus, senior teacher of public senior high school SMAN 5, Singkawang, 23 February 2013.

²¹ Yansen Akun Effendy was a regent of the regency of Sanggau from 2003 to 2008. He lost local election to Setiman H Sudin in 2008. However, just before he was released from power, he used his authority to ‘punish’ those who were deemed not supporting him, including Herkulanus Yulianus K. Later Yansen Akun Effendy was thrown behind bar for alleged corruption (Antara News, 2012). With regard to corruption cases involving education sector in West Kalimantan, *Tribun Pontianak* (2013b) reported that at least Police of Sambas have been investigating alleged irregularities in the procurement language laboratory equipment for 13 junior high schools in the Regency of Sambas worth Rp. 1.6 billion. Many corruption cases are also reported in West Kalimantan, although not as widely reported as in the Province of Banten, which will be elaborated in the next chapter.

²² Interview with *pengawas* (school supervisor), Herkulanus Yulianus K, Entikong, Sanggau, 11 March 2013.

position was deemed not too prestigious among fellows in education sector. Now, besides devoting his time to work as a supervisor who supervises schools, he was also involved in a credit union, which is mushrooming in the province.

Local identity

Three big ethnic groups, Chinese, Dayaks and Malays were simultaneously collaborating and competing to articulate their local identity against the backdrop of decentralisation. There were collaborating, for example in the form of creating a 'modern' dance called *tidayu* (*Tinghoa Dayak Melayu*, or Chinese, Dayaks and Malays), where they tried to present their unique traditional identities in one performance. This dance has become popular to be performed at school during school annual art performance (*pensi* or *pentas seni*). In the municipality of Singkawang, for example, *sanggar tari* (dance course) has also been mushrooming. Many of students who are also members of *sanggar* joined both provincial and national competition. One teacher of the *sanggar*, who was invited as a jury during one school art performance, explained that even though only the three ethnic groups that were prominently represented in the dance, other ethnic groups were usually represented. He described that after a while other performers representing every ethnic group in the province would come to join the main performers on the stage. However, during one performance in one school, it is clear that only three big ethnic groups represented in the dance, most probably because of the lack of performers.

Figure 10: Tidayu dance: A fusion of Malay, Dayak and Chinese local traditions



Figure 11: Cap Go Meh in Singkawang



However, the Malays did not seem to really make great effort in expressing their identity in schools. A leader of MABM (*Majelis Adat dan Budaya Melayu* or Association of Malay Tradition and Culture) said while Malay dances were performed in annual festivities, particularly in the regency of Sambas, which is predominantly Malays, there were no systematic efforts to integrate this into school curriculum.²³ “I did not see any effort from local education office in Sambas to systematically introduce Malay tradition at school, although Malay tradition is mushrooming there,” he admitted, adding that many students participated in the festivities. He confirmed the fact that in Pontianak Malay culture is less visible compared to that in the regency of Sambas. He also said it would be difficult to introduce Malay language at school because every regency or municipality, such as Pontianak, Ketapang and Sintang, has different Malay dialect. It appears that compared to the Chinese, the Malays did less effort in articulating their local identity at school. Ethnic Madurese community, who suffered during the 1997, 1999 and 3000 conflicts, however, remained low profile. They introduced Madurese local tradition only in schools whose students are predominantly Madurese. Founder of IKBM (*Ikatan Keluarga Besar Madura* or Association of Madurese Big Family), HM Sulaiman established education foundation Al-Anwar, which comprises elementary, junior high, senior high and a *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in Pontianak. “Within our school we introduce not only Madurese tradition, but also that of Dayaks, Chinese and

²³ Interview with Chairil Effendy, leader of MABM (*Majelis Adat Budaya Melayu* or Association of Malay Tradition and Culture), Pontianak, 14 March 2013).

Malays, but we don't bring or teach our Madurese tradition outside the school compound."²⁴ Up to know, Madurese are de facto prohibited to go to the regency of Sambas, which is predominantly Malay. Distrust from Malays towards Madurese remained high in the regency of Sambas.

Dayaks articulated their local identity through a famous institute called Insitut Dayokologi. The institute was established in 1990 as a part of Yayasan Karya Sosial Pancur Kasih Pontianak. It received funding from Cordaid from the Netherlands and CCFD-Terre Solidare from France. Cordaid supported from 2009 until 2010, while CCFD-Terre Solidare from 2007 up to the time of the writing of this book.²⁵ The institute tried to record various local stories of Dayaks and documented all of their local tradition, but unfortunately most of the record vanished when their building was burned down in 2007. Under the leadership of John Baba, the institute tried to preserve what has been left and published a Mediawiki, a website dedicated to Dayak tradition (Kompas, 2012). However, upon pressure from CCFD-Terre Solidare, the institute has now been more focusing on multicultural education for the past two or three years, rather than on Dayak local tradition. What it means by multicultural education is that all segments of cultures found in West Kalimantan should be represented in local content subject matters at school. For schools in urban areas where the students come from mixed ethnic groups, the institute introduced multicultural education, such as in the regency

²⁴ Interview with HM Sulaiman, founder of IKBM (*Ikatan Keluarga Besar Madura* or Association of Madurese Big Family), Pontianak, 16 March 2013.

²⁵ Interview with Julianto, Institut Dayakologi, 14 March 2013.

of Pontianak and the regency of Kubu Raya. To schools in the regency of Landak, the institute introduced Dayak local tradition because the regency is predominantly Dayaks.²⁶

Perhaps it is the Chinese who are able to almost fully articulate their traditional identity in almost every form. Chinese language courses were mushrooming with as many as fourteen Chinese language courses were established and officially registered with local education office in Singkawang and Pontianak. The Chinese were able to persuade the University of Tanjungpura to have a formal course to get a bachelor degree in Chinese language. The Confucius Institute or Pusat Bahasa Mandarin was officially opened by Vice Governor of West Kalimantan, Christiandy Sanjaya, himself a Chinese, on 26 November 2011. It is cooperation between Tanjungpura University and Guangxi University for Nationalities. The Ministry of National Education has granted permission to the university of have a formal course leading to a bachelor degree. Many private schools and some public schools had Chinese language subject matter in their curriculum. Some Chinese burial foundation such as Yayasan Halim also held Chinese traditional music course with many young people enthusiastically learned how to play the traditional music.²⁷ The Chinese were also able to make Cap Go Meh an annual festivity, attracting tourists not only from the country but also from outside the country. In 2013, a score of foreign dignitaries, national government officials, members of national parliaments attended the festivity together with

²⁶ Interview with Julianto, Institut Dayakologi, 14 March 2013.

²⁷ Interview with Robin, Irwan and Erwin, students of musical course of Yayasan Halim, Pontianak, 16 March 2013.

the governor of West Kalimantan Cornelis (Pontianak Post, 2013). In Cap Go Meh, the Chinese and Dayaks worked more intimately as they became the core performers (*tatung*), while the Malays participated in a less significant technical role such as lifting the go-cart or palanquin. Resistance from certain members of Islamic community, particularly in Pontianak, against Chinese cultural tradition was also palpable during the early years of *reformasi*. However, due to political backing from other groups particularly Dayak community, such resistance could be contained. The involvement of young people as core performers in the invincibility show in Cap Go Meh, nevertheless, has stirred debate among society, because it has been argued that it has an element of violence.²⁸ However, Head of MABM Singkawang, Edy R. Yacoub defended the festivity by saying that it has become a regional icon, urging members of community to maintain harmony (Tribun Pontianak, 2013a). In Pontianak, the local government only allowed adults and prohibited young people to get involved as the core performers in the festivity. The effort to make Cap Go Meh a regional celebration has not always been smooth as certain members of society used to resist the celebration. However, now one month before any religious or cultural festivity the government would invite all local religious and community leaders to meet to find a common ground and as a result now any celebration has always proceeded peacefully.²⁹

²⁸ Interview with Helmi Fauzi, member of Dewan Pendidikan Kota Singkawang, 23 February 2013.

²⁹ Interview with Khairil Anwar, Secretary to Parliament of Municipality of Pontianak, Pontianak, 22 February 2013. He also talked about the incident when leaders of FPI (*Front Pembela Islam* or Islamic

Many members of Chinese community enthusiastically welcome the revitalisation of their local tradition. Under the New Order, Chinese language was banned and was therefore considered as a 'cultural loss' (Yew-Foong, 2011, p. 261). Member of Parliament of Singkawang Bong Ci Nen said excitedly that it is timely for Dayaks, Chinese and Malays to develop their local traditions, and other ethnic groups who migrated to West Kalimantan do not necessarily need to develop their local tradition in the province because their local traditions must have already been developed in their respective regions or hometowns. He said they could if they wanted to, but much efforts and attention should be first dedicated to the preservation and development of local traditions of Dayaks, Chinese and Malays.³⁰ By and large, this indicates that ethnic Chinese no longer regarded themselves as foreigners but more as local people along with Dayaks and Malays. However, a senior Chinese public figure, FX Asali, appeared to be more careful by saying that Chinese cultural tradition is something that should be passed on in families not formally at school, because it might invite unnecessary tensions from other groups who might think that they are not well-represented in this new cultural atmosphere.³¹ Others have also voiced concern over the possible danger of extreme regionalism, perhaps reminiscing the communal conflict that previously torn apart West Kalimantan: "I agree that at school we should introduce our local tradition

Defender Front), a vigilante group originally from Jakarta, were barred from entering West Kalimantan in 2012.

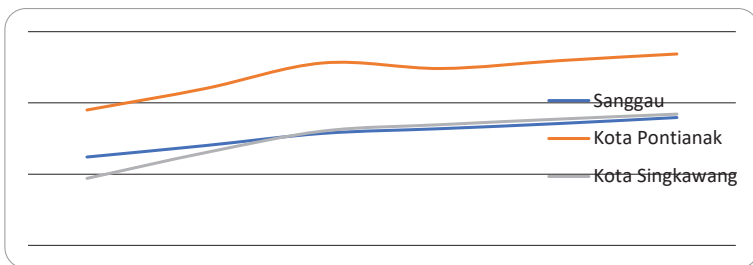
³⁰ Interview with Bong Ci Nen, Member of Parliament in Singkawang, 1 March 2013.

³¹ Interview with FX Asali, Chinese figure, Pontianak, 13 March 2013.

to students. We have to emphasise the uniqueness of our local tradition. However, we should not treat the spirit of locality excessively, I mean not with euphoria. We have to be aware that that Indonesia is formed upon plural ethnic groups within the unitary state of the republic.”³² But this does not mean the enthusiasm to revitalise local tradition would vanish as the festivities have been celebrated in even more various and creative ways from time to time, the *tidayu* dance is a concrete example of a creative innovation of a fusion of some local identities.

Measures to improve education quality

Figure 12: Human Development Index of the municipalities of Pontianak and Singkawang and the regency of Sanggau in West Kalimantan 2005-2011



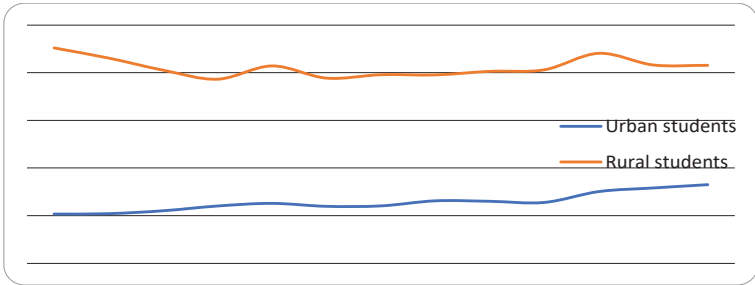
(BPS, 2007, 2010, 2012c)

The table of HDI from 2005-2011 shows that municipality of Singkawang is leading ahead municipality of Singkawang and regency of Sanggau, but three of them are crawling up gradually. This is more or less shows how quality of education should

³² Interview with Heri Mustamin, Vice Speaker of Parliament of Municipality of Pontianak, 22 February 2013.

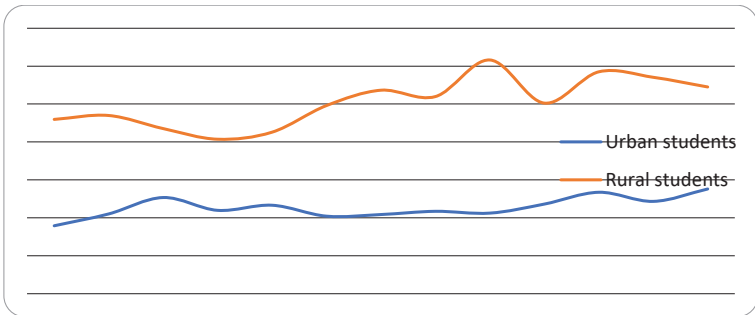
have an impact on quality of life. We can also examine the trend of the number of students before and after decentralisation, this time in urban and rural areas of the whole province of West Kalimantan. In terms of the number of students (elementary school level) before and after decentralisation (1998-2011), the number of students dropped in 1998-2001 (during the economic crisis) in rural areas, while the number of students in urban areas increased steadily. Also the same with junior high school level in rural areas, it dropped during and after the crisis (1998-2001), but improved slightly since then. In urban areas, the economic crisis did not seem to have significant impact on the number of students as it increased slightly, but decreased faintly in 2000 during the communal conflict. The number of students at senior high school level in rural areas dropped from 1998 to 2001 during the economic and communal conflict, but it remained slightly stable in urban areas (see tables below). It shows that students in rural areas seemed to be more fragile compared to those in urban areas, particularly during the economic and communal conflict, which saw a transition from centralisation to decentralisation.

Figure 13: Number of elementary school students 1998 – 2011



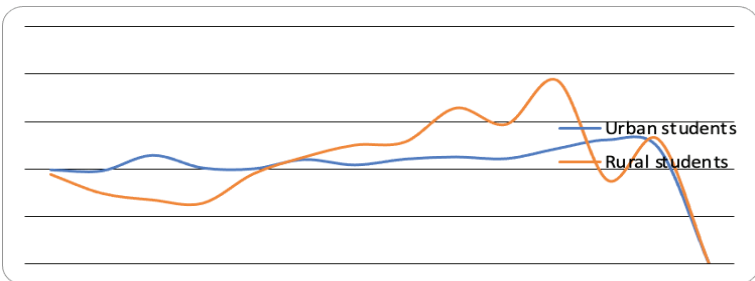
(BPS, 2012a)

Figure 14: Number of junior high school students 1998 -2011



(BPS, 2012a)

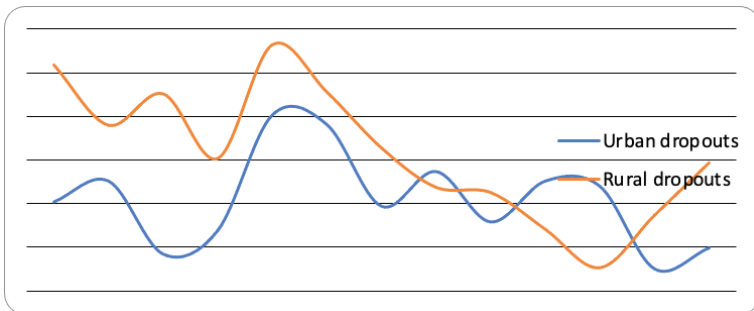
Figure 15: Number of senior high school students 1998 – 2011



(BPS, 2012a)

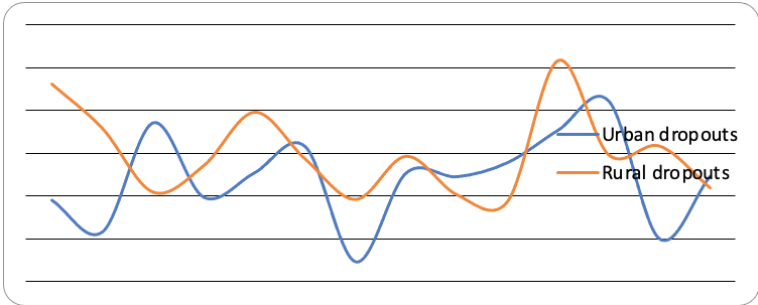
Generally, the province also saw a decrease of school dropouts, particularly for elementary and junior high schools in rural areas, although there is still a gap between dropouts in urban and rural areas. (see tables below). While at junior high school level the gap between urban and rural are almost at same par despite its fluctuation, at senior high school level the gap is again widening with the urban dropouts seemed to increase. This implies during the transition of youth to adulthood, temptation or other socio-economic conditions, which forced them to leave school seemed to be high. This is among others because of lack of facilities, teacher absenteeism and also lack of enthusiasm to continue studying, such as in district of Entikong, for example, where many students opted to work in Malaysia illegally during their time even at junior high school. When they came back, not everyone continued their study. As mentioned in the early part of this chapter, the HDI of Pontianak, Singkawang and Sanggau is gradually climbing up, with Pontianak leading due to its status of capital of West Kalimantan with more educational facilities being provided there.

Figure 16: Percentage of elementary school dropouts 1998 - 2011



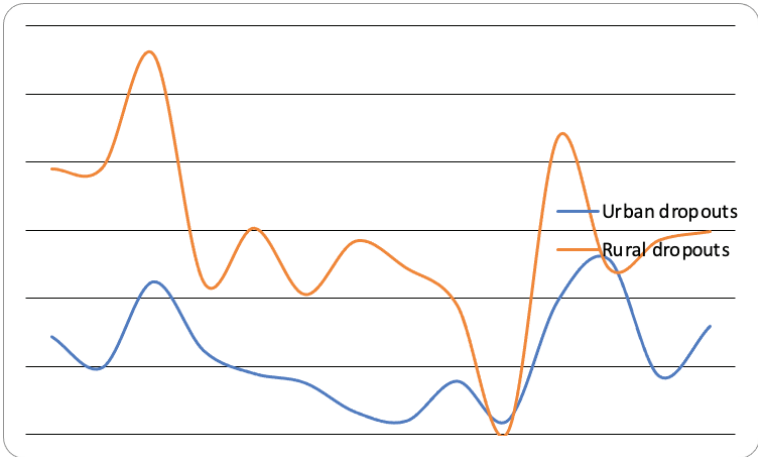
(BPS, 2012a)

Figure 17: Percentage of junior high school dropouts 1998 - 2011



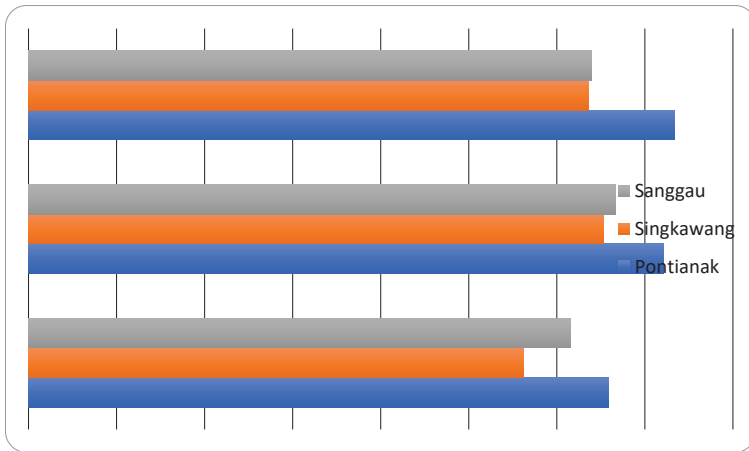
(BPS, 2012a)

Figure 18: Percentage of elementary school dropouts 1998 - 2011



(BPS, 2012a)

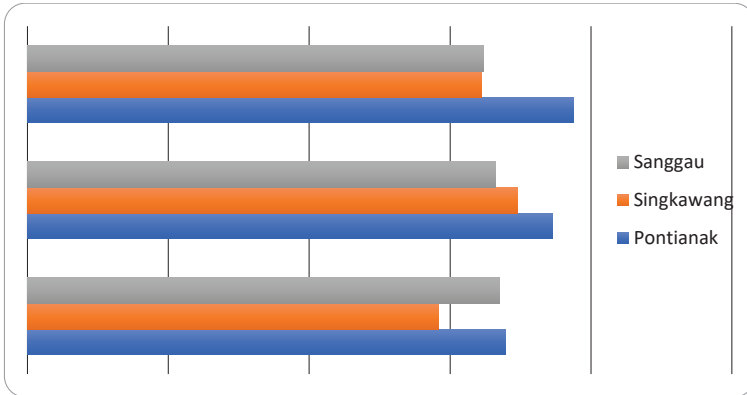
Figure 19: National Exam of Public and Private Junior High School, 2008-2011



(Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2009, 2010, 2011a)

The table of the average score of the national exams of junior high school and *madrasah tsanawiyah* on Bahasa Indonesia, English, mathematics and science in 2008, 2009 and 2011 shows that Singkawang is leading ahead. However, the average score of *madrasah tsanawiyah* is left behind by that of regular junior high school, showing the low quality of *madrasah*.

Figure 20: National Exam of Public and Private Madrasah Tsanawiyah 2008-2011



(Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2009, 2010, 2011a)

With regard to financing education, the province clearly has difficulties to allocate 20 percent of its budget for education. The local parliament has pressured the provincial office to allocate 20 percent of its budget for education as mandated by the constitution. However, members of provincial parliament appeared to be disappointed, “It is far from our expectation because the 2012 budget (for education) does not even reach 10 percent, “ he said (Kapuas Edukasia, 2012a). In 2012, the provincial office only allocated Rp. 87,582,000,000 (3%) for education out of total expenditure of Rp. 2,902,408,000,000 (Ministry of Finance of Republic of Indonesia, 2013). West Kalimantan’s governor admitted that it is difficult for the province to allocate 20 percent of its budget for education, apparently because of its limited authority, “ We are not directly supervising schools. Most of the budget mostly rests upon regencies and municipalities,” he said (Kapuas Edukasia, 2012a). This

dialog reflects apparent discontent among high officials at the provincial level both executive and legislative with regard to limited role and authority of provincial office in decentralisation era. It is the fact that under decentralisation regencies and municipalities that have sizeable amount of power and, more importantly, most of the money from the central government flows mostly to regency and municipal governments, not to the provincial office.

Now let's go down to the regency and municipal level. Based on the above table, there is indeed a sharp increase in the allocation of budget for education before and after decentralisation, and that after decentralisation the budget constituted to more than 20% of the total expenditure, which is more than the newly amended constitution has mandated. However, in reality, as Suharti (2013) explains, in most regencies and municipalities the allocated budget for education was mostly absorbed to teacher salary, not directly to the enhancement of teacher professionalism or the improvement of their teaching skill and other related pedagogical matters. In the case of Singkawang, for example, the real allocated budget for education constituted to only about 10% of total expenditure.

Figure 21: Budget allocation for education

before decentralisation

1994-1995	Local Revenue	Central Transfer	Education	Total Expenditure
Pontianak	7,161,624,361	34,146,415,546	1,281,938,600 (3%)	40,596,337,844
Sanggau	778,192,269	77,640,995,265	2,985,588,895 (8%)	37,061,712,291

1997-1998	Local Revenue	Central Transfer	Education	Total Expenditure
Pontianak	9,532,970,594	55,026,350,860	2,776,780,250 (5%)	57,379,763,541
Sanggau	1,484,656,478	62,056,215,986	4,095,195,885 (8%)	51,696,677,890

after decentralisation

2005-2006	Local Revenue	Central Transfer	Education	Total Expenditure
Pontianak	45,931,350,000	225,790,520,000	102,505,000,000 (36%)	281,425,000,000
Sanggau	12,755,300,000	272,410,490,000	121,890,000,000 (40%)	305,742,000,000
Singkawang	8,085,650,000	149,133,790,000	46,187,000,000 (29%)	156,698,000,000

2012	Local Revenue	Central Transfer	Education	Total Expenditure
Pontianak	296,057,000,000	864,626,000,000	372,457,000,000 (37%)	1,014,000,000,000
Sanggau	57,686,000,000	1,210,282,000,000	357,047,000,000 (40%)	884,666,000,000
Singkawang	48,535,000,000	718,360,000,000	183,456,000,000 (35%)	501,098,000,000

(Ministry of Finance of Republic of Indonesia, 2013) – in Indonesian Rupiah (Rp.), the calculation does not include all revenues.

However, various efforts have also been done to improve education quality. Many of teachers seemed to be happy that they received more trainings for professional development compared to the period under the New Order. However, it should be noted that these training were provided mostly by the central government through LPMP (*Lembaga Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan* or Educational Quality Enhancement Agency) at the provincial level (but not structurally under provincial office, as it comes directly under the Ministry of Education and Culture in Jakarta), not by the local government, meaning that this has nothing to do with decentralisation. The municipality of Singkawang, for example, gave almost little training for teachers, mostly because of their low revenue. But this does not prevent local politicians from undergoing populist campaign to lure support in education sector. The mayor of Singkawang Awang Ishak, for example, showed his concern with education by establishing STKIP (*Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan* or Teacher Training Institution) so that those who wanted to become teachers do not need to go

to Pontianak to study Tanjungpura University. He also gave scholarship to 10 teachers to get their master degree mostly at Universitas Negeri Jakarta. Most of them already finished their study and have now become school principals or teachers while also teaching at the STKIP. He conducted these measures during the first period of his leadership.³³ Awang Ishak was appointed as a mayor of Singkawang when Singkawang was made a new municipality in 2000. After a year an election was held and Awang Ishak was elected as a mayor. Five years later Hasan Karman, a Chinese descendent, defeated him in a local election in 2007. In the next election Awang Ishak won the election again and became a mayor of Singkawang. It is believed that Hasan Karman would have won the latest lection if another rival, also a Chinese descendent, had not participated in the election, stealing much of the vote from Chinese community. However, during the previous period of Awang Ishak, many schools had been built. During Hasan Karman, although he was a popular politician, on the other hand, attention to education was not as much as that under Awang Ishak, because Hasan Karman was believed to have paid more attention to the development of the private sector such as local industry, etc.³⁴ Under the current leadership of Awang Ishak, with low local revenue, not much has been done to improve education.³⁵ One step is to hand out *uang lauk pauk*

³³ Interview with Arif, school principal of SMA 4, also lecturer at the STKIP, Singkawang, 2 March 2013.

³⁴ Focus Group discussion with teachers of SMA 3, Singkawang, 1 March 2013.

³⁵ Interview with head of Singkawang education office, Martinus, 26 February 2013.

(food or meal allowance) to all civil servants including teachers as much as Rp. 15,000 per day. This handout money was made possible after measure is taken by reducing costs of official meetings. "We don't hold meetings in hotels anymore, but in government buildings, try to be as efficient as possible," said the mayor. He also complained that the central government introduced of what he said half-hearted decentralisation. "The central government gave us money but with too much restriction on what the money is used for. Hence, we spend much of our time in excessive meetings just to make sure that the money would be used properly as outlined by the central government. The central government should have given us more rooms to maneuver on how we use the money, because it we who know best of what we really need, not the central government. If they don't trust us, the independent KPK (Corruption Eradication Commission) should open its branch here so that they can keep an eye on what we are doing with the money."³⁶ Some members of parliament also had done something in education such as school renovation and the making of road asphalt, but mostly for their selected constituents at certain areas only. All of these measures were not really conducted in a well planned designed as they were based mostly on populist agenda for short-term political goal of winning local election.

The municipality of Pontianak tried to improve education quality by providing scholarship to students. "With this regional autonomy, I saw more progress in education development than under the New Order. For example, now, all students from poor family receive scholarship. The

³⁶ Interview with Awang Ishak, mayor of Singkawang, March 2013.

local government has given much attention. During the New Order, there was such a program but it was not really optimal," said one high official.³⁷ The mayor even declared that he would give scholarship until university level to any student who scores well in national examination. But this was possible because the capital earned enough money from revenue.³⁸ Other regencies and municipalities such as Singkawang and Sanggau were not that fortunate. The municipality of Singkawang, for example, only allocated around 10 percent of its budget for education.³⁹ As mentioned earlier, the mayor of Pontianak even only allocated 5% quota for students outside Pontianak to study in the capital. Many deplored his policy, one student during a seminar posed him a question, and "Your policy has sacrificed students who actually deserve decent education. Why do you have to sacrifice students?" But he defended his decision, "I noticed that 57 percent of students of our vocational schools and 43 percent of our regular senior high school consisted of students from outside Pontianak. You can imagine if our budget is used to finance students outside Pontianak, this is not correct. So we don't sacrifice our students, but instead save them." He also said that head of education offices from other regencies criticized his policy, which has made him bewildered. "If you don't trust your own education system in your area, how would you improve education there," he told

³⁷ Interview with Khairil Anwar, Secretary to Parliament of Municipality of Pontianak, Pontianak, 22 February 2013.

³⁸ Pontianak earned Rp. 285 billion, speech of Pontianak Mayor, Sutarmidji, 16 March 2013.

³⁹ Interview with Helmi Fauzy, member of Education Board, Singkawang, 23 February 2013.

the packed audience during the seminar. Showing his deep concern with education, he said, "I am not playing around with education, teacher salary has already eaten 39% our out regional budget, about Rp. 1.3 trillion, this has not included social subsidy to help finance students of the Faculty of Economy to take an intern position for six months in China and Malaysia, costing about Rp. 1.5 million per student."

Madrasah under Ministry of Religious Affairs, however, appear to have difficulty to catch up with schools under Ministry of Education and Culture. Efforts to improve education quality are halted with problems, as the ministry did not have as much as resources as Ministry of Education and Culture. Teachers of *madrasah* receive fewer enhancements compared to those under Ministry of National Education. Worse still, the teachers are not entitled to subsidy from local governments because they fall directly under the central government since Ministry of Religious Affairs did not undergo decentralisation. This often creates jealousy among teachers of *madrasah*. Certainly, this dualism brings more difficulty to teachers at the field than to policy makers in Jakarta since for 'secular' subject matters *madrasah* teacher have to use national curriculum provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture, but for religious subject matters they have their own curriculum. As a result, students of *madrasah* have more hours to study at school. While teachers do not explicitly express hope that *madrasah* to be put under the Ministry of National Education, there is aspiration that national education would bring much more benefit if it were to be put under 'one roof'.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Interview with Ersan, *madrasah* principal, Madrasah Aliyah Negeri

Figure 22: Children in remote area in Entikong are playing in Sekayam river, Sanggau.



Figure 23: Children in the village of Gun Jemak, Entikong, Sanggau.



Effort to improve education quality in a border area with Malaysia also continues to face hurdles, since access to the area is usually very limited. However, problems related to border in the regency of Sanggau appeared to be difficult to handle. In the district of Entikong, for example, while schools located close to the official entry gate to Malaysia appears to be performing including one vocational senior high school, other schools in remote areas continue to be entangled with various problems. In a village of Gun Jemak, for example, which is about 8 hour travel by boat from the centre of Entikong, continued to have problems since it only has one public elementary school. Many teachers, who come from Entikong and lived in the village to teach, did seem to enjoy living in the area with no electricity and even mobile signal. All of them are married and their families lived in the centre of Entikong, hence they return to Entikong almost every month to meet their family members. It is nearly impossible to bring their families to the village to live there since many of their children are already in junior high school and the village has no such a school.⁴¹ This means that the number of teachers in the village is not always stable. About three hour walking from the village of Gun Jemak, there is another village called Gun Tembawang. The situation is more depriving as one the only elementary school has only three classrooms with broken chairs and tables. The school's teachers and students abandoned the building due to inadequate resources after finishing the third year, so the students had to travel to the village of Gun Jemak to continue

⁴¹ Interview with Sutrisno, teacher of elementary school in Gun Jemak village, Sanggau, 6 March, 2013.

to study to the fourth year. Some of them stayed temporarily with their relatives in the village of Gun Jemak, some others had to walk for about three hours to reach the school from their village of Gun Tembawang. Some others children of Gun Tembawang even opted to study in a Malaysian school, which is located in the Malaysia village of Sapit in the state of Sarawak in Malaysian territory and it is about one hour walking from the Indonesian village.⁴² The Malaysian boarding school was established to accommodate seven villages in its territory. The children in the village of Gun Tembawang were allowed to study there because either their mother or father has a Malaysian citizenship, but still lived in the village of Gun Tembawang. Another regency of Sambas, which has the lowest HDI among regencies in the province and has a border with Malaysia, has so far built 20 one-roof junior high schools for children in villages around the border area, just what the Malaysian government did in the village of Sapit. This effort has at least widened access to education for children in the area, although ideally all schools from all levels of secondary education should also be built using one-roof system (Kapuas Edukasia, 2012b). The regency of Sanggau, however, has yet realised the development of this type of schooling. The provincial education board understood the importance of improving education quality in the border, encouraging the provincial office to issue local regulation to push the CSR of local industries such as plantation and oil and gas to take part in this project. Nevertheless, there has been no significant systematic effort

⁴² Interview with Marselus Gaut, head of Gun Tembawang village, Entikong, Sanggau, 7 March, 2013.

to encourage local industries in the province to help improve education of the local people (Kapuas Edukasia, 2013). Teachers who teach in remote areas are actually entitled to special incentives provided by the central government in a form of one full month salary, but unfortunately it is not well distributed because it is based more on unclear quota rather than the actual number of teachers. Hence, if there are five teachers at the school and they only get two person salaries, then the money would be divided by five, which means smaller amount of money each would receive. Worse still, the 'quota' they receive changes every month, creating more uncertainty.⁴³ Based on research on remote area allowance in several places in Indonesia, Toyamah et al (2010) wrote: "The inconsistent implementation of the remote area allowance program also contributed to the diverse and unclear impacts of the remote area allowance distribution on the teacher absentee level. The size of the remote area allowance funds given to teachers differed between regions and there were even regions which knew nothing about the remote area allowance funds. The socialisation process of the program was also very weak, meaning that only teachers receiving the allowance knew about the program" (p. 46).

Concluding remarks

Parental participation appears to be minimal in private schools as school fee is unilaterally decided by respective foundation. Particularly when the private schools are considered reputable, parents would rarely challenge school policy including the school fee despite the fact that private

⁴³ Interview with Sutrisno, teacher of elementary school in Gun Jemak village, Sanggau, 6 March, 2013.

schools, especially elementary and junior high schools, are also entitled to BOS. This is not the case with public schools where parental participation is obvious particularly when coming to financial matters. Knowing that schools are now receiving BOS from the government, parents would resist if they were asked to make financial contribution. This has created headaches among school principals who are also burdened by the pressure to improve school education quality. In general, BOS has resulted in reduced competition among public schools, but competition between public schools and reputable private schools increased. Private schools are entitled to BOS, but are still allowed to charge school fee, unlike public schools, which are not allowed to ask for extra financial contribution from parents. Certainly BOS has helped schools in rural areas to catch up with schools in urban areas, but teacher absenteeism, insufficient public infrastructure and lack of enthusiasm to go to school still persisted in rural areas. Parental participation appears less in public schools in rural areas, mostly as a result of low education of the parents

While education had been nationally politicised under the centralised New Order with teachers were mobilised and forced to vote only the regime's political party of Golkar, now education has been locally politicised and teachers have been confronted with deeply fragmented local interests. Appointments of officials in education office, for example, have been marred with alleged personal relation with local high-ranking officials. Political punishment for teachers who were accused of not supporting incumbent leader during local election was also obvious. The punishment was usually in the form of a transfer to a school located far away from his or her home.

With regard to the impact of decentralisation on the articulation of local identity through education, it appears that three big ethnic groups, Chinese, Dayaks and Malays, were both collaborating and competing to expressive their respective identity. This is particularly important since West Kalimantan was devastated by communal conflict, which saw the locals (particularly Dayaks and Malays) murdered Madurese migrants and expelled many of them out of the province. They collaborated, for example, through a modified dance called *Tidayu*, usually performed at schools. However, Malays seemed to be less aggressive in expressing their local identity, except in Sambas, which are predominantly Malays. Dayaks, meanwhile, have always been enthusiastic from the very beginning. They established Institut Dayakologi to record and preserve Dayak local tradition, but its effort was hampered as its headquarter was burned down with all its documents in one fire incident. Its Dayak-tradition orientation was further re-directed with foreign donors appeared to prefer a more multicultural approach rather than mono-cultural approach, particularly in education sector. Perhaps it the Chinese who are able to articulate their identity in almost every form, which is evident with the mushrooming of Chinese language and Chinese musical traditional courses. Annual Cap Go Meh festivity was also celebrated with full support from the provincial government. The Madurese, meanwhile, maintained their low profile in articulating their identity.

With regard to education quality, the gap still existed between urban and rural areas, proven by the higher percentage of school dropouts in rural areas despite the fact that the percentage of school dropouts both in urban and rural

have decreased since decentralisation, particularly at senior high school level. This has resulted among others from the lack of sufficient public infrastructure, teacher absenteeism and also lack of enthusiasm to continued studying. Efforts to improve education quality were evident with the increased budget allocated for education. Pontianak, Singkawang and Sanggau saw an increase budget allocation for education before and after decentralisation, but most of the budget was actually absorbed to teacher salary rather than to the enhancement of teacher professionalism. More trainings and workshops for teacher professionalism have actually been provided more by the central government through LPMP rather than by the local governments. Autonomous efforts by the local governments were restricted by their low revenue, and even if there is any were mostly ad hoc and driven by local politics, not exclusively Pontianak where local revenue is relatively higher than other regencies and municipalities. •

Chapter Five

Insight from the Province of Banten

Profile of Banten

The province of Banten is located in the westernmost part of the island of Java. Banten used to be part of the province of West Java before it split up and became a separate province in 2000 at the height of *reformasi* movement and when the government began to introduce decentralisation. Banten used to be a strong *kesultanan* (kingdom), which witnessed historical rebellion against Dutch colonial government (Hakim, 2006). Although a sizeable amount of the population shared Sundanese language as spoken by the people of West Java, its aspiration to become an 'independent' province had always been strong. Such aspiration began to emerge in 1953 and finally in 1963 the preparation committee was established to take steps towards the establishment of a province. The central committee of the province of Banten was formed during the big plenary meeting of the people of Banten on 25 October 1970. The central committee and Indonesian parliament convened a meeting in which they agreed to the efforts of the people of Banten to establish a province. However, under the centralised New Order regime the aspiration and

efforts of the people of Banten were halted, mostly due the authoritarian nature of the New Order regime. It was the *reformasi* and the spirit of regional autonomy that brought momentum for Bantenese to realise their long held dream. On 18 July 1999 the 'proclamation' of the people of Banten was held in the *alun-alun* of Serang, which later became the capital of the province. The 'proclamation' was translated into the establishment of a committee of a working body of the province of Banten. After long and tiring debates, eventually the national parliament officially endorsed the bill of the province of Banten into Law No 23 Year 2000 on the Establishment of the Province of Banten. The acting governor was Hakamudin Djamal before later the DPRD Banten elected Djoko Munandar and Atut Chosiyah as governor and vice governor respectively in 2002 (BPS, 2012b; Mansur, 2001). Atut Chosiyah later became the governor of Banten. Hence, the establishment of the province of Banten cannot be separated from the spirit of decentralisation sweeping the country, although their aspiration had been long before the collapse of the New Order in 1999.

Figure 24: Map of the province of Banten

(BPS, 2012b)

Besides bordering the country's capital of Jakarta, the province also functions as a transit passage to Sumatra. Banten's municipalities and regencies are as follows: municipalities of Cilegon, Serang, Tangerang, South Tangerang and regencies of Serang, Lebak, Pandeglang. The population of Banten is 11,005,518 in 2011. Most of the population is from ethnic Bantenese who speak both Javanese and Sundanese languages. People speak both Javanese and Sundanese because of the influence of Javanese Muslims under Sunan Gunungjati who captured the port of Banten in 1527 from the previous Sundanese leaders under Kingdom of Sunda. However, Bantenese regard Javanese and Sundanese languages different from those usually spoken in Java and West Java. Besides Bantenese (47%), other ethnic groups are Sundanese (23%), Javanese (12%), Batavianese (9.62%), Chinese (1,1%), Bataknes (0.93%),

Minangkabaunese (0,81%) and others (5.54%) (BPS, 2011). The province's religious composition: Islam (94.67%), (Christian 2.53%), Catholic (1.09%), Hindu (0.08%), Budha (1.23%), Kong Hu Chu (0.03%) (BPS, 2011). The number of schools under the Ministry of Education and Culture: 4,515 elementary schools (4,091 public, 424 private) with 1,341,250 students, 1,181 junior high schools (544 public, 637 private) with 243,507 students, 429 senior high schools (193 public, 236 private) with 196,079 students. The number of schools under the Ministry of Religious Affairs: 532 *madrasah ibtidaiyah* or Islamic elementary schools (20 public, 512 private), 650 *madrasah tsanawiyah* or Islamic junior high schools (30 public, 620 private) with 144,776 students, 320 *madrasah aliyah* or Islamic senior high schools (19 public, 301 private) with 42,694 students (BPS, 2012b). Banten is also known home of many *ulama* (Islamic scholars) and its Islamic identity is therefore strong. There are as many as 3,123 Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) in the province, most of them follow traditional (*salafiyah*) rather than modern mode of learning, with total number of 170,220 *santris* (students) (BPS, 2012b). However, among other provinces, just like West Kalimantan explained in the previous chapter, the province of Banten also ranked low in Human Development Index, which is 70.95 (2011), while the highest HDI is held by DKI Jakarta 77.97 in 2011 and the lowest by Papua 65.36 in 2011. Banten's HDI almost equals to that of West Kalimantan, which is 69.66 in 2011 (BPS, 2012c). Banten's Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) has increased to 6.4% from the period of 2011 and 2011 (Giap, Amri, Low, & Yam, 2013). Just like the previous chapter on West Kalimantan, this chapter devotes itself to capture insight from the province of Banten

by taking a closer look into regencies and municipalities, particularly municipality of Serang, regency of Serang and regency of Lebak.

Profiles of municipality of Serang, regencies of Serang and Lebak

Municipality of Serang is the capital of the province of Banten, which is located towards the north of the province and is passed by Jakarta-Merak highway. It was formerly part of Serang regency, but it became autonomous municipality on 2 November 2007. Its population is 598,407 with 290 elementary schools (227 public and 15 private), 71 junior high schools (34 public and 37 private), 26 senior high schools (6 public and 20 private), 33 senior vocational high schools (6 public and 27 private). It has 79,206 students and 2,888 teachers for elementary school level, 24,257 students and 1,128 teachers for junior high school level, 8,740 students and 550 teachers for senior high school level, 15,562 students and 618 teachers for senior vocational high school level (BPS, 2012b). Its native language is Bantenese-Javanese (popularly known as *Jaser* or *Jawa Serang*), although Bahasa Indonesia is indeed also widely spoken and used as an official language. Serang is also the hub of educational and government activities. The provincial office is located in the city, so is public Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University. Some favourite schools such as public senior high school SMAN 1 is located in the city many aspired to study at this school. Serang's HDI is 71.45 in 2011 (BPS, 2012c). Its HDI is the highest among that of regencies of Serang and Lebak, but it is defeated by that of municipality of South Tangerang (76.01 in 2011), which is located closer to Jakarta and part

of Greater Jakarta and was just administratively separated from Tangerang Regency in 2008.

Serang regency is located about 10 km from Old Banten (*Banten Lama*), where the historical ruins of the sultanate of Banten were situated. The population is 1,434,137 (BPS, 2012b) and the native language is Bantenese-Javanese. The regency has built 720 elementary schools (706 public, 14 private), 168 junior high schools (97 public, 71 private), 65 senior high schools (25 public, 40 private) and 58 vocational senior high school (58 public, 48 private). It has 186,383 students and 7,189 teachers for elementary school level, 52,029 students and 2,088 teachers for junior high school level, 38,124 students and 990 teachers for senior high school level and 14,997 students and 336 teachers for vocational senior high school level (BPS, 2012b). Its HDI has increased from 68.67 in 2010 to 69.33 in 2011 (BPS, 2012c). Lebak's regency is known as a socially and economically neglected area in the province of Banten, but it is also historical as famous Dutch figure Eduard Douwes Dekker, who sided with the Indonesians during Dutch colonial rule, was appointed in 1856 assistant resident. He discovered that bad practices of local high officials were given tacit approval by the colonial government. He later in published a book called *Max Havelaar*, which had a strong influence towards Dutch literature. Douwes Dekker's house remains intact and is located in Rangkasbitung, the capital of Lebak, albeit without proper maintenance. Lebak's population is 1,1228,884 and the native language is Bantense-Sundanese (*Sunda Banten*). The regency has built 776 elementary schools (765 public, 11 private), 189 junior high schools (156 public, 33 private), 51 senior high schools (35 public, 16 private) and

47 vocational senior high schools (12 public, 35 private). It has 173,546 students and 7,606 teachers for elementary school level, 87,479 students and 5,472 teachers for junior high school level, 11,544 students and 779 teachers for senior high school level and 12,205 students and 292 teachers for vocational senior high school level. Its HDI has only slightly improved from 67.67 in 2010 to 67.98 in 2011 (BPS, 2012c).

Community participation

Community participation in the province of Banten is not always translated as parental participation, but also in a more informal ways such as through NGOs or individual actions concerned with the development of education. However, let's discuss first the parental participation. Almost just like West Kalimantan's case, parents at schools in urban areas tend to be more active than those in rural areas. Take public elementary SDN 2 in municipality of Serang, for example. Parents are considered to be active as they show concern and attention over the development of their children including how they interact with their peers in class and the progress of their study. Parents are keen to monitor the progress of their children. Parents usually communicate with teachers through *buku penghubung* (communication book), through which they will be informed about the development of their children on individual basis and they would respond to it. Hence, it is clear here that the role of teachers is also decisive to encourage parents to communicate through the book. If there is something unclear, parents would come to the school to inquire the matters from teachers directly. They would ask about the school programs, the implementation of new curriculum, proving that most of them are concerned

and attentive. School committee has also been active too, although more on communicating or discussing general school policy. For example, recently the school has to change its status from SBI (*sekolah bertaraf internasional* or internationally oriented school)¹ to 'regular' school, which means 'downgrading' its status and the elimination of school fee. The school communicated this change of policy and its possible implication through members of school committee, as the school committee members consist not only parents but also teachers.² However, the further we go to the outskirts of the municipality, the lesser parental participation would be. At SMPN 6, which is located at the outskirts of the municipality, for example, not everyone asked question during big annual parental meeting and parents would come to the school only when they are invited.³

During meetings of parents in public schools, discussions on financial contribution often drag for long because of arguments advanced by parents. Some parents might reject, others might bargain to lower the proposed financial contribution. Once it is decided, it would be the same amount of money for parents regardless their socio-economic conditions, except for the have who are willing to contribute more or the less unfortunate who are not

¹ Indonesian Constitutional Court abolished SBI (*sekolah bertaraf internasional* or internationally oriented school) on the ground it doesn't provide equal access to all students to receive quality education (Tempo, 2013c).

² Interview with Een Sukaenah and Totong Sastramulya, teachers, public elementary school SDN 2 Serang, 17 July 2013.

³ Phone interview with Meti Istimurti, school principal, public junior high school, SMPN 6, Serang, 4 December 2013.

financially able to fully pay the proposed amount of money. Meanwhile, while public *madrasahs* also receive BOS but did not undergo decentralisation, the behavior of parents when coming to financial contribution is the same with those in regular public schools. The popular notion, which occupies parents' mind, is that since schools now receive subsidy from the government, schooling should be absolutely free, which is practically impossible. "During school committee meetings, it is not easy to ask for financial contribution from parents. Indeed we receive BOS, but BOS is only for operationalisation, which is not allowed to be used for big maintenance, not even for fixing shattered window glasses. There is no school fee, but there is *dana sumbangan pengembangan pendidikan* (educational development donation) Rp. 1 million per year. We are accountable; during next school committee meeting we will report to the parents about the use of the money. This is usually used to finance activities such as natural science experiment, for *ibadah* (religious rituals) usually Rp. 400 million per year. Last committee meeting we agreed to the amount of Rp. 2 million per parents per year, no body rejected it, but we had to undergo long discussions," said one vice school principal of a *madrasah*.⁴ Certainly the decentralisation atmosphere has encouraged parents to be more critical and schools to be more accountable.

Parental meetings in private schools have different characters. For example, at a private elementary school SD Mardi Yuana in Rangkasbitung, Lebak, there is no big parent

⁴ Interview with Jumroni, vice school principal public Islamic junior high school MTsN 1, Serang, 22 July 2013.

meeting during registration of new students to discuss openly about financial matter despite the fact that the school also has school committee like that in public schools. The school would invite parents, mostly ethnic Chinese, of prospective students to do face-to-face interview to decide the amount of the financial contribution expected from parents. Mostly the so-called *uang pembangunan* (development fee) is around Rp. 1,200,000 but very much depends on the income of the parents and how much they are willing to contribute.⁵ But the school fee is around Rp. 60,000 per month, which is lower than the actual operational cost thanks to BOS subsidy.⁶ Also the same with private elementary school SD Penabur in municipality of Serang. The role of school committee is not as significant as that of in public schools because of the strong role of the foundation, which decides almost every aspect of school governance without the involvement of parents.⁷ In another private Islamic oriented school SMP Al-Azhar, the school committee members are elected by parents, but later will have to be sworn by the foundation in the headquarter in Jakarta. This school tries to capitalize the role of school committee, but more on the interest of the school or the foundation. This shows the wide extent of authority of the foundation in private schools.⁸ Another example

⁵ Interview with Lina, parent, private elementary school SD Mardi Yuana, Rangkasbitung, Lebak, 31 July 2013.

⁶ Interview with Thomas, school principal of private elementary school SD Mardi Yuana, Rangkasbitung, Lebak, 31 July 2013.

⁷ Interview with Sri Supadmi, school principal, private elementary school SD Penabur, Serang, 16 Juli 2013.

⁸ Interview with Ade Rusdiana, vice-school principal, private junior high school SMP Al-Azhar, Serang, 25 July 2013.

is Christian oriented junior high school SMP Penabur in Serang. Every time the school increases its monthly fee, instead of communicating via school committee, it will send letters to each parent to inform about the increase. Parents who object the increase could write a letter to the school after which a closed meeting will be held between the parent of the school, and a compromise will be reached. In this case, although the official monthly fee is Rp. 400,000, less fortunate parents could pay less than that. But the negotiation is held in a closed door, unlike in public schools where this kind of matter is discussed more publicly in a usually big meeting. While parents generally have high confidence towards this private school, at least one parent said it would be better if parents know exactly the use of the money. She said although she saw a physical development of the school, parents would be glad if there is an annual financial report given to them.⁹ While she is perhaps only a minority and the majority of parents are unlikely to ask that further to the school, her statement shows the lack of transparency in private schools.

⁹ Interview with Vinsensia, parent, private elementary school SD Penabur, municipality of Serang, 18 July 2013.

Figure 25: Parental meeting in one school in Lebak regency



However, unlike that in West Kalimantan, Banten's provincial education board is not really functioning well because the election of its members has been dragging due political interference, including those at the regency and municipal level.¹⁰ Nevertheless, community participation is not always translated into structured bodies such as school committees or education boards, people also participated in various and more informal ways. This participation is often more meaningful and tangible, although more in ad hoc fashions. One of the examples is *Relawan Kampung* (Village Volunteers) movement, which was in 2009. Having concern with grave educational infrastructure in the province, he initiated the movement aimed at galvanizing community

¹⁰ Interview with Iwan Kusuma Hamdan, Head of Banten Education Board Selection Committee, Serang, 16 September 2013. The Governor established this committee through Banten Governor Decree No 420.05/Kep.32-Huk/2013.

support to rebuild or repair broken bridges located by schools throughout the province. The movement detected that hundreds of bridges are in severe situation in remote areas including the neglected regency of Lebak. Students risk their life, as they have to cross the river to go to their school. Up to now, there have been seven bridges, which have been repaired or rebuilt. Besides receiving support from within the country, the movement also receives support from people of other countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Qatar and Uni Emirate Arab (Irawati, 2013). The repairment or rebuilding of each bridge would cost between Rp. 40 million to Rp. 75 million. The movement receives support from various segments of society, from individual to army and corporate, such as from *Kopassus* (Indonesian Special Forces) and minimarket Alfamart.¹¹ There are also NGOs concerned with educational development in the province. The mushrooming of NGOs is inseparable from democratisation sweeping the country. Some of these NGOs often stage noisy demonstrations demanding transparency from what they perceive corrupt provincial and local governments with regard to education; some of them often visit local bureaucrats' offices to express what they regard lack of transparency.¹² But the role of NGOs, which visit local offices, is often problematic, as it is also known that many of them are also vested with political or business interests, apparently trying to blackmail or extort the already corrupt politicians or bureaucrats.

¹¹ Phone interview with Muhammad Arif Kiriat, founder of *Relawan Kampung* movement, 4 December 2012.

¹² Interview with Suminta, high official, education office of Serang regency, 19 July 2013.

Marketisation of education

Competition between schools in urban and rural areas in recruiting students has reduced due to BOS funding from the government, which more or less resembles the situation in West Kalimantan. Particularly the fact that elementary and junior high school in rural areas longer burden parents with school fee has given parents a great relief. To a great extent this is assurance that rural schools will always have students studying. All public elementary and junior high schools in Serang municipality, for example, do not impose school fee, unlike under the New Order. But it should be noted that this has nothing to do with decentralisation as BOS funding comes from the central government. More importantly, pressure to improve quality feels stronger upon urban schools where demand from parents seemed to be more obvious as well. It is because of this that the mayor issued a decree that schools are still allowed to ask for financial contribution from parents as long as it voluntary and under the consent of school committee. However, this financial contribution is not on monthly basis, only once during the student three-year studying and is taken during the time when they registered as new students. Every school varies in terms of this financial contribution. At SMP6 in the outskirts of Serang municipality, every student pays Rp. 400,000, SMPN 2 and at SMPN 1 in down town Serang Rp. 750,000 and Rp. 3,000,000 respectively.¹³ One public favourite school even charged Rp. 9,000,000 for financial contribution, which sparked controversy because

¹³ Phone interview with Meti Istimurti, school principal of public junior high school SMPN 6, 4 December 2013.

the governor only allows for financial contribution for senior high school level no higher than Rp. Rp. 1,200,000. It should be noted that senior high schools did not receive full BOS like elementary and junior high school. Starting 2012, the central government increased the BOS for senior high school level to Rp. 500,000 per student, which is still considered insufficient to cover all school operational matters. It is because of this that the regency of Serang, for example, has allocated additional Rp. 500,000 per student as BOSDA (BOS Daerah or local BOS), meaning every student will get Rp. 1,000,000 every year (Media Banten, 2012; Radar Banten, 2013). This is in addition to Rp. 1,200,000 as outlined by the governor regulation. Nevertheless, the fact that a number of senior high school level still charged more than the 'red line' outlined by the government shows that operational cost particularly in urban areas is high, notwithstanding that parents demand improved quality from schools. All in all, the fact that the more the school is located in urban areas the higher the parental financial contribution proves that demand for quality education is also higher in urban than rural areas.

Figure 26: Students and their teacher in municipality of Serang

While public and private schools are competing for students, in some cases reputable private schools could have their loyal market. One parent of private elementary school SD Mardi Yuana in Rangkasbitung, for example, said she sent all her children to study at the school. “It is for their *iman* (faith) of being a Christian as there is church here, so all my children have been studying here from kindergarten and I would like them to finish until junior high school here. It is also safe for them to study here.”¹⁴ This school also receives BOS, meaning that its school fee lower than the actual operational cost. However, less reputable private school such as junior high school elementary school SMP Muhammadiyah in the outskirts of Serang is having troubles because few students they had. The school only has 50

¹⁴ Interview with Sisilia, parent, private elementary school SD Mardi Yuana, Rangkasbitung, Lebak, 31 July 2013.

students, meaning that they also receive less BOS from the government.¹⁵ Despite the fact the school has an Islamic orientation amidst strong Islamic identity of Banten, they still have less students because many of them would want to study at reputable public schools or more reputable Islamic schools such as Al-Azhar.

Not every private school is willing to receive BOS, but this does not mean they are less attractive for parents. For example, private elementary school Christian-oriented SD Penabur in municipality of Serang refused to receive BOS under the instruction from the foundation headquarter in Jakarta.¹⁶ This means all schools operating under Penabur all over Indonesia do not receive BOS and the headquarter foundation in Jakarta, which is financially strong thanks to loyal contribution from Christian community, also has a role in regulating and helping schools run their day-to-day activities. The school monthly fee is Rp. 400,000 without any subsidy from the government. The school also makes sure that those from poor family from Christian community

¹⁵ Interview with school principal Nani Aeruni and vice school principal Rusdiana, private junior high school SMP Muhammadiyah, Serang, 25 July 2013. Hanjiyanto Y. Thorari, a high official in Muhammadiyah organisation and Vice Speaker of People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) said that it is timely for private schools under Muhammadiyah to re-orient themselves against the backdrop of the increased awareness of the state in the provision of education to its people. With the state now subsidising schools, it would be a challenge for private schools to survive and compete with heavily subsidised public schools. He said private schools should be ready to offer what he terms 'education-plus' to people. Interview, Jakarta, 10 August 2013.

¹⁶ Interview with Sri Supadmi, school principal of private school SD Penabur, Serang, 16 July 2013.

receive education through cross-subsidy mechanism. On the contrary, Islamic oriented private junior high school Al-Azhar receives BOS, which means a great help also for parents. School fee is Rp. 450.000 per month, after being added by BOS. But the central foundation of Al-Azhar in Jakarta did not really regulate schools in relation with BOS, meaning that schools are free to decide whether to receive or reject BOS. The school also has scholarship for students from poor families, but generally people from upper middle class with strong Islamic religious orientation would send their children to this type of private school, while others whose children have had education in religious schools but with modest income would send their children to public *madrasah*, and others would compete to send their children to study at favourite public schools.¹⁷

Figure 27: Students and their teacher in municipality of Serang



¹⁷ Interview with Nani Abdul Gani, school principal, private junior high school SMP Al-Azhar, Serang, 25 Juli 2013.

However, what some public schools have been doing by receiving more students as they are supposed to be has brought disadvantages to private schools. This is because having more students means having more government subsidy, and many parents would love to send their children there because it is supposed to have no tuition fee. "What public schools have been doing is disadvantaging for private schools. For example, the mayor outlined that junior high school should only receive new students of eight classes, and each class in 42 students. However, in reality they receive more than that. As a result, private schools like us are suffering because of the decreased number of students," said one vice school principal of a private school.¹⁸ This shows that somehow public schools have an upper hand in marketing their schools to the population and to compete with private schools, although few, reputable private schools also have some loyal segments of market.

Islamic boarding schools attracted students not only from Banten but from also all over the country, considering the fact that Banten is home to *ulama* and its Islamic identity is therefore strong. Islamic boarding schools also receive BOS, which is specifically intended for the *madrasah ibtidaiyah* (Islamic elementary school) and *madrasah tsanawiah* (Islamic junior high school) within the *pesantren*. In one big, modern *pesantren*, usually there are *ibtidaiyah* and *tsanawiah*, where they also learn 'secular' education along side with Islamic education. In this case, extra costs for food and laundry during they stay at the *pesantren* would have to be born by

¹⁸ Interview with Nani Abdul Hani, school principal, private Islamic junior high school SMP Al-Azhar, Serang, 25 Juli 2013.

the students. For example, at one Islamic modern *pesantren*, there are 640 students of *madrasah* and each of them has to pay Rp. 480,000 per month, which covers all costs and which this is already helped by BOS.¹⁹ However, traditional Islamic boarding schools, which normally do not have *ibtidaiyah* and *tsanawiah* and teach their students with strict Islamic teaching, would usually reject receiving BOS subsidy to avoid what they perceive as 'too much' requirement procedure. Besides, these traditional *pesantrens* (some call them *pesantren salafi* and others call them *pesantren rombeng*) are keen to maintain a modest way of life of their students and their teachers, such as having meal on banana leaf, etc.²⁰ Those who graduate from these traditional *pesantren* are not granted with an official certificate, their continuation to study to a more advanced traditional *pesantren* would be guaranteed by the credibility of their *ustadz* (Islamic teacher) or *ulama* teaching at the previous *pesantren*. Both modern and traditional *pesantrens* are operating under the supervision of *Kanwil Kemenag* (provincial office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs) and *Kantor Kemenag* (municipal and regency office of Ministry of Religious Affairs), although in reality both *Kanwil* and *Kantor Kemenag* have no adequate administrative capacity to really supervise all *pesantrens*, particularly the traditional ones. There are also *madrasahs*, which are not attached to *pesantren*, few of them are public and many of them are private. Generally, as Fauzi (2005) writes, parents in Banten would send their children to regular schools if

¹⁹ Interview with Ustadz Abdul Mufid, teacher at Islamic modern *pesantren* Al- Mizan boarding school, Rangkasbitung, Lebak, 29 July 2013.

²⁰ Interview with Ustadz Agus Rahmat, leader of Islamic traditional *pesantren* Kesuren boarding school, Serang, 8 July 2013.

they feel confident with the intellectual capacity of their children and that they have sound financial sources, but would instead send their children to *madrasah* if they are not sure with the intellectual capacity of their children or have not enough money for what is widely considered as an upsurge of expenses in regular schools. However, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and *madrasah* community share the blame of this generalisation, which makes them unable to fully marketise *madrasah* to wider community, as they view themselves as the 'poor cousins' within the state education system (Kingham & Parson, 2013, p. 80).

Politicisation of education

Teachers admitted that during local election the political atmosphere is heated and that teachers and school principals also feel the heat. They fear that that might be accused of not supporting certain candidates endorsed by the incumbent. This has distracted them from doing their job and, although they don't want to be politically active, they have no choice but to align themselves with the powerful to make sure that they are 'on the right side'.²¹ It is usually school principals of elementary schools who really feel the heat of political atmosphere because many of them usually have another role in society such as head of *rukun warga* (neighborhood head) a position that forces him or her to become a member of local KPPS (*Kelompok Penyelenggara Pemungutan Suara* or Voting Organizing Committee Group) during local election.²²

²¹ FGD with teachers, public elementary school SD Cimarga, Rangkasbitung, Lebak, 27 July 2013.

²² Phone interview with Meti Istimurti, school principal of public junior high school SMPN 6 Serang, 4 December 2013.

However, this is not only the case. Cases of teachers or school principals having been fired because they were accused of not siding with the incumbent during local election are rampant. Local politicians or bureaucrats in the province of Banten have always abused bureaucratic machinery to boost their political chances (Hamid, 2011), and civil servant teachers, given their sheer numbers and social influence towards society, are often unable to escape from becoming victims.²³ For example, one teacher admitted that he was transferred to teach at a school, which is located about 8-hour by motorcycle from his home, as a political punishment that he was accused of not supporting incumbent Regent Jaya Baya, who had been pushing her own daughter to run in local election as next Regent of Lebak.²⁴ However, it is not secret that some teachers have also been active in politics by supporting certain political candidates during local election, hoping to get political compensation such as position in local education office once their candidate is successfully elected.

Local politicians are also keen to make political slogan to give impression that they are concerned with the plight of the people, including in Lebak regency where educational infrastructures have generally been in a grave situation

²³ Interview with Iroh Siti Zahroh, trainer, LPMP Banten, Rangkasbitung, 29 July 2013 and interview with Endang Baharudin, high official, LPMP Banten, Rangkasbitung, 29 July 2013.

²⁴ Interview with Saiful Bahri, teacher, SMP Cimarga, Rangkasbitung, 24 July 2013. Because of local politics, he was punished by Regent Mulyadi Jaya Baya, being transferred to a school located about eight hours by motorcycle from his home in Rangkasbitung. This means if he has to teach at 7 o'clock in the morning, he will have to leave his house around midnight or otherwise he will have to spend the night at one of his friend's house.

particularly in remote areas. Through banners and local media, the then regent Mulyadi Jaya Baya, after he was just elected, vowed to make Lebak a 'educational regency' (*kabupaten pendidikan*) and Rangkasbitung a 'student city' (*kota pelajar*), in an apparent attempt to refer to Yogyakarta as a famous *kota pelajar*. But his statement does not really parallel with the current situation. "Indeed, in 1999 there were many broken school buildings, but now after decentralisation more schools buildings are repaired and more new buildings were erected. However, only in surrounding Rangkasbitung most schools are in good condition, if we go to rural areas there are still schools, which are in grave condition. Even in remote areas we still need more teachers. We might have more books now, but with no chairs and tables for students so they have to lay down on the floor to study. This is despite the fact that Mulyadi Jaya Baya has vowed to declare Lebak as 'educational regency'," said one teacher.²⁵

Politicisation is well entrenched that even local politicians dare to cross the line by exerting their influence upon *madrasahs*, which actually still fall under the central government as the ministry of religious affairs did not undergo decentralisation. One school principal of a *madrasah* shared his experience, "One member of local parliament pressured our school principal to accept his son to study here, but we flatly rejected this. We even told him directly 'it is your son who will study here, not you'. We are worried that since his son is not eligible, he will be left behind during his study here. There are 750 prospective students who did

²⁵ Interview with Hudori, teacher, public elementary school SDN Margaluyu, Lebak, 30 Juli 2013.

an entrance test and we only received 294, this son of the local parliament member only ranked 600, we cannot push him to study here. After all, structurally we are *orang pusat* (people of the central), not *orang daerah* (people of the region). It is the central government, which made decisions on us, not the local government.”²⁶ It appears that the members of local parliament did not understand or did not care that *madrassahs* are actually under the central government. However, people are also aware that that similar political pressure towards teachers is not unique Banten, they also heard that the same thing happening in other parts of the country. “Political pressure is not only in Lebak, but also in Pandeglang, even I heard from television news that it also happens in Nusa Tenggara Timur, a female teacher was moved to a school far away from her home,” said one school principal.²⁷

But regular public schools under the Ministry of National Education are unable to escape from this political abuse because all civil servant teachers fall under the authority of local government. This kind of abuse also takes form in taking bribes from parents by local parliaments or officials to make sure that their children be accepted in one of favourite schools. Public schools usually have an allocated quota called *bina lingkungan*, which gives privilege to schools to allocate quota for children of the people around or related to the schools. From all total number of new students, 20% are usually allocated for the *bina lingkungan* purpose. However, certain teachers, school principals and local bureaucrats

²⁶ Interview with Jumroni, vice school principal of public Islamic junior high school MTsN 1 Serang, 22 July 2013.

²⁷ Interview with Jumroni, vice school principal of public Islamic junior high school MTsN 1 Serang, 22 July 2013.

including members of local parliament might have abused this *bina lingkungan* quota as moneymaking machine, as several respondents admitted. There is a cynical expression among Bantenese when the time approaching for their children to register to a new school: *orang tua jual sawah, guru beli sawah* (parents sell rice field, teachers buy rice field), implying how parents are getting poorer but teachers are getting richer.

Such an attitude of local actors only reveals the tip of the iceberg of problems of corruption in the province. Certain members of both executives and legislatives at provincial and municipal and regency level in the province have allegedly been involved in stealing state budget (Anzar, 2010). The brother of the current governor Atut Chosiyah, Chaeri Wardana, was arrested by the KPK (*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi* or Corruption Eradication Commission) on alleged corruption and the governor, who was also accused of building a family-based political dynasty in the province, was slapped with travel ban (Tempo, 2013a).²⁸ Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW) released a report that the Province of Banten has become a 'winner' in corruption cases with regard to education budget, reaching Rp. 209 billion in at least ten corruption cases. However, the Province of Banten is not the only one, the report said that the Province of West Java has the highest number of cases, but the state loss, which is Rp. 22.7 billion, is less than that in the Province of Banten. Throughout Indonesia there are 479 suspects with alleged direct involvement to 296 corruption cases. Out of 479 suspects, 71 are heads of education office

²⁸ For the development of oligarchy in the Province of Banten, see Arifin (2013).

and 179 subordinates at education office, all at municipal or regency level of government, and 114 their business partners. The report said education office is the most corrupt office with state loss reaching Rp. 356.5 billion (Okezone, 2013). Attorney General in Serang, Banten, has also raided Education Office of Municipality of Serang with regard to alleged corruption of the procurement of school language laboratory equipment with the value of Rp. 4 billion slashed from special allocation fund of national revenue and expenditure budget of 2010 (Tempo, 2013b).

Local identity

The Banteneese, particularly under this decentralisation era, are keen to preserve their local tradition. In the regency of Serang, for example, a village called Kertamukti is considered *kampung seni* (art village) where people devote themselves to the preservation of Banteneese local tradition including its dances and music. Education Office of Serang regency has also been preparing a book on Banteneese local tradition to be introduced to students.²⁹ In the municipality of Serang there are two famous *sanggar tari* (dance courses) Raksa Budaya and Wanda Banten. The latter was affiliated with SMPN 1 as one of the teachers there actually owns the course. Every year during farewell gathering every school usually conducts *pentas seni* or *pensi* (art performance) where some of those dances and music are performed. Besides *pensi*, every year there is also *festival seni* (art festival), where students compete each other at the municipal or regency level. In the municipality of Serang, for example, the *festival*

²⁹ Interview with Juhaedi, Head of Division of the Development of Traditional Values, Education Office, Serang Regency, 11 July 2013.

seni has always been conducted at SMPN 6. The winners would again compete at the provincial level before going to national level.³⁰ Banten Provincial Office of Culture and Tourism also threw support by conducting *Pentas Monolog Remaja* (Youth Monolog Festival) with as many as ten theatre groups Teater Gates, Teater 110 Wanten, Teater Komunitas Rahim, Teater CAdas, Komunitas Pelajar, Teater Titik Nol, Gesbica IAIN Banten, Teater Kafe Ide, Teater Wonk Kite and Teater Anonimus from Banten participating in this festival. The high official from Jakarta who attended the festival said that his ministry has collaborated with Ministry of Education and Culture to make sure the provision of arts teachers at schools (Radar Banten, 2011).

At a more scholarly level, a centre for the study of Banten called *Laboratorium Bantenologi* was established in 2000 by Dutch-educated Bantenese scholar Mufti Ali at Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Islamic Higher Education in municipality of Serang. It was aimed at preserving Bantenese local tradition. The centre has just published school textbook, which covers Bantenese local tradition and the language of Serang-Javanese or Bantenese-Javanese (*Jaser* or *Jawa Serang*) to be used by 750 elementary schools in the municipality of Serang. The distribution of the books at schools in the municipality is deemed appropriate since the native language here is considered Bantenese-Javanese. They have also published dictionary of the same language.³¹

³⁰ Phone interview with Meti Istimurti, school principal of public junior high school SMPN 6, 4 December 2013.

³¹ Interview with Mufti Ali, president of *Laboratorium Bantenologi*, Serang, 9 July 2013 and interview with Mujahid Chudari, writer of books on Bantenese-Javanese, Serang, 18 July 2013.

However, the use of local language at school can also be problematic. The Bantenese are generally bilingual, speaking both Javanese and Sundanese with Bantenese flavour. As explained earlier, people speak both Javanese and Sundanese because of the influence of Javanese Muslims under Sunan Gunungjati who captured the port of Banten in 1527 from the previous Sundanese leaders under Kingdom of Sunda. Bantenese regard their own version of Javanese and Sundanese languages different from those usually spoken in Java and West Java. Officials from Serang regency education office proposed to have a sort of cultural dialogues among elements of society in the province to talk about this matter.³²

Figure 28: Students are studying local language in one school in Rangkasbitung.



³² Interview with Juhaedi, head of division of the development of traditional values, and Yadi Supriadi, head of division of the development of local language, Education Office of Serang regency, 11 July 2013.

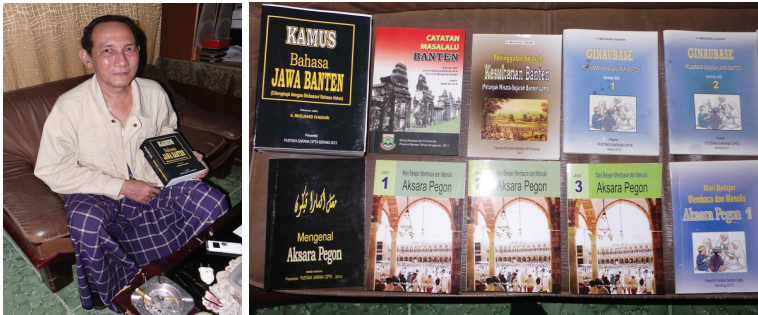
In the municipality of Serang, many schools still use *sunda priangan* or West Java-Sundanese as local content subject matter, although the native language is actually Serang-Javanese. “We actually have difficulty in teaching *sunda priangan* because we don’t actually use it in day-to-day life. It is easier to teach English rather than *sunda priangan*. So teaching *sunda priangan* is actually irrelevant because many of us here speak Jawa Serang,” said one teacher.³³ With the publication of school textbooks by *Laboratorium Bantenologi*, this problems should indeed be resolved. In another case in Rangkasbitung, Lebak regency, many schools use West Java-Sundanese, or *sunda priangan* as their local content subject matter despite the fact that this language is not used in day-to-day life in even in this ‘Sundanese-spoken’ regency. Hence, the next challenge for *Laboratorium Bantenologi* is to publish school textbook on the language of Bantenese-Sundanese. Nevertheless, not all are fond of adopting local language as a local content subject matter. Private elementary school SD Penabur in Serang, for example, used Bahasa Mandarin as its local content subject matter and according to parents it is good because Bahasa Mandarin has already become an international language and local people would need it if they want to succeed in business.³⁴ Besides language, local martial art of *pencak silat* is also used as a local content subject matter. Others schools in the municipality of Serang refer to *baca tulis Qur’an* (Qur’anic reading and writing) as their local content subject matter taking into consideration of a

³³ Interview with Een Sukaenah, teacher SDN 2 Serang, 17 July 2013.

³⁴ Interview with Vinsensia, teacher, private elementary school SD Penabur, 18 July 2013.

strong Islamic identity of Banten province, said one school principal.³⁵

Figure 29: The writer of dictionary and school textbooks of Bantenese-Javanese.



It is important to examine the position of what is perceived as the revitalisation of local identity vis a vis the notion of national identity, whether the former would strengthen or weaken the latter. Mufti Ali, president of *Laboratorium Bantenologi*, admitted that while local identity has the potential to strengthen primordialism, a careful preservation could help maintain social cohesion among various societal groups.³⁶ Above all, as previously explained, the fact that competitions of traditional dances at school level are held not only at the provincial but also further at national level shows that local identities are exalted to a state level with official celebration, bringing a sense of pride of the participants. Thus, this makes the blending of

³⁵ Phone interview with Meti Istimurti, school principal of public junior high school SMPN 6, 4 December 2013 and interview with Een Sukaenah, teacher SDN 2 Serang, 17 July 2013 and

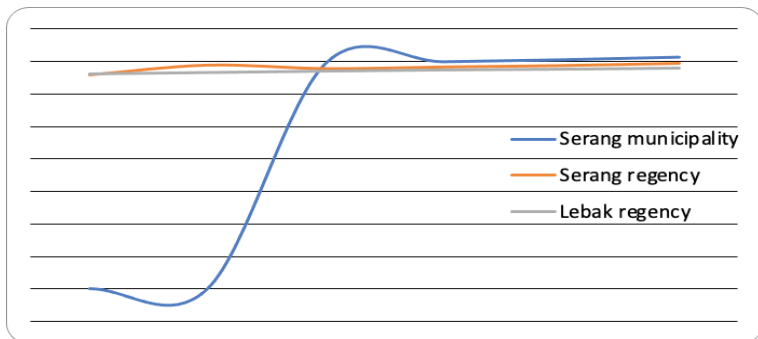
³⁶ Interview with Mufti Ali, president of *Laboratorium Bantenologi*, Serang, 9 July 2013.

the notions of local identities into national identity possible. While still acknowledging and appreciating the richness of local cultures, these efforts might help defuse the possible excessive attachment to local identity.

However, one high official at the education office of the regency of Serang said that local content subject matter does not always have to be something related to local cultural arts. He said what schools need is not a mere adoption but also adaptation, meaning schools need to explore and analyse the surroundings area to tap on local potential, in which schools could contribute to its development. He gave an example of the know-how related to local industry or agriculture, hence the teaching of local content can be more beneficial and even productive not only for students and schools but also the surrounding areas.³⁷

Measures to improve education quality

Figure 30: Human Development Index of municipality of Serang, regencies of Serang and Lebak (2005-2011)

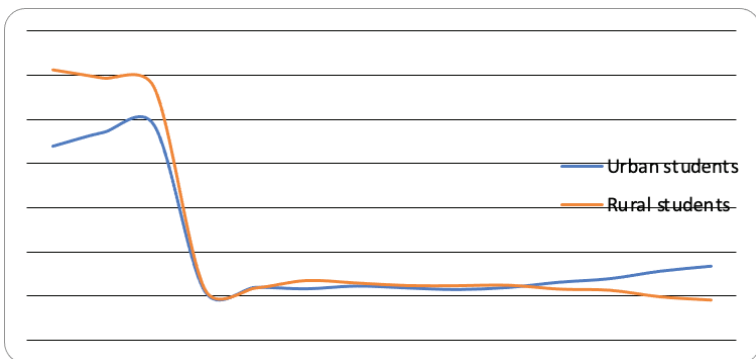


(BPS, 2007, 2010, 2012c).

³⁷ Interview with Dedi, high official, education office of the regency of Serang, 12 July 2013.

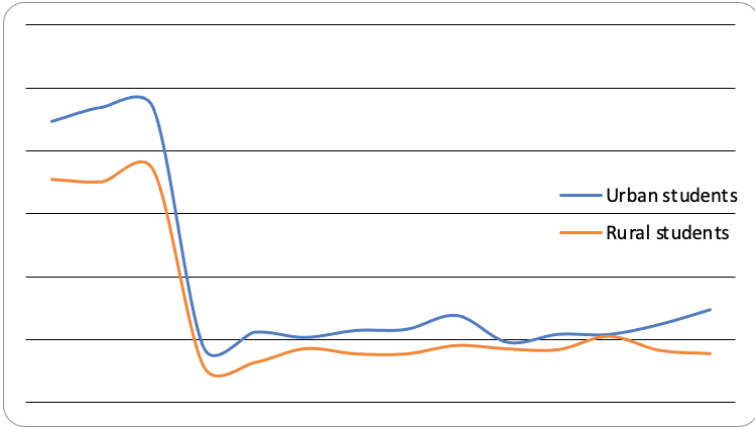
The tables shows that Human Development index of municipality of Serang, regencies of Serang and Lebak are crawling up with municipality of Serang leading ahead. It should be noted that the recent municipality of Serang was still part of regency of Serang in 2005 and 2006. While this shows how education should give impact of the quality of life, on the whole the HDI of the province remains one of the lowest among other provinces in the country, as explained in the earlier part of this chapter. The number of students and the number of dropouts should also give some sketches of the quality of education in the province. The tables below show the trend after Banten officially split of West Java province in 2000. While the trend shows how the number urban and rural students in elementary school level remains almost stagnant, but shows a very gradual increase in junior high school and senior high school level. Further research needs to be done to see if students from rural areas have migrated to urban areas to continue their study.

Figure 31: Number of elementary school students in West Java (1998-2000) and Banten (2001-2011)



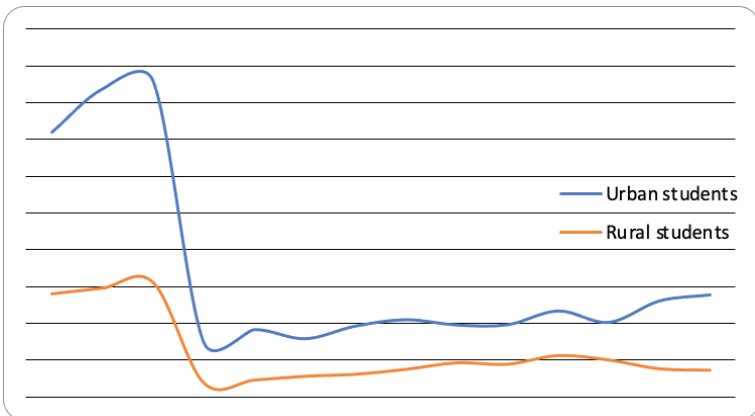
(BPS, 2012a)

Figure 32: Number of junior high school students in West Java (1998-2000) and Banten (2001-2011)



(BPS, 2012a)

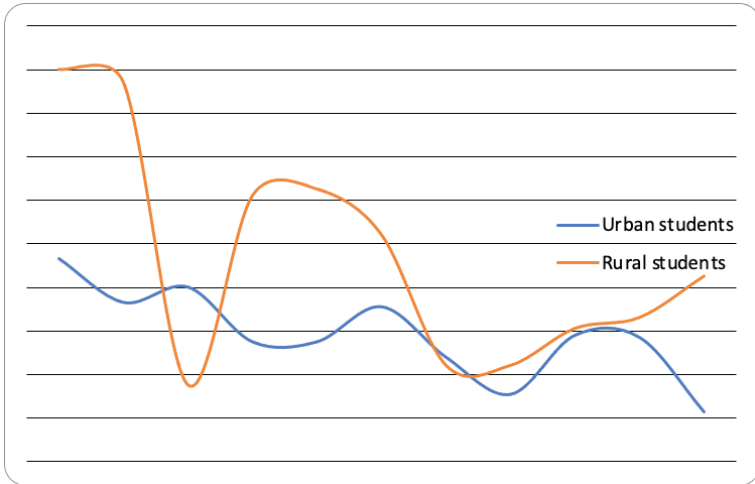
Figure 33: Number of senior high school students in West Java (1998-2000) and Banten (2001-2011)



(BPS, 2012a)

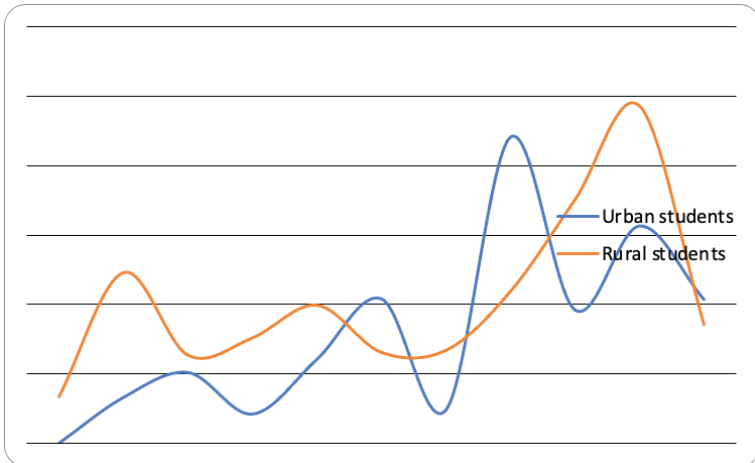
The trend of dropouts shows those rural dropouts of elementary school saw a sharp decrease after Banten separated from West Java, but fluctuates later, while that of urban dropouts saw a modest decrease. The trend of junior high school dropouts seemed to alarmingly increase and senior high school dropouts also show a worrying trend (see next tables). For elementary school, this shows that while access to education is getting wider, students in rural areas still stumble with difficulties that make them drop out. What is more alarmingly is for junior and senior high school level as the trend increases. Naafs' (2012) research on youth in Banten perhaps can provide us with some backgrounds. Her research shows that while the population began to highly regard education as a tool for upward social mobility, other social factors might have hindered the trajectories, she wrote: 'while many parents hope that education will be an avenue to improve their family's social standing, at the same time uneven distribution of power and economic resources shape the education trajectories already existing class, gender and other social divisions... For example, several informants reported that they had to wait for older siblings to finish their education before they could continue their schooling, while others said their parents expected to help pay for schooling of younger siblings. Hence, decisions about moving in and out of school, work and home are often taken collectively and involve entire families pooling their cultural, social and economic resources... other inequalities remain, notably between rural and urban areas, between rich and poor students, and public and private schools' (p. 106).

Figure 34: Percentage of elementary school dropouts 2001 – 2011

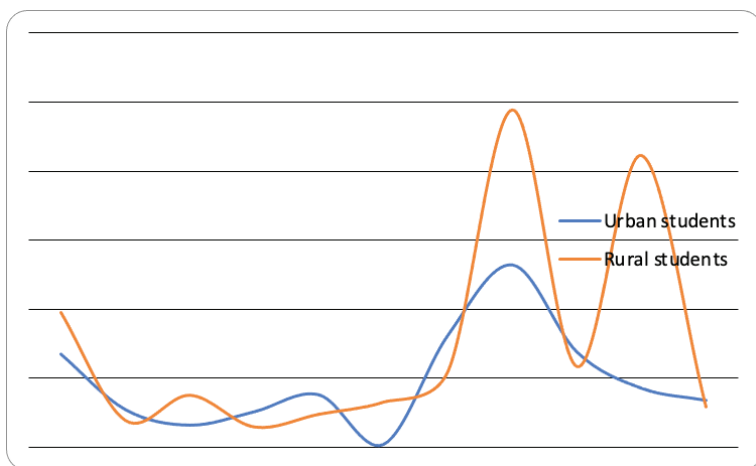


(BPS, 2012a)

Figure 35: Percentage of junior high school dropouts 2001 - 2011

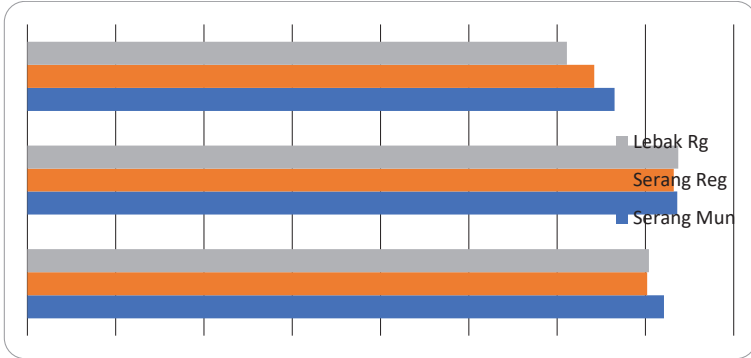


(BPS, 2012a)

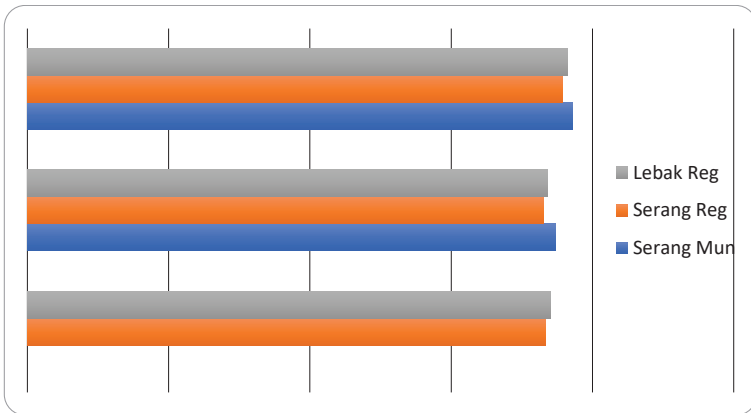
Figure 36: Percentage of elementary school dropouts 2001 – 2011

(BPS, 2012a)

The table of the average score of the national exams of junior high school on Bahasa Indonesia, English, mathematics and science in 2008, 2009 and 2011 shows that Municipality of Serang, Regency of Serang and Regency of Lebak were competing tightly in 2008 and 2009 but three of them dropped in 2011 with Lebak becoming left behind. With regard to *madrasah tsanawiyah*, Municipality of Serang has always been leading (although data on the year 2008 was not available), but overall the average score of three of them jumped from 2009 to 2011, catching up with regular junior high schools. Provided that the result of the exam is reliable, considering the overall condition of *madrasah* where teachers have less professional development than those of regular schools, this is indeed a great achievement.

Figure 37: National Exam of Public and Private Junior High School, 2008-2011

(Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2009, 2010, 2011a)

Figure 38: National Exam of Public and Private Madrasah Tsanawiyah, 2008-2011

(Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2009, 2010, 2011a)

In terms of finance, the allocation from the provincial office is very small for education. In 2012, for example, the provincial office only allocated Rp. 250,024,000,000 or only 6%

for education out of total expenditure of Rp. 4,134,075,000.000. (Ministry of Finance of Republic of Indonesia, 2013). This is because most of the money from central government goes to municipal and regency governments. As the next tables show, the municipality and regencies have allocated more than 20% of the total expenditure. If we compare the situation under centralisation and decentralisation, the increase of the allocation for education was quite sharp, note that under centralisation Banten was still part of West Java and only data on regency of Lebak was available. Nevertheless, as also mentioned in the previous chapter, under decentralisation most of the allocated budget for education was mainly used to pay for teacher salary, not for the direct improvement of teacher professionalism (Suharti, 2013).

Figure 39: Budget allocation for education

before decentralisation

1995-1996	Local Revenue	Central Transfer	Education	Total Expenditure
Lebak	4,891,227,840	32,239,666,667	2,899,915,952 (7%)	35,284,824,446
1999-2000	Local Revenue	Central Transfer	Education	Total Expenditure
Lebak	4,369,761,891	108,785,468,823	5,324,313,700 (6%)	89,645,240,871

after decentralisation

2010	Local Revenue	Central Transfer	Education	Total Expenditure
Serang Mun.	18,005,000,000	409,515,000,000	177,488,000,000 (38%)	461,828,000,000
Serang Reg.	122,990,000,000	659,338,000,000	345,206,000,000 (39%)	881,966,000,000
Lebak	69,770,000,000	789,208,000,000	397,301,000,000 (44%)	891,425,000,000
2012	Local Revenue	Central Transfer	Education	Total Expenditure
Serang Mun.	36,516,000,000	524,434,000,000	313,116,000,000 (35%)	881,310,000,000
Serang Reg.	199,042,000,000	905,031,000,000	615,141,000,000 (41%)	1,483,852,000,000
Lebak	97,190,000,000	914,876,000,000	595,738,000,000 (25%)	2,323,294,000,000

(Ministry of Finance of Republic of Indonesia, 2013) – in Indonesian Rupiah (Rp.), the calculation does not include whole revenues.

Despite the sobering numbers of the above tables, the governments have launched various programs to enhance education quality. For example, LPMP (*Lembaga Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan* or Educational Quality Enhancement Agency), which is a proxy of the central government, has done more in giving trainings and workshops to teachers than the local governments. The theme of trainings would be uniform all over the country given its centralised character. For example, in 2004 it was the very time to strengthen the use of Competence Based Curriculum, hence all LPMPs all over the country delivered trainings on this curriculum to teachers, including in the province of Banten. In 2007, the big theme of the training is KTSP. In 2010, LPMP did not conduct massive trainings but focuses more on the strengthening of KKG (*Kelompok Kerja Guru* or Working Group Teachers) for elementary school, MGMP (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran* or Subject Matter Teacher Group) for junior high school, senior high school and vocational senior high school. Every group should make a proposal first and later, if approved, LPMP would distribute funding to every group. Every group would conduct its own trainings by inviting relevant speakers or trainers. For vocational senior high schools, for example, they would receive Rp. 15,000,000 for several meetings or trainings. KKG would receive Rp. 10,000,000. MGMP for senior high schools would receive around Rp. 15,000,000. In one year, there are around 120 working groups of KKG and MGMP. Another program called PLPG (*Pendidikan dan Latihan Profesi Guru* or Education and Training of Teaching Profession) started in 2007 and is conducted together with LPMP, UNJ (Universitas Negeri Jakarta) and UNTIRTA (Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa) involving lectures of the Faculty of

Education of the latter to prepare teachers also for certification program. Teachers, who failed the portfolio certification program, would join PLPG in 2007. In 2011, trainings were more focused on teacher evaluation. And now, of course, the big theme of the training is the new 2013 Curriculum. Besides the nationally devised program, LPMP has attempted also to accommodate local needs by conducting training needs assessment, but it will be overruled once there is a pressing policy from the central government to be translated into trainings. But now, starting from 2010, the central government publishes EDS (*Evaluasi Diri Sekolah* or School Self Evaluation) form in which every school to identify and make a list of what they actually need. Hence, based on that form, LPMP will design specific additional workshops, which are more tailored to local needs. LPMP complex is huge and every time training is conducted will involve hundreds of teachers from all municipalities and regencies in the province.³⁸

Other forms of training that have not been conducted by LPMP appeared to have been taken over by the provincial education office. The provincial office, for example, conducted training on finance for school principals about three or four times a year.³⁹ They also provide teacher trainings, which were considered very useful; however, the local government and school authority did not seem to give a fair go in giving opportunities to teachers, as they tended to appoint those who have always been active and have already been skilful. In fact, there are other teachers who have not been appointed to join

³⁸ Interview with Elis Sukaesih, trainer, LPMP Banten, Rangkasbitung, 30 July 2013.

³⁹ Phone interview with Meti Istimurti, school principal of public junior high school SMPN 6, 4 December 2013.

trainings to enhance their teaching skill and knowledge.⁴⁰ There is also an alleged discrimination towards teachers of private schools. The local government prioritises public schools more than private schools, from the provision of educational facilities to professional enhancement. They would give more opportunities to public servant teacher first, not teachers from private schools to join the workshops, said one school principal of a private school.⁴¹ In addition, even workshops provided by municipal offices have been regarded as far from unsatisfactory. "The municipal office usually provides workshops in September, October or November merely to finish up their remaining budget towards the end of the fiscal year. So often they hastily called us to send participants. The problem is that their trainers are not qualified, many teachers have complained about this," said one school principal.⁴² Even if there is any workshop from Serang municipal government, it did seem to run appropriately. One teacher said that the workshops usually lasted only for one day, like for example BIMTEK (technical guidance for IT development) workshop, usually once in a year towards the end of fiscal year. He compared workshops provided by Serang municipal government with those provided by the central government, which usually take up a whole week. He gave an example of all trainings related to curriculum development provided by the central government through LPMP.⁴³

⁴⁰ Interview with Een Sukaenah, teacher SDN 2 Serang, 17 July 2013.

⁴¹ Interview with Nani Abdul Gani, school principal private junior high school SMP Al-Azhar, Serang, 25 July 2012.

⁴² Phone interview with Meti Istimurti, school principal of public junior high school SMPN 6, 4 December 2013.

⁴³ Interview with Totong Sastramulya, teacher of elementary school

It is noteworthy that the introduction of the new 2013 Curriculum does not only show the effort to improve quality, it also hints a shift of policy of the central government. The previous curriculum of KTSP gave more rooms to teachers to maneuver and develop their own syllabus in what was supposed to be more creative ways, demanding skills and innovation from teachers. However, with this new 2013 Curriculum, the syllabus and all their related materials including school textbooks are decided and provided by the central government. Teachers only need to prepare their RPP (*rencana pelaksanaan pembelajaran* or lesson plan). Unlike the previous curriculum, several subject matters are now integrated into some central themes, although just like the previous curriculum teachers are still expected to role more as facilitators rather than mere knowledge transmitters. In one semester, students with their teacher had four series of books to go through. Through municipal and regency offices, the central government dropped the textbooks to schools, this time elementary school level through out the province of Banten.⁴⁴ This major change of policy shows how the central government has departed from its policy of giving more authority to teachers to create their own syllabus to that of the more pedagogically centralised mode. One of the reasons behind this major shift of policy is that many teachers did not seem to really make use of the authority given to them due to their lack of competency.

The local governments also attempted to improve the welfare of the teachers by giving incentive called

SDN2 Serang Municipality, Banten, 17 July 2013.

⁴⁴ Interview with Een Sukaenah, teacher SDN 2 Serang, 17 July 2013.

TPP (*tunjangan pendapatan pegawai negeri*), but again this is exclusively for civil servant teachers, not for teachers of private schools. For example, in the municipality of Serang, the TPP is around Rp. 440,000 for *golongan empat* (rank four) Rp. 300,000 for *golongan tiga* (rank three) Rp. 250,000 for *golongan dua* (rank two) of civil servant. Also the same with the Serang regency, as this was initially done by Serang regency before Serang municipality split off. Only teacher certification program from the central government, which doubles the core salary of teachers, is enjoyed indiscriminately by both civil servant teachers and private teachers.⁴⁵ This clearly shows the inability of the local governments to use their local revenue to help fulfil the needs of teachers, which could have impact on their teaching quality. It is still the central government, which has done most to improve the welfare of teachers. Ironically, as explained previously, teachers are often politically abused by local bureaucrats or politicians during local election under the threat of being fired because administratively they fall under the authority of the local governments, but paid mostly by the central government. With regard to quality of *madrasah*, since ministry of religious affairs has no enough resources to enhance the professionalism of its teachers, teachers of *madrasah* have less professional development and their teaching quality is perceived to be left behind by that of regular teachers.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Interview with Totong Sastramulya, teacher of public elementary school SDN2 Serang, 17 July 2013 and interview with Khawasi, teacher, private junior high school SMP Al-Azhar, Serang, 25 July 2013.

⁴⁶ Interview with Elsyue Egianti, teacher, public Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri, Pasir Sukarayat, Rangkasbitung, 31 July 2013.

Inequality also persists when we talk about the quality of infrastructure and teacher distribution between schools in urban and rural areas (Juniardi, 2013). For example, even though Lebak regency has been declared *kabupaten pendidikan* (educational regency) and Rangkasbitung *kota pelajar* (student city), the quality gap between schools in urban and rural areas remains considerable. One teacher said, “At school in urban areas, there are a big number of teachers, but at schools in rural areas like our school, only me and the school principal who are civil servant teachers. Regent Jaya Baya actually has a good vision of advancing education in the regency. He has recently said that all school buildings are now in good condition, but as you can see, in one class we have no chairs and tables for students. And the number of classrooms remained the same. Here we desperately need more teachers, more chairs, more tables, more classrooms..”⁴⁷ However, the fact that Banten split of West Java and became a province on its own should actually accelerate the development. Officials in the education office of the municipality of Serang, for example, said that decentralisation paved the way for the buildings of new schools. They admitted that before decentralisation, when Banten was still part of West Java, the initiative and implementation of building of new schools took really a snail pace because of the long and complicated bureaucratic procedure and a long distance between Serang and the capital Bandung of West Java.

Furthermore, one of the main challenges also to improve

⁴⁷ Interview with Hudori, teacher, public elementary school SDN Margaluyu 2, Lebak, 30 July 2013.

the quality of life of the Baduy people in Lebak regency who resisted formal education. In Baduy community, formal education is forbidden because it is believed it will contaminate the purity of life and local tradition of the people of Baduy.⁴⁸ However, the government has launched a specifically designed program called *pemberantasan buta aksara* (eradicating illiteracy) for Baduy community, where people study informally at houses with teacher volunteers. Starting from 2005, there have been three main focuses in education improvement in Banten: first, compulsory education; second, decreasing the number of dropouts, and; third, eradicating illiteracy (Banten Provincial Government, 2005). For the illiteracy eradication, it focuses more on Baduy community, and what is most important is for them to be able to read and do basic counting for everyday need. However, if one member of Baduy community wants to study further, he has to go out of the village. The head of the village gave an example of one member of Baduy community who recently runs as candidate of a vice regent, H. Kasmin and his family decided to move out because they wanted their children to continue studying. His children now have had bachelor degrees, master degrees, one is still studying at Trisaksi University. "When you want to go out of the village, you have to get permission from the elderly here, you have to undergo certain rituals. And if you want to go back, you are welcome, but what is the use of coming back when you already have high education?"

⁴⁸ Interview with Agus, member of Baduy community, Kanekes, Leudamar, Lebak, 28 July 2013.

said head of a village in Baduy community.⁴⁹ The general perception of Baduy community with regard to education is summarised as follows: “It is important for human beings to have education to prepare them for the life here in the world and in the hereafter so that they will not get lost. The Baduy community are pleased to let our people learn how to read, write and do counting just like any other modern human being, but these all are mere complements. We refuse to radically open up our community and learn formal education because we don’t want anything to disturb our tradition here – because we have our own measurement, our own need, which is different than any other community” (Kurnia & Sihabudin, 2000, p. 295).

Figure 40: Students in one school in regency of Lebak study without chairs and tables.



⁴⁹ Interview with Jaro Dainah, head of Baduy village of Kanekes, Lebak, 28 July 2013.

Figure 41: Children in Banten are risking their life to go to school (courtesy Muhammad Arif Hidayat)



Concluding remarks

Similar to West Kalimantan, parents at public schools in urban areas appear to be more active than those in rural areas. Education background of parents has almost certainly contributed to this attitude, besides pressing competition in urban areas forces schools to adjust to the demand. However, parental participation appear minimal at private schools, particularly reputable ones, for parents already have strong confidence towards the school quality, this is despite the fact that private schools also have school committee just like at public schools. Provincial education board and those at the regency and municipal level, nevertheless, are not functioning well due to political bickering and apparent lack of commitment. But community participation has also been translated in less structured way, such as individual efforts to build or repair educational infrastructures and NGO's actively pressing pressure to the government to perform more.

BOS has also helped reduce gap between schools in urban and rural areas and has served as a great relief to parents in rural areas. But demand to perform more is felt strongly by schools in urban areas, forcing them to ask for more financial contribution from parents especially of those of junior and senior high schools, for which the local governments have allowed the schools to do so but only for the entrance administration not for monthly based tuition. A competition between public and private schools seems to be inevitable, particularly when both are regarded favourite. But public schools, especially the favourite ones, appear to have more rooms to maneuver, as they tend to receive more students than they are supposed to have and parents can be more attracted to send their children there because of less money but with arguably better quality than average private schools.

Local politicians and bureaucrats in the province of Banten have a history of abusing bureaucratic machinery to increase their changes in local election, and civil servant teachers are being targeted to be mobilised during local election due to their influence towards society and their big numbers. However, cases of teachers being informally active in *tim sukses* (success team) in local election to endorse certain mayoral or regent candidate are also evident. Not only that, in education sector, certain local bureaucrats and parliaments often act as brokers, sometimes collided with school principals or teachers sometimes or on their own, to make sure certain children be accepted by favourite schools, which indeed involves certain amount of money as a kickback. However, teachers of *madrrasah* are relatively immune from politics exerted by local bureaucrats or

members or parliament because they still fall under the authority of the central government.

With regard to local identity, Bantenese are more than eager to celebrate their local identities through the performance of traditional dances and music. Nevertheless, the introduction of local language can be problematic as two languages are spoken in the province: Bantenese-Javanese and Bantenese-Sundanese. Up to now, only textbooks on Bantenese-Javanese have been written and planned to be introduced at school, while schools located in Sundanese spoken regencies such as Lebak still refer to West Javanese-Sundanese, which is different than Bantenese-Sundanese, to be used as their local content subject matter at school. The absence of decisive policy to support the use of local language as local content subject matters has resulted in confusion among teachers.

Lastly, one might argue that there is wide gap of almost every aspect in urban and rural areas. However, taking a closer look one might find even in the downtown of municipality or regency, the luxury of better education only belong to few schools. Furthermore, while the trend of dropouts in urban and rural at elementary school level saw stagnancy, the trend junior and senior high school levels shows an alarming increase. Above all, the governments have introduced various measures to improve education quality. However, it is provincially-based LPMP (Educational Quality Enhancement Agency) as the central government proxy, which has done more in introducing tangible measures through long trainings and workshops for teachers in the province. Other efforts by local government did not seem to have been conducted in well-planned manners.

In addition, it is important to note that the introduction of the new 2013 Curriculum, which has taken some authority previously given to teachers back to the central government, seems to display the central government's gradual departure from decentralised to centralised mode of governance. Whether this would be translated into more measures and policies need to be carefully seen. •

Chapter Six

Epilogue

This book has revealed the implications of wide-range decentralisation upon education in Indonesia. Before embracing decentralisation, Indonesia underwent a long period of centralisation under the New Order regime. Nevertheless, while education achievement in quantitative terms might have been palpable with the increased number of students and elementary school buildings, qualitatively is generally not satisfactory, as shown by the low result of international tests such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and low rank of its Human Development Index. With decentralisation, Indonesia hopes that educational policy will be more attune to local needs with attention and corrective measures being applied quickly by the now more empowered regency and municipal governments. It should be noted that besides popular pressure for democratisation, neo-liberal international monetary agencies such as the World Bank and IMF have also applied pressure to the Indonesian government to transfer much of its authority to the local level. Two case studies of the provinces of West Kalimantan and Banten are presented in this book, providing us with the impacts of decentralisation on education by zooming into selected regencies and municipalities in the provinces.

First is about community participation. There seems to

be a shift of community or parental participation from BP3 (Operational Assistance Body) under centralisation to a more empowered school committee under decentralisation. This shift was powerfully endorsed by the central government; hence a 'top-down' initiative of decentralisation has characterized this process. Despite this, an earlier research shows how people enthusiastically welcomed this change as the school committee now has the power to supervise and to some extent intervene the policy of school governance, unlike BP3 whose function was clearly a mere fundraiser. Cases of regencies and municipalities in West Kalimantan and Banten show how parents are aware of their new authority and some of them tried to exert their influence towards school policy, but this is only exclusively for public regular schools in urban areas and restricted to individual parents with high education background, including among few reputable public *madrasahs*. The more we go to the periphery and to rural areas, the lesser the activities of parents would become. It was revealed that school committees were not fully functioning as initially expected. Their role is merely superficial to meet the need of the bureaucratic procedure in getting budget from the government despite the fact that parents are generally getting critical. They acted upon the interests of the school. Overall, the very essence of any discussion among school committee members and other parents is contained in the issue of parental financial contribution. In spite of the fact that school committee are empowered with new authority, the mindsets of members of both school committees in schools in urban and rural areas are still mostly confined to financial matters. Therefore, one might argue that school committee is a 'neo-BP3' but

with more often time consuming discussions and debates among members because of its new democratic flavours. Nevertheless, the positive side is that this more open atmosphere has also forced schools to be more accountable to parents, although this does not always mean that strong democratic principles are developing at school level.

Parental participation in private schools has taken an entirely different form. While school committee has also been formed, parental participation, if we would like use 'parental critical attitude' as a parameter, is much less that that in public schools. School committee at private schools are mere 'ornaments', this is because the role of foundation (*yayasan*) in private schools is strong and influential in designing school policy. Even the foundations of some reputable private schools are located in Jakarta as they steered all main policies of the schools through out the country. The low parental participation is not only because parents seem to have strong confidence towards few and reputable private schools, but also because parents have no choice when being confronted with policies already designed by school foundation.

Let's further reflect on how community participation is supposed to be also structurally formed at provincial, municipal and regency level in the form of education boards, which should consist of community members concerned with education. Translating community participation into structured bodies like these should help people's aspiration to be conveyed to the government or to exert pressure to the government. West Kalimantan provincial education board seems to run well thanks to the credibility of its members, but Banten provincial board is not running as expected

due to political obstacle during the member selection as many seemed to want to have a 'hand' in it. Many members of municipal and regency education board are also well-minded citizens, but whether the bodies could have strong influence upon the government very much depends on political will of the mayor or regent, who are in fact the most powerful figures in this era of decentralisation. This is not to mention that the operational activities of these bodies depend on subsidy from the governments. However, community participation is not always translated into formal or structural bodies like educational boards or school committees. In Banten, for example, the roles of individual initiatives and non-government organisations concerned with the deprived condition of education in the province were also obvious.

With regard to marketisation of education, this book looks into how marketisation is 'restricted' or 'mediated' with government intervention. This is after a period when market had almost an upper hand after decentralisation was launched, resulting in further limiting access to education to certain segments of society particularly the poor as the gap between schools in urban and rural areas was widening. However, the central government has intervened by providing BOS (school operational assistance) subsidy, particularly for elementary and junior high school level, to mediate market forces, which proved to be very helpful particularly for schools located in rural areas. All schools both private and public are entitled to BOS, and this somehow in some cases has created an 'uneven' competition between reputable public and private schools because private schools are still allowed to ask for monthly fee from parents while

public schools are not. Perhaps to score points against private schools, some public schools receive more students than they are supposed to do, limiting chances for private schools to receive more students. This is despite the fact that few private schools refused to receive BOS because their foundation forbids them to do so, but this type of school usually already has loyal market within society. This type of school usually offers people with education quality that has been proven over time. Parents with sound financial capacity would like to send their children there, although this is not always the case as few reputable public schools are also attractive to parents and students because of their prestige.

Demand for quality education is also felt stronger in urban areas, creating headache among school principals of public schools because they have to adjust their school educational activities to BOS funding, which is not always sufficient if they really want to enhance their school education standing. As a result, they would still ask for financial contribution from parents but of those whose children were newly registered students as an 'entrance fee' or in case-based need such as repairmen of parts of buildings, not in the form of regular monthly school fee. As long as the financial contribution is voluntary and with the consent of school committee and parents, the practice is finally regarded tolerable. In addition, the local governments attempted to contribute to school by giving additional subsidy called BOSDA (regional BOS). But the realisation of this local policy very much depends on local revenue and political will of the mayor or regent. In municipality of Pontianak, the government set aside their budget for

BOSDA, while municipality of Serang instead allows or pushes public schools to ask for financial contribution from parents of newly registered students. Although the regulation of municipality of Banten underlines the limit of the amount of money public schools can ask from parents, in reality some favourite public schools defied this regulation. This somehow shows that to a certain degree municipality of Serang pushes the education to a situation where market has an upper hand, though not in an extreme situation such as when the 'big bang' of decentralisation was launched. This is perhaps an unintended consequence as so much rests on the political will of the municipality of Serang to set aside their local budget for the development of education. Still, this subsidy effort of BOS by the central government is laudable, as this has widened chances of all segments of society especially the poor to education. Overall, this shows the central government's effort in striking a balance between centralisation and decentralisation, or to be more specific in applying a kind of quasi-market approach (see, for example, Vandenberghe, 1999) between liberal and conservative forces, but gradually pushing the country closer towards the social democratic type where social protection is provided by the state. Indeed, this new swing towards a sort of 're-centralisation' is certainly different than centralisation under the New Order, where politics was heavily centralised and controlled by the central government. Now the central government is more to assist the already autonomous local governments running their governance, but with rather centralised policy mode of delivery. In a broader comparative perspective, which includes not only education but also health sector, Singapore and Malaysia are moving

closer to the liberal type, while Thailand and Vietnam, like the case of Indonesia, are moving closer to the social democratic type of social protection system (Ananta, 2012).

Politicisation of education has been intense and in some cases uncontrollable. Both cases of municipalities and regencies in West Kalimantan and Banten show almost similar patterns. Teachers found themselves in a very disadvantaging and insecure situation every time local election is looming. Local bureaucrats are targeting teachers to mobilise them to support certain candidates due to the sheer number of teachers and their influence upon society. Those teachers or school principals who do not show loyalty or display dissidence would suffer from political repercussion in the form of being fired or transferred to an unfavorable place. Not only in municipalities and regencies in West Kalimantan and Banten as this practice has also been widely reported almost in many municipalities and regencies all over the country. However, this is not only the case of local bureaucrats exerting their pressure towards teachers, there is also the case of teachers making use of this political opportunity to advance their career. It is because of this that improper appointment of teachers to hold positions in local governments or as school principals due to their political intimate with the powerful rather than meritocracy have also been widely reported. In any way, this has brought immense distraction, as teachers have been distracted from fully doing their teaching. But what is equally worrying is irregularities in municipalities and regencies in Banten where local officials, members of parliament, even school principals or teachers became brokers to ensure certain children be accepted by certain favourite public schools.

It is noteworthy, however, that teachers of *madrasah* under the ministry of religious affairs were relatively sterile from local politics. This is because the ministry of religious affairs did not undergo decentralisation since according to decentralisation law religious affairs remained within the domain of the central government, but this does not restrict local politicians to try exerting their influence towards teachers of *madrasah*, such as in the case of municipality of Serang in Banten. In another case, this politicisation of education has also brought a stronger sense of territorial boundary, as in the case of municipality of Pontianak where the mayor vowed to 'protect' his territory from 'unwanted' students coming from other less fortunate regencies seeking better education.

This politicisation of education shows a degree of tensions surrounding the decentralisation of power. If we compare this politicisation of education under decentralisation to that under centralisation during the New Order regime, one thing is clear: education sector remains politically attractive for politicians to reap benefit from. The difference is that while politicisation of education was nationally uniformed with very clear vision of the central government under centralisation, now it is locally fragmented with unclear vision resulting from various vested interests among competing local politicians or bureaucrats under decentralisation. Under centralisation the politicisation of education somehow brought 'stability' and 'unity', but now more 'instability' and 'fragmentation'. Under centralisation, education was seen both as a venue for 'embodiments of national values' and as a source of 'political power', now more as a 'vehicle for exercising power' and 'political weapons' (see Fiske, 1996) with the prospect of instability or reduced

teaching commitment among teachers. This shows that what Hadiz (2011) describes as a ‘predatory attitude’ of local politicians under decentralisation has been well entrenched in vital sectors including education, undermining the very reform of education decentralisation itself.

With regard to local identity, decentralisation has helped push the emergence of exclusive identity politics at the local level. In politics it is often translated that local executive leaders should be local sons (*putra daerah*). How is it translated into school life? The case of municipalities and regencies in West Kalimantan and Banten reveal that local actors including educationalists supported the insertion of local cultures into curriculum, usually what is perceived as local language as a local content subject matter or traditional games and dances as school extra curricular activities. It is problematic to define what is really meant by ‘local’ languages or traditions, and in reality societal groups—religious or ethnic based—could compete to articulate their identity by trying to have a prominent place at school. In one case, however, because some ethnic groups regard themselves as equally prominent they would collaborate to articulate their local identities together in one modified dance performance. In West Kalimantan, for example, three major ethnic groups Chinese, Dayaks and Malays innovated a traditional dance that features their identities together, called *tidayu* (*Tinghoa*, *Dayak*, *Melayu* or Chinese, Dayaks, Malays). Other dancers who are supposed to represent other ethnic groups would later emerge to dance at the periphery of the stage, reflecting the multicultural West Kalimantan, and perhaps also the social layers of each societal group. This dance is popular and is often performed at schools during

annual art performance. Among all ethnic groups, however, it is the Chinese who seem to be more obvious in articulating their cultural identity with the mushrooming of Chinese language courses and the adoption of Chinese language as a local content subject matter in school curriculum and the enthusiasm of local youth to learn Chinese traditional music, particularly in municipalities of Pontianak and Singkawang. Cap Go Meh celebration has won full support from the provincial government, and the government-sponsored University of Tanjungpura also now has a formal course on Chinese language, which leads to a bachelor degree. It appears that the Chinese no longer regard themselves as foreigners, but local people along with Dayaks and Malays in West Kalimantan. The performance of *tidayu* dance, anyhow, reflects local contestation in defining what is meant by local identity in West Kalimantan, which has resulted in the blending of the identities of the three major ethnic groups.

In Banten province, this contestation of local identity is translated more in defining what is meant by local language as people in some areas speak Bantenese-Sundanese and in other areas Bantenese-Javanese. Up to know only school textbooks on Bantense-Javanese have been produced and would be distributed to schools in the municipality of Serang where native language is Bantenese-Javanese. But in other areas such as in the regency of Lebak, there is no such school textbook on Bantenese-Sundanese. They are forced to use school textbooks on West Javanese-Sundanese, which is considered different than Bantenese-Sundanese. Even in municipality of Serang, many schools also adopt West-Javanese Sundanese as local content subject matter, which is practically irrelevant since the native language is Bantenese-

Javanese. The absence of decisive local policy concerning the use local language has resulted in confusions among schools principals and teachers. Other schools use Qur'anic reading and writing as their local content subject matter since Banten's Islamic identity is quite strong. However, other local traditions such as traditional dances are celebrated in a more festive fashion. For example, Bantenese traditional dance competitions are held at school level, provincial level and at national level. This celebrative traditional dance competitions from the local up to the national level are held through out Indonesia including in West Kalimantan, bringing a sense of pride among participants, thus making possible what seems to be the fusion of the notions of local identities into national identities. However, defining what is meant by 'local identity' is still inherently problematic, how can we decisively define one group as 'local' and others not? In Indonesia's case, what is certain is that this country has radically departed from the politics of uniformity under the centralised regime under the New Order to the politics of multiculturalism under this decentralised regime, thus striking a delicate balance between attachment to local and national identities is inevitable. It also appears that it is the global movement of democratisation and decentralisation that have brought about the emergence of the awareness local identity, creating contestation among local societal groups to articulate their local identities. At the very local level, schools are a perfect venue for this contestation.

Finally, with regard to efforts to improve education quality, while educational budget has been massively increased and various initiatives have been taken including teacher certification program and education has been

devolved to local level in order to be sensitive to local needs, Indonesian education quality remained stagnant as shown by the poor result of the international standardised TIMSS and low rank of HDI, as explained earlier. This is among others because inadequate attention has been given to the comprehensive enhancement of teacher professionalism as most of the budget was in fact was absorbed for teacher salary, not for direct improvement of their professionalism. Furthermore, teachers have been distracted from their teaching duty due to intense politicisation by local politicians or bureaucrats, as explained earlier. This miss-management of teachers, which includes poor teacher distribution and questionable teacher promotion by local governments, has increasingly received more attention. A member of national parliament suggested that the authority regarding teacher affairs be returned to the central government, in this case Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Education and Culture and Ministry of State Apparatus, or at least to the provincial office (Berita Satu, 2013). This has confirmed Weiler's (1993) theory of decentralisation that at some points of time the central might be tempted to demand an evaluation of decentralisation, which could further demand a return of the authority to the central.

The result of the internationally standardised tests reveals the average student cognitive capacity, which is not really encouraging. The result of national exam, however, shows a gradual improvement. Unfortunately, national exam has been riddled with irregularities allegedly involving officials and teachers themselves, who are being pressured by local governments for not causing 'national embarrassment'. The ranking of HDI is more telling as it discloses the impact

of education upon the quality of life, which also displays steady improvement, but is still very much left behind even by Indonesia's neighbouring countries. The trends of the number of students and school dropouts illustrate the urban and rural educational circumstances, which were encouraging at the elementary level but not so much at the junior and senior high school level, so particularly in rural areas. Jalal and Sardjunani (2007) have also pointed out that literacy rates in urban areas are usually higher than those in rural areas, and the richest groups scored better. They wrote that while literacy rates increased simultaneously from 1995 to 2002 in both urban and rural areas, in 1995 'the literacy rate of the population aged 15-24 years in urban areas reached 96.5 percent in the poorest group and 99.3 percent in the richest group, while in rural areas it reached 93.0 percent in the poorest group and 99.3 percent in the richest group' (p.6). Indeed, existing class and other social divisions could hinder students to continue their education, particularly with inequalities remain between urban and rural areas, between the poor and the have, and between public and private schools (Naafs, 2012). It would be beneficial for next research to explore youth transition from secondary school to university or job market in more municipalities and regencies to examine the trends of the impact of education upon youth trajectories and their choices for their upward social mobility.

The dynamic tug of war between the central and the local over the extent of authority being devolved to the local level is legitimate as long as everyone is committed to formulating and achieving the best mode of governance. The

national examination and the current introduction of the new 2013 Curriculum displays an apparent swing towards centralisation, not in the managerial but more in pedagogical aspects, as an attempt to improve education quality in a more standardised manner. Furthermore, there are more programs to enhance teacher professionalism such as training and workshops as well as opportunities to continue study for teachers under this decentralisation era, but they are mostly provided by the central government through provincial-based LPMP (Educational Quality Enhancement Agency), not by the local governments. It appears that that the local governments still have no adequate capacity to provide sufficient trainings and workshops for teachers, which is to some degree understandable given the fact that the local government's capacity is limited in terms of resources and experience, though political will cannot be ruled out for local governments with relative high local revenue. In this case, teacher professional development provided nationally by the central government through LPMP needs to be continued, developed and diversified to cover not only most of pedagogical principles but also school managerial aspects. Education quality of *madrasah* also remain stagnant and to a certain degree is even left behind by regular schools due to the inability of the Ministry of Religious Affairs to provide sufficient resources and well-designed programs to enhance the professionalism of its own teachers. Efforts to improve the knowledge and teaching skills of its teachers need to be continuously improved. In the future, it would be worth thinking to put all educational institutions under 'one roof' as to avoid overlapping and to ensure well-distributed quality improvement.

Overall, with all this tug of war between the central government and the provincial and local governments, it would also be worth thinking to again devise and dispense the extent of authority much more proportionally among all layers of governments to ensure equal access for all and the best possible output of education. •

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EDUCATION — DECENTRALISATION — IN INDONESIA

Community Participation, Market,
Politics and Local Identity

Education decentralisation has been a global trend and many countries are experimenting certain degrees of decentralisation. As in the case of Indonesia, the fall of the New Order regime forced many to have lost the faith in centralisation, which had been a prominent feature during the regime. The decentralisation framework under the Law 22/1999 on regional autonomy was introduced in a 'big bang' fashion to a society that had been previously deeply accustomed to heavy centralisation. This book, using Indonesia's experience, scrutinizes the relationship between education decentralisation policy and its practice and simultaneously sheds light on critical debates and controversies within this field. Although education decentralisation has unfolded in various modes and is unique from one country to another, it has offered common promises such as the improvement in the area of efficiency in resource provision and the improvement of central government responsiveness to local needs with increased local participation. Therefore, the research findings of this book show valuable lessons not only for Indonesian policy makers, but also for those of other countries, and contribute to important debates within this field.

Prof. Dr. H. Abdul Mu'ti, M.Ed., Faculty of Education, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University.

The book discusses important aspects of Indonesian education policies: the impacts and consequences of decentralisation in the area of community participation, marketisation of education, politicisation of education, local identity and measures to improve education quality. This is an important book for us to critically reflect on how educational decentralisation is conceptualized and implemented to ensure utmost benefit for all stakeholders.

Prof. Dr. Ir. H. Fatah Sulaiman, S.T., M.T., Rector of University of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa.

This book is an urgent reminder that decentralisation has a profound and destabilising impact on local education in Indonesia. Uneven access to funding, a low performance in the field of quality improvement, the emergence of exclusionary identity politics, and, worst of all, predatory attitudes of politicians and the politicisation of local bureaucrats tend to undermine the foundations of education at the local level. Alpha Amirrachman analysed these processes with great clarity. His book is a powerful appeal to rethink once more the basic assumptions of educational decentralisation in Indonesia.

Prof. Henk Schulte Nordholt, Leiden University.

This book has uncovered the implication of decentralisation of education in Indonesia. It reminds us of how the degree of authority among all layers of governments should be arranged more evenly to ensure good governance and the best output of education.

Prof. Dr. H. Muhadjir Effendy, M.A.P., Coordinating Minister for Human Development and Cultural Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.

The author's analysis with regards to the impact of decentralisation of education on local education is important as lessons learned. Among others is the fact that wider public involvement of the formulation of educational policies is paramount to ensure the policies are implementable. Education decentralisation is perceived to have resulted in increased local participation, but this should also be accompanied with adequate knowledge and skills. Policy makers should use this book as a critical reference to ensure that local context and condition are taken into account.

Prof. Dr. H. Zainuddin Maliki, M.Si., Member of Indonesia's House of Representatives.

The book shows how the implementation of education decentralisation needs not only comprehensive concept of the policy, but also unyielding responsibility of the involved stakeholders with conducive environment. When it is implemented too hurriedly and without adequate public consultation, it would only bring prolonged unexpected impacts to education. This book is a notable contribution to the field of educational policy and implementation.

Prof. Drs. H. Suyanto, M.Ed., Ph.D., State University of Yogyakarta.