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Abstract

Chinese Indonesians are an ethnic minority who have settled in Indonesia since at least the 15th century who comprise 1.2% of the Indonesian population. From 1965-1998, Chinese-Indonesians became subject to various assimilationist laws under the rationale that this ethnic minority had failed to integrate into Indonesian society. Under Soeharto’s administration, Chinese-Indonesians had to give up their political and cultural rights, although they were allowed to participate widely in the economic sector.

This desk-based research studied assimilationist laws and their impact on the ‘development’ of Chinese-Indonesians by studying various laws and through the use of an online questionnaire to a sample of Chinese-Indonesians. At first glance, this ethnic group can be classified as ‘developed’ at least economically, however when investigated further, systemic political and cultural exclusion has harmed their full human development. The case of Chinese-Indonesians reflects Amartya Sen’s argument in ‘Development as Freedom’ (1999), that wealth is only one aspect of human development. However care should be taken when considering the Chinese-Indonesian case. Generalisations should not be made about the harms that can result from assimilation policies as they were formulated during the Cold War. Assimilation is still important but should not be coercive and ensure multiple identities (such as ethnic and national identity) can coexist. This research report also uses right to development as framework. It concludes that the right to development may not be inclusive to Chinese-Indonesians’ situations because it still narrow down development as ‘growth’.
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# Table of Contents

Abstract ............................................................................................................................................. ii  
Acknowledgement ................................................................................................................................. iii  
Table of Contents ................................................................................................................................. iv  
List of Tables ........................................................................................................................................ vi  
List of Abbreviations ............................................................................................................................ vii  
Chapter 1: Introduction ............................................................................................................. 1  
  1.1. Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 1  
  1.2. Research justification ......................................................................................................... 1  
  1.3. Objective of the research .................................................................................................. 2  
  1.4. Research questions ........................................................................................................... 3  
  1.5. Research Methodology ...................................................................................................... 4  
  1.6. Methods for this Study ..................................................................................................... 5  
  1.7. Ethical considerations ....................................................................................................... 8  
  1.8. Research Report Outline .................................................................................................. 10  
Chapter 2: Literature Review .................................................................................................... 12  
  2.1. Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 12  
  2.2. Deconstruction of Development: From Modernization to Freedom ..................... 12  
  2.3. From Human Rights to 'Right to Development' ............................................................ 16  
  2.4. The Emergence of Right-Based Approaches ................................................................. 21  
  2.5. Assimilation as a Development Policy or as an Obstacle to Full Development? .... 23  
  2.6. Assimilation as a "Development" Policy in Indonesia .................................................... 26  
  2.7. Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 27  
Chapter 3: A context analysis of assimilationist policies in Indonesia .................................... 29  
  3.1. Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 29  
  3.2. Under Dutch Colonial Period (Pre-1949) ...................................................................... 29  
  3.3. Under the Old Order (1945-1965) and the New Order (1965-1998) ....................... 31  
  3.4. Under Post-New Order (1998-2014) .............................................................................. 38  
  3.5. Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 43  
Chapter 4: Research Findings .................................................................................................... 44  
  4.1. Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 44  
  4.2. Demographics .................................................................................................................. 44  
  4.3. How The Respondents View the Assimilationist laws and Assimilation .............. 44  
  4.4. The Impact of the Assimilationist Laws on Chinese-Indonesian’s Ethnic Identity 47  
  4.5. Chinese Indonesian’s Human Development ................................................................. 50  
  4.6. Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 52  
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion .................................................................................... 54  
  5.1. Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 54  
  5.2. Cultural Rights ............................................................................................................... 54  
  5.3. Political Rights ............................................................................................................... 55  
  5.4. Economic Rights ............................................................................................................ 58  
  5.5. Assimilation as a development policy in Indonesia ...................................................... 59  
  5.6. From the Perspective of Right to Development ............................................................ 60  
  5.7. From the Perspective of Rights-based approach to development ......................... 62  
  5.8. Conclusion and Recommendations ............................................................................... 63  
References .......................................................................................................................................... 66  
Appendices .......................................................................................................................................... 73  
  Appendix 1: Informed Consent (English) ................................................................................. 73  
  Appendix 2: Informed Consent (Bahasa Indonesia) ................................................................. 77
List of Figures

Figure 1. Colonial Structure in Dutch East Indies ........................................30
Figure 2. Laws targeting Chinese-Indonesians based on sectors) .............35
Figure 3. Do you prefer to be called "Indonesian" or "Chinese-Indonesian" by
Indonesian natives? ..................................................................................45
Figure 4. How the respondents feel when interacting with people who still can
maintain their culture ..............................................................................50
Figure 5. Respondents’ level of education ..............................................51
Figure 6. Chinese-Indonesians’ preference over ethnic identification ........52
List of Tables

Table 1: Methods of Qualitative Research ......................................................... 5
Table 2: Research Methods ............................................................................... 7
Table 3: Laws targeting Chinese-Indonesians .................................................. 33
Table 4: Active Chinese-Indonesian Organizations ........................................... 39
Table 5: Respondents’ answer to question ‘How do you feel when interacting with Chinese-speaking people or those who are still able to maintain their culture?’ .. 48
Table 6: Online Questionnaire (English) ............................................................ 75
Table 7: Online Questionnaire (Bahasa Indonesia) ............................................. 79
List of Abbreviations

ASPERTINA  *Asosiasi Peranakan Tionghoa Indonesia* (The Association of Peranakan Tionghoa Indonesia)

BAPERKI  Consultative Body for Indonesian Citizens

GDP  Gross Domestic Product

HDI  Human Development Index

ICCPR  International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICERD  International Convention on The Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

ICESCR  International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

ICJ  International Court of Justice

IMF  International Monetary Fund

INTI  *Perhimpunan Indonesia Tionghoa* (The Chinese Indonesian Association)

MATAKIN  *Majelis Tinggi Agama Khonghucu* (The Supreme Council for Confucian Religion in Indonesia)

MDGs  Millennium Development Goals

PITI  *Persatuan Islam Tionghoa Indonesia* (The Chinese-Indonesian Islamic Association)

PSMTI  *Paguyuban Sosial Marga Tionghoa Indonesia* (The Chinese Indonesian Clan Social Association)

PSTI  Paguyuban suku Tionghoa Indonesia

RBAs  Right-based approaches

SBKRI  *Surat Bukti Kewarganegaraan Republik Indonesia* (The Certificate of Indonesian citizenship)

SNB  *Solidaritas Nusa Bangsa* (The Solidarity of the Nation-State)

UDHR  Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNCHR  United Nations Commission on Human Rights

UNDP  United Nations Development Programme

UNDRD  United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development

UN  United Nations

WB  World Bank
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