

# Etnoparenting: Strengthening Culture in the Sundanese Family

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**Abstract**—The study of cultural transformation in the family raises an interesting issue to research given that some cultures have a tendency to disappear because they are no longer used by native speakers. This article is the result of research that examines the maintenance of Sundanese culture through parenting in the family. Specifically, this research was conducted with the aim of describing and analysing; the perception of parents in young families on Sundanese culture; the process of implementing Sundanese culture by parents in everyday life; and difficulties faced by parents in implementing Sundanese culture towards children. Data were collected using observation, interviews and focus group discussions with experts in the field of Sundanese culture. Research was conducted on young Sundanese families in Bandung area who have the challenge of maintaining Sundanese culture as part of education in the family. The results found that; Sundanese young families have the view that Sundanese culture and language have positive values that must be maintained and applied in daily upbringing; the positive cultural value carried out in Sundanese young families is carried out through the process; modelling, habituation, development and appreciation; Some of the challenges faced by Sundanese young families in doing Sundanese culture-based parenting, among others; the assumption that Sundanese language and culture as a traditional, colloquial, and outdated culture, the use of Sundanese language makes it difficult to teach the language to children, tends to be rigid, and not egalitarian, and the use of Sundanese language in friendship and school environments has been reduced.

**Keywords**—parenting, etnoparenting, Sundanese culture, family

## I. INTRODUCTION

A study conducted by BPS in collaboration with ISEAS (Institute of South Asia Studies) has formulated that there are no less than 633 ethnicities and sub-ethnicities in Indonesia [1]. The two biggest are Javanese with 40.06% and the second are Sundanese (15.51%), while other ethnicities are still below 5% [2]. The Sundanese ethnic group mostly occupies the provinces of West Java and Banten. As a large ethnicity, Sundanese has a unique and diverse culture that has been passed down from generation to generation. Anthropologically, Sundanese culture is manifested in a belief system, livelihoods, arts, kinship,

language, science and technology, as well as customs systems. One of the important cultural elements that can be found in everyday life is the use of language. The number of speakers of Sundanese is estimated at 27 million speakers, which is the second largest number of speakers after Javanese with 75.2 million speakers and Betawi language with as many as 20 million speakers [3]. Even though quantitatively the number of Sundanese speakers is quite large, the use of Sundanese in daily life, especially in urban areas in West Java and Banten is decreasing.

The decline in the use of Sundanese as a means of communication in everyday life cannot be separated from the role of the family in early education for children. Family as the first environment known by children has a huge influence on the subsequent development of children [4]. From various studies on care in the family, it was found that education in the family also has an influence on student academic achievement at school [5], varied stimulation within the family can increase children's learning readiness at school [6] and good caregiving, positive which is characterized by positive changes in the relationship between parents and children in the family can reduce the level of depression in children [7].

Parenting for children is not limited to educating, guiding, caring for and caring for children, but also has a content that is full of social values and norms, building cooperation, responsibility, and independence. The process of obtaining all these things is obtained through intensive interaction with parents and other family members. Nurturing in Sundanese culture is carried out in a system of *silih asih* (loving each other), *silih asah* (mutually improving oneself), and mutual care (protecting each other) [8]. The meaning of these values is supported by the use of Sundanese language as a means of communication and interaction within the family. The family changes along with the development of society and the world. Global development, cultural acculturation, and cross-cultural interactions have an influence on changes in interaction in the family. The need for daily living needs, insurance, children's education, makes many families spend their time working [9]. The function of the family is also developing and becoming increasingly widespread, which is influenced by global conditions. This change in function causes interactions within

the family to become more limited, narrow, and brief. The family also undergoes changes in terms of social and cultural dimensions [10]. These changes occur due to the influence of other cultures or a changing social environment, which includes; (1) the function of the family changes, (2) the role of education is largely left to educational institutions, except for children who are still small, and (3) social activities that are fading away due to the growth of modern associations, both in the real world. and in cyberspace.

Sundanese culture is full of positive values. However, this culture can only survive if the Sundanese family is committed to nurturing, performing, and conveying the parenting process to the next generation. The study that Sobarna has conducted on its decline can prove that, even though the Sundanese ethnic group is large in number, it does not guarantee that Sundanese culture will survive. The level of use of the Sundanese language in the Sundanese family, according to one of them is due to negative views on Sundanese culture and language, in addition to the strengthening of the existence of the national language (Bahasa Indonesia) which was originally only used in official situations, has now led to an informal situation, including its use in family environment. Sundanese language is also considered less capable of keeping up with the dominance of the national language or foreign languages. This fact is exacerbated by the existence of a poor assessment of regional languages (especially Sundanese), which considers that regional languages are closely related to conservative and traditional things [3].

Parenting is a complex interaction between parents and children. Parenting is not only about health care, providing nutritious food, stimulating development, but also about transforming the value system adopted by the family [11]. Parenting is unique, so that each family has a different tendency to care for. In addition, cultural factors, other factors that are thought to have an influence on the process of caring in the family are the socioeconomic conditions of the family, especially education, and parents' work [12].

One of the main functions of the family is the function of education. Included in this function is the maintenance of a system of cultural values that is embraced and believed by the family and society. Since the beginning, the cultural value system was introduced by parents through an intensive process of interaction within the family, whether consciously or not. Children gain valuable experience in the first care in the family. Bronfenbrenner states that the family is a micro-system that has a major influence on subsequent child development [4].

Research on Sundanese culture and language has actually been done a lot. However, in a context that is more focused on parenting activities based on Sundanese culture, it seems that there is still not much to do. Therefore, the authors consider that this study is a study that complements various previous studies related to the development of Sundanese culture in the Sundanese community. Specifically, this research was conducted with the aim of describing and analysing; 1) the

perception of parents in young families on Sundanese culture; 2) the process of implementing Sundanese culture by parents in everyday life; and 3) difficulties faced by parents in implementing Sundanese culture towards children.

## II. METHODS

This article is written from the results of research using a descriptive qualitative approach with case study analysis from the results of observing carefully a function, role, and interactions that occur in a family that is limited in time and activity. A case study is a qualitative research method that intends to explore phenomena in a certain context using various data sources [13]. On the basis of this, the researcher made an exploration effort by interpreting and connecting various parenting phenomena that occurred in Sundanese families. The main informants were selected purposively with the consideration of the feasibility of the information obtained, namely three cases of young families of Sundanese ethnicity who consistently apply Sundanese language as a means of communication in daily life in the family. In addition, researchers also conducted focused discussions with expert on Sundanese cultural to clarify the meanings contained in Sundanese cultural phenomena.

Data collection was carried out through participatory observation, interviews and focused discussions, and documentation in the form of archival records. This research was conducted for five months to young families in Bandung City by conducting observations and interviews with parents. The observed aspect in this research is the habit of using Sundanese culture in daily life by parents, while interviews are conducted to explore aspects related to; Parents' understanding of Sundanese culture, the reasons for the use of Sundanese culture in everyday life, the methods used in implementing Sundanese culture and the difficulties faced in implementing Sundanese culture. To ensure that the data held has good validity, data checks are carried out through credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as well as triangulation and focus group discussions. The focus group discussion was held twice, presenting three resource persons who are experts in Sundanese culture. The aspects discussed at the meeting were; why there is a tendency of decreasing understanding of Sundanese people towards Sundanese culture, why many Sundanese people think that Sundanese culture and language is considered traditional, and why many families have difficulty implementing Sundanese culture in their daily life.

## III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### A. *Children Values in Sundanese Cultures*

Children have an important position in the Sundanese family. The presence of a child in the family is an important event which is greeted with a child birth ceremony called aqiqah, which is a term adopted from the procedures in Islamic culture in welcoming the birth of a child. Aqiqah is carried out on the seventh day after birth. On that day children are given names through a ceremonial process by cutting two goats for

boys and one for girls, if the parents have the ability. Before the birth process, the ceremony actually takes place during the pregnancy process. The ceremony is generally held at the gestational age of four months and seven months, there are even ceremonies that are held at the gestation period of 10, 11, and 12 months because the gestational age exceeds the normal gestational age. Pregnancy like this is known as pregnant like a buffalo (*sundanese*: reuneuh mundingen).

For the Sundanese, the care given to children does not actually start with the birth of the child, but is carried out during pregnancy. For a pregnant mother, there are several taboos that are culturally thought to interfere with fetal development, for example; should not see something disgusting, see disabled people, visit people who are sick and people who have died, and make pilgrimages to graves [14]. In urban Sundanese families, these taboos are not widely known by young families. They only believe that this taboo is considered a symbol of always doing good and taking care of themselves during pregnancy.

In the Sundanese society the expression "many children have lots of luck" (the number of children, there are also many fortunes in the family). This expression is currently considered irrelevant. Today's Sundanese parents believe that having children should be planned in such a way so that children are not seen as just an economic asset for the parents but as an investment that requires careful planning, especially in terms of education. It is not uncommon for young Sundanese families today to only have one or two children. This consideration is based on the awareness of parents that children are a trust / mandate of God who must receive good service so that they can live well.

Sundanese families are well aware that the first and foremost environment that shapes children's behaviour is family. Therefore, children must get proper care starting from the family environment. The family environment or known as the micro-system is the first environment known to children and will determine the next child's behaviour [15].

#### *B. Positive Value of Sundanese Culture in Child Care*

The preservation of Sundanese culture in some Sundanese families is still maintained. The maintenance is carried out through; use of Sundanese language as a means of communication, use of Sundanese terms, introduction of Sundanese songs, and introduction of other Sundanese customs. The Sundanese culture has values that are highly valued by the Sundanese people which are reflected in the proverbs of *silih asih* (loving each other), *silih asah* (improving oneself), and *silih asah* (mutual protection). Other values that are also inherent in Sundanese culture are the values of politeness, humility towards others, respect for elders, and compassion for the lesser, togetherness, mutual cooperation, and some. These values make Sundanese culture a culture that has its own characteristics among other cultures.

There are 5N positive values taught in Sundanese culture, namely *Nyunda*; show self-identity as a Sundanese person who

is friendly, humble, and socially sensitive; *Nyalindung*; show themselves as God's creatures who are obedient in worship, maintain good relationships with others, are involved in environmental care, *Nyantika*; show a person who knows ethics, manners, is polite when speaking, can bring himself to various social strata; *Nyeni*; shows a person who likes art, has an artistic spirit, and is able to express thoughts and feelings through art, and *Nyakola*; show yourself a smart and logical person when thinking, careful and wise in attitude. This defines respecting differences, being responsive to change but holding fast to one's own culture. This condition is a challenge for parents to continue to instil the noble values of Sundanese culture in the midst of the onslaught of westernisation and millennialism.

*Nyunda*; use Sundanese words for children, and teach in implementing it in daily activities such as *punten* (expression of apology), *nuhun* (expression of thank you), *mangga* (answers to expressions of gratitude), and *muhun* (expression of agreement). *Nyalindung*; always teaches the concept of divinity through creation, surrender but not lose, faith, sportsmanship and peace. *Nyantika*; applying *sabilulungan* as a noble value of Sundanese culture, by teaching uptake of proverbs that are in accordance with daily life and explaining to children some of the basic Sundanese cultures, namely "*Sarundeuk, saigel sapihanean*" which means helping each other in dealing with the problems at hand. *Nyeni*; introducing Sundanese culture to children such as comedy dramas, pupuh, Sundanese songs, Sundanese musical instruments and Sundanese art figures. *Nyakola*; Sundanese cultural stories are used as an educational process that teaches children about history, and the beginning of something happening, *Nyakola* activities also teach and introduce children to the history of Sundanese culture, on the implementation of educational programs that have been implemented in the Sundanese region by introducing the program of *silih asah, asih and asuh* (educate each other, love each other, and help each other).

For families who continue to use care in Sundanese culture, it is carried out in various forms, namely; 1) modelling, 2) habituation, 3) development, and 4) appreciation. Modelling means that parents interact with Sundanese culture, including by using Sundanese language with the closest people, especially with all family members. Modelling is one of the main ways to shape early childhood behaviour [16,17].

TABLE I. POSITIVE VALUES ON PARENTING

No.	Positive Values	Example of behaviour
1.	<i>Silih Asah, Asih dan Asuh</i>	teach each other, love each other, help each other
2.	<i>Nyunda</i>	polite, friendly, humble, helpful
3.	<i>Nyalindung</i>	diligent in worshiping, praying, maintaining friendship, loving the environment
4.	<i>Nyantika</i>	work together, care for others, have a leadership spirit
5.	<i>Nyeni</i>	singing, appreciating art, maintaining art, and developing art

Table 1. Cont.

No.	Positive Values	Example of behaviour
6.	<i>Nyakola</i>	smart, logical minded, open to change, innovative, creative, and thirst for knowledge
7.	<i>Cageur</i>	maintain physical health, exercise
8.	<i>Bageur</i>	like to help, prioritizing the public interest, willing to sacrifice, without strings attached
9.	<i>Bener</i>	honest, brave, responsibility, ready to take risks
10.	<i>Pinter</i>	smart, collaborate and collaborate, easy to convey ideas
11.	<i>Singer</i>	skilled, agile, proficient, and fast in completing work

Habituation is a strategy to strengthen individual behaviour. In families who apply the positive value of Sundanese in the family, habituation is carried out starting from waking up to waking up. Some forms of habituation are used to say greetings, thank you, apologize, speak politely, and others. In addition, another form of habituation is watching Sundanese language television shows, listening to Sundanese stories and songs, and attending special Sundanese cultural programs. Habit is intended to ensure that positive values are repeated so that they become habits. Habit is also a form of familiarity to get to know new situations through giving stimuli repeatedly [18].

For Sundanese families who are committed to maintaining Sundanese culture, the application of culture is carried out by developing thinking through writing or making Sundanese language stories, composing Sundanese language songs and developing Sundanese activities, both in the family or through the community. Community gives strength to individuals in the family in applying or maintaining beliefs, so that the family does not feel alone in applying their beliefs [19,20].

Cultural appreciation is also carried out as a strategy to strengthen Sundanese culture in children. The appreciation is carried out in the form of involvement in Sundanese cultural events, including their children in Sundanese culture-based competitions, participating in Sundanese ceremonies, and using Sundanese art tools.

### *C. The Challenge of Parenting Based on Sundanese Culture*

Understanding the value of Sundanese is the basis for parents to apply Sundanese culture in their daily life. In young Sundanese families, it turns out that many young parents do not fully understand the meaning and values of Sundanese. Instead of looking for a complete understanding, the Sundanese family is looking for an easier way to replace terms and procedures in Sundanese culture with terms and procedures in Indonesian. The use of Indonesian is considered easier to use as a communication tool. Sundanese young families are also accustomed to using Indonesian as a social language outside the home, so this habit is also used inside the house. This is what is then feared will be a disaster in culture, namely the loss of user's care for their own culture. Therefore, parents should

understand and realize that Sundanese culture can only survive and develop if parents apply it in everyday life [3].

The use of Sundanese in everyday life is indeed full of challenges. The habit of using Sundanese in the family is not supported by the surrounding environment and schools. Generally, most of the places around Sundanese families in urban areas use Indonesian as a social language. Whereas the social environment after the family that has a major influence on children's learning development is the school environment and the surrounding community environment, known as the meso system [21].

In addition, parents also feel that there are difficulties in teaching Sundanese language to their children. The structure in Sundanese is considered impractical. Some word / language pairs are used differently for oneself and for others, based on one's age and social status. The structure of the language is considered feudal and opposes the current and demands of democratization and egalitarianisation of society.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Sundanese culture has positive values that should be maintained through the transformation process from generation to generation. These positive values are reflected in the philosophy and habits of behaviour, both towards God as the creator of the universe, towards humans, and towards the surrounding environment. Efforts to maintain culture are started from the family environment through a process of modelling, habitual behaviour, development, and appreciation. Maintenance efforts also need to prioritize important values contained in culture and occupy them in the contemporary context.

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