

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Indonesia is a rich country. Not only the nature, but also the ethnicity and culture. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics census conducted in 2010, the majority of the Indonesian population is derived from the Javanese, which accounted for 40.05% of the total population of Indonesia, which is then followed by the Sundanese by 15.50%, while the other tribes are less than 5% of the total population of Indonesia. This shows that Javanese culture is the widest culture adopted by the people of Indonesia.

Culture is the whole package of the beliefs, morals, laws, knowledge and all abilities and habits obtained by an individual as a member of the community and cannot be separated from the pattern of community activities. Culture has many forms, such as: first, culture transforms into idea value, and norms of the society. Second, culture transforms into activities or patterns of behaviour in a society. Third, culture transforms into human creatures. These forms are concrete because they are the whole thing of creatures, activities, behaviour, and attitude of a person in the environment (Koentjaraningrat, in Prayogi & Danial, 2016).

Initially, Javanese people are divided into four different types based on the languages used. The majority of the people in the capital city of Jakarta speak Betawi-Malay dialect. Most of people in Central and Southern parts of West Java speak Sundanese, while people in the Eastern and Northern parts of West Java speak Madurese because they are inhabited by immigrants from Madura

Island, and people speak Javanese in the other parts of Java. However, the Javanese language used in the four regions above are very different, so it is referred to as the Javanese are people whose native language is the Java language which can be found in the region of Central and East Java because Javanese and its true meaning can only be founded in Central and East Java (Suseno, 1985).

On the other hand, Western World or in Indonesian is better known as Dunia Barat or Negara Barat, according to Trubetskoy (2017) can be defined based on three perspectives, namely:

1. *The Latin West*, is a group of countries that is historically formed by the Christian West, which is known as Catholic and Protestant by now, as well as using the Latin alphabet.
2. *The Cold War West*, is a group of countries that politically against the Soviet Union and adhere to the same ideology which is democracy, based-on-law countries, upholds human rights and equality.
3. *The Rich West*, is a group of countries with more than \$10,000 revenues based on the World Bank estimation in 2016.

Indonesians use the word “bule” more often to refer to Westerners. According to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), the word *bule* originally came from the word “bulai”, which is used to refer to people whose whole bodies and hairs are white because of the lack of pigmentation. However, as time goes by, the word *bule* which was previously used to refer to people with Albino experienced a generalization of meaning to be a term of white people, especially Europeans and Americans, or who are often called Westerners. Franciska (2017) explained that the word *bule* began to be used to refer to

white foreigners in the 1960s after being popularized by Benedict Anderson as a substitution for the word *mynheer*, which literally means “lord” that has been used in colonial or former colony countries.

According to the website www.seputarpernikahan.com (no date), Javanese people are known for their modesty and also uphold politeness. Besides that, according to Hofstede (in Nadar, 2007), Javanese people are known as non-individualists as indicated by the need for each individual to feel close to other people and realize the element which can lead into the damage of the togetherness of their surroundings. This principle is called the principle of harmony.

Likewise stated by Suseno (1983), the principle of harmony does not mean that Javanese people have no personal interests. Upholding the principle of harmony does not mean providing oneself with a minimum of personal interests and rights, but as a manifestation of social concern for a community. However, in fact, Javanese are well-known for their ability not to directly say negative or unpleasant things that they feel.

Stated by Anugerah (2016), this Javanese culture is certainly very different from Western culture which most of Westerners do not like small talk in conveying something, both positive things such as praise and appreciation, and also negative things felt by Westerners. They assume that not expressing something clearly will only waste time.

Besides the language, sex is something that is considered as common in Western countries. As quoted on Liputan6.com (2016), in the Netherlands, there is a unique culture which parents will allow their children to stay with their lovers. This culture reaps some pros and cons among some people who are not

only Dutch. Mostly parents in the Netherlands believe that by getting into a sexual experience with a lover will make their children wiser in terms of living and decision making.

The situations above are slightly very different from the reality in Asia, especially for the Javanese people in Indonesia. According to Brauer (in Roqib, 2007), on the perspective of Javanese people, sex is something that is sacred, glorious, used for a living and it is for maintaining the harmony in the relationship of husband and wife. As stated by Chong in an Australian online magazine, *Meld Magazine* (2013), mostly Westerners assume that sex is a beautiful thing, in which even people cannot wait to discuss their experiences with other people related to sex. While sex as a taboo is rooted in Asian culture in general.

Especially in Indonesia, there are many Indonesian women who are in committed relationship with Western men. This phenomena is seen differently by Indonesian. Just said by Keisa (2016) that being in a relationship with a Westerner means that they should be prepared to accept the negative image from their surroundings in Indonesia because most Indonesians believe that being in a relationship with Westerners is always related to free sex.

The same thing was felt by Desi (2013) that was revealed on her personal website. Besides the stereotype about free sex, Desi also described some unpleasant experiences when she was dating Westerner, such as being called materialistic, not nationalist, slut, and even looked down by the hotel and restaurant staff. Not only a few of Indonesian who think that she was a housemaid or a baby sitter.

In addition to the situation above, the researcher also found a different phenomenon, especially in Semarang, Central Java. Based on the interview conducted by the researcher with one Western man on November 11th, 2018, there is a unique community in Semarang in which all its members are women who stay in Semarang. This community is unique because the purpose of each members who join this community are finding *bule* as a lover.

A *bule* who is also an interviewee said that he had been in a relationship with one member of the community. Although it did not last for long enough because of the infidelity that he experienced, but it could make him understand that sexual satisfaction and not being in a long distance relationship (LDR) are not enough to maintain the relationship, even though he had assumed that he had tried to be a good partner. Just at that moment he was too quick to make a decision for being in a relationship although they had not known each other well.

The differences value and point of view are revealed by researcher from an interview on January 18th, 2019 with Javanese woman in Semarang who currently in a committed relationship with Western man. This woman and her family see religion as a guidelines in their lives. Therefore, her parents asked her significant other to be a religious person if they are planning to get married and it has to be in Indonesia. On the other side, marriage is not very important for her partner because they can just live together and rise kids in interpersonal commitment without any religious practice involved. It is difficult for her to persuade her partner but she keeps trying.

Another Indonesian woman who are in a committed relationship also told the researcher that it was difficult to have different point of view towards

lifestyle. Her partner tends to be very serious about life, while she liked going out every Friday and enjoying life after working hours. She loves her partner but in the other hand, she also wants to enjoy her life for being financially independent and catching up with friends every Friday. They are now still in a progress of dealing with this situation.

A Javanese woman who has a relationship with a *bule* will face the differences in various aspects such as mindset, values, point of view in seeing a phenomenon and many other things. With lots of cultural differences, habits, and thoughts, by all means everyone must have the ability to overcome every problem that might appear in a relationship, one of the ways is to adjust. Self-adjustment includes two things, changing themselves according to the environment in which is called autoplasic adjustment, and changing environment according to the one's own desires in which is called alloplastic adjustment (Gerungan, 2002).

According to Schneider (1964), self-adjustment is a process of an individual in dealing with problems or demands both within themselves (frustration, tension, and inner conflict) and from the outside so that the harmony can be obtained. Likewise Fatoni (2006) said, self-adjustment is a continuous interaction with oneself, others, and the environment, including the ability to make plans and organize responses in order to deal with the conflict efficiently, so that the peace of mind and body can be achieved and be able to have good relations with oneself, other people and the surroundings.

Based on the phenomena that exist in Semarang, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "The Dynamics of Javanese Women's Self-Adjustment to Committed Relationship with Western Men". This study will

reveal the dynamics of self-adjustment of Javanese women who are in a relationship with men from Western countries. The subjects of this research will be Javanese women who are in their early adulthood.

1.2. Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe and analyse how Javanese women adjust themselves into a committed relationship with Western men from a psychological perspective.

1.3. Benefits of Study

1.3.1. Theoretical Benefit

The theoretical benefit of this study is for the development of social psychology about self-adjustment in international relationship.

1.3.2. Practical Benefit

The practical benefit of this study is the exposure of knowledge about the dynamics of self-adjustment of Javanese women who are in a relationship with Western men.

