THE RELATION AMONG ETHNICS IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ETNOGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT

The relation of ethnics refers to interaction among different ethnics (interethnic) or interaction in the same ethnical groups (intraethnic). The correlation of ethnic in this chapter focuses on the correlation among ethnics (interethnic). The relation among ethnics or peoples has been the main issue discussed in many countries whose citizens are from multi ethnics. Groups of ethnics building "social border" among the ethnics are potential to create conflicts among them. Social border among ethnics can also cause dissatisfaction which is represented by particular social actions that can lead the people to open and bleed conflicts. An example of real ethnical conflict occurred in the ex-United of Yugoslavia, where a business of an ethic causing destruction to other ethnic and consequently led to the ruin of the country.

Key words: *cultured capital, habitus ethnography, higher educational institution*

Introduction

Ethnical correlation is a very important issue in a multiethnic country such as Malaysia. There are steps of ethnical relations which are represented under the condition of unity and disarray among different ethnics. In the context of Malaysia, since the early period of being independent, especially after ethical conflict in May 13th 1969, the kingdom has taken drastic steps to nurture the unity among the people of multiethnic. It includes repairing the basics of education in which unity is its main agenda. Nonetheless, after making the basics of unity become the country's agenda, the issues on ethnical relations remains exist. Zainal Kling, who realizes the approaches to achieve the objective of national unity formulated, "...those approaches have not been able to achieve the expected unity" (1996:16).

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There is an assumption that serious ethnical polarization is still present in the society of Malaysians including the young generation. Therefore, this chapter will describe the result of a critical analysis from a discourse of habitués ethnography on the relationship of the students at a State Higher Educational Institution (IPT) of this country. The discourse has been done by Amis Hassan (2004).

Education for Unity

Educational system in the Federation of Malaya since the era of pre-independent has had a macro objectives for achieving the unity among ethnics. The statement of Razak in 1956, for example, has become a reference for the basics of this country's education after the independence. Razak stated in 1956 as the following:

> We believe that basic objective of the lessons in this country is the effort of unifying people of all ethnics in this country by implementing one lesson regulation covering all ethnics by using national language as an enormous language of instruction, even though it cannot be instigated simultaneously, yet in process.
> (Federation of Malaya 1960)

National unity has become the basic in Razak's statement. The statement of Razak has been discussed previously by Rahman Talib (1960). The statement of Rahman Talib also emphasizes the importance of education as a means to achieve the unity. The 1961 Educational Certificate has conveyed most of the statements of both Razak and also Rahman Talib. The 1961 Educational Certificate has brought national system of education by concerning on the development of culture, social, economy, and politics. In the 1961 Educational Certificate, the basic of National Language, which is Malay Language, has become language of instruction in schools as one of the means to pursue the unity.

The report of Cabinet Committee in 1979 also put the main objective of education which is achieving the unity in the society of multiethnic. It emphasizes the construction of curriculum containing some important subjects that are compulsory taught at all schools. Important subject such as Malay Language is obligated so as multiethnic students can improve patriotism and national unity. "Unity" has been specifically defined to comprise feeling, emotion, sentiment, behavior, and value. At school, students are educated to develop positive values which are expected to strengthen the unity. School curriculum is the 'reference' that can build the characters and personality of young generation according to the expectation of the Kingdom. The report of Cabinet Committee in 1979 highlighted the following objectives of national education:

- Achieving national education
- Producing qualified workforces for building the country

- Achieving educational democratization
- Planting positive values

 (EPRD 1993)

The result of the report of Cabinet Committee in 1979 is the conception of the Country's Educational Philosophy which was initially implemented in 1987. The Country's Educational Philosophy has conveyed the elements that can plant the unity in multiethnic society, especially through the implementation of pure values which are also inserted in educational curriculum.

In 1991, the Prime Minister of Malaysia for the period had decided the country's objective to be a developed country through The Vision of 2020. The ideology conveyed in The Vision of 2020 is not free from the objective of achieving the country's unity. The first chapter of The Vision of 2020 clearly states," to accomplish the unity of Malaysia having common objectives and pursuing them together, it has to be a safe country integrating its areas and peoples, living in harmony, cooperating totally and fairly and being supported by one nation of Malaysia having political faithfulness and dedication to the country" (INTAN 1994).

The Vision of 2020 has stated many changes in educational field. In 1996, several certificates related to education have been accepted by the Parliament. Among those certificates are 1996 Educational Certificate, 1996 Private Higher Educational Certificate, 1996 State Higher Educational Institution Certificate, and 1996 Certificate of State Accreditation Foundation. No matter any change occurs, the basic of education remains strengthening the objective of unity. 1996 Educational Certificate clearly highlights the importance of education for unity which is in accordance to the principles of Pillars of the Nation (the country's basic regulation). 1996 Educational Certificate states:

> National language as the main language of instruction, national curriculum and language for testing; the education delivered is varied and the scope is comprehensive and meeting the need of the country and planting the country's unity through the development of culture, social, economy, and politics in accordance to the principles of The Pillars of the country (the country's basic regulation).

Commonly, the implementation of the basics of macro education for multiethnic unity in the level of school is conducted through the curriculum and the co-curriculum activities. For instance, the kingdom uses the same curriculum and text books for all schools. In the field of co-curriculum, the students are suggested to interact through students' clubs and associations. At schools, teachers have a role of being a socialization agency to implant the unity. Peer interaction of different ethnic is also expected for constructing common understanding.

After the country's independence, educational system has been given a big role to achieve the objective of unity. Educational system through National Language and centered (common) curriculum is expected to provide experiences aimed at socializing the students to the direction of the unity. Therefore, based

on the basics of education for unity after independence, the unity among young generation is supposed to be achieved. Guided by the education for unity at schools, the problem of 'ethnic' is not supposed to be a problem again when students are educated and graduate from their schools. Students at schools, universities, and other places are not supposed to show polarization anymore. Nevertheless, there are factual problems related to "the unity of young generations". Consequently, a detailed analysis needs to be performed. The analysis needs to exactly recognize the form and the reason causing the relation of different ethnics remain to be an issue.

The Unity in Multiethnic Society

The mass media of the kingdom frequently shows the people that multiethnic society of Malaysia is a unified society. Mass media such as television and radio play songs under the theme of unity. Politicians of the government always mention that Malaysia is the best example of multiethnic society performing the unity. Big days such as Religious holiday, Chinese New Year, and Deepavali are characterized by the event of 'open house' which is claimed as the evidence of the unity among the people. Hence, from what shown to the people, it can be inferred that actually there is no gap or problem occurring among ethnics in Malaysia.

Though general description shows that unity exists, but lately 'ethnical polarization' in the society of Malaysia is not a problem that can be ignored. Research and media analysis found that started from the end of 1999 until 2002, the issues on ethnical polarization or 'racism' is mentioned very frequently by many people. There are some incidences occur in the society showing that polarization is a serious problem. There are some incidences in the society reflecting the level of unity in our society. Lately, there are so many persuasions to the unity spoken by political leaders. It shows that 'polarization still happens.

The incidence of 'ethnical' conflict occurring on Jalan Kelang Lama in March 2001 has been claimed by many people as evidence that the gap among multiethnic people in Malaysia still exists. The incidence of ethnical conflict initially reported on March, 4th 2001 and continued until almost a week causing 6 people killed and 44 people seriously injured (Paramessivan 2002). Though this incidence cannot specifically related to the division among 'ethnics' which is a 'big' incidence or 'trivial case' since the cause was a 'small' incidence, but the effect has been causing the issue of 'ethnic' seems so 'big. There are also some people saying that the unity programmed so far is not real and it is only a mask. The minister of the Country's Unity, in an interview, for example, confessed that the unity in Malaysia especially among the young generation is only a cosmetic. "Yes, it is only at the level of make up, there is no feeling coming radically..." (Mingguan Malaysia, March 18th 2001).

The statement of the minister above is something serious to think over. Since the statement coming from somebody who has an authority on things

related to unity, it shows that there is no real unity among ethnics in Malaysia. Moreover, his statement saying that the unity among young generation is only at the level of artificial indirectly refers to those who are still being educated at schools.

Ethnic based polarization can also be related to religion. In religious day celebrations, such as at the end of 2001 when people were about to celebrate Idul Fitri and Christmas, there were some people saying that central government is discordant and hotels prioritized the celebration of Christmas rather than of Idul Fitri meanwhile Christmas came after Idul Fitri. Moslem Unity claimed that it was an action of prioritizing Christmas and putting aside Idul Fitri and they considered it as "too much" (Mingguan Malaysia, December 9th 2001). So many people stated that this action disgraced the celebration day of the 'majority' ethnic in Malaysia and it could lead to dissection.

The issues on polarization of macro society have a correlation to what happens in educational world. There are some people 'pointing' to educational system for not implementing integration in education. There was also a political party blaming national school (Malay School) which has impeded the integration because the school seems to have an intention to 'Islamize' or at least make the students who are not Malay to be 'Malay like'. The schools of Chinese and Tamil were also claimed as ignoring the unity. There was an idea of reviewing the educational system. Argumentations appeared. Some people wanted to have schools with only one flow but some others wanted to continue the existing educational system. Besides that, there were also ideas of implementing the mix of 'ethnics' such as the program of integrated schools and Visionary schools. But those ideas seem to always be prolonged polemic.

The dissatisfaction on the mix of education can be seen from the following examples. In 1999, a group of Chinese ethnic through Suqui Committee has stated what we call as The Appeal of Chinese Association Election Malaysia on August 16th 1999 (http://www.suqui.org). Such appeals frequently show dissatisfaction among Chinese people towards ethnical relation in Malaysia. Suqui stated that the existing Basics of National Culture is based on single culture (Malay Culture). Therefore, the basic is an obstacle of the development of multiethnic society. Also in the educational field, they claimed, the 1996 Educational Certificate is not fair towards mother tongues especially for Chinese, Indians, and other minority ethnics of this country. There are many more demands touching the problems of minority ethnics such as an ultimatum of removing quota for enrolling students to university.

At the end of 2001, serious claims related to integration at schools appeared. The Association of National Education (NUTP) had claimed that there was a separation of students caused by 'ethnic' in ten out of a hundred schools in Malaysia. This claim has raised a polemic, conflict, and blame especially between NUTP and the Ministry of Education. NUTP, for example, has been claimed for "lying" (Utusan Malaysia, December 21st 2001) and "there is a hidden agenda"

(Mingguan Malaysia, December 23ʳᵈ 2001). The issue is getting hotter when other sides such as political parties, professor, non governmental organization (NGO), and the Association of Parents and Teachers (PIBG) each of them give their own review. In the meantime, the NUTP defends its claim by reviewing 200 schools where some students are separated; the schools consist of 125 elementary schools and 75 middle schools. Besides the claim of separation based on 'ethnic', NUTP also claims that 60.000 Malay students have enrolled Chinese Nationality Schools which are claimed to ruin the role of national schools as the agent of integration (Utusan Malaysia, December 24ᵗʰ 2001). The issue of students' separation had forced the Ministry of Education to form Independent Commission for implementing strategy to cope with this problem in 2002.

Also, in the level of Higher Educational Institution (IPT), there was a claim of polarization among three main ethnics which are Malay, Chinese, and Indian. The claim was around the issues such as hundreds of students of one ethnic did not want to mingle with students of other ethnics. Students prefer being together with others who share the same ethnic to being with those who do not. The interaction with others who do not belong to the same ethnic is limited to academic activities and university programs such as field visit, projects, and recreation. Ethnic polarization was shown when university students did not want to accept the basic of "the association of multiethnic" as being implemented in University of Malaya started in May 2000 (Utusan Malaysia, June 8ᵗʰ 2000).

There are some other problems showing that ethnic polarization does exist in IPT. Among all is concern on the establishment of Tunku Abdul Rahman University which tends to be "Chinese", concern on the establishment of ethnic and nationality based associations, concern on the establishment of more private higher educational institutions (IPT), the issue of language use, and other issues revealing that educational system needs to be reviewed. But, if it is looked closer, the issues are discussed more at macro level and general. Most of the claims are not completed by concrete facts. If the discourse existed, it is only at the level of ad hoc. The data on "polarization" which is said to exist in universities, for example, is still argued for its truthfulness and sample. Special commission formed for reviewing the claim of students' separation based on 'ethnic' was only given eight weeks to apply the strategy and prepare their report. Even though the review was done by experts, there were still some problems causing the report to be doubted by particular people. Then the problem of the society in Malaysia which is about integration or polarization remains to be an issue.

Based on what has been discussed, it is so real that ethnical relation is an issue needed to be seriously thought. There was a question of whether ethnic polarization really exists or not. Is there any evidence? The claims of "ethnic" polarization among young generation need to be proven. Is the spirit of "ethnicity" among young generation still substantial? Why do students of different ethnic at Higher Educational Institutions lack of interaction? Is it true that there are some people who still put racism into practice in educational system? So far, there is

no explanation or evidence on the cause of the occurrence of ethnic polarization. If polarization or racism really exists in Higher Educational Institution, what causes it? What does exactly happen in the institution? Those problems need to be reviewed based on the issue of polarization appearing among students of universities and the effort of finding the causes of it. This chapter tries to view the relation of ethnic issues which can lead to ethnic polarization in accordance to the perspective of those who are studying at higher educational institutions (IPT).

Literature Review

Viewed from the perspective of sociology, functionalism theory can probably explain the functions of education in creating harmony in the society. The basics of education are designed to lead the people to unity. Nonetheless, the issue will appear again when the basics do not meet the objective expected. The objective of unity will not be achieved if polarization among the society still remains. To solve ethnic polarization, the theory of conflict will also correlate the polarization to the causes of economy, status, and power. The basic related to economy will cause social imbalance. Too much attention on academic achievement, for example, will cause the ignorance of unity accomplishment.

The sociology of interactions also emphasizes the importance of symbol and meaning as basic components in understanding how social life is formed and carried out. The perspective of interactions views an individual starting the process of socialization since he/she was just born. Since childhood, a child will interact with the first socialization agency which is family. The child is formed according to the guidance of each family. In the context of multiethnic country of Malaysia, each ethnic has its own way to raise children. According to the view of interactions sociology, the socialization accepted in family will construct self concept of an individual.

The child then will be sent to school. In elementary school, there are three main ethnics, which are Malay, Chinese, and Tamil. When the child enters middle school, the majority of the students will follow the nation. As has been mentioned, one of the important roles of school is as socialization agency to achieve educational system expectation. In middle school where various ethics are available, the probability of conflict to occur among students of different ethnic is high. And so is university level. What is actually the problem stimulating conflict among students? Is the conflict coming from the outside of educational institution or from the interaction among students occurring inside of the institution?

Generally, the theory of functionalism views ethnic polarization as temporary incidence. In contrast, the theory of conflict views polarization as something permanent since it is caused by the structure of the society belonging to ethnical groups. There is an association of micro and macro sociology to analyze the inner and outer influence of an issue. According to sociology approach, the causes of a phenomenon is correlated one another.

There is a particular method employed by the experts on sociology and ethnic in reviewing ethnic relation. Schemerhorn (1970) revealed a theory on interactional forms between dominant and subordinate groups in the society. He has stated particular variables for discussing the correlation between the dominant and subordinate groups which are relevant in the quantitative discussion of macro sociology.

This chapter focuses on the discourse of Amir Hassan (2004) who applies the theory of habitués and cultured capital stated by Pierre Bourdieu in discussing the causes of polarization in a public higher educational institution in Malaysia. The discussion is carried out by applying ethnographic qualitative. The theory stated by Pierre Bourdieu is found to be more relevant with the discourse objectives and is used very frequently in the discussion of educational sociology. Pierre Bourdieu has stated the theory of habitués and cultured capital in analyzing social phenomenon (1973, 1977, 1996, 1998). Following this theory, cultured capital has an important role in influencing the actions of social agencies. Generally, the discussion of Amir Hassan (2004) tried to investigate ethnicity occurring in educational institutions based on the interaction of the students and its relation to what happens outside of the educational institution especially following the theory of habitués and related cultured capital.

Capital is a result gained from particular field. There are different forms of capital such as economy, culture, social, and symbolic. According to Bourdieu (1998), cultured and economic capitals influence human life a lot. But for him, the field of education has more influence in the supply of cultured capital more than economic capital. Therefore, the discussion of Amir Hassan (2004) emphasized cultured capital meanwhile other capitals are outside of his discussion.

Bourdieu (1998) also emphasized that an individual's action is influenced by micro and macro factors. Habitués is anything inside of oneself resulted from the process of socialization. The place where socialization occurs is called as a field. Someone's habitués is formed as the result of cultural achievement such as in educational field. Cultural achievement from the field will be cultured capital and have a power toward the action of social agency. Fields are different one another. Therefore, each habitués gains unique cultured capital.

Habitués needs to be viewed in the context of the field. When an individual is in a new field, the habitués will encounter the process of adaptation; it will also accept something new, refuse or receive part of it. Frequently, what structured to the social agencies through cultural achievement will be a trajectory to the actions of social agencies. According to Bourdieu (1996), social trajectory needs to be understood uniquely as an adventure through social room where the disposition of habitués is expressed.

In the context of ethnic polarization discourse among students at higher educational institution (IPT), the habitués of the students have probably been formed based on cultured capital from different fields. Cultured capital influencing the habitués of social agency will be the trajectory of the individuals. If the habitués before entering university is combined trajectory, then there

will be a probability of the students having the behavior which is a combination among ethnics. If someone's habitués conveys particular ethnicity, then at higher educational institution his/her character of 'racist' will continue. Higher educational institution is a new field for social agencies. Does the field at higher educational institution have conducive atmosphere for acculturation? How far does the institution provide cultured capital that can continue or form the habitués to the direction of acculturation?

Based on the theory of habitués and cultured capital by Bourdieu (1998), Diagram 1 described the conceptual framework of the discourse. Based on the diagram, the discourse is started by designing the patterns and the forms of ethnicity at universities. The patterns discussed occur both inside and outside of the university. Next, the factors of ethnicity are analyzed by using the theory of habitués and cultured capital as the basic. Field is the place where cultured capital is gained. The causes of ethnicity are also gained in the field of university or other fields before entering university. Cultured capital gained will influence the habitués of an individual which then influences ethnicity behavior. Up arrow shows trajectory of the agent which probably conveys the trajectory of ethnicity.
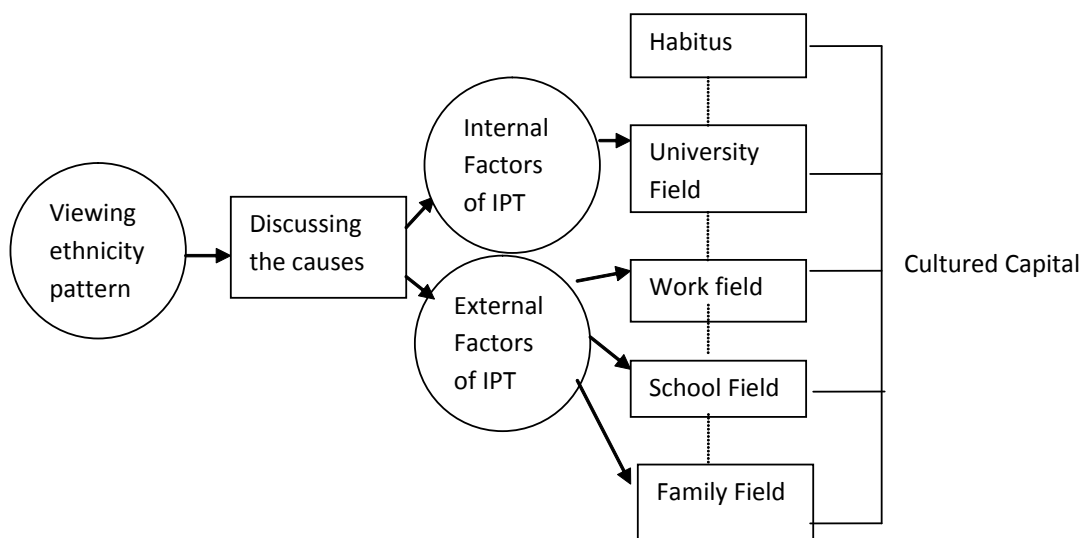

Diagram 1 Conceptual Framework of the Discussion

This chapter discusses the result of Amir Hassan's study (2004) which is new and in the level of exploration in Malaysia. It is because the study emphasizes micro aspect of students' interaction which is related to macro aspect. The study is different from any other ethnic study in other subject done in macro scope in Malaysia previously. The study is an effort to well recognize the pattern of ethnicity and other factors influencing it which is related to the theory of habitués and cultured capital by a famous expert of educational sociology, who is Pierre Bourdieu.

Methodology:

The Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is analyzing the patterns of ethnicity shown by the students of higher educational institutions from three main ethnics – Malay, Chinese, and Indian when they are interacting. The concern on ethnicity patterns can represent things called as ethnic 'polarization'. The study is aimed at analyzing the relation of ethnics among students at public universities. The students observed were from three main ethics which were Malay, Chinese, and Indian. Specifically, the problems of the study are as follows:

1. How is the interaction among ethnics which show the patterns of ethnicity at public higher educational institution?
2. What is ethnicity form of a particular ethnic towards other ethnics?
3. Is it true that polarization is a problem of university students?
4. How far does the factors at university influence interaction patterns between one ethnic to another?
5. How is the role of socialization agencies outside of the university structuring ethnicity?
6. How does the relation between factors at university with what happens outside of the university influence the habitués of ethnicity?

The Formation of the Study

This study is a discourse of sociological education based on the habitués and cultured capital. The formation of the study is habitués ethnography which is always applied by Bourdieunian. This ethnography study was conducted in a place to find out ethnicity phenomena deeply. Ethnography study is a kind of habitués investigation analyzing many data sources and collected those in a rather long time so it is resulted in a new understanding on the phenomenon studied (Gillborn 1995).

Concept and Term

"Polarization is a term used quite frequently for describing the inexistence of acculturation or the existence of 'disarray' among different ethnics. Marshall (1994) defined polarization as "the tendency towards concentrating at two opposing extremes observed by sociologist in a large number of diverse contexts". However the definition does not refer specifically to racism or ethnicity. Generally, the word 'polarization' is not clear in the vocabulary of western racism study. For this study, the problems assumed as 'polarization' in Malaysia are included in the study of racism and ethnicity issues.

Plural society is defined as, "a society in which several ethnic groupings coexist, each living in communities or regions in which largely separated from the others" (Giddens 1993: 759), or "any society in which there exists formal division into distinct racial, linguistic or religious groupings. Such distinctions may be horizontal or vertical" (Jary & Jary 1995: 495). Based on the related definitions,

the main element constructing a plural society is the existence of different ethnics and races as the components of a society. Two words which usually become main problems are the word "ethnic" and also "race". Race is defined as "differences in human physical stock regarded as categorizing large numbers of individuals together" (Giddens 1993:760). A group of ethnic is defined as "a group of people sharing an identity which arises from a collective sense of distinctive history" (Jary & Jary 1995: 205). In discussing the difference between ethnic and race, the concept of race will categorize people based on physical characteristics such as the color of skin, the form of hair, nose, and other physical aspects. Ethnic will also differentiate people based on cultural characteristics such as belief system, economy, tradition, and other characteristics of culture. Based on the definitions used and also historical background of the development of Malaysia citizens, the difference of groups in this country is based on cultural characteristics. Therefore, this study employed the society of Malaysia as a society consisting of multiethnic or multiethnic society.

Racism is a term used largely by people in Malaysia. In some writings in Malaysia, polarization is always related to racism. The word racism is used largely in western academic writing especially because the society is based on the difference of racism. Among the definitions of racism, the one that is used largely is:

Any action giving opportunities to achieve individuals success from particular group of race or ethnic, which is based on or legitimated by a belief of ethnic or race group inherited and low from the side of morality, culture or low of intellectuality. (Foster 1990:5)

The combination of discrimination and prejudice are directed to groups of ethnic whose race is different from the dominant groups. (Gollnick & Chinn 1990:92)

Both of the above definitions show that racism is a discrimination and prejudice toward other ethnic. The dominant group is claimed to practice racism to the minority groups. Nonetheless, the condition of western society which is studied a lot has certain difference from the society of Malaysia. In United States of America, United Kingdom, and Australia, racism in the form of oppression based on skin color is real since the difference of skin color is so subtle. For example, there are Black, Asia, Hispanic, or Afro Caribbean skin colors (Gillborn, 1990, 1995; Omi & Winant 1994; Schaefer 2002).

In the situation of Malaysia, the society tends to be ethnical since the majority o the people is from Asia. So, the definition of "racism" which only refers to skin color justification or the domination of majority towards minority is not quite correct. As an addition, the mastery of a field does not only involve majority to minority, but also minority to majority. So because the society in Malaysia is based on ethnic, this study tends to use the word "ethnicity" more than "racism" which generally refers to any action prioritizing his or her own ethnic. Ethnicity is shown by elements such as prejudice, and discrimination toward other ethnics.

In this study, the definitions of the terms used for ethnicity are as follow (Gillborn 1990, 1995; Jary & Jary 1995; Cashmore 1996; Feagin & Feagin 1996):

Persecution	: Any action having physical implication such as fighting, hitting, and firing
Skepticism	: An action of mistrust towards an ethnic such as was-was, doubtful, prejudicial
Discrimination	: Difference in service or being unfair towards different ethnic such as giving different treatment based on ethnic.
Ethnocentric	: Having a view of supporting, prioritizing, choosing one's ethnic both implicitly and explicitly such as choosing one's ethnic as the leader of the group.
Disturbance	: An action causing emotional impression but does not cause physical action such as fighting or riot
Insult	: An action or bad words addressed to other ethnic including reproaches, condemnation, gestures, or using icons.
Group	: A real action of being together only with those belonging to the same ethnic.
Less Cooperative	: Lack of cooperative relationship among different ethnic such as does not want to share notes.
Prejudice	: Looking down at other ethnics or making a generalization on a particular ethnic like considering an ethnic to be lazy.

The Basic of Unity and Issues at Higher Educational Institutions

The government in England colonial era had never thought that there would be many higher educational institutions in Malaysia. Therefore, the problem of unity or polarization in the level of higher educational institution at that time was not an issue. After being independent, the basics and certificates of the state's education until 1990s only emphasized the basic and objective of unity at schools. Main expectation of the basic is to implement integration in the level of young age in elementary and middle schools. So, the role of curriculum, co-curriculum, and pure values for cultivating unity are emphasized more in the level of school.

After independence, the basic regulation of kingdom has given opportunity for the growth of many public universities such as the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur (1961), Mara Institute of Technology (1967), Science University of Malaysia (1971), Malaysia University of Technology (1975), etc. Though, in the level of higher educational institution, there is no special certificate touching the basic for unity. Different from school, universities do not have common curriculum and co-curriculum. From curriculum side, the students are separated following their own department or faculty. The same course is followed by all students, but the students also join stadium general provided by the university as it is provided by Islamic and Asian Society Committee or Public Educational Center. Yet, those courses do not have special objective of improving interaction among ethnics (read university courseware: University of Malaya 2001; also Mohamad

Sabri Haron and Mohd Arip Kasmo 2002). Each university has its on rules and teaching learning system. In short it depends on the university itself whether it will implement the basics for cultivating ethnic unity which usually becomes part of the students' responsibility of each university. Therefore, it is assumed that the unity in public higher educational institutions is on the expectation of trajectory from the basics of unity at the level of school.

Educational certificates accepted in 1996 have given an opportunity to the institutions to grow. The institutions are in the forms of universities, college universities, college, twin programs or franchise. There are particular issues related to the polarization caused by the development of private higher educational institutions. One of the issues after 1996 was about the language of instruction in higher educational institutions. Local higher educational institutions are supposed to use Malay language as the language of instruction since 1983, yet today private institutions can be said as running from language objective if they use English as the language of instruction. It shows that as if National Language Certificate is not used anymore in private higher educational institutions. In addition, today, there are also some public higher educational institutions which use English as the language of instruction. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, for example, plans to use English as the language of instruction in 50 percent of the offered courses (Utusan Malaysia, March 28th 2002). This issue of language in the long run probably will have an implication on the existence of two main educational flows previously used, which are Malay and English. Abu Bakar Nordin (1994), for example, stated that race polarization both in schools and higher educational institution improves when the people choose the institution based on its language of instruction. Therefore, if at the beginning of the independence the state's educational objective was to unify the citizen through common language, now because of the globalization, this objective really needs to be implemented.

The issues of education in general and higher education in particular are more interesting to talk by any side. Their views are expressed as reported by some mass media. Even though most of media reports are not based on empirical studies, yet this big news is so important in the context of today's issues. There is possibility of mass media influencing the thought of the people. In the context of the role of mass media in ethnicity issues, there is a study of how news represents particular ethnic and reading news can arouse the spirit of "racism" (Zainal Mohd Jais 1996).

The followings are the results of some analysis on media that can explain the involvement of media in offering issues related to ethnic. In the effort of achieving unity, the issues argued as if shows that there is huge conflict among the three main ethnics in Malaysia. One of the serious issues is the mastery of English of Malay students claimed as the cause of high employment among graduates of Malay. But this problem is denied by many Malay people by saying that English is not the main cause of unemployment but it is related to the domination of Chinese ethnic in private sector. They expressed their experience in big forum,

for example someone who claimed himself as a graduate of England and has been working in multinational company for more than 10 years said," the issue of English language is not the main problem of Malay students not having jobs yet it is more to the problem of racism which is practiced by the management who are not Malay" (Utusan Malaysia, May 16th 2002). Other person said," Race discrimination is the reason of native unemployment" (Utusan Malaysia, May 20th 2002). Other opinions concluded and claimed that Malay graduates are unemployed not because of their incapability of speaking English but because of the discrimination of Chinese ethnic who prefer taking their own ethnic as workers (Utusan Malaysia, May 21st 2002). It is added also by the issue that some employers have particular conditions such as the ability of speaking Mandarin and from Chinese ethnic is considered as discrimination towards Malay graduates. Moreover, the deputy of Prime Minister for that period, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said that giving a condition of being able to speak Mandarin and being from Chinese ethnic as the discrimination of Chinese people toward other races (Mingguan Malaysia, May 19th 2002).

The critics on the incapability of speaking English of Malay graduates and the influence of globalization prioritizing the use of English causes a plan of using English as the language of instruction at schools and universities. This drastic plan has invited various reactions from certain people. Many universities stated that they have been proactively running the regulation, including UKM, UPM, UITM, and UPSI. There are also some associations such as Malaysia Linguistic Association, The Association of Malaysia Translator, Malaysia Science Academic, National Writers Association, Malaysia Islamic Young Generation, Students' Association of Melayu Semenanjung, National Islamic Students Association of Malaysia, Malay Teachers Association of West Malaysia, and Historical Association of Malaysia stated their worries on the future of Malay language if English is considered as more important in educational system.

The implementation of meritocracy in Public Higher Educational Institutions in May 2002 also brought ethnical issue in it. Even the Minister of Education at that time considered that conflict among people on meritocracy system as "racism" (Daily News, May 14th 2002). It becomes an issue when there is meritocracy system that has caused the increase of the number of indigenous/native students entering public higher educational institution which is more than 55 percent needed by the previous quota system. The Ministry of Education announced 68.9 percent of students entering public higher educational institution at the month consisted of indigenous/native students. If the quota system is considered as not fair, meritocracy system is not considered as fair if the condition of entering public higher educational institution is dominated by one ethnic compared to other ethnics. Matriculation system and science basic is said to give opportunity more to native students to enter public university. One of those who concerns on this issue is the manager of DAP party and the president of Movement Party.

Meanwhile, certain parties among Malay people are upset when the basic meritocracy causes Malay students to have low performance especially in the critical fields of IPTA. Non-Malay students, especially Chinese students are said to keep mastering the critical fields of knowledge. Indian ethnics also feel dissatisfaction. Indian political parties such as MIC judge the meritocracy system as disadvantaging for Indian ethnics. Therefore, the 56th National Meeting of MIC has required that the meritocracy system returns to its original form in order to give more opportunities for Indian students in entering the world of IPTA.

The problems with matriculation, STPM, and science have brought about an idea of having a single university student entrance examination. The Movement Party supporting the full administration of meritocracy has recommended that the checking of STPM and matriculation be conducted simultaneously. The former Counselor of USM, Datuk Dr. Ishak Thambi Kechik considers that the three systems—STPM, matriculation and Science Center—are not appropriate for diverse society and create more suspicions between "ethnics" (Utusan Malaysia, May 22, 2002). However, the Foreign Alumni Association UMNO rejects any efforts in manifesting one single system of student university entrance examination because the indigenous people who are still left behind need to be helped (Utusan Malaysia, May 23rd, 2002).

Based on that matter, there's a suggestion for all schools to be in one system before it can be implemented in a university. There is an intention from other party to have schools joined in one system and afterwards, one type of assessment can be implemented. But this suggestion is still arguable. MIC President, Datuk Seri Samy Vellu continuously argued the elimination of education system based on nationality, and also the MCA party (Daily News, June 3rd , 2002). Meanwhile, the movement of MCA's Selangor woman gave suggestion to the kingdom to implement equality system in recruiting students to IPTA, and in the same time ask for more Chinese schools to be established (Utusan Malaysia, June 3rd 2002).

Answering the critics towards matriculation that is thought to be "beneficial" only for the indigenous people, the kingdom has opened matriculation program for non indigenous. Ethnic conflicts and debates are getting clearer when the kingdom opens a quota of 10% for non indigenous students to join matriculation program and MRSM starting from 2003. The main reason proposed by the kingdom in implementing the policy is "to allow indigenous students to compete with other ethnic" and for the long term goal is to strengthen ethnic integrity". There are some parties welcoming this decision. MCA president at that time, Datuk Seri Ling Liok Sik, for example, thought that the decision was "historical" in the national education system (Utusan Malaysia, June 3rd 2002). Meanwhile, Malay people are more diverse in accepting the decision. Many non Kingdom organizations see that the decision is suspicious. For example they have asked a delay for the opening a 10% quota of MRSM for the indigenous people (Utusan Malaysia, June 5 2002). Professor Diraja Ungku Aziz considered Steps in opening matriculation

program and MRSM to non native is a political step or decision. According to him the reason of giving opportunity to Malay students for competing and achieving national integration is something political (Mingguan Malaysia June 9, 2002).

Ethnics which are represented by political parties bring also the issue of IPTS in their conflicts. It is well known that the number of students of Malay in IPTS is only about five percent. This small number of students has triggered the UMNO members to promote the idea of equalizing in terms of proportion or quota between students of Malay in IPTS and IPTA (Daily News May 23 2002). They also claim that the less number of students in IPTS seems to be political. According to them, many Malay students are banned to enter some strategic departments in IPTS. They also claim that the less number of student in IPTS based on the Unified Examination Certificate (UEC) which is not following the national curriculum. Among private universities, Tunkku Abdul Rahamn Collage, New Era and Southern Collage accept this certificate.

The conflict is getting worse when UMNO members demand the government to give ten percent quota to those students from the native of Malaysia. However, this is against by the leader of MCA at that time, Datuk Ser Dr. Ling Liong Sik. According to him, if this happens, only few of non native of Malay or other ethnics get the opportunity to study at the collages (Mingguan Malaysia Jun 9, 2002). If this happened, he could be blamed to be arrogant and seems that only Malay who has the right to promote the issue of national integration and parties of other ethnics in contrast. The student association of Malay Semenanjung (GPSM) has blatantly criticizes the University of Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) for its racism action. This problem has led the prime minister to take action by ordering them to have a dialogue to solve the problems.

The analysis of the media toward the issue of ethnocentrism in education has been also brought to the educational institution especially those in universities level. Political parties also make this issue of representativeness as their commodity in political practice. This is also clear that since the independence, the main conflict among ethnics is also caused by their politic interest in education sector. IPTA for example, has so far been dominated by the Malay and IPTS is dominated by the non-Malay students. Certain ethnics who are not satisfied with their representativeness in both universities urge for the addition the students' numbers from their ethnics. Something ironic is the fact that education has so far been claimed to support the nation integration, however, the real fact show it in contrast.

Ethnocentrism In University

The issue of ethnocentric has its special concern in terms of definition. This definition of ethnocentric, in this sense, refers to an attitude of a giving a privilege to a certain ethnic. This idea of ethnocentricity also appears in the daily interaction among university students in Malaysia. Most of ethnics in Malaysia which tend

to show their group specialization are Malay, Chinese and India. Arriving for the first time in the university, most of respondents in this research who are students of the university tend to interact with their own ethnics. In the classroom, the one who becomes a discussion partner and in some other academic activities are mostly those who are from the same background of ethnic. However, there might be a chance for those Chinese to interact and collaborate with other ethnics when no one from the same ethnic or less than expected is found.

Instead of ethnocentrism in terms of ethnic, other ethnocentrism may occur in the context of regional territory. Many of the students also being so ethnocentric based on this area or regional territory. Some of the students work only, in their academic business, with those friends coming from the same area like East Malaysia, East Coast, West Coast or based on regional territory like Kelantan, Kedah, Johor and so on. However, this kind of ethnocentrism is not the focus of this study. Therefore, it would not be part of discussion in this research.

Skepticism

Skepticism in this context is a feeling of suspicious to other group of people in the society. In the middle of Malay ethnic, the skepticism toward the Chinese ethnic is mostly caused by their unfamiliarity toward the language the Chinese ethnic use. In the academic world like at school, many Chinese talk with their peers in their own language. This fact has caused a multi interpretation from other non Chinese ethnics which finally ends with a mockery from those students out of this ethnic (Chinese). According those Chinese students, the use of their own language in their social interaction is due to their "comfort feeling" in using the language itself. So, no matter what other students say, they seem to find this language use better in their interaction with their peers of Chinese.

This skepticism sometimes appears among ethnics in their social interaction. Most of Chinese are skeptical towards the other groups of students like from India and Malay. According to them, when an Indian does good things to a Chinese in a classroom, for example, the Chinese would see this as a "threat". This means that they think that the good attitude shown by those Indian or Malay have something to do with things like ask them some answers of certain tasks and so on. The same fact also experienced by students from other ethnics like India and China who might do the same things as those Chinese do.

The issue of ethnocentrism is also dealing with "political business". It is believed so far that many lecturers in university levels prioritize Malay students in every project they have or in the practice of teaching and learning in the classroom. When there is a student from other ethnic like Indian or Chinese is given a "reward", a political business seems to be in the mind of many other students are higher than Malay's students. This assumption is taken from their seniors and colleges in other universities. Therefore, they apply strategies such as

group works in Malay groups with names of Malay's students. Moreover, there are also suspicions from the Chinese and India towards university management that employ discrimination.

Discrimination

How far does the discrimination towards non Malay by lectures or university prevail? Respondents from this study stated that they do not realize or responsible of the discrimination by the lectures and university. The discrimination by lectures can be considered a minor case. Hence, in can be concluded that the accusation of discrimination is distrustful and cannot be proven by strong evidences.

Prejudice

The Other prejudice actions toward different ethnics are occurred in the university. Most of the prejudices that happened are prejudice on religions. They consider other religious activities as unbeliever acts from their theological point of view. Those kinds of prejudice are hampering Malay ethnic to blend with other ethnics.

On the contrary, the Chinese ethnic have their own prejudice towards other ethnics. They consider the Malay and Indian Ethnic as lazy, untidy, and relaxed people. The occurred judgment happens because the Chinese ethnic belief that Malay ethnic has too much dispensation. They think that the rights and ease of enrolling into a university in Malaysia are not simply based on their achievements, but more on their status as Malay ethnic. Furthermore, they also consider Malay ethnic are less intelligent. Thus it is difficult for them to accept Malay students as their roommates.

In addition, they also belief that they do not need to study Islamic studies such as Islamic society, the course is not beneficial for them. Thus, they believe that the course is destined only for Islam students.

Collaboration Aspects

There are less cooperation occurs between Malay ethnic and Indian ethnic. They only work together in a pinch. They do their assignment as a group because their lecturer said so, not because they want to work together in that group. In the dormitory, they tend to choose their roommates based on their ethnic background. They, for instance, use religious service as their alibi to choose a roommate.

The Malay and Indian ethnic consider Chinese ethnic as more diligent and intelligent. In particular cases, they often ask help from the Chinese ethnic to help them with their assignment. However, the Malay and Indian ethnic regard the Chinese uncooperative, and they do not want to help them with their assignments. The common term for addressing the Chinese ethnic is "nerds" and they are also considered as arrogant and unfriendly.

Meanwhile, for the Chinese ethnic, they regard themselves as independent and they tend to work better with their own ethnic. There is a probability that the Chinese do not want to help because of their competitive traits and they have certain rivalry particularly with the Malay Ethnic.

The Causal Factors of Ethnic Polarization in the University

One of the purposes of this chapter is to observe the serious problem of polarization ethnic in Malaysia state universities. The research conducted by Amir Hasan (2004) shows that although the university students realize about the polarization, but they consider the phenomena as a common thing and it is not crucial. The respondent believed that it was not a big problem to be debated since it has been considered as the students' ways of life. The research is also indicated that there are two causal factors of students' ethnic polarization; they are Students' Factor and University Factor.

Students' Factor

The choice of roommates becomes a prominent factor from the beginning of their enrollment; they were badly wanted to choose their roommates based on the same ethnic. They have the alibi that they can freely and comfortably interact with the same ethnic. Moreover, the students also think that they can cooperate better with the same ethnic.

The distrustful attitude has additionally become the other factor in choosing their roommate. The non-Malay students think that state universities in Malaysia are identify with Malay ethnic. Thus, the Chinese and Indian students have a certain fear that they will be excluded if they commune in a Malay dominant environment. The case triggers them to find their roommates based on the same ethnic. The research indicated that there is a less effort students to tighten ethnical relationship. Malay students lack of showing welcoming attitude towards minority ethnic of Chinese and India when mingling their groups. Meanwhile, minority ethnic of Chinese and India do less work to assimilate themselves in the majority groups.

Grouping is not considered as racism by the respondents. Therefore, there will be no feeling guilty if they are in the same ethnical groups. Moreover, there is the influence of senior colleagues in implanting ethnocentric feeling to junior students, especially in Chinese students. This can also be in line with other ethnic groups.

Students' language mastery can also contribute to the interaction level among ethnic groups in university. Chinese students who always complain about their weaknesses in Malay language make them have less socialization with other ethnic groups. Most of Chinese students utilize their own dialects that are not understood by other students from different ethnics. Students from Indian ethnic are able to master Malay language better than Chinese students, which then allow them to make better interaction with Malay ethnic.

University Factor

University factor plays an important role in tightening ethnic relation among students in Higher Educational Institutions. However, the study of Amir Hasan (2004) in a local public university finds that there are no specific courses related to or emphasis on the interaction and the ethnic combination in the university. The available courses in the university do not include ethnic relation aspects, except for one part of education sociology.

Co-curriculum programs in university do not require acculturation among ethnics in the co-curriculum activities in the university. This may be because the purpose of the co-curriculum activities is not to mix racism. From the observations, the lecturers do not also put emphasis on the interaction among different ethnic students and there are no instructions and specific learning activities which are designed to promote interaction among different ethnics. The university also gives lack of recommendations on specific discourse dealing with ethnic interaction during the week. For example, university student handbook in 2002/2003 provides no activities or programs enhancing interaction or acculturation among different ethnic students. College management in the university allows the grouping of the students based on their similar ethnics.

Other Factors:

Meritocracy and Quota Factors

Malay respondents are not sure whether to accept meritocracy or to continue quota system. The reason to accept meritocracy is to be observed more equal towards other ethnics. Meanwhile, the reason to continue quota system is for the sake of Malay and special rights of Malay people in education and scholarship. Malay respondents also fear the effects of long term meritocracy such as the competition in which Malay students cannot compete to get a position in Higher Educational Institutions.

Privileges of the Malays

All Malay respondents are defending the privileges of the Malays. Chinese respondents also consider that these privileges are unfair and the government runs this overwhelmingly. Indian respondents also comment that these privileges should be reduced in order not to interfere other ethnic interests.

The Malaysian Concept

Only a few respondents realize the concept of Malaysia. Malay students do not agree if the concept of Malaysia generalizes the rights of all ethnics. Chinese respondents are also pessimistic to the formation of Malaysia due to priority to the Malay. They will accept the Malay based on the existing ethnics.

Mixed Marriage

Mixed marriage concept is accepted by Malay ethnic with the condition that other ethnics have to be Islam follower. Chinese respondents do not accept this concept due to barriers of family, culture, and religion. Indian respondents cannot move to Islam due to mix marriage.

Socialization Agencies Outside Universities

The study of Amir Hasan (2004) explores how socialization agencies outside Higher Educational Institutions influence the attitude of one ethnic to other ethnics. His study finds that the role of socialization agencies outside the universities such as experience in schools, family, residence, religion, work, colleagues, community and media will influence respondent attitude. There are some factors related to one another. For example, religion might be closely related to family because someone will generally follow the same religion in the family.

Based on flow structure in elementary schools, there are isolated students who follow ethnic, especially those who attend Tamil or Chinese Ethnic Schools. In the secondary level, there are a number of Chinese students who attend at Chinese Secondary Schools. Therefore, there are used to grouping to the same ethnics in the level of elementary and secondary. Majority of Malay students attend national schools. For Indian students, they spend most of their time interact with Malay students due to their attending national schools.

Peers at schools usually consist of the same ethnic. Therefore, the students are getting used to their own ethnic and probably cannot make close friends with students from different ethnic. Indeed, most of students at schools have limited interaction with students from other ethnics. Even though there are interactions, but they are limited to the situations in the classroom.

The use of different language by each ethnic has also possibly influenced the ethnic groupings. Chinese students use Chinese language (Mandarin or Hokkien) and Indian ethnic students use Tamil language. The interest and predilection of the different ethnics may also differ in terms of academic subject selection, curriculum selection (for example, games, clubs, and sports) and also topics of discussion.

Learning styles and academic achievements may also influence the interaction among ethnics. Normally, Chinese students are considered to be wiser and more diligent in studying so that they tend to learn together with students from the same ethnic. There are also negative views or stereotypes among ethnics that result in separating one ethnic from the other. Most teachers are found to be unable in playing their roles in improving interactions among ethnic students because they are also in group with their own ethnic groups.

In addition to school factor, family aspects, religion, location, partners, and experiences of parents at work may also influence the polarization of university

students. At home, the language used is the mother tongue, which is the language coming from each ethnic. The respondents have been used to interact with family from the same ethnic and interaction with other ethnics may be limited to the neighbors, classmates, and daily activities. Family may also play an important role in spreading negative stereotype towards children from other ethnics. There are housing complexes special for Melayu kampong, Chinese kampong, real estate, etc.

Religion facto may also separate certain ethnics. Most often, religious staff especially the problems of what is *halal* and *haram* of Islam has separated ethnics. For example, Muslim Malay students probably will not be willing to live in the same room as Chinese or Indian students because of the differences in terms of religion rituals and food. The same case is also true for Chinese and Indian students who are not willing to live with Malay students.

Job experience factor of parents may also affect children attitude. Chinese and Indian parents consider jobs in the public sector are for Malay ethnic. Indeed, they feel discrimination by the King of Malay people. The same case is also true for Malay people who work for Chinese companies who feel discrimination in terms of salary, promotion, etc. The feelings of these parents who once experienced discrimination are inherited to children so that children suspect other ethnics and bring with them prejudices until they enter the universities.

Conclusion

This chapter discusses ethnic university students' relationship from the perspective of *habitus* ethnography and cultured capital. Based on the ethnography study by Amir Hassan (2004), the term "polarization" has created misunderstanding in the society. Even though there are parties who deem polarization as problems, university students have different opinions. They consider polarization as the society way of life or the culture of multiethnic Malay society in general. They do not consider ethnic as racial. Integrity can also take the shape of polarization. Even though there are polarizations shown by the grouping of ethnics, there are also groups showing tolerance and understanding among others. In other words, they can solve the problems raise by the differences in principles among each other.

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