

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The interest in research about mixed racial descent has increased rapidly in the past few years (Rocha, 2018). Because of globalization, the number of mobilities and migration gets higher resulting in mixed-race, mixed ethnicity, and mixed heritages (Urry, 2012 as cited in Rocha, 2018). A marriage between two different kinds of heritage produces “Biracial”, “Interracial”, “Multiracial”, or “Mixed-race” children (Baxley, 2008). The mixed racial identity may result in the growth of prejudice and racism that leads to racial identity transformation (Collins, 2000). In its practices, mixed-race descent may have different experiences from one place to others. In Japan, the mixed-race descent of Japanese with Southeast Asian is often experiencing racism, yet Japanese- Eurasian mixed racial descent are more appreciated among the Japanese pure blood (Tanu, 2018). As a result, the feeling of being ashamed to be part of the mixed-race descent of Japanese - Southeast Asian are commonly found among them (Tanu, 2018).

Being a person of mixed racial descent often is signified by the struggle in identifying self which is partly also influenced by environment and society (Fearon 1999), individual personalities, family relationships, and the geography of location (Baxley, 2008). These factors, I argue, may result in the difference in the identity development of the mixed racial person. In conclusion, a mixed persons’ identity may

be developed as multiple options; 1) identify racial identity that is given by the society, 2) identify as the minority of racial identity, 3) identify as the majority of racial identity, 4) identify as a biracial person which the racial identity is not identified, and 5) identify as having more than one racial identity (Root, 1996 as cited in Baxley, 2008). Moreover, according to Reddy (2019), mixed people may identify themselves differently when they are in the public and in their private life.

Before this research is conducted, the writer did preliminary fieldwork research to know the issue as the research material. The writer interviewed several informants in Surabaya, those were Japanese Indonesian mixed descent of youth between 15 to 24 years old. The writer asked some questions related to their experience of being a biracial person. From this fieldwork, the writer found out that the mixed racial descent of Japanese Indonesian experienced an uncertainty for their racial identities. Growing up in Indonesia, some informants were not certain whose identity, either as Japanese or Indonesian, should be theirs related to their positions in society as stated by informant RA, "I'm confused whether Japanese or Indonesian images should be maintained in order to be accepted by society". Even though some informants do not experience identity conflict, I argue that it is still important to study the development of mixed racial identity, because as stated by Reddy (2019), studying identity construction is needed to understand the perspective of the multi-racial experiences. Moreover, an informant has experienced loneliness and the feeling not accepted by the society because of their difference in terms of their mixed race. Most of the informants felt uncomfortable by the jokes that Indonesian people gave them such as "Once an

outsider will always be an outsider,” and “You have a Japanese blood that means you are a colonizer”. Some informants said that it is normal to be stereotyped as a colonizer because Japan has a history with Indonesia. Japan is known as a colonizer with the shortest period of time invading Indonesia which according to Mahayana (2013), Japan colonized Indonesia only about 3 and a half years. Furthermore, Indonesia itself is Japan’s “*Saudara Tua*” which means already more than 60 years of Japan being Indonesia’s fellowship after being considered as a colonizer (Wirayudha, 2018). By understanding these issues, the writer wants to further analyze regarding the identity development of the Japanese Indonesian mixed racial descent and the choice of their racial identity.

The object of this research focuses on the examination of the mixed racial descent of Japanese Indonesian related to their biracial identity developments. The reason for choosing biracial people of Japanese Indonesian as the focus of the research object is because the relation between Japan and Indonesia keeps getting stronger each year. According to Avivi and Siagian (2020), there are 162 bilateral relationships between Indonesia and other countries, however, the first bilateral agreement in the economic sector in Indonesia is with Japan. This bilateral relationship known as the Indonesia-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement was established on August 20, 2007. (IJEPA). Furthermore, according to www.id.emb-japan.go.jp, in terms of exports and imports, Japan is the largest trading partner. The number of Japanese populations itself in Indonesia increases every year (Statista Research Department, 2021). These

reasons might create a possibility of intermarriage between Japanese and Indonesian people which produces a new generation of biracial children.

A term for the mixed-race people of Japanese descent is called *hafu* which means ‘half’ in Japanese. This term of *hafu* itself is a development from the previous term of *koneketsuji* or *ainoko* that was commonly found during World War Two. In fact, the term *hafu* has a slightly different connotation compared to *koneketsuji* or *ainoko*. *Hafu* has more positive meaning compared to the previous term (Torngen & Sato 2019). In doing this research, the research subjects are limited to the youth between 15 to 24 years old of *hafu* that live more than 10 years in Indonesia. Due to the limited access of finding the mixed racial person of Japanese Indonesian, the writer will only analyze five informants.

This research aims to analyze the identity development of Japanese Indonesian mixed racial descent that will reveal the choice of each individual’s racial identity. Therefore, biracial identity development theory by W. S. Carlos Poston will be used to analyze the object. So, how the processes of identity development happen will lead to the choices of an individual’s racial identity. According to Erikson (1963), the concept of identity development is important especially for youth to create a choice of racial identity (Erikson 1963, as cited in Poston 1990). Biracial identity development could result in whether a biracial person maintains their multiracial identities or chooses a single racial identity (Thorton and Wason 1995 as cited in Collins, 2000). Furthermore, the identity of a mixed-race person could develop based on interaction, experience, acceptance, and belonging by the society (Kich, 1982 as cited in Collins 2000). There

are five stages to analyze the identity of a biracial person using Poston's theory, which are: 1) personal identity, 2) choice of group categorization, 3) the enmeshment or denial stage, 4) appreciation and 5) integration (Poston, 1990 as cited in Collins, 2016). By applying these five stages, the writer could understand an individual's identity development, how biracial individuals identify themselves, and understanding how each individual sees their Japanese and Indonesian identity. Lastly, the writer could know the choice of each individual's racial identity. Poston (1990) explains that a biracial person could choose either one of two racial identities from their parents or even choose to be a multi-racial person.

Some research related to *hafu*'s identity has been conducted with Japan as the setting of the place. In Indonesia, similar research is found on one research that discusses how mixed Japanese Indonesian negotiate their identity on socializing with a monoracial person of Japanese racial identity. This research, however, will discuss the identity development of Japanese Indonesian *hafu* that takes place in Indonesia in relation to identity identification. I argue that the environment brings such a significant impact on individuals' choice of racial identity and its identity development. I also argue that the development of each person's identity has an important role for biracial people in creating beliefs in choosing their racial identity. Each biracial person may result in different choices of racial identity with one and another. This research uses a qualitative method of primary and secondary data collection. The primary data is generated through interviewing the informants while previous studies and books are used as the secondary data collection especially for framing and abstracting the

fieldwork findings. Furthermore, a purposive sampling method of data collection is used to find the informants that are suitable for the research.

1.2 Statement of Problems

By using biracial identity theory, this study aims to answer these problems:

1. How do the processes of identity development among Japanese Indonesian mixed racial descent happen in Indonesia?
2. As the result, how do the processes lead to the identity choices?

1.3 Objective of The Study

According to the statements of problems, this research attempts to:

1. To understand Japanese Indonesian mixed racial descent's identity development.
2. To know Japanese Indonesian mixed racial descent's identity identification.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research is to know the choice of Japanese Indonesian racial identity and understanding the process of identity development. This research contributes insights to cultural studies especially about the experiences of mixed racial descent and help the readers to understand the journey of *hafu* in developing their racial identity. Moreover, the writer hopes that this research could increase the sense of tolerance towards each person's background differences. Furthermore, the writer hopes that this research could be a reference for further research about *hafu*. Even though

there are previous researches that discusses identity construction and identity negotiation of *hafu*, this research will be focusing on *hafu* who live in Indonesia. Lastly, the writer hopes that in the future, research about *hafu* can be more developed in different countries and be discussed other than identity negotiation and identity development.

1.5 Definition and Key Terms

Racial Identity : Individual's choice of their racial ethnic. Examples of choices of racial identity are: monoracial identity, biracial identity, and situational identity (Renn, 2004 as cited in Steele, 2012).

Biracial Identity : A person whose parents are from a different race and ethnicity (Damayanti, 2019).

Identity Development : Steps to establish each individual's independent identity (Erikson 1963, as cited in Poston, 1990).

Hafu : A Japanese term that means "half" in English which refers to mixed racial of Japanese descent (Tanu, 2018).

Personal Identity : An individual awareness of their ethnic background (Poston, 1990).

Choice of Group Categorization : The process of individuals on choosing a racial identity (Poston, 1990).

The Enmeshment or Denial Stage : The feeling of guilt, disgrace, and disloyal of choosing a certain racial identity (Poston, 1990).

Appreciation : Individual begins to understand and learn more about their choice of racial identity (Poston, 1990).

Integration : Fully accepting each own racial identity as a whole (Poston, 1990).