



Religious and Social Childcare Institutions in Indonesia

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Supervised by Prof. D.E.F. Henley

Laura Gulpen

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This thesis will focus on state, civil society, and child care in Indonesia. The emphasis will lay on the religious and state welfare institutions starting in the period after independence up until today. My research question for this thesis will be:

What roles do religious, state and other institutions play in the care for needy children in Indonesia, and why?

It is believed that there are between 2 and 8 million children living in orphanages or other residential institutions in the developing world and the former Eastern Bloc.¹ Millions of children throughout the world do not live with their parents anymore due to different reasons, such as the death of their parent(s), migration, detention, natural disasters, conflict, and child trafficking. Governments, academics, and the international public have given attention to the issue of children being raised in residential institutions in the past few decades. Within this broad area, the UN together with other international non-governmental organizations have asked governments to phase out children's institutions in the developing countries and the former Eastern Bloc, due to other options that are believed to be better for the child, such as foster parents or adoption.²

Nowadays, millions of children on this globe are growing up without (direct) parental care. They live in different kind of settings, such as orphanages, with relatives, with persons not biologically related, with employers, or with other children on the street. The precise number of children living in all these given circumstances on a global basis is not clear, just like the total number of children living in orphanages. UNICEF issued a report in 2005 stating that there are 143 million orphans in 93 countries in the developing world.³ There has been given an estimate by Save the Children UK and UNICEF where the number of children living in institutions is between 2 million and 8 million. This would mean that only 3,5 per cent of the orphans worldwide live in institutions, whereas the other 96,5 per cent lives in other circumstances, such as the ones given above. It is believed that the majority of children are placed in an institution by family members as a result of poverty, rather than the death of their parent(s). At least four out of five children living in an institution across the globe have at least one living parent and most of these children come from poor families.⁴ Although only

¹ Babington, B.K. (2015) *A discourse analysis of policymaking relating to children's institutions in Indonesia, 1999-2009* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/104490>. P. 5

² Ibid. p. 12

³ Ibid. p. 12, quoting UNICEF (2005)

⁴ Ibid. pp. 13-15

a small minority of orphans live in orphanages, the absolute number of children doing so is still large. They also highlight the interest and importance of child care institutions as an object of study.

In Indonesia, there are three types of institutions that take care of needy children. First, there are the Children's Homes, or the so called *panti asuhan* – which I will refer to as 'child welfare institutions' in this thesis - who take care of neglected children such as orphans, fatherless or motherless children, or children whose parents could not take care of anymore. Second, there is the Home for the Disabled, or the so called *Panti Sosial Penyandang Cacat*. These institutions take care of both adults and children with disabilities, such as physical, sensory or mental disabilities. Third, there are *pesantren*, which is a religious boarding school where students are getting their education according to Islamic principles. These educational institutions often have a dormitory or residential system, which means that students also stay on the campus after school and often only go back to their parents on special occasions.⁵ There is a blurred line between social and religious institutions, because the *pesantren* here have a double role: they function as both school and shelter for (needy) children.

Indonesia is believed to have roughly 130,000 children living in thousands of child welfare institutions (*panti asuhan*) officially recognized by the state.⁶ If one could hold onto the earlier results given that there are between 2 and 8 million children living in welfare institutions worldwide, then Indonesia could already account for 2 à 6 per cent of all children in institutions around the globe.⁷ Around 1.8 million children in Indonesia live in religious boarding schools – the so called *pesantren*. These statistics show that the amount of children living in *pesantren* is at least five times bigger than those living in *panti asuhan*. But, why would this be? Are the religious boarding schools to an increasing extent serving as a quasi-'orphanage' for needy children? Most of the time the children enter these boarding schools before the age of ten and stay until the age of eighteen. Many children living in *pesantren* are in need of both care and schooling. Out of all the children living in institutions in Indonesia half of them have at least one or even both surviving parents, but these children live in institutions in order to get basic services such as food, education, shelter and health care.⁸

What makes this research interesting is that there is a blurred line that needs further investigation. As mentioned before, there is a close line between the *pesantren* and child welfare institutions, where it is believed that these two institutions are (almost) the same when it comes to taking care of their children. The goal is to investigate these institutions in order to understand their role in Indonesian society and why these institutions are the way they are.

⁵ Save the Children UK, Ministry of Social Affairs, and UNICEF (2006), *A rapid assessment of children's homes in post-tsunami Aceh*, Save the Children UK, Jakarta. P. 20

⁶ See page 25: 'Financing of child welfare institutions'.

⁷ Save the Children UK, et al. (2006), p. 18

⁸ UNICEF (2010) *Children in Indonesia: Children without parental care* (report).

Organization of this thesis

This thesis will first look at the religious schools and institutions in Indonesia and how they evolved throughout the years. The emphasis in this second chapter will lay on the pesantren. The third chapter will deal with child welfare institutions – a name given by the Minister of Social Affairs – which in English is often referred to as ‘orphanage’, and in Indonesian these days is still referred to as ‘panti asuhan.’ One will see that there is a close line between the religious institutions and child welfare institutions, since most of the panti asuhan in Indonesia are still under control of Muslim organizations like Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. The fourth chapter will go deeper into the categories of children that are catered for by religious and state welfare institutions, and therefore will mostly focus on these children and their background. The fifth and last chapter emphasizes the role of the state and civil society towards these institutions, and will include how these institutions are being financed and therefore supported by the government and other organizations. In the conclusion I will answer my research question together with a broad argumentation.

CHAPTER 2

Religious Institutions

Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world, and institutionalized forms of Islamic beliefs have been known here for over centuries. Throughout the Muslim world there are traditional educational institutions that teach religious subjects, including Quranic interpretation and memorization, traditions of the Prophet (*Hadith*) and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). Many parts of the Islamic world call these schools *madrasa*, but in Southeast Asia they are often referred to as *pondok*, *pondok pesantren*, or *pesantren*.⁹

There were highly active networks of Islamic scholarships in Southeast Asia that involved Muslim scholars of this region in which *pondok* was the center of studying Islamic knowledge. The *pondok* represents a style of education that is unique to the Islamic world, and the Indonesian *pondok* is even believed to be extra unique because of their combination of intellectualism and mysticism.¹⁰

The Indonesian *pondok*, which is also called *pesantren*, is almost as old as 'Indonesian' Islam because of its connection to the *Wali Songo* (the nine saints that brought Islam to the island of Java), who all founded their own *pesantren*. One of the important features of the *Wali Songo's* missionary activities on Java was their willingness to make connections with the local culture. For instance, they were known for using *wayang* (shadow puppet theatre), *gamelan* (percussion orchestra), and the use of *beduk* (big drum) before the call of prayer.¹¹

The word 'pesantren' is derived from the word *santri*, which is a term used for people who study religion in traditional Islamic education institutions in Java. The word *santri* gets the prefix 'pe' and the suffix 'an', which refers to the place where the students learn their new knowledge. It is unclear however where the word *santri* derives from, and from which language. Different scholars say it could derive from different words, such as: 'tutor', 'religious book', or 'people who live in a house for the poor.'¹² The last option would of course be extremely interesting for this research, since it could show that the religious boarding schools were not purely schools since the beginning, but also a place for the poor.

Modern Indonesia and its social history tells us that there has been a major development in Islamic institutions in the twentieth century. This was mainly because of the rise of two important Islamic organizations: the Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). These two organizations, which are very much involved in social welfare activities, have shaped

⁹ Ronald A. Lukens-Bull (2010). *Madrassa by another name: Pondok, pesantren, and Islamic schools in Indonesia and larger Southeast Asian region*. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 4(1), p.1.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p.4

¹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 6-7.

¹² Asrohah, H. (2002), *Pesantren di Jawa: asal usul, perkembangan, pelemagaan*. Jakarta: Indonesian Institute for Civil Society, p.15.

Indonesia's Islam for almost a century. Muhammadiyah was founded by modernists in 1912 and is nowadays known as a reformist movement that engages in social welfare enterprises. Muhammadiyah's social concerns are within a lot of social welfare activities, which also includes the relief of the poor. Thousands of modern schools together with hundreds of orphanages and hospitals throughout Indonesia are being operated by this movement. On the other hand, there was the traditionalist NU that emerged in 1926 as a reaction to the modernist Muhammadiyah. NU shaped another variant of Islamic movement and, together with their discourse and activism, enriched Islamic social activism in Indonesia. NU was the one who played an important role in spreading and preserving Islamic traditionalism – mainly in the rural areas – and has been operating thousands of traditional Islamic boarding schools, or *pesantren*.¹³

Most of the children in Indonesia are raised by either their parents or other family members. Children who do not live at home do so in different residential circumstances, which have been mentioned in the first chapter. One of the institutions that take care of children and provide them care, education, and shelter is the Islamic boarding schools, or the so called *pesantren*. These boarding schools are the oldest form of education in Indonesia for children, and parents who send their children to these *pesantren* have different kind of reasons for this. First, compared to the public schools from the government, it is cheaper for parents to send their children for education to a *pesantren*. However, since the public schools do not ask for tuition fee and the *pesantren* do, this might need some clarification: according to own research with ex-*pesantren* students, the *pesantren* always ask for fees. These fees are there not only to take part in this religious education, but most importantly, these are the costs for shelter and every day food (at least two times a day). So if you take into account that these students indeed live in these *pesantren*, these boarding schools can indeed be cheaper than sending your child to a public school. Second, families with no financial problems may choose the Islamic boarding school for religious and/or ideological reasons. The *pesantren* curriculum consists of traditional religious education, but there are also *pesantren* that include government approved education and vocational education. The religious education meanwhile focuses on the Quran – the holy book of Islam – and therefore the Arabic language, but also Islamic traditions and laws. Most of the students will stay at the *pesantren* from the age of six until their graduation, which is around the age of eighteen. Most of the *pesantren* provide shelter for their students, but the contact between children and their families still remain intact. The holy month of Ramadan is a nice example of this, which shows that most of the children return to their family houses during this time.¹⁴

The *pesantren*'s aim is to teach their students Islamic values, which is often done through rote learning and memorizing the Quran. These schools are led by Islamic teachers called *Kyai*, and most of the *pesantren* are connected to the Islamic social welfare organization Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Another Islamic value is taking care of poor and needy people, and this is also a reason why the *pesantren* can be considered a place for those poor children: the Muslim

¹³ Latief, H. (2012), *Islamic Charities and Social Activism – Welfare, Dakwah and Politics in Indonesia*. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from <https://dspace.library.uu.nl/handle/1874/253590>, p. 3.

¹⁴ Babington (2015), pp. 71-72.

community sees it as a duty to help those in need. According to own research with alumni of a pesantren in Central Java, there are special rules for children who come from poor families: depending on the financial status of a family, the student only has to pay a small amount for food and shelter, and in some cases do not have to pay school fees at all.

The pesantren and its religious aim

Historically speaking, pesantren schools on the island of Java and Madura are called pondok – which literally means ‘bamboo hut.’ The term pondok presumably derives from the word for dormitories, because back in the days these houses were mostly made out of bamboo. In order to understand the nature of pesantren, one needs to describe the features of traditional Islamic education.¹⁵ Loyalty to Islam is expressed through the Five Pillars of Islam which are considered mandatory by believers. In practice, loyalty to Islam is shown with correct behavior, acceptance of the norms and rules of their religion, and by loyalty to the Islamic community. On the island of Java, correct Islamic behavior is illustrated by the Kyai who teaches the Islamic ideals, symbols and practices to his students in the pesantren, and to other members of the community. For a Javanese to be able to practice and learn about the Islamic principles, requires education. Despite different ways of studying and learning about Islam in Indonesia, such as the *pengajian* or the *madrassa*, the Islamic education strength’s is still in its pesantren system. The strong and dominant place of the pesantren is mainly because of their success in producing and educating a number of highly qualified *ulama* (highly religious scholars) who all feel the need to spread Islam and through that strengthen the faith among Muslims. As successful Islamic training centres, the pesantren also trained teachers for the madrasa, and other informal Islamic trainings such as the *pengajian* or Friday sermons. It is because of the Kyai’s method of training that the pesantren leaders are successfully a part of producing various highly qualified Islamic scholars. Instead of only filling the minds with information, the intention is to refine the student’s minds with morals, religious spirit, and virtue in order to prepare them for a life full of purity and sincerity. The students are being taught that their goal in education should not be to obtain money, power and glory, but rather that learning is an obligation and dedication to God.¹⁶

¹⁵ Dhofier, Z. (1980). *The pesantren tradition: a study of the role of the kyai in the maintenance of the traditional ideology of Islam in Java* (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from <https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/11271>, pp .3-4.

¹⁶ Dhofier (1980), Pp. 5-10.

Curriculum

The curriculum of temporary pesantren can be divided into four basic areas: religious education, character development, vocational skills training, and general education.¹⁷ The first three areas of instructions are known to be gender segregated. There are also pesantren that are believed to follow the general education of government schools in addition, but the majority is still highly emphasized on religious education. In addition to this religious oriented education and character development, a lot of pesantren have a curriculum that is designed to teach their students the knowledge and skills to find employment after their graduation. Normally, general education includes one or two basic curricula recognized by the government, where one is mostly secular and the other with a higher emphasis on religious training. Pesantren normally have neither, either or both of these types in their school. Skills training can include different things, such as carpentry, sewing, welding, automatic mechanics, shop keeping or other vocational skills. How a certain pesantren will accommodate these areas in their curriculum is based on their view of globalization and modernization.¹⁸ According to Lukens-Bull in his research on pesantren, the way a pesantren engages in these areas gets three labels in Indonesian discourse: *salaf* (traditional), *khalaf* (modern) and *terpadu* (mixed). A new category however was being added here by 2007, which is known as the *salafi pondok*. Even though the word itself does not vary much with the first category mentioned before, it is still a meaningful difference for Indonesians. By 2010 there were around thirty of these salafi pondok, which all follow the salafi/wahabi teachings. These streams and their teachings are often known to be more extreme than other regular teachings in Islam. The first category, salaf pesantren, only have religious education and character development. They are very good in preserving the teachings of classical texts and also see this as essential education. The second category, khalaf pesantren, has religious education that is only conducted in the Indonesian language, and implement general education and skills training. However, if an institution does not have much emphasis on religious education and character development, it is less likely to be considered a true pesantren. Most of the traditional pesantren try to limit the innovations used in the teaching of this curriculum as much as possible. The last category, the salaf pesantren, are believed to be the most traditional and therefore have the best religious education. However, most of the pesantren nowadays are labelled mixed, because they engage with different combinations with all types of curriculum.¹⁹ The fact that most of the pesantren nowadays would classify themselves as 'mixed' is because of the desire to be seen as a school which can balance modern education and traditional religious education. I would argue that this also has to do with the modernization process in which the pesantren feel the need to combine both educations in order to keep up with 'modern times' if they still want to keep the pesantren interesting for (future) students.

¹⁷ Ronald A. Lukens-Bull (2010), *Madrasa by any other name: Pondok, pesantren, and Islamic schools in Indonesia and larger southeast Asian Region*, P. 9

¹⁸ Ibid. pp. 9-10

¹⁹ Ibid. P. 10

Life in a pesantren

According to own research and conversations with an ex-pesantren student at a religious boarding school in Kabupaten Banyumas (Central Java), I have come to know a lot more about the everyday life of a pesantren student, which will show us that they usually wake up early and finish late.²⁰ Students would wake up every day around 4:30 AM to pray the Morning Prayer in a congregation. Pesantren students sleep in a dormitory, with rooms of different sizes and different amounts of children that sleep in one room. There are rooms of 40 m² which has place for 10 children, whereas other rooms of 20 m² have place for around 5 people. Immediately after prayer, students will already start with reading the Quran. After a shower, they leave to school around 6:30 in the morning. Interesting here is that these pesantren students go to a public school with other non-pesantren students. In this school they will learn secular subjects such as maths, although this is not always the case with every pesantren: it is mostly the traditional pesantren that will focus only on religious subjects, and not mix this with secular courses. After their second prayer, students will go back to their pesantren to have lunch and have some time off. This is usually for short naps, homework, or other activities that still need to be done, such as doing one's own laundry. After the third prayer students will come together to read the Quran, have dinner, and after this go back to reading the Quran again. Emphasis on the religion will continue the whole evening, while praying the fifth and last prayer in between, so that the students will be done with their day around 9 or 10 PM. Another alumni from another pesantren school in Purworejo (Central Java)²¹ basically gives the same schedule for the day, and here too there is a high emphasis on studying Islam through the readings of texts: their day consisted of a lot of studying Arabic through the Quran. This pesantren also lets their children go to a public school outside the pesantren itself, where they learn and study secular subjects together with religious ones. Interesting in these examples is the major emphasis on reading and studying the Quran, and the intensity: every day is fully scheduled. Students are only allowed to go back to their parents during holidays.

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo, also known as 'Pondok Modern Gontor' or 'Pesantren Gontor', is a pesantren in the Ponorogo Regency in East Java, and is established in 1926. It classifies itself as a 'modern pesantren', and is often seen as one of the best and most popular pesantren of Indonesia.²²²³²⁴ I include this certain Islamic institution to give an example of Indonesia's (maybe) most well-known pesantren and how their curriculum looks like. Pondok Modern Gontor is an Islamic educational institution that is consistent with

²⁰ The pesantren I am talking about is called 'Yayasan Pendidikan Islam Pondok Pesantren Al Hidayah Purwojati' in Kabupaten Banyumas (Central Java); and the public school is named 'MTs Maarif NU 1 Purwojati'.

²¹ Pondok Pesantren Al Iman, Purworejo, Cental Java.

²² 'Inilah 31 Pondok Pesantren Terbaik dan Terbesar di Indonesia', via <https://pasberita.com/pondok-pesantren-terbaik/>. Accessed on 28-20-2018

²³ '21 Pondok Pesantren Terbaik di Indonesia yang Sangat Populer', via <http://santinorice.com/pondok-pesantren-terbaik/>. Accessed on 28-10-2018

²⁴ 'Inilah 10 Pesantren Terbaik dan Terbesar di Indonesia', <http://www.tentik.com/inilah-10-pesantren-terbaik-dan-terbesar-di-indonesia/>. Accessed on 28-10-2018

training future leaders who are also all expected to have a certain level of religious knowledge. They are known to be putting a lot of emphasis on their education and teaching skills, which can also be seen in the fact that they provide opportunities for students to develop advanced skills in a particular area, depending on one's own individual interest. The curriculum includes education in Islamic faith, and emphasis on a student characteristic: developing skills is very important. Their goal is to educate successful (religious) students who are able to succeed in different kind of fields, situations and conditions after their graduation. The difference with Pondok Modern Gontor and other 'normal' schools, is that the students will always stay in a 'learning environment', which for instance means that they will be under supervision twenty-four seven. Teachers have close connections with their students, so that the peace and order will always be maintained. Another interesting feature of this pesantren is that – besides Indonesian and Arabic – they also find it important to include English in their curriculum.²⁵ All with all, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor is an interesting example of a modern pesantren in Indonesia, that besides all the features of a 'traditional' pesantren goes a few steps further, with including a lot of modern education areas in their curriculum, so that their students will not only learn about their Islamic faith, but also learn things about the modern world they are all living in.

The aim of this chapter was to look at the features of religious institutions in Indonesia - with an emphasis on the pesantren tradition – and to look at the way they evolved throughout the years. We can state that the emphasis of a pesantren has always laid in spreading religious knowledge. The main goal of a pesantren has been and will always be to teach their students about Islamic principles. There is however a shift going on, where a lot of pesantren tend to move towards a more 'modern' way of education, by combining traditional Islamic education, together with secular subjects. A feature of the pesantren that makes it into a residential institution is the fact that almost all of the pesantren provide shelter for their students. This means that the pesantren can be seen as both a school and a 'home' for their students, since they will spend most of their time in this religious institution. What plays a role is the religious motive behind a pesantren, that they welcome those financially-unstable people and children that need care.

²⁵ In'ami, M. (2011), Kultur pesantren modern: Integrasi sistem madrasah dan pesantren di pondok modern Gontor: *Jurnal Kajian Islam dan Budaya*, 9(2), Pp. 204-205.

CHAPTER 3

Child Welfare Institutions

A child that has lost one or both parents are defined as an orphan. A 'single orphan' is somebody who lost one parent, whereas a 'double orphan' has lost both its parents. In many cases, and also in Indonesia, an 'orphan' may still live with its primary or extended family. UNICEF states that there are at least 2.2 million children worldwide living in orphanages, and this includes all different kind of residential care, varying from small to large-scale institutions. Many however suggest that this number is highly underestimated, since many orphanages around the globe are not registered and these children living in these institutions are also not officially counted.²⁶

In 2006-7, the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs together with Save the Children and UNICEF conducted research in different provinces in order to find out how the quality of care is provided in childcare institutions in Indonesia. Up until this time, these childcare organizations, or in English often referred to as 'orphanage', have always been called 'panti asuhan' in Indonesia. They however suggested to change this name to Child Welfare Institutions (Lembaga Kesejahteraan Sosial Anak – LKSA). The idea behind it is that any institution or organization that provides care for children will be referred to as Child Welfare Institution (LKSA). Without success maybe, because Indonesian people still prefer to use the term *panti asuhan*.

Besides the religious institutions like pesantren, which are already being discussed in the second chapter, there is another residential child care institution. Panti asuhan is an Indonesian term that is used for a place for orphan raising and children who do not live with their families. The word *panti* can be translated as 'institution', 'residence', or simply 'home'. The word *asuhan* refers to 'rearing', 'upbringing', or 'education'. The word *asuhan* derives from the root term *asuh*, which means 'to bring up', or 'to nurse'. Panti asuhan is often a shortened form of *panti sosial asuhan anak*, which can be translated as 'institutions for the upbringing of children'.²⁷

There are different reasons why it is interesting to study child welfare institutions in Indonesia. First, Indonesia is one of the few countries in the Global South that have implemented a national policy in order to reduce reliance on children's institutions, but rather find other ways to help these children. One other way could for instance be fostering, but this will be discussed later in the chapter. Second, as stated in previous statistics, it is believed that between 170.000 and 500.000 children in Indonesia live in thousands of *panti asuhan*, compared to

²⁶ The Faith to Action Initiative (2014), *Children, Orphanages and families: a summary of research to help guide faith-based action*, via http://www.faithtoaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Faith2Action_ResearchGuide_V9_WEB.pdf, p. 5

²⁷ Babington (2015), p. 73

between 2 and 8 million children living in these institutions worldwide.²⁸ This means that Indonesia's children alone account for around 6-7 per cent of the overall.

Short history of welfare institutions

In the early sixteenth century, before the arrival of Dutch colonists in the East Indies, there were no orphanages in Indonesian society; no places for abandoned, neglected or orphaned children. These children were known to be raised by family members, relatives and other people within their communities. Orphanages were for the first time introduced by the Dutch colonial government, and in the early twentieth century the orphanage model which was introduced by the Dutch was assigned to local Islamic socio-religious welfare organizations that at their turn enlarged the number of *panti asuhan* throughout Indonesia. President Sukarno – Indonesia's first president from 1945-1967 – supported the growth of *panti asuhan* during his reign in order to help those children that had been abandoned or orphaned during and after the Second World War. During the next three decades under President Suharto, the number of *panti asuhan* increased fast because of strong State financial and other forms of financial support – which will be discussed in chapter five – that continued until the first years of the Reformasi era.²⁹

The definitional problems we are facing here is because – as mentioned in the second chapter – families do not only place their children in a *pesantren* because of the Islamic education they want to retrieve, but also to cope with financial hardship. The *panti asuhan* on the other hand are often regarded as a place for those children whose family members cannot take care for anymore, and cannot afford school fees, which makes them of a lower social status. It is because of these reasons behind it that the distinction between them is often blurred.³⁰ According to a report by the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs, the amount of poor families that send their children to childcare institutions is because of the lack of an economic system that should support these families. Other factors have also hampered the implementation of services, 'including the limited capacity of carers, the less than optimum performance of the authorities in managing children's care, the lack of professional staff working to support the children and their families, and the lack of integrated mandates among stakeholders in children's care'.³¹ According to the report, there should be a higher emphasis on alternative care for these children. This should be provided through the system of adoption, fostering, or guardianship, and residential care in a child welfare institution should be the last option for a child. The ministry also wants that if the parents, extended family or relatives can take care of the child again once the time is there, he or she should be returned home.

²⁸ Babington (2015), pp. 63-64

²⁹ Ibid. p. 73

³⁰ Ibid. p. 73

³¹ Government of Indonesia (2011), *National standards of care in child welfare institutions. Decree of the Minister of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia*, No. 30/HUK/2011, Jakarta: Government of Indonesia, Ministry of Social Affairs. P. 8

Education

Save the Children UK (2007) did research on the quality of care in children institutions in Indonesia and came to the conclusion that 98 per cent of the children in the institutions were attending elementary school, junior high school, or senior high school. There are also childcare institutions that have their own schools, in the form of a pesantren or a formal educational establishment. This is an example of the close relationship between pesantren and welfare institutions, because some religious welfare institutions are labelled as *panti asuhan*, but are actually also a pesantren. A lot of emphasis is being laid on the financial support for the education of these children, and especially the children's school fees. The institution sees it as their responsibility to contribute to the costs of their student's education: it is not the children's nor the family's responsibility. This can however be somewhat different with those childcare institutions that are linked to a pesantren, because in this case the children are actually expected to pay a (small) amount of money to the pesantren for attending their education and in some cases receiving their food, but they are often being exempt if the children in return donate their labor to the pesantren, including serving meals to their fellow pesantren students.³²

The school fees that were actually used for sending children through elementary and junior high school were heavily reduced after the implementation of the Government's School Operational Assistance (BOS) scheme, which was introduced to reduce or get rid of the costs of school fees for students. This meant that the amount of money that was usually spend on school fees were now used by the institutions to pay for school-related things not included in the BOS scheme. This included books, writing requisites, and extra-curricular activities. In some cases they also provide school uniforms. There are also institutions that provide pocket money to their children for buying snacks or to cover public transportation costs. This was for instance in case students of a childcare institution need transport to get to their school. The amount of pocket money varied; there are for instance examples of Rp 500 (0,05 USD), or Rp 2,000 (0,20 USD) per day. There are also examples that children in institutions had to work for their pocket money. Whereas some would spend their money immediately, other students would save it.³³

However, pocket money was not given by every institution. Children who attend their school outside of the institution sometimes have to travel great distances every day. In many cases the lack of money and/or transportation meant that the children had to find other ways to get to their school. Although there was a long distance sometimes, this did mean however that those children who received education outside the institution came more easily in contact with other persons and through this develop support network with other children and adults, whereas children who received their education within the institution often lost crucial opportunity to socialize with others outside. If a certain childcare institution was already linked to a particular pesantren or another Islamic educational establishment (*madrassa*), the children were then automatically enrolled in that particular school. There are also examples

³² Save the Children UK, et al. (2007), *'Someone that matters'. The quality of care in childcare institutions in Indonesia*. Jakarta: PT Panji Grafika Jaya. P. 189.

³³ Ibid. p. 190

where the children can choose their own school, but this was not often possible due to costs and distance considerations.

If a child was about to graduate from high school, another concern for the institution would rise: would they be able to successfully gain employment after leaving the institution? In order to make this possible, children were often sent to vocational schools (SMK) instead of high schools, since the latter was believed to be more suitable for those students who want to continue on a university, and this was not possible for students in institutions due to their financial status. By sending the children to vocational schools, the management hoped that by teaching them those skills it should be easier for students to immediately find a job after graduation. Besides the SMK, it was especially among boys popular to attend a technological vocational school (STM), which made it easier for them to find a job in for instance an auto or motorcycle repair shop or even as a driver.³⁴

Even though the institution prepares the student with education in the hope he or she can find work after their graduation, once the children living in these institutions reach the age of 18, they are in most cases sent back to their parents. In many childcare institutions however there are limited preparations for the child if it is about to leave care, and also limited monitoring after they have left the *panti asuhan*. There are some childcare institutions that establish and maintain individual bank accounts for their children so that they can access this after leaving the institution. The extent to which children and their families are being given financial and material assistance after the child leaves depends on the financial situation of the institution, who mostly all rely on government funds.³⁵ The financing however will be discussed further and in detail in chapter 5.

A day in the institution

Research on different institutions throughout Indonesia by Save The Children (2007) gives a clear picture on how an every-day life of a child in a childcare institution looks like. Just like the *pesantren*, children in Islamic childcare institutions wake up early to pray their Morning Prayer around 5 AM. After this, children will bath, eat, and get ready for school. When they get home from school again around 1 PM, they will have lunch and get a period to rest. This often means that children will go out to play in the yard or outside the institution, some will retire in their rooms, and others will help out in the institution itself with for instance cleaning. There are also institutions that spend more emphasis on religious studies during the day or in the evening, such as reading the Quran. In between the two Evening Prayers there is often time for dinner, and after the last prayer children have time to study and work on their homework. The day in a childcare institution normally ends between 9 and 10 in the evening, which is the time where children go to sleep. Even though it may sound like a normal fully packed schedule, there are also negative sides. The children are not always as free as it sounds, and there are institutions that for instance do not let their children watch TV or play outside.

³⁴ Save the Children UK, et al. (2007), pp. 191-192

³⁵ O’Kane, C. and Lubis, S. (2016), *Alternative Child Care and Deinstitutionalisation: A case study of Indonesia*, SOS Children’s Villages, via <http://www.socialserviceworkforce.org/resources/alternative-child-care-and-deinstitutionalisation-case-study-indonesia>, pp. 32-33.

Children are also asked to help with cooking, cleaning the rooms and yard, and some even work in plantations owned by the institution, or in other activities such as making and collecting paving blocks. There is often very little time to play and for recreation, recreational activities outside the institution were not much provided, and most of the institutions prohibit the children from going out in the evenings.

Interesting to see is that an every-day life in a pesantren and a childcare institution have a lot of similarities. They both have a packed daily schedule that basically starts and finishes at the same time. However, even though the religious childcare institutions do pay attention to religion, such as the five daily prayers and reading the Quran, the amount of time that the pesantren spends on religious activities and studies is way more. Whereas the aim of a pesantren is still to deliver its students religious knowledge, the childcare institutions focus on educating its children in general, and not only religiously. It also looks like in childcare institutions, they want the students to often work and/or help out whenever possible. Besides this, according to Indonesia's Ministry of Social Affairs, childcare institutions function more as 'institutions that provide access to education for children rather than as a last alternative care option for children who cannot be cared for by their parents or families'. Another point of critique is the belief that they only receive general guidance, whereas the emphasis should actually lay on care during their time in the institution.³⁶

National standards of care for child welfare institutions

Recently there have been alternatives and moves to partly replace child welfare institutions by fostering and guardianship, and at the same time to regulate and improve conditions in the existing childcare institutions.

As mentioned earlier on in this chapter, the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs established 'National Standards of Care for Child Welfare Institutions'. This policy instrument was made in 2011 to find solutions for alternative care of children in Indonesia. The ministry mentions that the care provided by social welfare institutions should get more attention so that it will meet with the national framework on alternative care of children and to make sure that these institutions function in an appropriate way. Interesting is that this report and research was done in response to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, where the UN recommended to the study the situation of childcare institutions and through this find ways to prevent the placement of children in institutions or to let them return to their families whenever possible. Another goal of the ministry was to improve the quality of services provided by *panti asuhan*. All these standards are part of the efforts to transform the role of the childcare institutions into making the childcare institutions a very last option of alternative care. Instead they should be able to function as centers for services for children and families.³⁷ The Ministry of Social Affairs in its report gives three recommendations that should help by

³⁶ Government of Indonesia (2011), *National standards of care in child welfare institutions. Decree of the Minister of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia*, No. 30/HUK/2011, Jakarta: Government of Indonesia, Ministry of Social Affairs, p. 4.

³⁷ Government of Indonesia (2011), pp. 1-5.

improving the situation. First, Family Support Services: a policy framework should be developed to support children in their/another family environment while providing multiple services for families that are dealing with challenges. Second, regulating or establishing certain institutions that can help with the care for children by planning national standards of care, establishing a professional monitoring agency, and establishing a data collection system for those children who face alternative care. Third, building a family-based alternative care system that supports family-based care alternatives – like kinship care, fostering and adoption – but also gives assistance and protection to those families that are facing challenges in their role as care givers.³⁸ If immediate family or relatives however really cannot take care of the child, the alternative care that should be provided is fostering, guardianship or adoption.³⁹ According to a report by SOS Children’s Villages formal foster care procedures in Indonesia are under development now. In February 2012, there was established a working group on foster care with the aim to develop methods for foster care, criteria for foster parents, and how to provide support to foster families. It is believed that an agreement has been reached on the methods for foster care, but there are still ongoing discussion about the role of the Social Affairs Offices, and the tools and needs to train future foster parents.⁴⁰ Fact however is that despite all the attempts, nothing has happened yet.

³⁸ Government of Indonesia (2011), pp. 4-5.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 21.

⁴⁰ O’Kane, C. et al. (2016), p. 31 citing Martin (2013).

CHAPTER 4

Needy children and their background

From all the children in Indonesia, 50 per cent of them live in a household with less than US \$2 a day, which defines them as vulnerable and poor. Children living in families that are dealing with economic hardships are often disadvantaged when it comes to health, education, survival, and access to services. 85 percent of the children in Indonesia experience at least one type of deprivation of important services and needs. Children from poor households have both a high chance to remain poor for the rest of their life, and a higher risk of intergenerational poverty.⁴¹ Worldwide, poverty is often the main reason for placing children in childcare institutions. Parents or caregivers struggle to provide the children whatever they need, and are often compelled to make use of these institutions. The 'pull factors' behind residential care is the means to meet basic needs, such as food, education and other services for the child. Parents also often think that an institution is beneficial to a child because it can fulfil the child's basic needs, but often do not realize the effect it can have on their social, emotional and cognitive development. Another reason why children are being separated from their families and enter residential care is after a natural disaster.⁴² This was for instance the case in Indonesia after the tsunami in 2004, where children in Aceh entered a child care institution due to different circumstances. The end of this chapter will go deeper into the childcare situation in post-tsunami Aceh.

Vulnerable children in Indonesia

When looking at Indonesia, we see that the majority of children that is being placed in an institution here is firstly, because of poverty and secondly, because of a lack of basic services. The third reason that plays a role, and which has also been discussed in the second chapter, is the religious belief to send their children to an Islamic institution, in order to get morals and discipline. Although children can already enter residential care at a young age, the majority of children living in institutions are between 10 and 17 years.⁴³

The University of Indonesia together with UNICEF conducted a research in 2014 interviewing 625 children living in residential institutions throughout Indonesia. As mentioned in my previous chapters, the majority of children in institutions still have at least one living parent. The report shows that, on average, parents voluntarily send their children to an institution around the age of 13. According to these parents, age plays an important role in this, because they still saw their children in need of parental care before this age, and they also did not want

⁴¹ PUSKAPA UI, UNICEF and DFAT (Australian Aid) (2014), *Understanding Vulnerability: a study on situations that affect family separation and the lives of children in and out of family care*. Via <http://www.cpcnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Understanding-Vulnerability-ENG.pdf>, p. 9.

⁴² The Faith to Action Initiative (2014), pp. 6-7.

⁴³ O'Kane, C. et al. (2016), pp.18-19. Citing: Save the Children, DEPSOS RI and UNICEF (2007).

to send them if they were already too old for junior secondary school (SMP). The last reason is that parents often wait to send their children to institutions until they are 'old enough' and 'ready' to take care of themselves.

Research shows that 81 percent of the children in institutions, both pesantren and *panti asuhan*, attend school.⁴⁴ This could show that the parents' expectation on their children's education can be fulfilled, especially because this is one of their main reasons for sending a child to an institution. They often see this as the only solution, because of the limited ability to provide their children education. The *panti asuhan* mostly covers all expenses and tuition related to their children's education. In those places where education is already free for public schools, the *panti* will pay for other expenses, such as books, uniforms and sometimes even transportation costs. The majority of pesantren on the other hand, are for the most part paid by the parents.

More than half of the children in *panti asuhan* and pesantren believed that the main reason that their parents sent them to the institution was economic reason. Children often understand their situation as a result of their family's financial hardship that dominated their decision. The majority of children being questioned in these institutions had a father whose occupation was farmer or fisherman. The second position was occupied by fathers who worked on the street. On the other hand, most of the mothers here worked in their own household and therefore had no income.⁴⁵ In most cases therefore it is hard for the family to take care of their children financially, because their income is either low, or they have (almost) no income after all.

Poverty is not the only underlying cause for parents to place their children in an institution. Parents also mentioned other issues, such as living far away from a school, having many children, being a single parent, having health problems, no time to watch their children during daily work and chores, or nobody else to take care of their children while they were working. The last reason being mentioned by some parents is the lack of a child's birth certificate.⁴⁶ Parents who are dealing with one or more of these issues often have the feeling that they cannot give the child what it needs, and therefore want to send it to a 'better place'. According to the same research, children with only one parent alive are three times more likely to end up in the pesantren or *panti asuhan* than those children with both parents alive. Parents also often choose for pesantren or *panti asuhan* in the hope to give their children a better future. This is mostly because the majority of parents from children in institutions only finished primary school, and therefore do not wish the same destiny for their child. They believe that education can mobilize the children's social status and the institution should guarantee this. An SMA diploma (secondary high school) was often seen as something that will facilitate better earnings. A pesantren on the other hand is seen as a place that offers added benefit to schooling in the form of teaching religious values, which in turn makes parents want to pay the costs. They often identified this as 'necessary character building', because the pesantren should be able to change the children's behavior through the teachings of religious dogmas.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ PUSKAPA UI, et al. (2014), p. 26.

⁴⁵ Ibid. pp.27-28.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 29.

⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 30.

There is a higher risk for those children living in remote areas to be sent to an institution for education. An interview conducted by SOS Children's Villages International in 2016 with a leader of an Islamic child care institution in Bandung shows again the close connection between the pesantren and the social welfare institutions: "The main reason for children living here is education as they are from remote areas. A lot of parents and children are thinking it is not a social welfare institution for neglected children, but it is more like a "pesantren", an Islamic boarding school."⁴⁸ Would this mean that the difference between pesantren and social welfare institution is also not clear among Indonesians, or that there are (almost) no differences after all? The same research team conducted an interview with an 11 year old girl who was staying in this institution and she said: "I was sad when first came here and found out that this is a child care institution not an Islamic boarding school. But I tried... and fortunately the activities are exactly the same with the activities in Islamic boarding school. But still I am sad to live here because I can only go home once in a year."⁴⁹ As shown in the previous chapters, this again can show the blurred line between pesantren and *panti asuhan*, where it might be even unclear for Indonesians themselves.

Interesting also is that it is believed that some institutions are sometimes trying to recruit most of their children prior to the academic school year. Practitioners in Bandung described cases where institutions tell parents that they will take care of their children, provide food, accommodation and education. These practices are an example of something that leads to family separation. This is being done by the institution because the more students a child care institution has, the more government and donor support it will get.⁵⁰ Would these institutions do it for their own sake only, or do they really want to help needy children? Or might it be a mix of both?

Informal care and formal alternative care

Informal kinship care is a common practice for those children who are not able to live with their parents anymore, and is in most cases also the first option. Throughout Indonesia, there are sixty million children under 15 years that live in households within their community, other than their parents. In most cases, these children live with grandparents or other relatives. Informal adoption by other extended family members and informal kinship is not an odd concept in some communities in Indonesia, especially on Java, Lombok and certain parts of Sulawesi. There are also forms of informal care where children live with neighbors, but there is no evidence on how big this scale is.⁵¹ Other forms of formal alternative care in Indonesia, besides residential care, is foster care, and guardianship. Foster care has already been discussed in the previous chapter, which showed that this type of care is still under construction. Even though there are some organizations, such as Muhammadiyah and Save the Children, that are putting effort into making foster care happening, there is still not

⁴⁸ O'Kane, C. et al. (2016), p. 18.

⁴⁹ Ibid. p.18.

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 19.

⁵¹ Ibid. pp. 26-27.

enough support from the government yet to make foster care into something that could serve as an important alternative for childcare institutions in Indonesia. The other type of alternative care is guardianship. One who tend to be a child's legal representative has to deal with two legal systems; the civil law and the religious court system. In practice however, guardianship is not very common yet in Indonesia and still a relative new form of formal care. This new concept still requires a lot of piloting and monitoring.⁵² Another last form alternative care is adoption. Even though adoption is recognized as a positive form of alternative care, the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs recognizes very few institutions nationwide that can facilitate adoptions. It is often seen as something 'serious': adoption 'transfers the child's civil and legal rights from his/her natural parents to the authority of the adopting parents'.⁵³ Different from guardianship and fostering, adoption is seen as permanent care. There are a lot of regulations for parents who want to adopt a child, including a minimum period of six months of foster parenting your 'future child'. International adoption however is not really supported by the State, and is only meant to be considered as a last option.⁵⁴

Case study: Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province after the tsunami

Aceh is an interesting case when looking at childcare institutions, because the province has met a great disaster in 2004: an earthquake followed by a tsunami. The tsunami itself and the aftermath were responsible for a major destruction and loss on the Indian Ocean's rim. It is believed that it killed around 200,000 people in the province of Aceh alone.⁵⁵ A few months after the tsunami, there was a total of 193 Neglected Children's Homes in Aceh, out of which 17 were established right after the tsunami at the beginning of the year 2005, but with more childcare institutions on the way. On the other hand, research identified 10 Children's Homes that were damaged due to the earthquake and the tsunami.⁵⁶

There are 16,234 children in the Nanggroe Ach Darussalam province that are being cared for in childcare institutions, and a little bit over 2,500 of them are victims of the Tsunami. It is believed that at least 112 child care institutions in this province are taking care of child victims of the tsunami.⁵⁷ The age range of these victims living in institutions vary from a few months to above eighteen years old. Whereas most of the institutions normally care for their children until the age of eighteen, in Aceh after the disaster there are also 19-year olds living in institutions, and the oldest even being 25. Would these than still be childcare institutions, or can it more be seen as a shelter for tsunami victims in general? Or should these few examples just be seen as an exception? Because over 70 percent of the total tsunami children victims living in institutions are still between the age of 6 and 15.⁵⁸

⁵² O'Kane, C. et al. (2016), p. 32.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 34.

⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 34.

⁵⁵ 'Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004.' Via www.britannica.com accessed on 15-11-2018.

⁵⁶ Save the Children UK, Ministry of Social Affairs, and UNICEF (2006), *A rapid assessment of children's homes in post-tsunami Aceh*, Jakarta: Save the Children UK, p. 37.

⁵⁷ Ibid. pp. 44-45.

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 48.

Data shows that 85 per cent of the tsunami children have at least one living parent, and 42 per cent of them still have both. Out of these tsunami victims, only 250 out of 2500 are double orphans. This again corresponds with the fact that most of the children living in child care institutions – or ‘orphanage’ – have at least one parent alive. Even after a natural disaster the loss of a child’s parent is not the main reason why he or she has to live in a social welfare institution.⁵⁹ Aceh is however not the only province where child victims of the tsunami entered childcare institutions. Tempo.co issued an article stating that three years after the disaster, there are still at least 203 children from Aceh between 10 and 18 years living in social welfare institutions in Indonesia, spread among six other provinces.⁶⁰ The question is why these children were placed so far away from their remaining families, which in turn questions the role of the government in monitoring these victims and their families.

The example of Aceh and the tsunami tells us more about how vulnerable childcare institutions are in the case of a natural disaster. Interesting however is that despite the disaster, where many people lost their lives, the main reason for children to enter an institution is because family or extended family cannot take care of them anymore, rather than the loss of (both) their parent(s).

⁵⁹ Save the Children UK, et al. (2006), p. 50.

⁶⁰ ‘203 Anak Korban Tsunami Masih di Luar Aceh.’ Via <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/112993/203-anak-korban-tsunami-masih-di-luar-aceh> accessed on 20-11-2018.

CHAPTER 5

The State and civil society

Before the arrival of the Dutch colonists in the early sixteenth century, orphanages were not known as a place for the care of orphaned, neglected or abandoned children in Indonesian society, because these children were normally raised by relatives or local communities. It was during the Dutch colonial time that orphanages were being introduced in the Netherlands East Indies, and they originated with the Dutch Christian missionaries. In the early twentieth century, it was more or less the local Islamic socio-religious welfare organizations that started to take over the Dutch orphanage model and through this expanded the number of *panti asuhan* in Indonesia in the next years. The first president of Indonesia, Sukarno, who was inaugurated right after independence, supported the growth of *panti asuhan* in order to help care for those children who were being abandoned or became orphaned during and after the Second World War. At first he lobbied Christian churches to take care of these needy children, but when the number and problem of orphans became bigger after independence, he asked all community groups to help with the care of orphans.⁶¹ It was only with President Suharto however that the number of *panti asuhan* grew very rapidly, because of strong State financial and other kinds of support, which I will discuss later on.⁶²

One Islamic reform movement in Indonesia that was established by Ahmad Dahlan in Yogyakarta in 1912 was Muhammadiyah. This movement strongly espoused educational goals and social welfare. Dahlan's emphasis laid on helping the disadvantaged and mainly orphans, and this led to the establishment of his first orphanage around 1924.⁶³ Another famous religious movement that established in 1926 in Indonesia is Nahdlatul Ulama. Although their focus was mostly on *pesantren*, they also wanted to help orphans, so they established *panti asuhan* as well. When Indonesia gained political independence in 1945, the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia included the role of the state towards needy children: Article 34 (1) states that "Impoverished persons and abandoned children shall be taken care of by the State".⁶⁴ Even though there is a lack of published records from the Sukarno era on the amount of *panti asuhan*, according to Peacock (1978) Muhammadiyah operated only a few orphanages in the 1920s, and this increased to 350 *panti asuhan* by the year 1970. This could assume that the amount of welfare institutions did increase in the decades after independence.

During the Suharto era however, it is very clear that there is an increase in the number of *panti asuhan*, especially during his last decades as president. What are the reasons behind this?

⁶¹ Babington (2015), p. 174.

⁶² Ibid. P 73

⁶³ Ibid. p. 195 citing Fauzia, A. (2013), p. 151.

⁶⁴ 'The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia', via https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/legaldocument/wcms_174556.pdf accessed on 23-11-2018.

Suharto is known because of his use of corruption, and this also played a role when it comes to childcare institutions. It is believed that the *panti asuhan* played an important role for Suharto's corrupt financial practices, known as 'KKN' ('Korrupsi, Kolusi, Nepotism', or corruption, collusion, nepotism). Suharto and his wife Tien Suharto were believed to be fundraisers for educational and children's charities from the 1950s onwards. It was mainly Tien Suharto who was involved with orphanages and was known as the patron of many of them because she wanted residential childcare to be widely adopted throughout Indonesia.⁶⁵ The Suharto family however was only concerned about vulnerable children in order to attract them to *panti asuhan*, because this would benefit the first family and its associates. Research by van Klinken (2012) points out that during the time Indonesia occupied East Timor from 1975 until 1999, Suharto's plan was to 'transfer' more than 4000 East Timorese children to Indonesia. He set up a foundation for Timorese children who became orphan after the Indonesian invasion, hoping to promote goodwill within Indonesian people for the invasion. Many soldiers took these children out of East Timor with the aim to educate them, which made it into a civilization mission for many.⁶⁶ Although the idea seems to be for the wellbeing of these needy children at first, fact was that Suharto did use these many *panti asuhan* to collect money from, through ways of corruption. It is believed that Suharto transferred 1000 East Timorese children to different forms of institutions throughout Indonesia, with the help of the national government and Muslim and Christian religious groups. In the year 1975, Suharto established the Dharmais Foundation; a charitable organization with the aim to raise funds for the care of orphans. These charitable organizations, or so called *yayasan*, had another important role: they were there to lead State-sponsored financial corruption. Throughout the Suharto era, Suharto and his associates manipulated their official powers for the establishment and growth of *yayasan*, so that it could lead to the increase of their own private wealth. *Yayasan* were recognized by the Indonesian law, and 'officially' established to collect donations for charitable purposes.⁶⁷

Suharto was the head of all state-run monopolies, and handed control over to his family and friends, who in turn gave a lot of millions back in tribute payments. These payments were normally wrapped as a charitable donation to all the foundations under control of Suharto. These *yayasan* were actually there do help construct foundations, schools, and hospitals, but instead functioned as Suharto's own money-box. Financial institutions were also ordered to contribute a certain amount of their profits to Suharto's *yayasan*.⁶⁸ *Yayasan* were often used for illegal money laundering between the Indonesian central bank and private banks, where a lot of *yayasan* also owned shares in these banks.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Babington (2015), pp. 197-198, citing Elson (2001) and van Klinken (2012).

⁶⁶ Bexley, A. (2014). Making Them Indonesians: Child Transfers Out of East Timor, *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 15(3), pp. 286-287.

⁶⁷ Babington (2015), p. 202, citing Aditjondro (2000) and Elson (2001).

⁶⁸ 'How Did Suharto Steal \$35 Billion?' via <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2004/03/how-did-suharto-steal-35-billion.html> accessed on 25-11-2018.

⁶⁹ Babington (2015), p. 203, citing Brown (2006) pp. 968-69.

Panti asuhan growth during the Suharto era

Whereas Muhammadiyah only operated a few orphanages in the 1920s, by the year 1970 this number already increased to 350. According to the Government of Indonesia et al. (2003) the number of panti asuhan in the years 1990-91 was 983, and seven years later this number increased to 1,647. This means that the number of panti asuhan increased with 67.5 per cent between 1990 and 1997 only. Also the number of children living in panti asuhan increased, especially during the last ten years of his rule: it went from 55,627 children in 1990-91, to 68,919 children on the eve of the financial crisis in 1996-97. This means that there was an annual growth rate of 5 per cent.⁷⁰ Whereas the number of panti asuhan in the 1970s were roughly a few hundred, this number increased to 1,647 at the end of Suharto's rule, which is an immense growth of 370 per cent in less than thirty years.

Yayasan not only provided massive financial opportunities for Suharto, they also gave him other advantages that led to the growth of panti asuhan during the last twenty years of Suharto's rule. When Suharto faced growing opposition from the military in the late 1980s and early 1990s, he decided to use yayasan in order to build a separate financial and political powerbase. By the 1990s, he manipulated the yayasan so strongly that it led to financial and political gains for Suharto himself and his associates, and panti asuhan were also inseparably linked to the corrupt financial dealings of Suharto. Both the amount of yayasan funds to their charitables and the exact amount that flowed to the panti asuhan is not known. There are also suggestions that Suharto wanted to portray himself as a supporter of Islam, a builder of mosques, and an establisher of (religious) boarding schools, and therefore needed his regime to support panti asuhan, since almsgiving to orphans is an important concept in Islam.⁷¹

The importance of public charitable support and therefore the importance of the panti asuhan itself can also be seen through the way Suharto's New Order regime supported the care for children outside their own household. Indonesian Law 4/1979 speaks about child welfare, the rights of a child, and whether a child should be raised with family or not. The panti asuhan is seen as a 'special environment' here, stating that 'children have the right to welfare, care, foster and guidance, based on affection in either their families or special environments to grow and develop naturally'. The same law also emphasizes the role of the state towards these children, stating that 'children who do not have parents anymore, have the right to be cared for by the state or [other] persons or [other] bodies'.⁷² Knowing the background of Suharto, panti asuhan, and the financial benefits it has brought him, it could raise questions on whether the growth of the amount of panti asuhan during his time was to actually help needy children, or if it was for Suharto's own financial benefit. Or could it also have been a combination of both?

⁷⁰ Babington (2015), p. 152, citing Government of Indonesia, Ministry of Religious Affairs, cited in UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2003, p. 42).

⁷¹ Babington (2015), pp. 203-204.

⁷² Presiden Republik Indonesia (1979), *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia nomor 4 tahun 1979 tentang Kesejahteraan Anak*, via www.hukumonline.com accessed on 27-11-2018.

Civil society in the Post-Suharto era

The fall of Suharto on 21 May 1998 marked the transition from the New Order era to the *Reformasi* period (reformation). This period of reformation was an important factor behind the growth of reformist Muslims to reform zakat practice and management. As mentioned in chapter two, zakat refers to giving alms to the poor and needy, and is obligatory upon every Muslim adult.⁷³ Since children in childcare institutions are often seen as poor and needy, a lot of zakat, especially during the month of Ramadan, is going to *panti asuhan*. There are four reasons behind the increase in Islamic philanthropy after 1999. First, the Reformasi movement have successfully forced to government to establish laws on Islamic philanthropy. Second, the economic crisis of 1997 encouraged Muslims to philanthropic activities in order to help those people affected by poverty. Third, ethnic conflicts in some places in the country led to casualties and destructions, so that Muslims felt the need to help victims through their philanthropic organizations. Lastly, the tsunami in Aceh brought along destruction, casualties, and suffering, which resulted in relief activities and philanthropic resources coming to Aceh.⁷⁴ Does this mean that there is a shift from a period where childcare institutions were funded and supported by the government during the Suharto era, to a period where childcare institutions are in the hands of the civil society and its philanthropic organizations (only)?

Financing of child welfare institutions

All child welfare institutions receive two sorts of funding: state and non-state. The state funding consists of government subsidy, whereas the non-state funding includes donations from the community, social organizations, and big companies.

Although the exact numbers are unknown due to a lack of data, according to a research by Save the Children the number of childcare institutions that are owned and managed by government agencies is 35, which is not much compared to the total number of childcare institutions in Indonesia. The rest are owned and managed by religious institutions. However, all of these religious institutions receive government subsidy: specifically to cover the costs needed for the children in their care. The Department of Social Services (DEPSOS) provides financial support to a large number of welfare institutions through the *Government Subsidy Program for Additional Food Costs for Social Care Institutions (BBM)*, which started in the year 2001. The aim of this program is to give social assistance through childcare institutions, and did this by giving subsidies for food costs for those living in institutions, whether a private one or from the government. The BBM seems to be the most important source of funding for the childcare institutions. By the year 2007 it is believed that this program helped 5053 institutions across Indonesia, and this included institutions for children, disabled, elders and homeless people. Out of all these, there were 4305 childcare institutions in that year that received subsidy, which could provide for 128.016 children. This meant that the central Government spent 105.2 billion Rupiah (US \$11.69 million) in total on this program for childcare institutions

⁷³ 'What is Zakat?' via <https://www.islamichelp.org.uk/zakat/> accessed on 27-11-2018.

⁷⁴ Fauzia, A. (2008). *Faith and the State: A History of Islamic Philanthropy in Indonesia* (Doctoral Dissertation). Faculty of Arts, Asia Institute, The University of Melbourne, pp. 214-219.

alone. The Food Assistance for one child was 2.300 Rupiah a day (US \$0.26), which means that there could be 839.500 Rupiah (US \$93.28) per child per year available, but unfortunately not every institution received the assistance one full year.⁷⁵

Even though the number the childcare institutions that receive BBM assistance is growing, it is believed that the number of actual children where it should be covered for remained stable throughout the years. This is probably because there is smaller proportion being contributed for each recipient institution every year. The assistance does not cover all the institutions in a specific region or the actual amount of children in need of care in these institutions, but instead covers a specific number of both. Generally, the government assistance hopes to subsidize around 30-40 children per institution.⁷⁶ Although the government has subsidies reserved for its needy children in institutions, it still does not benefit every child living in here. I would argue that an important reason for this is the lack of data: the precise number of children living in a specific institution in a specific place is unknown. And how can you help a person if you do not know they exist?

Save the Children et al. (2007) found eight different types of funding for childcare institutions in Indonesia, which included governmental and non-governmental organizations, and private donations. Out of these, there were identified six different types of funding through organizations, and two types of individual donations. The funding that was being done by organizations, included government funding, private company-funding, funding from social or international organizations, and foreign governments. The two individual donations were donations from managers of a childcare institution, and donations from members of a community. Most of the time the assistance consisted of money, but there were also donations in the form of buildings, materials, office and catering equipment, furniture, sanitary equipment, water, and food.⁷⁷

All the childcare institutions receive Government assistance, but besides this they also rely on other contributions, such as a contribution from an institution's own parent organization, its own managers, or their board members. A lot of institutions also receive assistance from their local community. Government institutions were primarily funded through local government funding, and in addition to this, all of them also received the BBM subsidy from DEPSOS. When it comes to private childcare institutions, they also receive BBM subsidy, and this seems to be the biggest funding they get. Besides the BBM funding there are also a number of childcare institutions – both government and private – that have access to funds from the local government of their district or province, which is called the *Anggaran Pendapatan Belanja Daerah* (APBD). One example, in order to get an idea on how the funding looks like, is from the Pamardi Utomo institution in Central Java, which received funds from the provincial government. This consisted of US \$48,000 in 2006, for 60 children. They could use it for children's services, transportation costs, administration, and infrastructure maintenance.⁷⁸ The second biggest source for a childcare institution, after Government assistance, is community donations. It is however mostly the non-Government institutions that receive

⁷⁵ Save the Children UK, et al. (2007), p. 18.

⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 19.

⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 72.

⁷⁸ Ibid. pp. 73-74.

these donations, since the budget of government institutions is often already secured by the state. Community assistance did not only happen in the form of money, it also included boxes of noodles and rice bags. Those institutions that were run by Muslim organizations often received more donations during the holy month of Ramadan, but this also depended on their relationship with the surrounding communities. The amount of donations given by donors to an institution can vary from hundreds to even thousands of US dollars a year.

Next to government funding and community donations, childcare institutions also receive assistance from social organizations. One interesting organization that is still operating these days is the Dharmais Foundation. Even though this foundation was established during the Suharto period and helped Suharto and its associates with the increase in their wealth, after the fall of the former President it changed aims towards striving for poverty reduction. The assistance from the Dharmais Foundation for welfare institutions is mainly to support the costs of health, food and clothes. The fourth sector that also provides assistance to childcare institutions are a few State-owned companies, including the national electricity company PLN, the State oil company Pertamina, the national logistical agency Bulog, and a few state owned Banks such as Mandiri and BNI. Besides this all, there were also international donations that reached the institutions through foreign government donations, international NGO's, and private individuals.⁷⁹

Financing of pesantren

But how about the pesantren and its financing? Tedi Priatna et al. (2018) conducted a research on a pesantren in Tasikmalaya, West Java, and came to the conclusion that there are four sources that provided financing for religious boarding schools. First, and most logical, is that the pesantren collects the money from parents, which is the monthly fee for food and lodging. This includes daily needs such as meals and the pesantren operational costs. In addition to these fees, they also have other contributions such as registration fees and annual donations collected by parents themselves. Second, the government support. This source is coming from the School Operational Grant (Bantuan Operasional Sekolah, BOS), and together with other government support is used for establishing and maintaining pesantren facilities. In general, the BOS program is a form of government support that wants to provide school facilities and learning activities. The BOS program however is not only for pesantren, but for other regular schools as well. This means that just like state schools, the pesantren is also financially supported by the government. The third source of funding are social donations. These donations are mostly coming from the Muslim community and deal with ZIS ('Zakat, Infak, Shadaqah') and UPS (Unit Pengelola Shadaqah, or 'Shadaqah Management Unit'). *Infak* and *sadaqah* are, just like zakat, payments given by the Muslim community for charitable and religious purposes. ZIS can be a powerful bridge when it comes to the creation of a harmonious relationship between the poor and the rich; between those 'who have' and those 'who have

⁷⁹ Save the Children UK et al. (2007), p. 76.

not'.⁸⁰ Whereas the ZIS tries to obtain three types of donations, the UPS only focuses on *shadaqah*, and comes from the Islamic principle of solidarity and sharing. The fourth and last source of financing comes from business units. This means that there are businesses with a patent in a certain pesantren, and therefore also assist them financially.⁸¹

Civil society nowadays

Although the previous section on childcare financing showed the important role of the government in funding most of the Indonesian social welfare institutions, it is still the civil society that takes care of them in the broader perspective. As is mentioned in previous chapters as well, one of the important aims for religious organizations in the past is helping needy people and children, and this is still the case nowadays. The *panti asuhan* is widely supported by the Indonesian community, and there are two main reasons for this. First, and probably also the most important reason, is that childcare institutions are supported by Islamic organizations and their teachings as place for charitable giving. Second, the *panti asuhan* are often seen as a 'good' place where neglected or orphaned children are being cared for, and a place where poor families can send their children to in order to get access to education. All with all, childcare institutions are often believed to have more advantages for the child than disadvantages.⁸² The pesantren on the other hand has partly the same background when it comes to civil society, but not entirely. The most important difference between a *panti asuhan* and the pesantren is the fact that the pesantren is in a way self-fulfilling because parents pay a monthly fee, whereas social welfare institutions fully rely on funding from outside, and therefore also more on the civil society. Although the education provided by *panti asuhan* and a pesantren are in many cases (almost) the same, I would argue that the public perception does not really acknowledge the similarities between the two. The Indonesian public makes a sharp distinction between the two categories based on the different background of the children in both institutions and the difference in financing. They are often not aware of the fact that in practice the experience of children in both institutions is very similar.

⁸⁰ Lailatussufiani, S. et al. (2016). The Utilization of Zakat, Infaq and Shadaqah for Community Empowerment (Case Study of BAZNAS West Nusa Tenggara Province). *International Journal of Business and Management Invention*, 5(10), p. 152.

⁸¹ Priatna, T. et al. (2018). Educational Financial Management in Tarekat-Based Pesantren. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 4(1), pp. 68-69.

⁸² Babington (2015), pp. 177-178.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

This thesis dealt with religious and social childcare institutions, and the role of the state and civil society, and why they are the way they are. My research question therefore was:

What roles do religious, state and other institutions play in the care for needy children in Indonesia, and why?

For this research I focused on two welfare institutions that take care of (needy) children, which is the pesantren and panti asuhan. I came to the conclusion that there indeed is a very close line between these two institutions, although this is not so clear from the 'outside'. Most people will indeed agree with the fact that both institutions take care of children, but I found out that they have much more in common than one could think. Whereas a pesantren is a religious boarding school, where in most cases parents send their child to for them to obtain Islamic education, a panti asuhan does not have the religious aspect and reasoning behind it. The panti asuhan on the other hand is believed to be an 'orphanage' for children, but striking is that the majority of the children living in these institutions still have at least one living parent. The reason for a parent to send the child to a panti asuhan is mostly economic reason and out of poverty; the child cannot be taken care of anymore and parents often believe that a panti asuhan is better for a child's future, since the child can get education and will be taken care of with shelter and food. This is however not much different with a pesantren: parents send their children to a pesantren for religious education, but the child also actually lives here, and the school will take care of their food. As might be clear by now, the pesantren and the panti asuhan have a lot of things in common.

Another aspect I found out during my research is that – since most of the panti asuhan are religious and mainly Islamic in nature – panti asuhan can basically be considered a pesantren, since there are a lot of cases where children from the panti asuhan receive their education at an actual pesantren, and therefore have the exact same daily activities as a student from the pesantren. I would argue that the difference between an Islamic boarding school and a panti asuhan is not even clear among many Indonesians themselves. There are namely examples of situations where children or parents only find out later that the child entered a panti asuhan instead of a pesantren, since their daily activities and education does not differ from an Islamic boarding school. Although the education and other daily activities of children from both institutions are the same, could one than not argue that the only difference lays in the name: at the end of the day some children will go back to their shelter called 'pesantren', whereas other children return home to their institution called 'panti asuhan', even though their day consisted of the same activities and curriculum.

Considering that the education system in many pesantren and panti asuhan are the same, I would argue that the way religious boarding schools and religious panti asuhan are in nature only differ on one aspect, which has to do with the financing. Although there are some exceptions if a child wants to enter pesantren and comes from a poor family, the overall majority of children living in pesantren are sponsored by their parents, meaning that their parents pay a monthly fee to the school in exchange for shelter and food, whereas a panti asuhan on the other hand is free of any financial charges. Besides the parental fees, the way both pesantren and panti asuhan are being financed is basically the same: both receive financial support from the government – understandably, the panti asuhan more than the religious boarding school - and both rely next to this also on the civil society and other donations.

This research made me clear that there is not much academic research done on Indonesian social welfare institutions, and I expected the amount of research on pesantren to be more. As far as I know, there is no research being done on the pesantren vis-à-vis the panti asuhan. Would this mean that the blurred and close line between the two is not known? Or do people do not find it necessary to do more depth research on this topic? I believe that it is necessary to understand more about the nature of especially social welfare institutions, because I believe that there are a lot of assumptions on this topic that are not true after all. Do people really understand what an Indonesian panti asuhan is or does for its children? I wonder.

Although I argued that the education and activities in both pesantren and panti asuhan are the same, the reason behind sending a child to either a pesantren or panti asuhan is different: panti asuhan is for those whose parents cannot take care of them anymore, whereas pesantren is considered a religious school. Despite the similarities, I believe that it is this underlying reason that makes an important difference, especially for the children. The panti asuhan gets a lot of support from the Indonesian community, because it is believed to be a 'good' place where 'orphans' and needy children have the opportunity to make something of their life. It looks however like no attention is being paid to how these children feel and how they like their life in the panti asuhan. Research among orphanages worldwide made clear that children growing up in these institutions face depression, anxiety, behavioral problems, and difficulties with social interaction. They form a vulnerable group with a higher chance of psychological and emotional problems later on in life.⁸³ On behalf of the child, the whole concept of 'panti asuhan as a home for needy children' therefore should get more attention by mainly the government, who should put more effort in finding out alternatives, such as fostering and adoption. Fostering has its aim to reunite children with their parents as soon as the situation at home has become better, but can live with foster parents in the meantime.

⁸³ Kaur, R., et al. (2018). 'A descriptive study on behavioral and emotional problems in orphans and other vulnerable children staying in institutional homes'. Via <http://www.ijpm.info/article.asp?issn=0253-7176;year=2018;volume=40;issue=2;spage=161;epage=168;aualast=Kaur#ref1>, accessed on 03-12-2018.

Although there already is some attention on for instance fostering, this is still not enough to help many children in Indonesia.⁸⁴

All with all, this research showed how childcare institutions have evolved throughout the years, to a point nowadays where, even though there are made distinctions between them, they do not differ much after all. Is it possible to abolish religious *panti asuhan* and let them be a part of the *pesantren*? Or are the underlying reasons of poverty and economic hardship a reason to still make a distinction between these two institutions? This is all probably easier said than done, due to all different kind of reasons, such as the support from the Indonesian community. Fact however is that – even though many will not realize it – the *pesantren* and *panti asuhan* have a blurred line and are very similar in practice. The experience of children in *pesantren* and *panti asuhan* is in most cases similar, even in the religious aspect. There are also similarities when it comes to financing: both receive state funding, and both receive funding from the society. This all reflects the importance of (religious) civil society and the close cooperation with the state, which is in turn very characteristic of Indonesia itself. It would be interesting to have more academic researchers on this topic, in order to understand the situation more and to maybe find a better solution for children living in social welfare institutions in Indonesia.

⁸⁴ 'Foster families' via <http://www.sos.or.id/trash/kdi-content/what-we-do/child-care/foster-families> accessed on 03-12-2018.

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