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# Government Policies and Ethnical Diversity Under Multiculturalism: The Study of Pohuwato Regency

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Sastro M Wantu<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Social Sciences, State University of Gorontalo, Indonesia

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## Abstract

This paper describes the construction of ethnic integration in Pohuwato local government policies which is supported by community under *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity) and multiculturalism. This research employed qualitative approach with the aim of tracing and analyzing social harmony from various ethnicities existing in society and government policy Pohuwato Regency. The instruments of the study included data, facts and concepts that were relevant. This study aimed to see the problem of segregation within societies by primordial groups to solve ethnic integration in which ethnic groups are bound together. There are two regional policies (1) controlling inter-ethnic relations and constructing the model of Gorontalo community as an important element of social, cultural and political aspect which uphold openness and tolerance; and (2) using deliberative public space in order to achieve harmonious atmosphere between public (community) with the government in protecting the diversity. Therefore, it can be concluded that ethnic communities residing in Pohuwato Regency are bound to unite by the desire to improve new and better lives between immigrants and local communities. This desire becomes a symbol of unity based on mutual respect for different values to achieve the integration or unity of multicultural ethnic groups.

## Keywords

policy; government; diversity; ethnicity; multiculturalism; harmony

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country that has special characteristic of ethnic diversity with its different languages and cultures formulated in national motto "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*" (Unity in Diversity). Although this nation is proud of the colorful nature bound by the third principle of *Pancasila* (five national pillars), the country also concerns with several problems arising from such differences as the process of national integration between ethnic groups, or minority-majority groups and the process of development of understanding between different religious

groups. In relation to the phenomenon of pluralism of Indonesian society, in some areas before and after the fall of the New Order government, there are apparently some alarming ethnic problems because there is a clash of differences that tend to give rise to horizontal conflict.

The period of violence conflict which has escalated massively in a very high intensity emerges in several tangible forms such

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### Corresponding author

Jl. Jend. Sudirman No. 6 Kota Gorontalo, Indonesia

### Email

sastrowantu@ung.ac.id

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as destruction, burning and persecution of worship places based on research results from Loekman et al (2000). According to the report from University of Gadjah Mada, there are twenty cases of violence in Indonesia since 1995-1997. Furthermore, after the fall of the New Order, horizontal conflicts were worse than before. There are several conflicts which happened in Poso Central Sulawesi Province, Maluku Provinces and Ternate. These horizontal conflicts have not been able to be mitigated. Even after the cases of Poso, Maluku and Papua, there are several horizontal conflicts which are still occurring such as the violence cases in Riau, South Lampung and so forth. In 2015, some conflicts based on ethnicities happened in Tolikara Papua Province, Central Maluku and Singkil in Aceh.

However, if we take a look at many cases of horizontal conflicts that spread in Indonesia, there is one interestingly opposite situation in Gorontalo Province especially in Pohuwato Regency. In this area, the community is very harmonious and tolerant by acknowledging and accepting social diversity. Therefore, the community shows a tolerant attitude for pluralism in the form of interethnic interaction style that mingles well and bound to each other. This harmonious conditions existing in the area is certainly a very important lesson for Indonesian people to create ethnic integration of diversity amidst pluralistic crisis in Indonesia.

The demographical composition of population in Pohuwato Regency is multiethnic. This regency consists of Gorontalo ethnic as majority and other ethnic minorities such as Chinese, Arabian, Minahasa, Sangir Thalaud (North Sulawesi), Javanese, Balinese, Sumbawa, Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara) Bugis and Makasar ethnics. These ethnic groups have different cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. From the composition of the society, there is a very interesting phenomenon. Unlike in other areas which show unequal distribution of opportunity, the Gorontalo ethnic as a dominant majority can share the chances and power justly with the other ethnic minorities. The ethnic minorities have equal

opportunity as majority has in all aspects of social, politics and economy. Pohuwato community is inhabited by a society that is diverse and plural. According to Nasikun (1996), a pluralistic society with a balanced competition and plural society with dominant majority have the ability to develop national integration dynamics rather than a society with a dominant minority or plural society with segmentation.

To strengthen harmonious social relations and mutual recognition among others based on diversity, the local government of Pohuwato proclaims the policies of local wisdom values of community to uphold harmony by making consensual ground y based on kinship system named "*Mohuyula*". Notwithstanding differences of race, ethnicity, religion, culture and language, they keep cooperating and coexist peacefully because they have "everyone is our brother" mentality. This view is built as a policy to deal with social problems of a variety of conflicts arising from their social segmentation.

Based on the above argumentation, there are some basic questions that we need to look at if we want to find a solution to see the ability of this area to maintain harmony and ethnic integration: How can the pattern of inter-ethnic relations in Pohuwato Regency be tied to each other? What is the policy of Pohuwato local government to equitably organize the society under the perspective of multiculturalism? This study is important in the way it discusses the multicultural policies of a regency or district government. The existing literatures on multicultural policy largely focus on the state or departmental section of national government (Baldwin & Huber 2010; Vertovec 2010).

### **Public Administration and Ethnic Pluralism**

Ethnic diversity in plural societies is part of the study in various disciplines of sociology, anthropology and politics. Public administration is also very important discipline even though it is not like the study of other social sciences. Under political science perspective, plural society according to Robushka and Shepsle is defined in three pa-

rameters: (1) Cultural diversity, (2) Ethnic alliances, (3) Politically organized (Nasikun 1996; Muttarak 2010; Gay 2013). And the other social science approaches are most widely cited by experts on pluralistic societies including Hefner (2007) which summarizes the work of Furnival, Miller and Walzer. According to Furnival (1944), plural society is a society consisting of two or more elements or social order that coexist, but without blending in one political unit. Therefore, Miller (1993) argues that independent institutions are almost impossible to appear in countries of different nations. Among people who are lack a sense of commonality, especially if they read and speak in different languages, the unity of public opinion is necessary for the operation of a representative government cannot live. In this context, Walzer (1996) argues that there is an irony of Western liberal scientists such as Mill where pluralism accommodation occurs in utilitarian interests between buyers and sellers in the market, but when it comes to the public and political life of liberals, they are completely unprepared for cultural plurality (Carter 2010; Lancee 2011; Sturgis 2011; Gay 2010).

According Ahimsa-Putra (2009), to respond to this situation, multiculturalism is needed to be assessed within three perspectives, namely: (1) social consciousness, referring to the knowledge held by a group, community, society or tribe about particular matters and those units are aware of such knowledge systems; (2) social-cultural construction, referring to a phenomenon that is constructed by an individual together with other individuals through the process of communication in which language is most important tools in the process; (3) Historical phenomenon, referring to multiculturalism in the form of a certain socio-cultural that is created as a result of the interaction between various factors in the life of a society in a particular period.

Therefore, ethnic pluralism is an underlying factor between public administration and community development in many countries, including Indonesia. The factor is also essential for public administration en-

vironment. Some cases like the newcomer who succeed in a short time would pose a new threat to the local people who regard their resources and power as being highly threatened and exploited. Or otherwise, the local people massively dominate and control the resources or powers; not even allow the ethnic minorities to be come communities. Dominations are not just in economic and social aspects but also the power of the public bureaucracy. Therefore, the ability of the state to handle the ethnic conflict is needed. This ability would require the capability of state public administration in performing its function as a fair intermediary institution in allocating resources only limited to ethnic groups which always compete each other (Effendi 2010).

Further, Effendi (2010, pp. 178-180) shows that public administration in both central and regional governments is an institution that formulates, implements and formulates policies as well as programs to channel government and private resources to community groups. In practice, such government policies and programs do not share benefits and costs evenly. Therefore, in practice, the multi-ethnic communities which are benefitted and disadvantaged can always be identified, both as reality and perceived with a particular ethnic group. Although rules, policies and programs are formally always objective and impartial, there is often deviation and misappropriation in practice because there is preference to a particular ethnic group. Several cases like the success of elite immigrants in a short period of time certainly pose a new threat to the local community who perceive their resources and power to be severely threatened and repressed. Or vice versa, the native community with the domination over control of resources and power who does not even give opportunities to ethnic minorities as a migrant community (Dahlberg 2012; Forehand 2016).

In public administration for example, people should pay attention to the composition of plural society as mentioned by Robushka and Shepsle (1972) who distinguish plural society in four configurations,

namely; (1) a plural society with a balanced competition, (2) plural society with dominant majority, (3) a plural society with a dominant minority, and (4) a plural society with fragmentation (in Nasikun, 1996). The results are consistent with the argument of Meier and Hawes (2008) who conducted a study of *Ethnic conflict in France a case for representative bureaucracy* examining assumptions about the values of diversity, flexibility and the use of the bureaucracy representation. Although it shows something biased, it is always part of the value of French especially when dealing with ethnic minorities and lower class citizens.

The study employed a qualitative approach, which according to the Lincoln & Guba (1985) is referred to as a naturalistic paradigm. Through this qualitative approach, researchers described and found a phenomenon that had a unique character in the implementation of local government policies in constructing the integration of ethnic groups. This study was conducted in Pohuwato Regency, Gorontalo Province. The regency was considered because it has implemented regional autonomy by not only building the welfare of society, but also taking into account the dimension of ethnic pluralism. The regency constructed local wisdom values in order to maintain the integration which could create harmony and attitude of multiculturalism in the local community. The focus of the study was to look at the pattern of inter-ethnic relations in Pohuwato Regency, involving heterogeneity as one of the reality of diversity and multiculturalism between migrants and local communities in Pohuwato. The region has strong economic base, ethnic pluralism and regional autonomy in ethnicity. Pohuwato Regency government implemented policies which equally organize society group under multiculturalism to solve various conflicts arising from social segmentation. Through their vision of mission on social justice, the local government could create deliberative public sphere and some policies by maintaining the social capital values and local knowledge to the recognition of multiculturalism and harmony through

the idea of kinship *Mohuyula* and *basudara torang* (we are all brothers).

The data was collected through an integrative way to see the relevant data from the following sources.

First, the main data source was from the Pohuwato Regency of Gorontalo Province. The data was collected by observing and investigating many competent sources to find the answers about the social phenomenon. This research tried to capture the meaning and information from observations such as discovering natural events related to multi-ethnic diversity. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain information (empirical data) associated with an understanding of local government policy in building inter-ethnic diversity in Pohuwato Regency under the perspective of multiculturalism. Gorontalo people had diverse values, traditions and social leadership which were merged into an open social life. Local government managed the policies in a fair society in facing social segmentation, structuring harmony between ethnic communities through kinship (*mohuyula*) and maintaining *basudara torang* ideology (everyone is brothers).

After that, in-depth interviews were conducted to obtain information related to an understanding of local government policy in building inter-ethnic diversity in Pohuwato Regency under the perspective of multiculturalism. The data was purposively collected in 2015. The informants involved governmental officials and scholars. The total of all informants were 53 people as informants who were considered mastering the problems.

Second, the data was also obtained through several documents available both from local government and community. Media, literature, workshops and so on were considered as complementary data sources. Based on primary and secondary data sources, the data was then recorded from observing the participants, writing the interview result and doing rigorous field notes.

After collecting the data, the data was analyzed by using interactive model analy-

sis (Miles and Huberman 1992) consisting of three components of analysis, i.e. data reduction, data presentation and conclusion. Data analysis based on interviews and field notes and other materials had been primarily concerned with local government policy in developing inter-ethnic diversity in Pohuwato Regency under the perspective of multiculturalism.

### The Pattern of Inter-Ethnic Relationships

The most widely used classical doctrine by government and plural society in many parts of the world including at the local level is how to preserve the value of unity which is bound by mutual recognition of social diversity and rejects the separation of ethnic groups based on hatred and discrimination. The classical doctrine teaches us that the most powerful way to stabilize an inter-ethnic region is to build a cohesive harmony based on shared values to achieve a better life. Based on this argument, Rawls (1980) and Kymlicka (2011) conclude that the source of unity in modern society is a conception of equal justice. According to Rawls, though, a well-organized society comes from public agreement on political and social justice that supports the bonds of civil relationship and secures the ties of the association.

The conception of such empirical and theoretical values can be applied in the case of the community in Pohuwato Regency in overcoming social problems. They show that social pluralism of the community can create interethnic integration. The regency can actually be categorized as a conducive area with its rich natural resources and plural people by implementing diversity and multicultural values. The natural resources and community pluralism are mutual aspects, where the background of interethnic society depends on the dimensions of the readiness of the potential and natural wealth of the area.

To view such connection better, an initial snapshot on geographical conditions which make the government and the public are interested in this area. The regency has an economic potential because Goron-

talo province is known as the pivot area for linking the trade. The line of territory connects this area and other regions starting from the South Sulawesi Province, West Sulawesi Province, Central Sulawesi Province and other districts in Gorontalo Province such as Boalemo Regency, North Gorontalo Regency, Gorontalo Regency, Gorontalo City to North Sulawesi province, such as Bolaang Mongondow Raya, Minahasa and Manado areas. The capital city of Pohuwato Regency is Marisa sub-district located in tropical areas which geographically is located in North Latitude 0.19-1.15 "and 12'23'123,43. The area covers 424.31 KM<sup>2</sup> or 34.75% of the province width. The area is bordered by some areas namely, Buol Regency of Central Sulawesi province in the north, Gulf of Tomini of central Sulawesi province in the south, Boalemo Regency of Gorontalo province in the east, while the Moutong Regency of Central Sulawesi province in the west.

Furthermore, the case of Pohuwato shows that people have and believe in equal values on the basis of the foundations of ethnic and religious differences. They have the same desire and strong principle to remain united between the group of immigrants as ethnic minorities and the local people of Gorontalo as majority ethnic. The life of the community that is built in Banuroja society is none other because each ethnic group has high awareness that they are immigrants who want to try their fortune in the area where the local people of Gorontalo stay before them. Therefore, mutual cooperation can be developed among them. In addition, there are community leaders who have the capability to foster unity. For example, in the Balinese ethnic community, there are public figures who are considered to solve problems if there is a conflict among Balinese people themselves and they are able to communicate with other ethnic communities. Similarly, there are other ethnic communities which have the same situation. Hence, they can live together with the same desire and strong principles of tolerance.

The unity of ethnic groups in this area is caused by the formation of the district of Pohuwato which is a model to build inter-



ethnic harmony. The model is originally the placement of transmigrants from various regions who came in this area on January 17, 1981. Each of them built various kind of places of worship ranging from the temple for Balinese people, the Church for the Toraja, Minahasa, Sangir Thalaud groups, and Mos-

que for the Islamic community both Gorontalo, Java, West Nusa Tenggara and others.

They are united by the desire to improve their better lives between new comers as migrants and local people who receive inspiration. The interaction can be an acculturation between the local spirit and the

Table 1. Number of Religious Believers in Pohuwato Regency in 2015

No	Districts	Number Of Believers By Religion					
		Islam	Christians		Hindu	Buddha	Confucianism
			Protestant	Catholic			
1	Paguat	15630	160	10	1	4	0
2	Dengilo	5.917	183	0	0	0	0
3	Marisa	17.503	137	18	15	8	0
4	Duhiadaa	11.269	82	19	0	0	0
5	Buntulia	11153	41	1	0	0	0
6	Patilanggio	9,033	123	0	0	0	0
7	Randangan	15,038	467	32	1.189	11	0
8	Taluditi	7,425	417	7	50	0	0
9	Wanggarasi	4,611	479	53	0	0	0
10	Lemito	11206	2.151	0	0	0	0
11	East Popayato	6.126	2.151	43	4	0	0
12	Popayato	9,720	268	4	1	0	0
13	West Popayato	7,371	81	2	0	0	0
	TOTAL	132,002	4,878	189	1.260	23	0

Source: Ministry of Religious Affairs of Pohuwato Regency 2015 and is Processed by researchers.

Table 2: Number of Religious Places of Worship in Pohuwato Regency

No	Districts	Total Place of Worship						
		Mosque	Musholah	Church		Temple	Vihara	Pagoda
				Protestant	Catholic			
1	Paguat	28	5	3	0	0	0	0
2	Dengilo	13	3	4	0	0	0	0
3	Marisa	18	8	2	0	0	0	0
4	Duhiadaa	16	7	1	0	0	0	0
5	Buntulia	12	1	0	0	0	0	0
6	Patilanggio	20	1	2	0	0	0	0
7	Randangan	30	13	7	1	11	0	0
8	Taluditi	21	24	8	0	3	1	0
9	Wanggarasi	16	4	5	0	0	0	0
10	Lemito	18	1	1	2	0	0	0
11	East Popayato	10	1	8	2	0	0	0
12	Popayato	21	1	2	1	0	0	0
13	West Popayato	10	3	1	0	0	0	0
	Total	233	77	44	6	14	1	0

Source: Ministry of Religious Affairs of Pohuwato Regency 2015 and is processed by researchers.

spirit of change under the immigrants. This hope becomes a symbol for unity which is based on mutual respect for different values to achieve the integration or unity of ethnic groups. The value of this unity can be traced, among others, in religious life in the form of a very harmonious, social, economic tolerance as stated by Ustad Alimudin (*Pesantren*) who states that Pohuwato society consists of various ethnic, cultural and religious. However, society always lives their harmonious and peaceful life. Therefore, there is no conflict associated with interethnic in Banuroja village and the crime rate in this village is very low; it can even be said not at all. Any problem that occurs in the village is directly addressed by the village government through the coordination of all religious and custom leaders. This is proven by the students in *Madrasah* who also come from Balinese ethnic who are Hindu. Hence, the organizers of *Pesantren* adjust the religious education curriculum. For Hinduism, there is a teacher of Hinduism who is hired in *Madrasah*.

Based on the above overview, Pohuwato Regency community is bound to each other. According to the view, it is most appropriate to quote the argument from Charles Taylor (1991) which states that public may feel passionate to work together in building a society in a vast diversity and they are willing to sacrifice to make the society united. Loyalty is a product of mutual solidarity. If citizens have a strong sense of identity toward other ethnic groups, they will witness the prospect of maintaining an inspiring and enjoyable diversity. According to Kymlicka (2011), a shared value of enthusiasm for vast diversity can help maintain a degree of solidarity. If that is not the case, what will come up is what is feared by Miller (1993). If there are two groups of people (ethnics) or more do not want to live together, it will be difficult to form solidarity.

### **The Policy of Pohuwato Regency Government to Justly Organize Community Groups.**

Measuring the dynamics of development and community direction can be seen from

the vision and mission of Pohuwato Regency in 2010-2015. Based on the vision and mission of Pohuwato regency, the physical and human resource developments and respect for pluralism serve as symbol of the policy of local government. This policy has been implemented and is very successful in creating an integration that produces a conducive, harmonious and cohesive community situation.

The policy becomes the direction of the strategy in organizing the Pohuwato community. One of which, is to create a policy of development that has the dimension of community justice and to nurture the pluralism of the community as well as to give economic and social opportunities to all the plural society of Pohuwato. In the socio-economic dimension, for example, local government provides policies for ethnic communities to enjoy development with no difference and discrimination, while in the political dimension can be seen from several positions occupied by several ethnic groups.

The overview of Pohuwato government's vision is "*Realization of public welfare above Pohuwato spiritual value through the development of human resources and the development of people's economy*". And the mission which is closely related to the issues of pluralism and multiculturalism is "*Developing the civil society with high morality, culture, respect for pluralism and gender equality. In addition to that, upholding the supremacy and governance which is more equitable in providing public services and security for the communities* (Development Plan 2010-2015 and Kuncoro 2013). Besides the policy that is formulated based on the above vision and mission, other policies which are *affirmative action* and very close with inter-ethnic relations are dialogue with community leaders (interfaith), nurturing harmonious life and cooperation among religious believers.

The vision and mission of Pohuwato Regency government with the dimension of justice serves as the catalyst of mutual relationship among citizens and regions. The local government represents the level of development of cultural dimensions



which is quite high. This is proven by the government's concern at the local level in building the diversity of a multicultural society. The concern is not just a slogan but also in the form of *affirmative action* management for plurality oriented wisdom of kinship (*mohuyula*) and *torang basudara* (we are all brothers) supported by a *policy-oriented* vision of pluralism mission. By looking at the phenomenon and various problems in managing the plurality of the community, the local government of Pohuwato creates policies and takes a decision that has the dimension of justice for pluralistic community. The policy of local government is to make a policy that not only revolves around the level of concept, idea or political campaign, but also relates to empirical matters such as understanding, discourse, mutual respect, acknowledging, accepting and practicing diversity manifested by interaction in daily lives for every community group. To implement this condition, a local government policy is needed as an element that not only contains legality but also as a formulation, implementation and can be assessed by a public space. Therefore, the role of local government of Pohuwato is expected by the public space that is a society that waits and requires real action that is not just a mere issue, but an action that is implemented and felt by the local community is what is called a harmonious life, peace and harmony.

In handling the diversity of society in Pohuwato Regency, local government takes a long time. This can even be said that the effort has been done throughout the ages of the development of pluralistic society. The policy is certainly concerned with how an ethnic pluralism is understood. And also, the threat to community unity and national integration should be effectively dealt with to create order among ethnic groups justly.

The way how local government creates policy in the real life of Pohuwato society cannot be separated from the general policy of the central government in handling everything related to the interests of the general public. The government's policy in

dealing with the distribution of justice in order to improve the welfare of society is conducted through the process of transmigration of population policies which is not only expected to improve society quality life, but also to build diversity among community groups in order to get to know each other with different backgrounds both from the tribe / ethnicity, religion, culture and character. Even so, there are some concrete steps taken by the government including: (1) The local government takes into account the concept and awareness of multicultural society for their bureaucracy system. (2) The local government provides assistance and cooperation between the different ethnic communities in the social life of the community, for example, in commemorating religious holidays. (3) The local government always involves ethnic groups in the discussion of regional development policies which also includes the problems faced by the community. This meeting is usually held at the home Panua (discussion house is a place when there is a problem should decide as involving local government) (4) Local Government emphasizes the educational institutions to accept social diversity, for example the establishment of Islamic boarding school *salafiyah Syafiyah* and also worship places for Christian, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam in the middle of interethnic communities.

Programs in government policy Pohuwato in managing the diversity of ethnicity can be seen on the role of Pohuwato Regency in establishing interactive communication between local government and local communities. Through this communication, the direction of regional development can be accessed by the community and also the nature of the development of value-creating justice in society without creating demarcation line between the interests of particular groups of people. Interactive communication is seen when there is a difference of opinion among communities. In this case, the local government invites traditional leaders, community leaders to engage in dialogue to seek a solution of existing problems.

### The Policy of Pohnuato Government in to Get Closer with the Multicultural Public Sphere

This policy of local governments aims at putting a direct and deliberative participation from society in creating democracy at the local level. This means that the government's policy in dealing with social pluralism of Pohnuato people should use deliberative public space to achieve harmonization between community and government. In this paper, the terminology of deliberation is a process of discursive in which participants (people) take choices together through reasoning, argumentation and persuasion public, and therefore deliberation is important to create equality (Harris, et al. 2004). Creating stability for public space is very essential because, borrowing a phrase Putnam cited by Avrizer, disintegration is a source of instability and tensions that might endanger democracy (in Harris, et al. 2004).

Putnam (1993) addresses concern which consciously or unconsciously is already practiced in Pohnuato, an area that is free from any conflict just like its neighboring regions such as Poso area. Until now, Poso is still a vortex region of conflicts. The anticipation stated by Putnam is empirically implanted by Pohnuato local government and its people to avoid the conflict occurrence like in their neighboring regions. They firmly consider that unstable condition will create not only a destruction to democracy, but also as a humanitarian disaster.

In analyzing the theoretical foundation used by Pohnuato local government in implementing policy to prevent conflicts, there are some policies from local authorities pursued by, among others, the policy through the National Unity and Politics (*Kesbangpol*) always monitor the developments taking place in the community, including a variety of potential conflict, namely: (1) Strengthening cooperation among religious communities; (2) Creating dialogues with all religions annually; (3) Fostering harmony; (4) Opening local administration in terms of equal opportunities for all, without distinction of background; (5) Opening the public space through the house of

*Panua* to collect the feedbacks and complaints from society. Therefore, the potential conflicts in Pohnuato community can be detected by policies such as the establishment of volunteers who detect vulnerabilities before the onset of the conflict. The volunteers conduct fieldwork in the community by detecting any causes of the conflicts that arise. Then, Pohnuato government always implements effective security with some volunteers placed in each district. They will provide information as soon as possible to the government and security forces. Their work is supported by several interethnic figures. In addition, *Kesbangpol* effort in fostering community relationships is conducted by developing inter-religious dialogue every year. Therefore, organizing interethnic harmony in society is not solely held by Pohnuato diverse community, but also is very dependent on the pattern of Pohnuato Regency government. The policy of local government policy is very clear, for example by creating social capital of "*huyula*" (cooperation), "*torang basudara*" (we are all brothers) and also government action among others, to go directly to any civic activities that present interethnic communities.

Notwithstanding its complex society, the communities supports the policy made by local government because Pohnuato Regency government succeeds in building the integration of ethnic groups as desired by pillars of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*, *Pancasila*, the Constitution of 1945 and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Regulatory practices that have been implemented by local government is always based on the above four national pillars as fundamental strength. The spirit forms the basis for the strength of new regency of Pohnuato that was originally only consisted of three districts under the Gorontalo Regency before Reformation Era. In the beginning of Reformation Era, Pohnuato Regency was under Boalemo Regency which both of them were initially under Gorontalo Regency. The basic situation creates local democracy spirit and euphoria to push the local government and its people to establish new regencies with their autonomy in the middle of diverse and

mosaic of ethnicities, religions and cultural characters under harmonious and mutual tolerance of each other.

The policies of Pahuwato local government have always been implemented by people in this area through coordination among community, religious and inter-ethnic leaders to maintain a harmonious social life. The life is very conducive because they can maintain the harmony although they consist of various ethnicities, religions and culture. Therefore, this area no longer has conflicts of ethnicities, religions and culture as well as horizontal conflicts. The policies of the local government in building a harmonious life is based on mutual and deliberative management practice of democracy through developing forums and interaction. The communication not only builds a peaceful life, but also as an attempt to ward off the provocation and social tensions in Pahuwato. Therefore, the awareness of coexisting life can be realized with high multiculturalism. The situation of tolerance is social reality and not based on fake process without any political interests.

The condition in Pahuwato is very counter-productive with the existing events in other parts of Indonesian archipelago. People with diversity are always overwhelmed by the competition which is not balanced and tends to result in social and horizontal conflicts. The integrity is not only a result of community awareness to live in diversity, but also is supported by the ability of Pahuwato local governments to organize in the values of unity in diversity as a strength of communities and regions. Various empirical slogans are not only listed on the vision and mission of the local government, but also can be seen from the efforts of local government to build slogans that remind people to maintain social pluralism such as “*Let Us Build Harmonious And Inter-Religious Tolerance For the realization of Prosperous Community of Pahuwato which is based on Religious Values*”. Similarly, the slogan that exists in society of Banuroja whose image is motivated by the places of worship of all religions that exist in the region such as “*Coexist, Peaceful and Beautiful,*

*The Image of Cultural Village*”.

The aspirations towards harmonious ethnic integration as listed in the vision and mission is a policy concept aimed at establishing a form of social diversity through *Mohuyula* kinship, and ideology of *Torang Basudara* (we are all brothers). The situation is interesting because there are diverse ethnic communities who preserve their unique cultures and at the same time, coexist with a dynamic and tolerant process. The ideology of “*Torang Basudara*” (we are all brothers) and the value of the social capital of kinship are strong foundations that are maintained since they first came (ethnics outside Gorontalo) and met with Gorontalo people who have stayed in the area for centuries.

## CONCLUSION

Ethnic groups in the region are bound to be united by a desire to improve new and better life. The migrants and the local people receive inspiration that the acculturation between the spirit of local and the spirit of changes is essential. This desire becomes a symbol for unity based on mutual respect of different values to achieve integration or unity of ethnic groups.

The ability of Pahuwato society in dealing with social problems, especially with regard to social pluralism, can give create ethnic integration. Although the area has rich natural resources and diverse communities, it can maintain peaceful life and apply values of multiculturalism.

The policies of Pahuwato government in managing the plurality of society can be seen in the vision and mission which emphasizes the importance of pluralism and multiculturalism, as states in the mission “*Developing the civil society with high morals, culture, respect for pluralism and gender equality. Additionally, upholding the supremacy and governance which provides equitable public services and security for the people.*”

Pahuwato government policy always opens to pluralism and the people who have the social capital to form a miniature of In-

donesian which is famous for plural society based on the value of unity in diversity.

Government policies at the local level empirically generates a new awareness for the people that are voluntary and cooperation in creating tolerant, harmonious and peaceful life as a model in managing pluralism at the local level with a very pluralistic society.

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