

Survey Report

A Social Survey of the Social Integration of Indonesians in Wanchai District

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Organisers:



International Social Service
Hong Kong Branch



Cultural and Leisure Services
Committee of Wanchai District
Council

Wanchai Home Affairs
Department (co-organiser)

SEARC Research Team

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Indonesian Interviewers:

Members of the Wanodya Indonesia Club

2.21 Use of public facilities and services

The Indonesians in Wanchai are frequent user of public parks, particularly Causeway Park in Wanchai District and Victoria Park in Eastern District. 97.3% (466) of the respondents have visited the above mentioned parks, and among them, 62.2% (298) visit these parks once a week or more. The concentration of Indonesians in the parks as well as on the streets nearby (including Yee Wo Street, Sugar Street, Jardine Bazaar and Jardine Crescent) is a prominent phenomenon in Wanchai, especially on Sundays, when most of them are having their day off.

Recommendations:

Because of the concentration of Indonesians in the above parks and neighbouring areas, most of the respondents request:

- More female public toilets in the parks.
- More seats and tables in the parks.
- Some also ask for more shades and rain shelters in the parks.
- Organise anti-discrimination training programmes for shopkeepers and sales personnel
- Organise cultural programmes for Indonesians at these places on Sundays and public holidays

Over half of our respondents (50.8%) visit the Central Library on Causeway Road once or more every one to two months. However, other public libraries, such as the Lockhart Road Public Library and the Wong Nai Chung Public Library in the district, are rarely used by the Indonesians. Other relatively un-used public facilities are the public hospitals and medical centres, sports grounds and centres, cultural centres, community halls and museums. Since the Indonesian workers have health insurance provided by the employers, they usually visit private clinics when they are sick. Some of them have expressed the difficulties in telling local doctors about their sickness because of language barriers. Another major reason for not using the above facilities is that they have never heard about them (32.2%).

Other than the Immigration Department (where they need to renew their visas and identity cards once in a while) and post offices, an average of 96.3% of the respondents have never visited other government departments, such as the Labour Department, Legal Aid Department, Equal Opportunities Commission Office, Social Welfare Department. Over half of them (56.5%) said that it is not necessary to use the services of these departments, and 32.2% have never heard of them.

Recommendations:

- Increase the number of materials (books, newspapers, magazines, audio-visual materials etc.) in Bahasa Indonesia in public libraries
- More promotion of public facilities and services, services of government departments with leaflets in Bahasa Indonesia
- Organise more leisure and cultural programmes for minorities, including Indonesians, at the sport grounds, community halls and cultural centres
- Organize more health programmes tailored for Indonesians and domestic workers at public hospitals and clinics; better with doctors that can speak Bahasa Indonesia, or at least with interpreters.

2.23 Religious and cultural life

Religious worship is an important part of the life of the Indonesians. The major places of worship for them in Wanchai include the Ammar Mosque (used by 70.6%), the praying hall (*moshula*) at the Indonesian Consulate (used by 62%), and small praying centres in private premises (used by 46.3%).

The need for *halal* food (halal meat is meat slaughtered after prayers in the proper way by Muslims) is a cultural particularity of Indonesian Muslims. However, a majority (65.1%) of the respondents said that it is not easy to find *halal* food, and around 40% cannot find *halal* food easily on holidays.

A majority of our respondents (over 80%) would like to receive continuing education in Hong Kong. However, the lack of information has barred them from taking courses. Most of the respondents are interested in language courses (80.2%) and computer courses (73.7%).

Recommendations:

- 79.1% of the respondents request more places of worship such as mosques and *moshula* (Islamic praying halls) in Wanchai.
- Many (77.5%) ask for more *wudhu* (washing facilities) near places of worship.
- We also found that many Indonesians conduct their prayers in Victoria Park when they are there with their companions. They request to build *moshula* and *wudhu* (such as more water taps near the toilets) at Victoria Park to make it easier for them to clean themselves before praying.
- Holiday on *Id-ul-Fitr* (Festival after the one-month fast) – also known to Indonesians as *Hari Raya Puasa* – for all Muslims

- Many request more *halal* food stalls and eating places with *halal* food in Wanchai and *halal* food signs to be displayed.
- The government should establish a joint programme for restaurants, cafes, food stalls to join in providing *halal* food – e.g. provide information about demand (not just Indonesians, but also others), rules and regulations (inspections), and sources of supply. It should build a mechanism, like the Singapore government, to work with Muslim organizations (such as the mosques) to assign approving bodies which will inspect subscribing restaurants and cafes to check on *halal* quality. Those that pass will get a *halal* sign of assurance.
- The Government should operate some places for the Indonesians to cook *halal* food for their gatherings.
- Many (97.1%) suggest that the government and NGOs should provide subsidized or free courses for them and provide information of such courses in Bahasa Indonesia.