

PRESERVATION OF CULTURE IN THE JAVANESE OF SURINAME

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SURINAME



HISTORY/BACKGROUND

- Dutch presence dates back to 1602
- The English traded Suriname for New York around 1663
- Slaves worked on sugar plantations
- Caribbean ideologies
- Abolition in 1863
- This brought in a new working infrastructure.
- Hindustani, Javanese, Chinese, and others

OUR TRIP

- Our journey lasted from June 27th-July 29th 2011
- Group consisted of 12 Cultural Anthropology students and 5 Theater students
- We stayed in the Capital Paramaribo mostly
- Ventured into the interior as well places like Jaw Jaw
- Worked with many cultural centers/educated children in two schools/raised educational supplies/
- Worked with HIV/AIDS organizations
- Learned traditional songs, dance, and dress
- Participated in many workshops ranging from theater to studio art construction.

MY GOALS

- To understand how the Javanese have preserved culture
 - After globalization and diaspora
 - Through jeran kepang (an animal spirit trance dance)
 - And pencak silat (a Javanese mixed martial art combining mental/spiritual, sport, self-defense aspects)

SURINAME AND ITS PEOPLE

- Hindustani make up 37% of the population
- Creole (mixed black and white) 31%
- **Javanese 15%**
- Maroons 10%
- Amerindian 2%
- Chinese 2%
- Other 2%
- White 1%







THE JAVANESE DIASPORA



THE JAVANESE IN SURINAME

- Third largest ethnicity
- Comprises 15% of the 485,000 people of Suriname.
- Well established throughout the community
 - Food
 - Dance
 - Performances (Pencak Silat/Jeran Kepang)
 - Music

MY FIELD SITE



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ETHICS

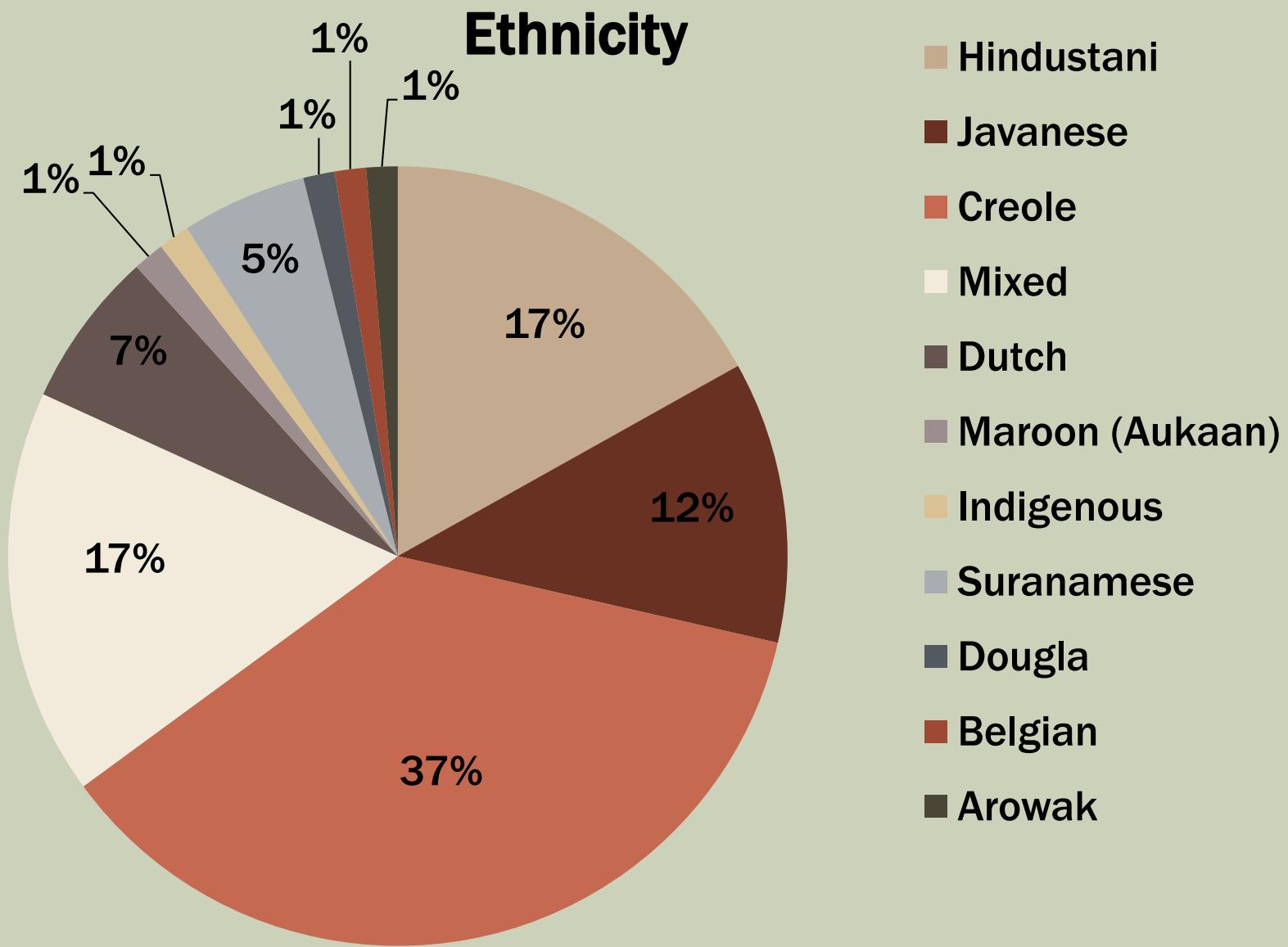
- All research was done after proper IRB class was taken on ethics and passed.
- Participants knew where and how the information would be used
- They knew they could stop at anytime before or even during an interview/recording
- They were told no full names would be disclosed

METHODS

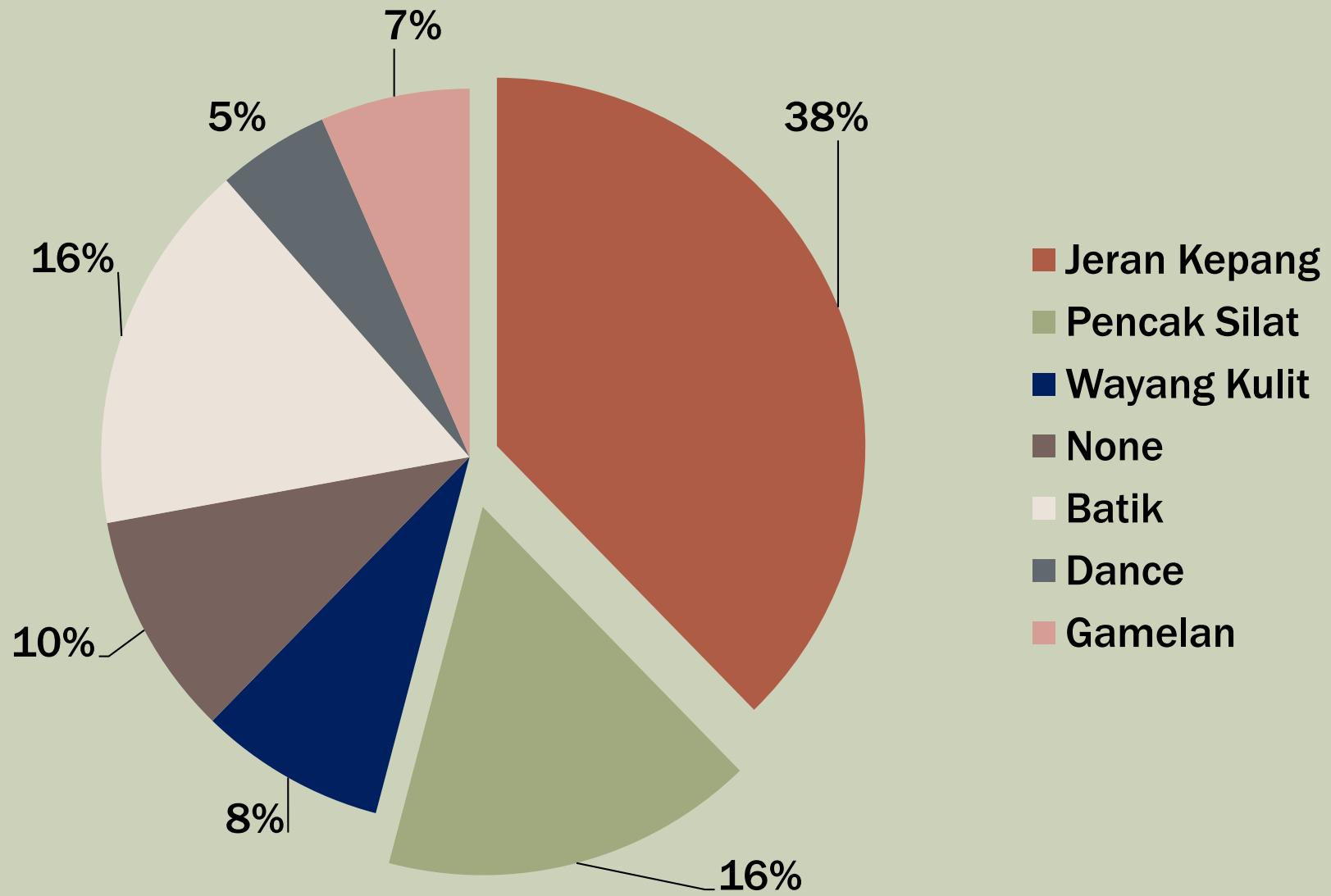
- 91 surveys distributed throughout Paramaribo
- 2 personal Interviews
- 1 group interview
- Participant observation
- Audio/video recordings
- Lead to filming of a documentary
- Helped with cultural setups for festivals

FINDINGS

- Collected 91 surveys
- Surveyed a large age range spanning from 11-79
- 31 males (34.1%)
- 54 females (59.3%)
- 6 didn't state (6.6%)
- 10 different questions with one broken down into 11 listing recognizable arts.
- Included Sex, Age, Ethnicity, Religion, Languages Spoken, Recognized Art Forms, Favorite, 3 words to Describe Java Culture, Importance of Promotion of Java, and Unique Contributions



Recognizable Arts



SURVEY QUOTES

Importance of promotion of Javanese culture?

- “It is very important for the youth.” (Hindustani)
- “It is of utmost importance, we as Javanese need to know where we come from, our identity.” (Javanese)
- “Very important integration for the community.” (Mixed)
- “It is very important because they can learn a lot about their culture that way.” (Surinamese)
- “Significant so that other groups can become familiar with our culture.” (Javanese)

INTERVIEWS

Why do you participate in pencak silat?

- "...It makes me feel like we are the Javanese people who represent our culture to the community and the world." (Marciano)

How does your participation contribute to your sense of Javanese Identity in Suriname?

- "Teach the new generations about our culture to keep the Javanese culture in Suriname alive." (Jordan)

What would you like us to share about your culture in the United States?

- "...in Suriname the Javanese culture is not a hidden thing.. We try to share it with others..." (Dongelique)

INTERVIEWS CONT.

What 3 major contributions does Sana Budaya make to the larger Surinamese community?

- “Teaching kids about the Javanese culture; teaching adults and outside of the Javanese community too.”



CORRELATIONS/SIGNIFICANCE

- Throughout extensive information jeran kepang and pencak silat do preserve culture by
 - Educating their youth
 - This allows for traditions to stay alive even after globalization and diaspora.
 - Creates a cycle for those generations to grow and teach.
 - Community
 - By embracing others they can share their culture
 - Through this sharing, other ethnicities will
 - Understand
 - Respect Javanese culture
 - Be able to support it by participating in functions and events that keep culture preserved

■ Acknowledgements

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REFERENCES

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Geography and history of Suriname.
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ns.html>