The Role of the Church in Efforts to Improve the Economy of Indigenous Peoples in Papua, Indonesia

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Research Article

Keywords: Economy, Indigenous Peoples, Papua, The Role of the Church

Posted Date: July 29th, 2021

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-760415/v1>

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Abstract

The novelty of this research is to prove that the community has been unable to encourage and motivate entrepreneurship growth to improve the economy of indigenous peoples in Papua. This research was carried out in-depth in Papua using descriptive qualitative methods using extensive interviews, observations, and secondary data techniques. The results of the study show that the efforts of the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua to improve the economy of indigenous peoples at both synods, classical, and community levels are still small. The community is currently facing challenges internally and externally. You are grappling with the global Covid-19 pandemic situation. Internet problems still exist in many areas of Papua, making communication even more difficult. To improve the economy of the indigenous peoples, the community tries to implement a common empowerment strategy and strategic steps, namely an open heart-to-heart dialogue between all church components internally at different levels. What is required is a concrete problem mapping with a priority scale and the ability to implement strategic indigenous economic development programs, and supported by appropriate support according to the regional or usual context. At the same time, the community must prepare competent human resources in its areas for long-term economic development.

Introduction

The research team carried out observations and studies in Papua, even though it was still a pandemic, firsthand the situation and condition of Papua which was abundant in milk and honey saw (Papua News Portal No. 1, August 26, 2019). Tanah Papua is the eastern part of Indonesia with a varied topography. This area is three and a half times the size of the island of Java (421,981 km²). Papua Province, formerly known as Irian Jaya, directly borders Papua New Guinea (Irawati, 2006). The Papuans have a unique cultural diversity, namely 312 tribes and 250 regional languages. The number of indigenous Papuans is around 2.3 million out of 4.3 million people (BPS Province of Papua, 2020). The Papuans consist of different: ethnically, culturally, and linguistically, but also consist of different faiths, namely; Christianity, Islam, Catholicism, Hinduism, and other tribal religions, but also with different economic backgrounds. However, the barriers of ethnicity, religion, customs, and government are still clearly visible. It's a challenge in itself.

The largest ecclesiastical institution in Papua is the Indonesian Christian Church (GKI) in Papua, which consists of 70 classics with more than 4,100 churches and over a million people spread across all districts of Papua (interview with Pdt Berlinda Hadi, 2021). The gospel has been in Papua since 1855 (Suara Papua.com, October 29, 2016) and the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua was founded in 1956. In addition to the GKI Tanah Papua, other church denominations have developed, including the Church Indonesian Protestants in Papua, Holy Kalam Christian Church in Papua Region, Protestant Batak Christian Church, Evangelical Camp Church in Indonesia, Ecumenical Christian Church in Indonesia, Indonesian Bethel Church in Papua Region, Assemblies of God Church, Full Gospel Bethel Church (PGIW Papua Region, 2021))

The state of Papua is a beautiful land and rich in potential natural and human resources that are diverse in ethnic groups, customs, religions, and languages. However, the problem facing Papuans today is how to improve people's well-being (Paksi, 2009).

The focus of the study is to show how the role of the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua is to strengthen the parish economy of the parishes. This study is intended to give an overview of the economic framework conditions, the challenges of the Papuans and describe the economic development of the community members as an integral part of society in shaping developments in various areas of life. Theologically, the steps towards economic empowerment were implemented as part of the faith call to realize the tri-calling of the church of fellowship, witness, and service (LAI, 2021).

Consistent with the ideals of the nation as outlined in Paragraph 4 of the 1945 Constitution, namely: (1) protecting the entire Indonesian nation and homeland of Indonesia, (2) promoting the general welfare, (3) educating the Life of the nation, (4) realizing world order based on freedom, lasting peace and social justice. These four points are a common starting point for all elements of the nation in putting together its work in motherland Indonesia. The Indonesian Christian Church in Papua, which is part of this God-given nation, participates in the realization of the ideals of the nation (Abdulgani, 2019).

The reality of having a church in Papua is still struggling, trying to improve the economy of the church itself with some of the service areas, namely 70 classes and 4,100 wards. The service areas are difficult to achieve and the range of services is very far

apart (coast, city, and inland, mountains), have limited human resources, facilities, and financial support are still minimal. In this case, Papuan faced various internal and external challenges that were very complex. It has therefore required in-depth studies by parties to support the Church and encourage and develop the people of Papua. It is not easy to make all of this happen unless a strategic approach is taken that involves all indigenous Papuan children from different elements sitting together. Without goodwill and the right programs, no success is possible (research team visits Mama-Mama Market Papua and buys products from Papua's local resources, 2021).

Pragmatically, the results of this study are intended to bring ideas to the churches in Papua and all related elements of the nation, in particular, to help the sons and daughters of Papuans by strengthening and improving the living standards of indigenous peoples, the better, then, are the goals of this research;

1. Describe the role of the JSB in Papua to date in strengthening the economy of
2. Papua. Describe the challenges facing in Papua, to the economy of indigenous peoples given the dynamics improve, of a rapidly changing world.
3. Describe how the Indonesian Christian Church can stimulate the Papuan economy.

Research Methodology

This study is more of an observation, interview, and valid data collection. The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method that is then analyzed and interpreted to conclude the problems facing the community. Informants are determined by several characteristics that influenced the problem under study or relate to the role of strengthening the community or congregation.

The data collection technique used in this study is a qualitative descriptive study through observation and interviews.

Observations were made through direct visits to places of economic strengthening and market locations, apart from interviews with important informants from the synod, social class, and community level, partner institutions such as the customs and the government in Jayapura.

Theoretical Approach

The publication of Law No. 21 of 2001 on Special Autonomy for the Province of Papua has greatly influenced the changes in the country of Papua. The paradigm shifts in conducting development in Papua by prioritizing empowerment of indigenous Papuans.

Following the concept of empowerment, which is the aim of the study, Lilley (1998) empowerment is a role of the lower social classes in participating in various development activities. Pranarka suggests that the empowerment tendency relates to the process of transferring some power, strength, or ability to the community so that each individual may become more empowered (Wrihatnolo & Dwidjoseputro, 2007).

Community empowerment is an effort to reduce the inequality of development through a problem-solving method. Kartasasmita (1996), *The Empowerment of the Community to Papua*; *First, identify* the underlying problem that is causing the gap. *Second, alternatives* identify for solving problems, and *Third, determine alternatives* taking into account the available and usable resources and the potency (Kartasasmita, 1996)

Kasali, (2017) His book on "Change of Leadership" stated that in a developing country where the country is rich, corruption is rampant, the government is ineffective, blames others, and has political power. What does the church need to strengthen Papua economically?

Taking into account the current situation and the state of the Japanese people, the community must review the empowerment model that will be developed in the future, whether it has been effective enough if only the approaches to implement the expected ideals. The approach in question is a functional humanist approach (Parsons, 1949).

Results And Discussion

The Role of the Church in the Economic Strengthening of Indigenous Peoples

The existence of the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua is now 65 years old. Before the GKI Synod was established in Papua, the churches in Papua had grown rapidly, along with the dispatch of Dutch people who brought the gospel with attractive and increasing approaches.

The development of the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua is theological and very quickly sociological. The distribution of the parishes also takes place in all the Regencies in Papua. On the economic side, however, the well-being of the indigenous peoples is equally fought. The Indonesian Christian Church in Papua has adopted part of the economic strengthening of indigenous peoples through the process strategic synod programs synod, for example through training courses on the economic strengthening of indigenous peoples and the use of synod land; with the cultivation of red ginger in powder form, the cultivation of coconut, Lawang oil, crushed fish, cocoa cultivation, laying hens, cattle breeding, pig breeding, and others. Several empowerment programs were carried out in cooperation with church partner institutions at home and abroad, for example with church partners in West Java, Germany, and Australia. (Interview with the deputy chairman of the GKI Tanah Papua Synod, Mr. Hezkia 2021).

In the different classes in GKI Papua, everyone has available potential, both natural potential, where there is gaharu, rattan, banana, sago. From other sources, we found cows, goats, pigs, and birds. We also found some resources like attractive beaches, land, sea, and islands. The Indonesian Christian Church in Papua also has funds from Sunday worship offerings, categorical worship offerings, church worship offerings, tithing offerings, and other donations. However, this still requires support to increase the economic empowerment of the community with a professional system.

The challenges for the Church in Papua lie in the economic strengthening of the indigenous peoples.

Coupled with the dynamics of social change that is happening so rapidly in globalization, and given the viciousness of the Covid-19 that has hit the world, GKI Tanah Papua's journey, now 65, must have weaknesses and Pose challenges, namely;

Internal weaknesses

1. of the availability of the exceptional natural potential of Papua, there are many other crops that Given they were not used to the economy, support indigenous peoples both owned by the municipality and owned by individuals in indigenous communities.
2. The community still has limited human resources that are competent in their area for the economic development of indigenous peoples.
3. The existing production of agricultural products is still limited and not optimally and professionally managed and does not yet have a good market. The original product of the Papuans is ginger, cocoa, coconut, etc. They are still in the local area of application and have not yet been sold in large quantities outside the region, especially abroad. Geographically, Papua borders directly with other countries, and the closest are Papua New Guinea and Australia.
4. Most of the indigenous peoples of the class make their living from agriculture, fishing, livestock farming, cooperatives, *speedboat businesses*, and other small businesses that are individually and traditionally run to meet daily needs.
5. There is still a prevailing patriarchal culture that does not support women in supporting the family economy. For example, some mothers have to go to the garden early in the morning to take their garden products and sell them in the market, but the fathers do not support them. While a mother's job is the double duty in addition to selling, she has to prepare food, wash clothes, clean the house, take care of children, and so on.
6. The daily need is increasing, both in terms of basic needs, clothing, and food. The needs of children's schools. In addition, the service, transportation, and other sectors saw dramatic increases.

7. On average, indigenous Papuans own large tracts of land, but over time the land is sold to other people, either officials, businessmen from outside the country, or companies. New roads have opened and bridges built by the government, but public land has been bought up by officials. It is proven that the sale of land is not used properly or managed. Therefore, the Papuans were gradually expelled from
8. my own country.
9. The work orientation of the young Peruvian generation has lately been on civil servants, how to become lawmakers, how to work in a bank or a company, while in the private sector, for example, the service sector and other entrepreneurs, there are very few. More immigrants in control of the private sector
10. There is still about of jealousy and self-centered attitudes that hinder progress. For example, a person or family is difficult, or may others progress or fail to see success in certain things. It creates unhealthy relationships and competition among people and can create endless conflict if not recognized and changed as early as possible.

External Challenges

Aside from the internal challenges, various external challenges are no less important. They include;

1. The government presents a development program that, due to the lack of a suitable approach pattern for indigenous Papuans to implement empowerment, aid, control, not the goal of evaluation and proper follow-up achieved, should be carried out in a transparent, professional, and responsible manner.
2. There was no dialogue or meeting with various related elements including government, religion/church, customs, and *interest groups* in terms of mapping economic problems and approaching strategies and models of assistance appropriate for local tribal peoples to build their wellbeing.
3. Synodically, the church has not maximized its professional function in the economic empowerment of indigenous peoples, all of whom are more focused on theological and sociological aspects than other stagnant functions. In the meantime, there are at the classical and congregational very few programs that are aimed at the economic strengthening of indigenous peoples.
4. There is still a rift between the upper and lower classes of society, between officials and their subordinates, especially with the community, so there is no real humanity with sons to humanize and daughters of the region.
5. What makes it difficult for the indigenous peoples of Papua are the leaders/officials in Papua themselves, who are also Papuan children. It means that officials at the suffering of the Japanese rejoice.
6. Granting a special autonomy to the Papuans Province Shall achieve justice, uphold the rule of law, respect human rights, accelerate economic development, and advance the progress of the Japanese people within the framework of equality and equilibrium with the progress of other provinces (Usman, 2018). However, they turn out to be The fact that the realization of special autonomy means that on the one hand has a positive impact on the community but on the other hand becomes a source of problems if it does not. managed transparently and responsibly, On the other hand, the Country Autonomy Fund can be a trap for actors in Papua who are unable to, manage it professionally so that there is a high probability that deviations may occur because they do not have good management skills, especially if the special fund for autonomy does not meet the basic needs of the community. In other aspects, it can be said that special autonomy funds can make people complacent and pampered, so that people tend to live in laziness and not care/work for the future of their families and grandchildren. The life of the people before the Special Autonomy Fund consisted of traditional agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing, but after the Special Autonomy Fund, they became entrepreneurs but could no longer run their business. The administration of special autonomy funds, both in the villages and by church institutions, was not used much to humanize people and to support the sons and daughters of the region/community. Compared to regions with no special autonomy in which churches are present and grow, it is not as complicated as the people and communities in Papua. Therefore, the JSB in Papua is facing a complicated situation and needs help to get together out of this state to become a better people in the future (interview with Mr. Daud, 2021).
7. There is still a gap and unhealthy competition between the people who live on the coast and the people who live inland, and therefore affects the unhealthy power orientation in several institutions. This has a significant impact on improving the

economy of the community and other sectors, causing envy and even inevitable conflict of self-centeredness(Interview with Mr. Thoha in Jayapura 2021).

8. The church still needs strategic exploration to establish collaboration with partner institutions both inside and outside the church, domestically and abroad, to harness natural resources belonging to the church and belonging to indigenous peoples.

Discussion

The land of Papua is rich in natural resources such as islands, seas, beaches, lakes, mountains, and land, as well as natural products that are so seductive and enchanting.

The progress of the Japanese people could have exceeded the progress of the people on the island of Java. The question is whether the progress of the Japanese people must depend on the participation of the central government. The answer, of course, is no, even if the contribution of the central government is quite large and cannot be denied, but this dependency needs to be changed, namely the progress of the Japanese people depends very much on how to build high quality and competent human resources (the sons and daughters of native Papua) to build awareness and commitment together without being restricted by barriers. Division (positions in government, positions in the church, positions in customs, without being limited to ethical positions and others). Papua will only be able to rise and move forward if the church can bridge all elements of society to sit together, speak cautiously, releasing various personal or group interests and egos. The Indonesian Christian Church in Papua must fulfill its prophetic function by building Papua from the heart and involving all interest groups in Papua. The church must show the value of Christ's love above all as a basis for building society and for maintaining the God-given nature of Papua since Papua is a small paradise at the eastern end of Indonesia (Warinussy, 2016).

Future

Programs The Church's plans and hopes for the future to improve the economy of the indigenous peoples in Papua. Based on the results of the GKI Synod Conference in Papua, the various decided empowerment programs will be implemented and maximized through partnerships with neighboring churches that have experience in empowering people, partnerships with campus parties in study and mentoring, and partnerships with business and industry.

Conclusions And Recommendations

Conclusions

The church as a social institution is also a system in which it is composed of various elements structured and functioning as they are like a body made up of various members, and each member has the function of mutually beneficial to one another to complete. So although there are many members, one body, which in the language of the apostle Paul is called many members but one body (1 Corinthians 12: 1-31). Brick (1937) regards society as a functionally bound system in a balance; this view arises from a perspective that equates society with biological organisms. Because people are very interdependent. So they have to complement each other functionally. And the functional requirements in the community system, both structurally and socially, are embodied in the form of values and adaptation to the environment.

Because of this basic idea, people interact with each other as social beings always and everywhere; people can build good relationships personally, with families, organizationally, and in service. Personal relationships are usually found in the family, in social, business, political, religious as well as in organizations or services. All of these relationships can be well built and feel good, cool, and uplifting when started or built heart-to-heart. Because heart-to-heart relationships always have honesty, sincerity, justice, togetherness, and the preservation of human values in the foreground. From there, sincere affection, mutual trust, mutual help, respect, love, and complement for one another are built. This relationship can work well when all parties are healthy and positive. In this context, no one should seek victory or advantage alone or unilaterally, there should be no discrimination, and so on, everyone must work together to achieve a common goal (Suprayogo, 2016). However, it cannot be denied that in a rapidly changing and dynamic world, heart-to-heart relationships tend to shift from pocket to pocket, brain to brain, and door to door.

Recommendations

The Indonesian Christian Church in Papua on Synod, classical and the congregation together with competent actors must sit together with one heart, share the same thoughts in love, to sketch church problems comprehensively and fundamentally from different aspects of life, for that is why the church is here to answer problems. the essence of indigenous peoples.

Churches (synods, classics, and parishes) in particular need to review and reformulate church programs that address the real needs of the parish, one of which is economic empowerment to improve well-being. It is important to remember to design empowerment pattern approach pattern implementation patterns, monitoring, evaluation, and follow-ups, which are transparent, professionally, and responsibly conducted

To initiate a change for the better, the JSB-synod needs in Papua one Program the pilot community, at In at least one class/region there is a community that is used as a model for the economic development of indigenous peoples, accompanied by support, clear assessment and follow-up. In every indigenous pilot community, there must be a transparent, professional, and accountable mentoring System with a model of an assistant protecting 12 heads of family who are trained, nurtured, and supported for business development by utilizing the potential human resources in the community, if not, needs to be reviewed by other communities or the government or related government agencies involved dealing with the economic development of indigenous peoples.

In addition, synods, classes, and congregations must provide reliable, honest, and competent human resources and implement the economic strengthening of indigenous peoples in a sustainable, precise, and correct manner. The church must open a space for dialogue and a heart-to-heart approach and support and complement one another, continuous, transparent, and professional cooperation with various parties, in particular local governments, customs, youth shops, other actors, and domestic and foreign private institutions. to improve the welfare of society.

Development is not just about physical change, but primarily about human development, and the development process must follow the principles of justice and respect for cultural values. So don't turn your village into a city, but your village into a city. Don't build Papua the Jakarta style, build Papua the Japanese style. Therefore, Papua needs to have an accurate mapping of the potential of natural and human resources and a Papuan version of a development master plan for the short term of 50 years and the long term of 100 years for future generations.

The Church must be able to be at the forefront of upholding justice, truth, and love and of justly and correctly enforcing the laws and regulations in this republic, including in the economic sphere. The specific role of the church in economic empowerment is to enable indigenous peoples to recognize and develop their potential and environment for economic improvement, and the church continues to motivate, support, and pray for indigenous peoples' efforts to increase because during these efforts God is present. In this context, the church is referred to as a blessing for its indigenous people.

The importance of maximum management of natural resources begins with the environment itself; House courtyards, gardens, and the surrounding area that have the potential to be managed so that the community no longer sells land to others but tries to manage it well. It is for this reason that an adequate mapping of resource potential is needed, a mapping of the potential of competent human resources in their fields is necessary for empowering and assisting the community in long-term business management. The importance of having strong financial support or assistance along with training and assistance in managing funds in a professional, transparent and accountable manner.

Abbreviations

GKI: Gereja Kristen Indonesia (Indonesian Christian Church);

Declarations

Acknowledgments

The authors are grateful to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Higher Education, and Research of the Republic of Indonesia.

Authors' contributions

I Wayan Ruspindi Junaedi was responsible for project coordinator, Dermawan Waruwu was responsible for social and cultural studies, I Wayan Damayana was responsible for religious studies, I Gusti Bagus Rai Utama was responsible for economic development studies.

Funding

This project includes the design of the study and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and in writing the manuscript funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Indonesia. in 2019-2021.

Availability of data and materials

The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, email: raiutama@undhirabali.ac.id

Declarations

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no conflicting interests.

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