

**DEVELOPING PAPUA AS A WAY OUT TO OVERCOME THE ARMED VIOLENCE GROUP (*KELOMPOK KEKERASAN BERSENJATA*) IN PAPUA**  
*The analysis based on the theory of inequality, marginalization, and sub-culture as the sources of Social Issues*

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## ABSTRACT

Papua's development must be considered in developing Indonesia. It is the unity in Bhineka Tunggal Ika. The equality and justice in striving the people's prosperity is also important for Indonesian people. Pancasila is the basis of the nation, which explains the five principles that have a power in developing Indonesia towards a "Mutual Cooperation (*Gotong Royong*)" society. The fifth principle, the justice for all Indonesian people shows that it is Soekarno's idea of how the people can relish the existence of justice and prosperity in both formal and non-formal fields which leads to mutual cooperation. It is implemented in Jokowi's era which is building and developing the marginalized areas, from Sabang to Merauke, especially the neglected areas. This is the time to realize the real action for Papua to gain justice although the challenges and obstacles that will be faced are not easy. Injustice, marginalization, and sub-culture are often being the starting points of various crimes and violences in Papua. The Violence Armed Group (*Kelompok Kekerasan Bersenjata*) uses those three variables as the reasons for committing various forms of violences and politically frame it with the desire to escape from Indonesia. The government and the ruling regime are in charge to keep increasing the development in Papua. It is all for the sake of justice, equality, and prosperity for Papua's people.

**Keyword:** *Inequality, Marginalization, Subculture, Papua, Conflict, Crime*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Conflict is closely related to inter-group interests that underlie the values of a power. The differences in value and identity also have a very big influence besides economic disparities, interests, and control over power. It is not impossible for the conflict to start from economic injustice, then spread to become a conflict of ethnic identity which gives more power to accumulate the hatred and it has a long

impact on the resolution of the conflict.<sup>1</sup>

The social conditions such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment are assumed to increase individual crimes with minimum education levels and market ties a weekly workforce dominates prison populations such as Sweden, Canada, Finland, and the US. It is conceivable that many prisoners are there because their

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<sup>1</sup> Muhamad Teja, Konflik Papua dan Masalah Kesejahteraan Masyarakat, dalam Jurnal Info Singkat Kesejahteraan Sosial, Vol. III, No. 21/I/P3DI/November/2011, ISSN: 2088-2351

social class origin provides limited opportunities to achieve a middle-class lifestyle.<sup>2</sup>

The large number of ethnic groups scattered in various islands and territories of the Republic of Indonesia is a valuable asset. At the same time, it also makes Indonesia vulnerable to various conflicts. The uneven development is one of the issues which have become the starting point and root of the emergence of various conflicts. The poverty issues, cultural gaps, disparities of development between one region and another, corruption and so on are crucial issues that cannot be easily resolved without the government's good will. Therefore, it is necessary to have a strong commitment and firm action in order to give people the prosperity.

For more than 40 years, Papua Province was handed over from the Dutch Government through UNTEA (United Nations Temporary Executives Authority) to the Government of the Republic of Indonesia,<sup>3</sup> however the Papuan people have never felt free from suffering. All forms of power abuse are actually carried out not only by the central government in Jakarta but also by regional governments which further aggravate the economic, social, and cultural conditions of the Papuan people through attitudes and behaviours which deeply injure the Papuan people that is corruption.

The conflict in Papua is rooted in an injustice stemming from the unequal distribution of the results of economic development which carried out by the New

Order. This process of unequal distribution of the results of economic development is eventually institutionalized into a structured and permanent impoverishment effort, whether it is intentional or automatic. The concept of economic development that is carried out and simultaneously functions as a state ideology must inevitably pay more attention to the needs of the centre than the regions, as a source of strength for development funds.<sup>4</sup> Papua's area is 421,981 KM<sup>2</sup> (3.5 times larger than Java Island) with a topography covering mountainous areas and most of the swampy land in the coastal area. Papua is bordered by Halmahera Sea and Pacific Ocean to the north of Arafura Sea and Australia to the south, Papua New Guinea to the east, and the Arafura Sea, Banda Sea and Maluku to the west.

The total population of Papua is around 2,576,822 people, which is only 1% of the population the total population of Indonesia, where 70% of them live in rural areas and in the middle of remote mountainous areas. Based on the population census in 2000, the densest population is in the highlands in Jayawijaya Regency with a total of 417,326 people. The total indigenous population, who is rich in culture, is estimated to be around 66% of the total population. Research in the field of Anthropology categorizes seven cultural zones throughout Papua: (1) Saireri, (2) Doberai, (3) Bomberai, (4) Ha-Anim, (5) Tabi, (6) Lano-Pago, and (7) Me-Pago. There are more than 250 ethnic groups with customs languages, practices, and

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<sup>2</sup> Shlomo Giora Shoham, Paul Knepper, Martin Kett, International Handbook of Criminology, Published February 21, 2010 by Routledge, ISBN 9781420085518

<sup>3</sup> Baca Kompas, Trikora : Pembebasan Irian Barat, <https://www.kompas.com/skola/read/2020/02/11/120000169/trikora--pembebasan-irian-barat?page=all> 2

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<sup>4</sup> Theodor Rathgeber, Hak-hak Ekonomi, Sosial dan Budaya di Papua Barat, Studi Realitas Sosial dan Perspektif Politis, Sinar Harapan, Jakarta. 2006 hal 52

different indigenous religions in Papua. This means, there are hundreds of customary norms that apply in this province. In addition, there are 100 non-Papuan ethnic groups. The influence of ethnicity is still very strong, therefore incidents showing indifference to social harmony will usually lead to acts of violence. In reality, social communication is very limited and people are usually reluctant to have contact with people of different ethnicities and religions. Conflict usually occurs when we cannot understand this plurality of norms and values.<sup>5</sup>

Besides being rich in cultural heritage, Papua also has abundant natural resources ranging from gas, oil, gold, silver, marine products, and copper. Unfortunately, Papua's wealth (natural resources and culture) has been colored by a long history of conflict with significant humanitarian costs which will be explained in more depth in this paper.

## **2. DISCUSSION**

### **Poverty Issues in Papua**

#### **The Economic Poverty**

The Central Statistics Agency (BPS)<sup>6</sup> in January 2020 notes that the poverty rate in 16 regions is still high and above the national average of 9.22 percent. The highest poverty rates occur in Papua and West Papua. Papua still has the highest percentage of poverty where the percentage of poverty is 26.55 percent. It is followed by West Papua (21.51 percent).

Then BPS releases new data as of March 2020<sup>7</sup>, and Papua is still the province with the highest poverty level in Indonesia. There are 26.64% or 911.37 thousand poor people in Papua. The next provinces that have the highest poverty are West Papua, East Nusa Tenggara, and Maluku.

#### **The Poverty Process in Papua**

Papua is included in the region with a high poverty index score and an area that has a high level of difference with Jakarta. The challenges poverty in Indonesia is not only related to the large number of poor people, but also the large difference between regions, provinces, regencies, and cities. Jakarta and Papua represent the large disparities between provinces: in Jakarta, only 3.4 percent of the total population is poor, while around half Papuans live below the poverty line. The objective analysis states that the "poverty" that exists in the regions is the result of structural impoverishment which caused by a lack of opportunities for people to participate in decision making. This, in turn prevents them from accessing and using existing resources (be it natural, socio-economic, political, legal or cultural) to which they are entitled.

Since the New Order era, the opportunity for indigenous Papuans to be involved in the economic sector has been lacking. Indigenous Papuans cannot provide for their own livelihoods because most opportunities to develop businesses are given to those who already have their own capital. This can be seen from the following conditions; Papua has two

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<sup>5</sup> Yulia Sugandi, Analisis Konflik dan Rekomendasi Kebijakan Mengenai Papua, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Jakarta 2008, halaman 3-4

<sup>6</sup> Sumber Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), Per Januari 2020

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<sup>7</sup> Sumber Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), Per Maret 2020, Lihat Laporan Katadata.co.id <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2020/07/18/10-provinsi-dengan-kemiskinan-tertinggi-di-indonesia-per-maret-2020>

dominant economic sectors, mining and agriculture, which contribute 76% of the total GRDP.

One of the main characteristics of indigenous Papuans is subsistence. However, this character does not match the opportunities provided by the business world; the capital-intensive mining industry generates 57% of GRDP and only absorbs 0.6% of the workforce, while the agricultural sector generates 19% of GRDP with 75% of the workforce. In the business sector, the involvement of indigenous Papuans is very low and almost all entrepreneurs are migrants. This means that economic growth does not reflect equitable distribution including access to basic needs. The injustice of opportunity is rooted in the prejudice and racism caused by indigenous Papuans who are positioned as inferior as documented in the basic ideas behind the formulation of the Special Autonomy Law for Papua Province in the form of a self-governing territory in 2001 regarding the condition of indigenous Papuans; 75% do not have access to proper education, 50% never received formal education or do not graduate from primary school, 22% only graduated from primary school, 10% graduated from public high school, and 2% graduated from university. In the ranks of Civil Servants only 35% of Echelon II positions in the Papua Provincial Government are occupied by indigenous Papuans and for Echelon III only 26%.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Cases of Armed Violence in Papua**

The killings in Nduga that occurred in the first week of December 2018 added to the row of armed violence cases that occurred in Papua. More than 20 cases

have occurred from 2014 to November 2018.<sup>9</sup> Throughout 2017, armed violence killed three Indonesian officers and two people from armed groups. That year, there were nine cases recorded by media coverage. In the following year, the number of victims swelled. There were four civilian victims and three Indonesian officials recorded. The victims emerged from seven cases that occurred up to November 2018. The data does not include the incident in Nduga that happened to Trans Papua development workers. During 2014 to November 2018, at least 15 civilians and 14 Indonesian officers were.

### **The Injustice Development and Marginalization in Papua**

In the last few decades, Papua is almost certainly not moved from news of violence (human rights violations) without a solution, accusations of repetitive treason activities and for the Papuan people, it seems that trust in the central government will return to scepticism. Initially, President Joko Widodo has good intentions to develop Papua through a non-security approach through various accelerated development programs, from the development of basic supporting infrastructure such as roads to efforts to improve the quality of human resources through school construction, improving the quality of teachers, etc. Unfortunately, the Human Rights agenda has not been explicitly implemented as contained in the government's development agenda. Even though the development of Papua will not

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid halaman 4-5

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<sup>9</sup> Baca selengkapnya di artikel "*Kekerasan Bersenjata yang Terus Terjadi di Papua*", <https://tirto.id/da75>, <https://tirto.id/kekerasan-bersenjata-yang-terus-terjadi-di-papua-da75> Diakses pada 25 November 2020, 20:30 WIB

run perfectly without a solution related to human rights issues.<sup>10</sup>

The past human rights issues that have occurred in Papua to this day have not received government recognition and accountability. Impunity in human rights violations cases are a factor in shaping Papuans' awareness that they are always discriminated against by the central government. Papua is an example of the difficulty of realizing transitional justice in Indonesia. The turmoil of violence which occurs in Papua and other areas experienced by Papuans will affect their belief in state accountability. Finally, all forms of accelerated development in Papua are seen as an effort to facilitate control over citizens, not to improve people's prosperity. The development will be suspected of being a way for the state to facilitate mobilization of armed personnel, facilitate the exploitation of natural resources, and to continue injustice against Papuans.

The collection of facts about the violence that occurred is clearly not in line with the country's political commitment to develop aspects of prosperity in Papua. In this case the government continues to place the issue of prosperity as the main way of answering complex Papuan issues. The Papua issues have always seen as a matter of economic welfare alone, and ignored other important issues. The human rights violations issues, recognition of identity rights, political aspirations and access to human development are still far from being caught fire. We await the seriousness of the government in resolving the Wasior case (2001), the Wamena case

(2003), the Abepura incident (2001) and a number of other violence cases that mainly involve state apparatus, soldiers and other police.

The Papua issues are actually too complex to be simplified to merely economic matters. The proof is, after the acceleration of development started by the government through the formation of the Papua and West Papua Development Acceleration Unit (UP4B) and the issuance of Law Number 21 of 2001 concerning Special Autonomy for Papua, it has not been able to significantly improve conditions in Papua's development. A number of other issues then emerged, especially the issue of the increasingly high disparity between indigenous Papuans and most of the immigrants from outside Papua.

The history proves that Indonesia's political nationalism is quite capable of knitting the interests of a plural society, which is actually difficult to determine common will. However, the idea of Indonesian political nationalism only succeeded when there is a common enemy, such as colonialism. This condition is related to determining who is "friend" and who is "foe" together as a nation. Just when there are no more real "opponents", then sudden differences in SARA become important to compete with. So political nationalism is required to maintain the common will and horizontal comradeship solve concrete problems, the sources of which do not necessarily address the evil of the enemy from without.

When political nationalism fails to realize its promises, the elements of cultural nationalism will strengthen again as happened in Papua. This condition occurs when Papua and its history do not have a place in the history of the

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<sup>10</sup> Kristianus Antonius Saputra, Nasionalisme Indonesia dan Persoalan HAM di Papua, *Indoprogress.com* <https://indoprogress.com/2019/08/nasionalisme-indonesia-dan-persoalan-ham-papua/> diakses pada 25 November 2020

Indonesian nation which is very Java-centric. The truth of the political history of Papua and its culture needs to be conveyed clearly and truthfully as an important part of the Indonesian nation. The Indonesia-Papua conflict is a historical fact that should not be underestimated. As the region most recently incorporated into the Republic of Indonesia, Papua is actually the prima donna of the struggle for many countries with the interests of exploiting its resources.

### **When Papuan Culture Becomes a Sub-Culture in Indonesia**

The study of these subcultures often consists of the study of the symbolism inherent in clothing, music, and also the other appearances of members of the subculture. Apart from this, sociologists also study the ways in which these symbols are interpreted by members of the dominant culture.

According to Kellas (1998)<sup>11</sup> "Nation" is a group of people who claim themselves as part of society and are collectively limited by historical, cultural and hereditary ties. Nation has several characteristics, both objective and subjective. Objective characteristics include territory (region), language, religion. Meanwhile, the subjective characteristic is people's awareness of their nationality and their love for their nationality. The term nation is generally used to describe the state, for example the United Nations. The word nation which is used in the word "united nation" is a nation in the sense of a state. The term nation is also used to describe an ethnic group or ethnic nation.

"Nationalism" in the Kellas sense is an ideology and a form of behaviour of a nation. This ideology is built on people's awareness of their nation in terms of a statement of attitude and behaviour (program of action). When a person or a group of people shows attitudes and behaviours for the benefit of their nation, that person or group of people has shown their nationalism (nationalism). In almost every form, this nationalism is intended for defend or promote the interests of the nation (nation). In the political aspect, this nationalism is often used in its efforts to determine self-determination as a sovereign nation (national sovereignty). It is in this political context that nationalism as an ideology finds its substance.

As a form of behaviour, nationalism (nationalism) tends to be interpreted as ethnocentrism and patriotism that demand loyalty to the state. As a form of nationalism based on the feeling of belonging to the people as a nation. Nationalism appears in the form of "supreme sacrifice," where a value of sacrifice - even in the form of "willing to die" - becomes the highest in every attitude and behaviour.

The meaning of "Ethnic Group" for Kellas is the smallest part of the nation. This ethnic group is more exclusive than the nation. In the context of contemporary politics, the use of the term ethnic group tends to refer to minority groups within a nation. Meanwhile, the definition of "Race" is defined more from a biological approach, with an emphasis on differences in skin colour, height, and other biological characteristics.

In a more contextual sense, nationalism originates and is built from various relationships such as ethnocentrism and ethnicity and evolves

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<sup>11</sup> James G. Kellas, *The Politic of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, Macmillan Press Ltd.1998., hal 3 -9

into nationhood. Nationalism determines the pattern of relations between politics, economy and culture. In relation to politics, nationalism seeks to gain power to form or maintain a nation, against all forces that discriminate. The principle is to define oneself as a nation and get out of oppressive power and discrimination. Economically, nationalism grew from resistance to threats and discrimination against the economy. Meanwhile, in the context of culture (culture), nationalism is seen from the results of the pattern of political power between superior and subordinate positions in the country.

Smith, in his book *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, says that ethnicity is a pioneer for the formation of nationalism. Ethnicity becomes the embryo for the development of nationalism and in this case the modern state plays an important role for the sustainability of nationalism. For Smith, nationalism always pays attention to three main things, namely: national autonomy, national unity and national identity. Departing from these three main points, Smith provides an understanding (ideology) of nationalism as an ideological movement to achieve and maintain autonomy, unity and identity for a population. As said before, ethnicity is a pioneer for formation of nationalism. This means that there is a very strong correlation between the two. Ethnicity (ethnic) is defined by Smith as a human community that has a name, which is related to one homeland, has a common ancestral myth, shared memories, one or more elements of a common culture and certain solidarity.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Wiley, 8 Jan 1991

### **Injustice, Marginalization and Sub-Culture as Reasons for Armed Violence Group Violence**

The three variables above have been the main reasons for the actions of the Armed Violence Group in Papua over the past three decades. Apart from the injustice of development and the structured process of marginalization from the agenda of the leaders in Jakarta, Papua is experiencing a continuous sub-cultural process. Feelings of prolonged unfair treatment, marginalization, and exclusion that continue to encourage the formation of deviant values. Because this situation is experienced collectively, it has led to the formation of subcultures that build values outside the mindstream. Thus, armed violence groups were born which often carry out acts of violence as a form of resistance to unfair treatment as well as an expression of anger over cultural alienation. Thus, areas with deviant communities in Papua, such as Nduga, etc., emerged, with the encouragement of individuals to commit deviations which became increasingly strong, giving rise to culturally supported criminals.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

In order to reduce tensions as part of proper conflict management, there are several important elements that can be applied as safety valves in Papua. This safety valve element will play an important role in preventing social aggression as a result of the accumulated complaints. In general, increasing ease of access to basic rights that support equitable justice must be carried out in line with increasing levels of human security and improving the security sector. The elements mention below are in a development framework in accordance with the local context or what

is known as ethno-development accommodate the participation of grassroots communities in order to develop, empower and provide equal opportunities for all levels of civil society (even the poorest people) and based on cultural knowledge. Ethno-development refers to the cultural integrity of the indigenous population which emphasizes the important roles of indigenous people as active representatives of social change even in the modern capitalist system.

The resilience of the integrity of the indigenous peoples and their culture which validates the continuation of this change and this integrity, as indigenous peoples actively strive to include what happens to themselves on the preconditions of their own world system. The disclosure of cultural integrity as part of human rights must be expressed and supported by all major players (security forces, government and all levels of civil society) and international agencies working in Papua. Some of the safety valves are as follows; Historical complaints stemming from different views regarding the history of Papua's integration into the Indonesian state must be mediated in a white book that accommodates a critical explanation of the intended history. There must be sufficient room to develop for indigenous Papuans at the grassroots level and other parts. from civil society in Papua, Genuine initiatives originating from the community and non-governmental organizations should be supported (through capacity building and education) and provide greater room for constructive development, There should be sufficient space with clear and transparent parameters for implementation freedom of expression in Papua (for example cultural performances or products, written and oral

presentations, etc.). Recognition of collective dignity must be expressed through various policies in accordance with local culture which include ancestral domains, cultural sacred objects, various traditional practices. ional, etc., The differences that cause polarization at various layers must be resolved peacefully with a human approach through open dialogue.

The implementation of Otsus must be followed by an increase in the system for distributing professional resources to increase the ease of access to basic rights and spur the impact on indigenous Papuans in rural or remote areas and especially marginalized groups (for example women and children as well as people. stigmatized people living in stigmatized areas such as red zones). A professional system of channelling resources as the basis of good governance, supported by special regulations (Perdatus and Perdasi) as firm and concrete actions in order to increase equity in justice, which will also reduce social deviations (e.g corruption, elite turnover, etc.) in the distribution process. The urgent need to build a professional resource distribution system also requires capacity building and structural support including coordination between relevant official institutions which make special regional regulations such as local government, legislature and MRP. Coordination among elites should be followed by similar capacity building at the village level as institutions dealing directly with the grassroots as the main target. So, there needs to be an integrated effort from a wide or macro scale to the grass roots.



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