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The role of the church in motivating entrepreneurship to improve the economy of indigenous peoples in Papua, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The novelty of this research proves that the tarekat has not been able to encourage and motivate the growth of entrepreneurship to improve the economy of indigenous peoples in Papua. The purpose of this study is to analyze the challenges faced by GKI in Papua to improve the economy of indigenous peoples in the face of the dynamics of a rapidly changing world to improve the economy of the Papuan people. This research was conducted in depth using qualitative descriptive methods in Papua with in-depth interviews, observation, and secondary data techniques. The results show that the efforts of the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua in improving the economy of indigenous peoples are still minimal, both at the synod, classical and congregational levels. The congregation is currently experiencing severe challenges both internally and externally. They have been struggling with the global Covid-19 pandemic situation. Many areas in Papua are still having problems with the internet network which makes communication even more difficult. To improve the economy of indigenous peoples, the congregation tries to implement the necessary traditional empowerment strategies and strategic steps, namely open heart-to-heart dialogue by all church components internally at various levels.



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Introduction

The research team conducted observations and studies in Papua, even though it was still a pandemic period that saw firsthand the situation and condition of Papua, that abundant with milk and honey (Papua News Portal no. 1, August 26, 2019 in (Steinrücken, Kamm, Spence, & Song, 2019)). Tanah Papua is the eastern part of Indonesia with varied topography. That area is three and a half times that of the island of Java (421,981 km²). The province of Papua, formerly known as Irian Jaya, is directly adjacent to Papua New Guinea (Irawati & Widjaja, 2006). Papuan people have a unique cultural diversity, namely 312 tribes and 250 regional languages. The number of indigenous Papuans is about 2.3 million people of 4.3 million people (BPS Papua Province, 2020 in (Lewenussa & Rawi, 2020)). The Papuan consist of diverse: ethnically, culturally, and linguistically but also consist of various beliefs, namely; Christianity, Islam, Catholicism, Hinduism, and other tribal religions, but also in different economic backgrounds. However, the barriers of ethnicity, religion, customs, and government are still clearly visible. It is a challenge in itself.

The largest church institution in Papua is the Indonesian Christian Church (GKI) in Papua, which consists of 70 classics with more than 4,100 churches/congregations and over one million people spread across all districts in Papua (Interview with Pdt Berlinda Hadi, 2021). The gospel has been in Papua since 1855 (Suara

Papua.com, October 29, 2016 in (Chauvel, 2021)), and the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua has established in 1956. Besides 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 in (Sianipar, Nurhasana, Hanita, & Ayuningtyas, 2021)).

The condition of Papua is a beautiful land and rich in potential natural resources and human resources in which there are various ethnic groups, customs, religions, and languages. However, the problem of the Papuan in the current day is how to improve people's welfare (Paksi, Rózsa, Kun, Arnold, & Demetrovics, 2009). The focus of the study is to carry out is how the role of the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua is to empower the community's economy of the congregations. This study is to obtain an overview of the economic conditions, the challenges faced by the Papuan and describe the economic development of the members of the congregation as an integral part of society in filling developments in various sectors of life. Theologically, the economic empowerment steps have been implementing as a part of the call of faith in realizing the Tri vocation of the congregation, namely fellowship, witness, and serve (LAI, 2021 in (Soesilo, 2021)).

In line with the ideals of the nation as stated in the 4th paragraph of the 1945 Constitution, namely: (1) Protecting the entire Indonesian nation and the entire homeland of Indonesia, (2) Promoting general welfare, (3) Educating the nation's life, (4) Implementing 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 assembling his work in the motherland of Indonesia. The Indonesian Christian Church in Papua, which is part of this God-given nation, participates in realizing the nation's ideals (Abdul-Ghani & Konstantas, 2019).

The reality of having a church in Papua is still struggling and trying to improve the congregation's economy even with a large number of service areas, namely 70 classes, and 4,100 congregations. The areas of service are hard, and the range of services is very far apart (coastal, city, and inland, mountains), have limited human resources, facilities, and financial support are still minimal. In addition to various internal and external challenges of the church which are very complex. For this reason, in-depth studies from various parties are needed to support the church and help the nation to develop the lives of the people in Papua. It is not easy to make all of this happen if it does not start from a strategic approach that involves all indigenous Papuan children from various elements to sit together. Without goodwill and the right programs, it is impossible to succeed (Research team visits Mama Mama Market Papua and buys products from Papua's local resources, 2021).

Pragmatically, the results of this study are to contribute ideas to the churches in Papua in particular, and all related elements of the nation to jointly advance the sons and daughters of the Papua through empowerment and improvement of the standard of living of indigenous peoples who are better, then the objectives of this research are to; Describe the role of GKI in Papua so far in the economic empowerment of Papuans. Describe the challenges faced by GKI in Papua to improve the economy of indigenous peoples in the face of the dynamics of a rapidly changing world and Describe how the Indonesian Christian Church can increase the economy of Papuans.

Method

This study is more of an observation, interview, and valid data collection. The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method which is then analyzed and interpreted to obtain conclusions on the problems faced by the congregation. Informants have been determined by several characteristics that influenced the problem being studied or related to the role of the church in empowering the community or congregation. The data collection technique used in this study is a qualitative descriptive study through observation/observation and interviews. Observations were made by directly visiting locations of economic empowerment and market locations, apart from interviews with key informants from the church at the synod, social class, and congregation levels as well as partner institutions such as customary and government in Jayapura. The informant selection technique used is a purposive technique.

Results and Discussions

The role of the Church in the economic empowerment 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 sending Dutch who brought the gospel in with attractive and increasing approaches.

The development of the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua is very rapid, both theologically and sociologically. The distribution of congregations is also in all regencies in Papua. However, on the economic side, there is still a fundamental struggle for the welfare of indigenous peoples equally. The Indonesian Christian Church in Papua, within the framework of the economic empowerment of indigenous peoples through the Synod trial, has decided on strategic synod programs, namely by providing training on economic empowerment of indigenous peoples and the use of synod lands, for example; with the management of red ginger in powder form, the management of coconut, oil of Lawang, shredded fish, cacao cultivation, laying hens, cattle breeding, pig farming, and others. Several empowerment programs have been carried out in collaboration with church partner institutions at home and abroad, such as with church partners in West Java, Germany, and Australia. (Interview with the Deputy Chair of the GKI Tanah Papua Synod, Mr. Hezkia 2021).

The economic empowerment of indigenous peoples at the classical level and up to the congregations has not yet been implemented, if any, the efforts made by the congregations are individual. In the various classes in GKI Papua, each has available potential, both natural potential, where there are gaharu, rattan, banana, sago. Pet; cows, goats, pigs, birds, there are attractive beach, land, sea, and island attractions, as well as other assets owned by church members including the potential for human resources, which, although still limited and not optimally utilized. The Indonesian Christian Church in Papua also has funds from Sunday worship offerings, categorical worship offerings, ecclesiastical worship offerings, tithing offerings, and other donations. However, this still requires support to increase the economic empowerment of the congregation with a professional system.

Challenges faced by the Church in Papua are in the economic empowerment of indigenous peoples

Along with the dynamics of social change that is happening so fast in globalization and facing the viciousness of the Covid-19 that has hit the world, the journey of GKI Tanah Papua, which is now 65 years old, must face weaknesses and challenges, namely;

Internal Weaknesses

With the availability of Papua's extraordinary natural potential, there are still many other crops that have not been used to help the economy of indigenous peoples, both those owned by the congregation and those owned by individuals in indigenous communities. The congregation still has limited human resources that are competent in their fields for the economic development of indigenous peoples. The existing production of agricultural products is still limited and has not been managed optimally and professionally, and does not yet have a good market.

The origin product of Papuans is ginger, cacao, coconut, etc. They are still in the local scope and have not yet been sold outside the region in large quantities, especially abroad. Geographically, Papua is directly adjacent to other countries, and the closest ones are Papua New Guinea and Australia. Most of the indigenous peoples in the class make a living from agriculture, fisheries, animal husbandry, cooperatives, *speedboat* businesses, and other small businesses that are individual and carried out traditionally to fulfill their daily needs. There is still a dominant patriarchal culture, and it does not support women in supporting the family economy. An example early in the morning some mothers have to go to the garden to take their garden products and sell them in the market, but the fathers do not support them. While a mother's job is to do double duty apart from selling, she has to prepare food, wash clothes, clean the house, take care of children, and so on. The daily need is increasing, both for basic needs, clothing, and food.

The needs of children's schools. In addition, the service, transportation, and other sectors experienced a drastic increase. On average, indigenous Papuans own large areas of land, but over time the land is sold to other people, either to officials, businessmen who come from outside, or to companies. Recently, when new roads have been opened, and bridges have been built by the government, but public lands have been bought up by officials. There is proof that the sale of land is not used or managed properly. Therefore, the Papuans were gradually excluded from their own country. The work orientation of the young Papuan generation lately is on civil servants, how to become a legislature, how to work in a bank or company, while in the private sector, for example, the service sector and other entrepreneurs, there are very few. More immigrants who control the private sector. There is still a fit of jealousy and egocentric attitude that hinders progress, in an example, a person or family is difficult or cannot see others progress or succeed in certain things. It creates unhealthy relations and competition among the people, and it may give birth to endless conflicts if it is not realized and changed as early as possible.

External Challenges

Apart from the internal challenges faced, various external challenges are no less important, including; The government comes with a development program that does not hit the target due to the lack of an appropriate approach pattern for indigenous Papuans for the implementation of empowerment, assistance, control, evaluation, and appropriate follow-up and should be carried out in a transparent, professional and accountable

manner. There has been no dialogue or sitting with various related elements, including the government, religion/church, customs, and *stakeholders* related to map economic issues and how to approach strategies and models of assistance that are suitable for local indigenous peoples to build their welfare. Syntonically, the congregation has not maximized its professional function in the field of economic empowerment of indigenous peoples, all of which are still more concentrated on theological and aspects and are sociologically trapped in power orientation so that other functional aspects are stagnant or have not been touched properly. Meanwhile, at the classical and congregational levels, there are still very few programs oriented to the economic empowerment of indigenous peoples. There is still a gap between the upper and lower classes of society, between officials and their subordinates, especially with the community, so that there is no real humanity in humanizing fellow sons and daughters of the region. What makes it difficult for the indigenous people of Papua is the leaders/officials in Papua themselves, who are also Papuan children. It means that officials are happy over the suffering of the Papuan people.

The granting of special autonomy for the Papua Province is intended to achieve justice, uphold the rule of law, respect for human rights, accelerate economic development, and progress for the Papuan people in the context of equality and balance with the progress of other provinces (Usman, 2018). However, the facts prove that the realization of special autonomy funds on the one hand has a positive impact on the community but on the other hand becomes a source of problems when it is not managed in a transparent and accountable manner. On the other hand, the Special Autonomy Fund can be a trap for stakeholders in Papua who are not able to manage it professionally so there is a high possibility that deviations can occur because they are not equipped with good managerial skills, especially if they use the special autonomy fund does not respond to 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 do not try/work well for the future of their families and grandchildren. The life of the people before the special autonomy fund existed in traditional farming, animal husbandry, fishing, but after the special autonomy fund, they turned into entrepreneurs but could not manage their business finally stopped. The management of special autonomy funds, both in villages and through church institutions, has not been utilized much to humanize humans and prosper the sons and daughters of the region/congregation. When compared to regions that are not given special autonomy where churches are present and growing, it is not as complicated as those faced by the people and congregations in Papua. Therefore, the GKI in Papua is indeed facing a complicated situation and needs help collectively to get out of this condition to become a better person in the future (Interview with Mr. Daud, 2021). There is still a gap and unhealthy competition between people living on the coast and people living in the interior therefore it has an impact on unhealthy power orientation in several institutions. This has a significant impact on improving the economy of the congregation and other sectors so that there is jealousy and egocentricity and even inevitable conflict (Interview with Mr. Thoha in Jayapura 2021).

The church still needs a more strategic exploration to build cooperation with partner institutions both within the church and outside the church, both domestically and abroad to utilize natural resources owned by the church and belonging to indigenous peoples.

The land of Papua is rich in natural resources like islands, seas, beaches, lakes, mountains, and land as well as natural products that are so alluring and enchanting. The progress of the Papuan people should have been able to exceed the progress of the people on the island of Java. The question is whether the progress of the Papuan people must depend on the participation of the central government? The answer is of course no, even though the central government's contribution is quite large and cannot be denied, but that dependence must be changed, namely the progress of the Papuan people is very dependent on how to build quality and competent human resources (the sons and daughters of native Papuans) to build awareness and commitment together without being limited by barriers. partition (positions in government, positions in the church, positions in customs, without being limited to positions in ethnicity 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 carefully by releasing various personal or group interests and egos. The Indonesian Christian Church in Papua must realize its prophetic function by building Papua from the heart involve all stakeholders in Papua. The church must show the value of Christ's love above all else as a foundation to build society and preserve the nature of Papua that God has given because Papua is a small paradise at the eastern end of Indonesia (Warinussy, Kristiana, & Soesetijo, 2018).

In line with Pasande & Tari (2019) research, it shows that there are many models of entrepreneurship development, for example, a church with a mall in one location. There are also cooperatives selling snacks, small and medium businesses, food stalls, and others. Churches are required to be creative in developing entrepreneurship, especially in this digital era. According to Silalahi (2021), the church can be salt and light through efforts to educate, conduct training, provide capital, and work together with the congregation.

Entrepreneurship can alleviate poverty and improve the economy of the congregation in the COVID-19 pandemic situation. In line with this role, this activity is very strategic for preaching the gospel. Giving business education is a good thing for the Church to do, but it doesn't lower the quality of preaching the Gospel.

Future programs

Plans and hopes of the church in the future to improve the economy of indigenous peoples in Papua. Based on the results of the GKI synod session in Papua, the several empowerment programs that have been decided will be implemented and maximized by partnering with neighboring churches who have experience in the field of empowering people, partnering with campus parties in studies and mentoring, partnering with the business world and industry.

Conclusions

The church as a social institution is also a system in which it consists of various elements that are structured and function as they are, like a body consisting of various members and each member has a function to work complementary to each other. So even though there are many members but one body which in the language of the Apostle Paul is called many members but one body (1 Corinthians 12:1-31). Brick views society as a system that is functionally integrated into an equilibrium, this view emerges through a perspective that equates society with biological organisms. Because humans have a very high interdependence with one another. So functionally they must complement each other. And the functional requirements in the community system both structurally and socially are in the form of embodiment of values and adjustment to the environment (Wood, 1937).

From this basic concept, as social beings, humans always interact with one another anytime and anywhere, humans can build good relationships personally, with family, organizationally, and in official services. Personal relationships tend to be in the family, social, business, political, religious, as well as in organizations or services. All of these relationships can be built well and feel good, cool, and uplifting if started or built from heart to heart. Because heart-to-heart relationships always prioritize honesty, sincerity, justice, togetherness, and uphold human values. From there, sincere affection, mutual trust, mutual help, respect, love, and complement for one another will be built. This relationship can work well if all parties think healthy and positive. In this context, no one should try to gain victory or advantage on their own or unilaterally, there should be no discrimination, and so on, all must work together to achieve a common goal (Suprayogo & Sjarief, 2016). However, it is undeniable 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.

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