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

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Abstract

The novelty of this research is to prove that the church has not been able to encourage and motivate the growth of entrepreneurship to improve the economy of indigenous peoples in Papua. This research was conducted in-depth using descriptive qualitative methods. The location of the research was carried out in Papua with in-depth interviews, observation, and secondary data techniques. The results of the study indicate that the efforts of the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua in improving the economy of indigenous peoples are still minimal, both at the synod, classic and congregational levels. The church is currently also experiencing quite heavy challenges internally and externally, especially with the global Covid-19 pandemic situation which severely limits the movement of people in their activities. In some areas in Papua, there are still problems with the internet network which makes communication even more difficult. To improve the economy of indigenous peoples, an appropriate customary empowerment strategy is needed and strategic steps are needed, namely an open heart-to-heart dialogue by all church components internally at various levels. A concrete problem mapping is required, with a scale of priorities and the ability to implement strategic indigenous economic development programs and supported by appropriate assistance according to the regional or customary context. Along with that, the church must prepare competent human resources in their fields for the benefit of long-term economic development.

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's land, land that is abundant with milk and honey (Papua News Portal no. 1, 26 August 2019). Tanah Papua is the eastern part of Indonesia with varied topography, its area is 3 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, 2006). Papuan people have a unique cultural diversity, namely 312 tribes and 250 regional languages. The number of indigenous Papuans is 2.3 million people out of a total population of 4.3 million people (BPS Papua Province, 2020). Papuan people are not only ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse but also consist of various beliefs, namely; Christianity, Islam, Catholicism, Hinduism, and other tribal religions, but also in different economic backgrounds. In the social life of the community, inter-religious harmony goes well, with mutual respect and mutual respect for one another. However, the barriers of ethnicity, religion, customs, and government are still clearly visible, this 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), and the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua was 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).

With the condition of Papua which is extraordinarily beautiful and rich in potential natural resources and human resources in which there are various ethnic groups, customs, religions, and languages, however, the struggles and basic struggles of the Papuan people to date are how to improve people's welfare, and how to improve the welfare of the people. enjoy a life that is free and comfortable from acts of discrimination and social and political pressures of society n that is still felt (Paksi, 2009).

The concentration of the study carried out is how the role of the Indonesian Christian Church in Papua is to empower the community's economy or more specifically to the economic improvement of the congregations within the church. This study is intended to obtain an overview of the economic conditions, the challenges faced by the church, and what conclusions are offered for 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 carried out by the church for its people are part of the call of faith in realizing the Tri vocation of the Church, namely fellowship, witness and serve. It is in this service task that the church in Papua is also called to work together with its citizens to build the congregation's economy for the welfare of the people (LAI, 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. Based on the struggle to achieve the ideals of the nation and the noble calling of the church in Papua, the church should continue to strive to realize all of this in love as taught by Jesus as the head of the church. Therefore, in the complexity of life's challenges, whether economic, social, political, technological, and other changes that occur, the most basic thing and needs to be built is the importance of a sense of one heart, one mind, sharing in togetherness and good cooperation by all parties by releasing ego and personal or group interests by building heart-to-heart communication to create harmonious relationships in God's love so that they can help and develop higher-quality development for the younger generations of Papua in the future (Abdulgani, 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 Class, 4,100 congregations, then the field of service is difficult and the range of services is very far apart (coastal, city and inland, mountains), has 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 prosper 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 approach, 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 expected 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 nation in Papua through empowerment and improvement of the standard of living of indigenous peoples who are better, then the objectives of this research are to;

1. Knowing the description of the extent of the role of GKI in Papua so far in the economic empowerment of indigenous peoples that have been carried out in Papua.
2. Knowing about 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.
3. Knowing what the Indonesian Christian Church will realize in the land of Papua in the future in improving the economy of indigenous peoples and stating its prophetic vocation in helping the state realize the ideals of the nation.

Research Methodology

In connection with the object of the problem formulated, and based on the reality of the church concerning increasing economic welfare, 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 church.

To obtain data for this study, informants were used which included 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.

Theoretical Approach

The publication of law number 21 of 2001 concerning Special Autonomy for the province of Papua greatly influenced the creation of changes in the land of Papua. The change is a paradigm shift in carrying out development in Papua by prioritizing the empowerment of indigenous Papuans.
Related to the concept of empowerment which is the target of the study, Lilley (1998) defines empowerment as giving a role to the lower classes of society in participating in various development activities. Pranarka suggests that the tendency of empowerment refers to the process of giving or transferring some power, strength, or ability to the community so that each individual becomes more empowered (Wrihatnol & Dwidjowijoro, 2007).

So community empowerment is an effort to overcome the problem of inequality in development through a problem-solving method. exploit the potential of existing resources in the community. Kartasasmita (1996) said that community empowerment-oriented development planning should include: First, identify the underlying problem that causes the gap. Second, identify alternatives to solve problems, and Third, determine the chosen alternatives by taking into account the available and exploitable resources and the potential that can be developed (Kartasasmita, 1996)

Kasali, (2017) in his book on "Change Leadership" states that in a developing country where the country is rich, corruption is mushrooming, the government is ineffective, blames each other and political power is so easily ignited. What does the church want to do with economic empowerment for its people when looking at the reality in Tanah Papua facing a situation similar to that statement?

By paying attention to the current situation and condition of the Papuan people, the church needs to re-examine the empowerment model that will be developed in the future, whether it is effective enough if only the right approaches are used in implementing the expected ideals. The approach in question is a functional humanist approach. The church, which is one of the cultural representations of the indigenous Papuan people whose role is to increase faith, peace, and community welfare, is expected to be able to carry out a functional humanist approach to create harmonious relations, so that the church can speak from heart to heart with all components of indigenous Papuan children, both internally and externally. as well as in relations with business partners, including the government, customs and various other stakeholders in Papua (Parsons, 1949).

Results And Discussion

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 sources of funds from Sunday worship offerings, categorical worship offerings, ecclesiastical worship offerings, tithing offerings, and other donations. However, this still requires stronger 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

1. With the availability of Papua's extraordinary natural potential, there are still many other crops that have not been utilized to help the economy of indigenous peoples, both those owned by the church and those owned by individuals in indigenous communities.
2. The church still has limited human resources that are competent in their fields for the economic development of indigenous peoples.
3. 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. Sales of products from ginger, cacao, coconut, and so on 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.
4. Most of the indigenous peoples in the class make a living from agriculture, fisheries, animal husbandry, some have cooperatives, speedboat businesses, and other small businesses that are individual and carried out traditionally to fulfill their daily needs.
5. There is still a patriarchal culture that is dominant and does not support women in supporting the family economy, for example at dawn or early in the morning there are mothers who 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.
6. The demands of life are increasing, both for basic needs, clothing, food, as well as the needs of children's schools and so on. In addition, the service, transportation, and other sectors experienced a drastic increase.
7. 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, bridges have been built by the government, but public lands have been bought up by officials. And the tendency is that the proceeds from the sale of land are not used or managed properly but are wasted. This is what causes the indigenous people to gradually become excluded in their own country, which was originally in the city or a strategic place but due to selling land eventually moved to the interior and had no other competitive business.
8. The lack of human resources who have competence in fields certain according to their needs and lack of strong fighting power.
9. 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
10. There is still a fit of strong jealousy and egocentric attitude that hinders progress, for example, a person or family is difficult or cannot see others progress or succeed in certain things. This 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;

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Synodically, the church 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.

4. 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.

5. What makes it difficult for the indigenous people of Papua is the leaders/officials in Papua themselves who are also Papuan children. This means that officials are happy over the suffering of the Papuan people.

6. 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).

7. There is still a gap and unhealthy competition between people living on the coast and people living in the interior so that 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).

8. 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.

Discussion The land of Papua is rich in extraordinary natural resources, not only the beauty of the islands, seas, beaches, lakes, mountains, and land as well as natural products that are so alluring and enchanting, but the level of soil fertility and the very high potential of the sea provides space and opportunity for the Papuan people to work to build and be able to compete within and outside the country.

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 by involving all components of the nation's children 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, 2016).

**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, 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, other related.

**Conclusions And Recommendations**

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 (1937) 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.

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, 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.

**Recommendations**

The Indonesian Christian Church in Papua in a synod, classical manner and the congregation together with competent stakeholders need to sit together with one heart, share the same thoughts in love to map out church problems comprehensively and fundamentally from various aspects of life because that is why the church is here to answer problems. the essence of indigenous peoples.

In particular, churches (synods, classics, and congregations must review and reformulate church programs that address the real needs of the congregation, one of which is in the aspect of economic empowerment to improve welfare. It is important to remember to design empowerment patterns, approach patterns, implementation patterns, monitoring, evaluation, and follow-ups that are carried out in a transparent, professional, and accountable manner.

To start a change for the better, the GKI synod assembly in Papua has to program a pilot congregation, at least one class/region there is one congregation that is used as a model for the economic development of indigenous peoples accompanied by assistance, clear evaluation, and follow-up. In each pilot indigenous community, there must be a transparent, professional, and accountable mentoring system with a model of one assistant protecting 12 heads of families who are trained, fostered, assisted for business development. Of course, this must be done by utilizing the potential human resources in the congregation, if not, must be looked at from other congregations or involve government or related government agencies who are concerned with the economic development of indigenous peoples.
Along with that, synods, classes, and congregations need to prepare reliable, honest, and competent human resources and can implement the economic empowerment of indigenous peoples in a sustainable, precise and correct manner. The church must open a room for dialogue and a heart-to-heart approach and carry out continuous, transparent, and professional collaboration with various parties, especially local governments, customs, youth shops, other stakeholders as well as domestic and foreign private institutions to support and complement each other, for improving the welfare of society.

Development is not just a matter of physical change, but primarily about human development, and the development process must be following the principles of justice and respect for cultural values. So don't turn your village into a city, but turn your village into a city. Don't build Papua in the Jakarta style, but build Papua in the Papuan style. Therefore, Papua must have an accurate mapping of the potential of natural and human resources and have 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 stand in the forefront to uphold justice, truth, and love and to enforce the laws and regulations in this republic fairly and correctly, including in the economic field. The concrete role of the church in economic empowerment is to facilitate indigenous peoples to be able to recognize and develop their potential and their environment for economic improvement, and the church continues to motivate, support, and pray for the efforts of indigenous peoples to increase because during these efforts God is present. It is in this context that the church is called a blessing to its indigenous people.

The importance of maximum natural resource management starting from the environment itself; home yards, gardens, and the surrounding environment that have the potential to be managed, so that the community no longer sells land to other parties but tries to manage it well. For this reason, proper mapping of the potential of resources is needed, mapping of the potential of competent human resources in their fields is needed for empowerment and assisting the community in long-term business management. The importance of strong financial support or support along with training and assistance in managing funds in a professional, transparent and accountable manner.

**Abbreviations**

GKI: Gereja Kristen Indonesia (Indonesian Christian Church);

**Declarations**

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**Authors' contributions**

I Wayan Ruspendi 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.

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**Availability of data and materials**

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**Declarations**
Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no conflicting interests.

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