



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Indonesian Nationalism and Papuan Ethnicity: Responding to the Dynamics of Social Conflict and Finding Sustainable Solutions

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ABSTRACT

Indonesian nationalism has faced major challenges in various regions, particularly in Papua, where ethnic aspects often influence the dynamics of emerging social conflicts. The aim of this study is to analyze how Indonesian nationalism interacts with ethnicity in Papua in the context of the social conflicts experienced and to find sustainable solutions to address these problems. The method used is a literature study and content analysis of secondary data related to government policies, local community responses and actual events in the area. The results of this study are intended to lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing ethnic conflict in Papua and identify strategic steps that can be implemented to strengthen Indonesian nationalism while taking into account the uniqueness of local ethnicity in Papua. Thus, this study contributes to efforts to find sustainable solutions that promote social inclusion, justice and national unity.

INTRODUCTION

Although Indonesia has strengthened the principle of national unity and unity, the original principles are still visible in society. According to experts such as (Tussupbekov et al., 2024), primordialism is a social orientation that emphasizes a person's loyalty to their tribe, religion or ethnicity. Research by (Varshney, 2002) shows that interethnic relationships are often competitive and conflictual because of these core principles. These principles often hinder efforts at national development and social inclusion. According to (Pollard-Wright, 2020), "primal" is a feeling created by the brain so that the individual can create images and mark the first moment of subjectivity when thinking. This primordial feeling by (Purdey, 2006), as the feeling of "us" versus "them", comes from a primordial identity. According to (Kumarasamy et al., 2024), the original identity is based on blood, language, territorial and religious ties. These original bonds are further considered by (Durmuş, 2019) as individual identities formed on the basis of social groups (sexual, economic, racial, ethnic, religious, political, etc.).

Primordialism, also called ethnic ideology, plays an important role in strengthening ethnic solidarity in Indonesia based on cultural values, ethnic polarization and Islamic supremacy (Haridison & Alfirdaus, 2024). The ethnic ideology of the Indonesian nation is reflected in more than three hundred ethnic groups, spread across about six thousand inhabited islands, with significant religious, linguistic and cultural differences. Although up to 88 percent of Indonesians identify as Muslim, the country's Muslim community is deeply divided, not only in terms of theological orientation, but also in terms of political ideology (Hefner, 2018). In the period from the 1930s to the early 1980s, Indonesia was still debating political ideologies, in which left-wing politics promoted by socialist and communist parties were most active and prominent (Hewison & Rodan, 2012).

During the same period, from the 1950s to 1960s, Indonesia also faced the challenge of Papuan integration. One of the main problems that emerged in the process of Papua's integration into the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia was the reflection of identity politics. According to (Sari & Silalahi, 2024), ethnic identity in Indonesia is often politicized in various forms, ranging from electoral rules to political party ideology to ethnic demographics and social norms. Politicization carried out by specific individuals or groups is often associated with specific goals, including radicalization. The politicization of ethnic identity in Papua can be understood as a process of raising Papuans' awareness of their ethnic identity, as well as raising awareness of the racial differences between Papuans and other ethnicities in Indonesia. As a stigma for other Indonesian ethnicities in their region, several issues have been successfully incorporated into the paradigm of Papuan society.

The first problem raised in building Papuan ethnic solidarity is the perception that Indonesia plays the role of a colonizer (Woodman, 2023). The colonial problem blamed by Indonesia on Papua was caused by the failure of development in the region. Many Papuans believe that Indonesia's presence in Papua only serves the exclusive exploitation of wealth without promoting the well-being and development of the local community (Webb-Gannon, 2023). This problem is becoming more and more pronounced because it is triggered by a comparison of the social conditions of the Papuan people during the colonial period, who ironically have a better quality of life, especially in the field of education (Kooijman, 2024). In the context of the economic sector, the Dutch government has introduced a populist economic system that has had a significant impact on the economy of indigenous peoples. The implementation of this system has resulted in a marked difference in how the Papuan people view the Indonesian government in dealing with local economic problems (Conroy, 2023).

The second issue raised in building Papuan ethnic solidarity is racial discrimination. The stereotypes associated with racial discrimination are more about the exploitation of culinary traditions, plants and cooking techniques of colonized peoples, which is referred to as gastrocolonialism (Chao, 2022). The replacement of sago starch with rice as the daily diet of the Papuan people is based on the perception that using sago as a staple food is considered unhealthy and nutritious. Therefore, the consumption of sago starch, which is common among the local population, is considered bad and needs to be replaced with other alternatives such as rice, which is said to provide better health and nutrition.

With the discriminatory treatment called gastrocolonialism, the Indonesian government took a controversial step through the exploitation of natural resources, especially the acquisition of sago forests that are part of the customary land. The goal of gastrocolonialism is further illustrated by the implementation of the transit migration program, which regulates the transfer of the poor from the island of Java to Papua and is accompanied by the conversion of natural forests into oil palm plantations, which shows a systematic effort to change the social and ecological structure of Papua (Budiardjo & Carmel, 1983). Systematic and structured government efforts have transformed the structure and function of forests in the context of the customary order of the Papuan people. The areas they inhabit are not only a source of livelihood but also a place of cultural expression for the indigenous Papuans. However, this action has negative consequences in the form of isolating Papuans in the area where they have lived for generations.

The third issue raised in building ethnic solidarity in Papua concerns freedom in the development of cultural arts linked to the traditions of the local community. For the Papuan people, cultural arts are not just aesthetic practices, but representations of identity and traditional symbols that reflect their freedom in relation to the place in which they live (Burridge & Nielsen, 2017). The cultural arts that the Papuan people possess in their traditions represent the close cultural ties of the past, which are expressions of their beliefs in the various rituals that are performed (Shaw & Langley, 2017). Restrictions on freedom of expression in art and culture, especially in relation to the performance of religious rituals, are often influenced by the isolation of natural places that are considered the center of the ritual. This isolation prevents the Papuan community from maintaining and developing a culture that has been passed down from generation to generation.

The politicization of ethnic identity in Papua has created an ethnic solidarity that unites Papuans, even though there are more than 250 tribes with different languages in the region. This ethnic

solidarity is related to the identity of the family, the meaning of which is identical to the sense of nationalism of an Indonesian family. (Putra et al., 2024) in the International Journal of Intercultural Relations found that the majority of Indonesians treat and view Papuan negatively. The concern is that if Papua is actually considered part of Indonesia and Papuans are also called Indonesians, they will demand the same treatment as other citizens. Although the government has taken corrective measures to address the shortcomings that occurred in the past, these events have significantly contributed to the formation of Papuans' ethnic solidarity.

The problems of Papuan ethnic solidarity compared to Indonesian nationalism, which was built on the basis of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution as the ideology of the Indonesian nation, often lead to conflict. The problem is not that Pancasila or the 1945 Constitution do not take into account Papuan ethnic solidarity, but rather that, according to (Kueh, 2023), there is a sense of competing nationalism that unites a large group of people on the island of Java, but at the same time nationalism also tends to marginalize several other ethnicities, including Chinese, Acehnese and Papuans. Ambitious modernist programs aim to rebuild the Indonesian state in an image centered on the island of Java. This has led to conflict between different ethnic groups in Indonesia and poses its own challenges to efforts to strengthen national unity.

In Papua in particular, the conflicts that have occurred since the 1960s to the present are a series of conflicts that arise from the lack of Papuan ethnic solidarity, which (Meteray, 2012) is referred to as Papuan nationalism was adopted into Indonesian nationalism as a nation full of ethnic diversity. Papuan nationalism has grown and developed based on the identity of the Papuan people with physical characteristics such as black skin and curly hair. Meanwhile, Indonesian nationalism as a whole is guided by the motto *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*, which emphasizes unity in diversity. From Indonesia's independence in 1945 until 1962, Indonesia was not fully sovereign in Papua. As a result, the influence of Indonesian nationalism was not fully accepted in Papua during this period. (Meteray, 2012) revealed in his research that the people's identity existed even before Indonesia's identity through Christian education and religion since 1927, when Papuan children from different regions were educated in Merauke and cared for by Christian priests. This research was conducted to examine the problem of ethnic identity of Papuans who lack space to develop their ethnic identity as part of the Indonesian nation.

METHOD

This qualitative study examines the indigenous Papuans as a material that simultaneously symbolizes their sense of identity and ethnic perception within the framework of the existence of an Indonesian nation with the concept of Indonesian nationalism in their motto "*Bhinka Tunggal Ika*". Although all Papuans served as research subjects, only a few people were selected as informants for the reserach. From a sample of them, individual targets were selected as respondents who were assumed to be able to provide information (Pare et al., 2024). Respondents were selected based on criteria such as traditional leaders, community leaders, women and youth leaders, religious leaders and bureaucrats. Between July and August 2023, detailed interviews and literature reviews were used in the data research process.

Table 1. Profile of Research Informant

Initial name	Age	Gender	Work	Position
DW	50	Man	Self employed	Youth Leaders and Community Empowerment Activists
KM	80	Man	Self employed	Chairman of the Papuan Customary Council Region III Domberay
DJ	55	Man	Civil Servan	Head of the National Unity and Political Service
DS	70	Women	Self employed	Female Characters
MT	48	Man	Pastor	Religious Leaders
JM	52	Man	West Papua Government Represent	National and Political Unity Agency

ET	47	Man	Secretary of the DPRD	West Papua Provincial House of Representatives
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NVIVO software was then used to group the collected data to identify, classify and select relevant information (Elliott-Mainwaring, 2021). Interpretive understanding serves as the primary basis for data analysis and involves elucidation of facts and data related to social conflict and ethnic identity. This explanation is based on a theory developed by Max Weber, which explains that one of the factors that influence the formation of an individual's identity is his ethnicity. The individual freedom of those who identify with their ethnic group may be restricted. When members of different ethnic groups clash while trying to protect their freedom and identity, conflict can arise (Weber, 1992).

RESULT

Indonesia Nationalism

According to the results of the study, there are several factors that shape the sense of Indonesian nationality, which is called Indonesian nationalism

Table 2. Results of NVIVO factor shape Indonesia nationalism

IMPORTANT DETAIL
code\indonesia nationalism
indonesia language
agrarian identity
maritim people
bhineka tunggal ika motto in pancasila

Indonesia, as a multi-ethnic country, has created a national identity through Indonesian as a unified national language. As a unified language, Indonesian is the official language that holds the population together. In addition, Indonesian also serves as an effective tool for use in all official areas, but does not necessarily replace the use of other native languages in the area of more informal communication (Simpson, 2023). Indonesian as a national language is used by the mass media, in formal conversations, at all levels of education and in the written language (Immanuel et al., 2024). Approximately 270 million people, between 23 and 43 million, speak Indonesian, compared to more than 84 million speakers of Javanese, the regional language most commonly spoken on the island of Java (J. Jap & Tiatri, 2024).

In addition to language, the identity of the Indonesian nation is also reflected in cultural aspects, such as the Sundanese ethnic culture, which considers the existence of Leuit as a symbol of the community's agrarian identity (Kurniawan & Aprilian, 2024). Agrarian identity describes agricultural activities carried out by communities on a land and also plays a role as a cultural identity that is passed down from generation to generation (Villalba-Eguiluz et al., 2023). For example, the cultural identity of the Balinese people is clearly reflected in the management of their agricultural activities (Adhika & Putra, 2021). Therefore, land ownership explicitly reflects the cultural and ethnic identity of a community since the land is the place where they live (Chou, 2009).

The identity of the Indonesian nation is also reflected in the image of the community as a maritime society, which sees the sea as a secular element but also as something sacred. Traditions and rituals related to the sea are a sign of their respect for the sea (Hartati et al., 2020). Indonesia's maritime society contains a variety of inherited religious values, including myths, legends, folklore and oral traditions about marine cosmology. Folklore, myths and legends occupy an important place in society as they not only refer to cultural traditions but also contain religious or theological values that are closely linked to the identity of the Indonesian nation (Kristianto et al., 2024). Therefore, traditional religions have played an important role, both in the ethnic identity of the group as a whole and in the local identity of the population of certain villages and hamlets (Chernykh, 2024).

One of the most important aspects in determining Indonesia's national identity is the ideology of Pancasila. Pancasila acts as a unifier for the Indonesian nation, which is made up of diverse ethnicities. This ideology is the basis for strengthening unity and oneness amidst the existing

diversity (Rahawarin, 2021). Historically, Pancasila emerged from the idea of the diversity of the Indonesian nation, which aims to form a country with an ideology consistent with the national cultural identity (Bourchier, 2014). Pancasila is a philosophy and ideology that forms the basis of the life of the nation and state in Indonesia. Its function is not only to embody the ideals and aspirations of the nation, but also as an expression of a deep sense of nationalism among the Indonesian population (Setiyono & Natalis, 2023).

Although Indonesia has strengthened the principle of national unity and unity, the original principles are still visible in society. The ethnic ideology of the Indonesian nation is reflected in more than three hundred ethnic groups, spread across about six thousand inhabited islands, with significant religious, linguistic and cultural differences. Although up to 88 percent of Indonesians identify as Muslim, the country's Muslim community is deeply divided, not only in terms of theological orientation, but also in terms of political ideology (Hefner, 2018). In the period from the 1930s to the early 1980s, Indonesia was still debating political ideologies, in which left-wing politics promoted by socialist and communist parties were most active and prominent (Hewison & Rodan, 2012).

Papuan Ethnic Identity

Physically, Papuans are often known for characteristics such as curly hair and dark skin tone. This characteristic is often a stigma that creates feelings of racial difference in various social environments (Sianturi et al., 2022). The perception of racial differences that Papuans experience often hinders their ability to accept and form deeper relationships with people from non-Papuan groups. The politicization of ethnic identity in the 1950s to 1960s led to stereotypes that remain with Papuans today.

According to the results of the study, there are four factors that influence people's perception of Papuan ethnicity; These factors are shown in Figure 1.

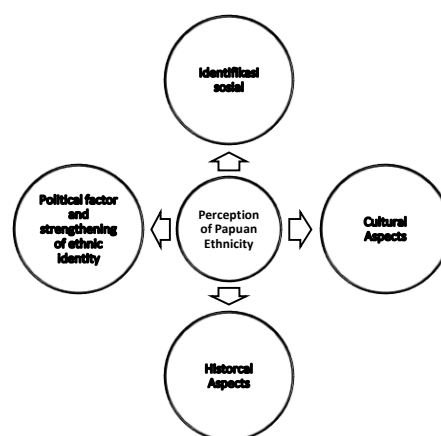


Figure 1. Factors that shape the perception of Papuan ethnic identity.

Social identification

Table 3 shows that several factors influence the social identification of the Papuan population, which in turn influences the strengthening of ethnic perceptions.

Table 3. Results of NVIVO Social Identification data processing

IMPORTANT DETAIL
code\ethnicity perception\social identification
customary territories
geographical location

Indigenous tribes in Papua are separated by social identification according to their traditional territories, which are divided into seven categories. Seven indigenous areas of Papua are shown in Figure 2.

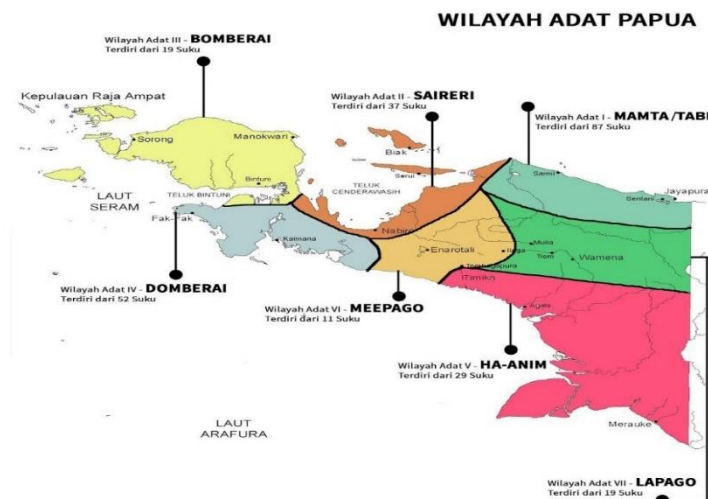


Figure 2. Map of the division of Papuan customary territories. Map Source obtained from (Pemerintah Provinsi Papua, 2010)

Tribes such as the Biak, Tabi, Arfak, Moi, Maybrat, Dani, Asmat and Ngalum share the belief that ethnicity should be formed based on the Papuans' home territory as shown in figure 2. There are over 250 tribes including the Kuri-Wamesa tribe, the Korowai tribe, the Yali tribe and others. The locations of the ancestral areas of these tribes, which are delimited according to the map of the respective territory, provide information about their differences. Although divided into traditional territories, the Papuans share a strong ethnic identity that unites all the region's inhabitants as a nation with common characteristics that identify them as such "*comen*". This term is typically used to distinguish Papuans from non-Papuans; "*amber*" is the term for non-Papuans.

In addition, tribes are categorized geographically based on their respective places of residence. For example, the division of tribes against those who live in the lowlands or in valleys, in mountains or on coasts, or in blood. The Central Region of Papua, which includes Jayawijaya, Tolikara, Puncak Jaya, Puncak, Lani Jaya Regency, Nduga and several other districts, is the first of four regions in Papua where the factor of distinguishing characteristics and the formation of cultural identity is based on the place of importance is residence is divided. These districts have now been expanded to include the mountainous province of Papua. In addition, it has been adapted to coastal regions such as Sarmi, Jayapura Regency, Biak Numfor, Supiori, Yapen Waropen and a number of districts that are still part of Papua New Guinea. Examples of riverine and swamp areas include Merauke, Mappi, Bovendigul and Waropen regencies in Papua Province and Teluk Bintuni Regency in West Papua Province. Seagrass and lowland regions exist in Fak-Fak and Tambrau regencies, Sorong. The term "*orang gunung*" is used by Papua for people living in the mountainous regions of the country, while the term "*orang pantai*" is used for people living on the coast. However, Papuans are unaware of the common terms used to identify non-Papuans in terms of their geographical location.

Customary aspects

According to the results of the study, cultural factors in the perception of Papua New Guinea's ethnic identity can be divided into three main categories, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of NVIVO Customary Aspects data Processing

code\\ethnicity perception\\customary factors
IMPORTANT DETAIL
language aspects
aspects of trust
social values and norms

According to the (Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), 2021), 312 indigenous languages spoken by local tribes are used in daily life in Papua. The diversity of local languages reflects the different

cultural identities present. Despite their linguistic religion, they communicate with other indigenous Papuan tribes and with other ethnic Indonesian tribes using Indonesian as their official language. Papuan Malay is the name of the Indonesian language that Papuans use for daily communication with other Indonesians. The language used in this context is the Papuan dialect of Indonesian. For example, if you ask someone where they want to go, you usually say, "Ke mana Anda ingin pergi?" When this pronunciation is memorized in the Papuan dialect, it is "ko pi mana?" This pronunciation can be misinterpreted as: "Where's the coffee?" even if the meaning is to ask "where are you going?".

The perception of Papuan ethnic identity is also influenced by emerging beliefs in the region, particularly traditional beliefs. Before the emergence of contemporary religions such as Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and Christianity, Papuans practiced animism, which believed that the spirits of the deceased were still alive and still had a connection to them. One of the most widespread beliefs is that of the Biak tribe, or *Koreri* in the local tongue. The foundation of this belief is a person who is regarded as "god," who will deliver them from the hardships, hunger, and poverty of the modern world and grant them unrestricted access to the natural resources that are available to them. In their beliefs, *Manarmakeri* is the personification of God.

This idea of Papuan identity is an ideology that is part of a strong feeling of brotherhood. Papuans' sense of brotherhood stems from their history as victims of underdevelopment and human rights abuses. The community's problems were exacerbated by an armed conflict that broke out during the New Order government between the Indonesian military and the Free Papua Organization (OPM). Due to the complexity of this issue, liberation movements emerged based on Papuan ethnic ideology and combining it with Papuan beliefs. Non-Papuan ethnic groups are generally viewed negatively by the Papuan population. They believe that there is a lack of trust among non-Papuans and that the existence of non-Papuan ethnic groups does not provide a sense of security. For example, non-Papuans tend to dominate the results when it comes to promotion of positions or admission of civil servants (PNS) and TNI/POLRI members. Because they believe that non-Papuans are stealing opportunities from local communities, Papuans often feel that their rights have been violated. This assumption stems from ethnic attitudes in Papua, where local communities are entitled to freedom and access to all resources based on their beliefs.

The communal ownership system is the first way to recognize Papua's traditional land ownership from the perspective of the values and social norms that shape Papuans' ethnic identity. A large family owns a hamlet that is considered traditional land. Because they are considered successors of *Keret*, boys descended from an ancestor's paternal line are counted as heirs when it comes to ownership of ancestral land. The second is social relationships within conventional family structures. Because their family structure is based on *Keret*, Papuans typically live in their hamlets. The family system based in *Keret* means that there are multiple clans with blood relatives in a hamlet. This is obviously also related to the existence of customary laws. Third, Papuan kinship ties are also formed through marriage ties as a means of forming perceptions of ethnicity, as a traditional procession must be performed at the time of marriage. All clans or families with kinship ties take part in the traditional procession, which is directly related to the inequality in dowry payment in Papua. As a dowry, the entire clan receives their possessions in the form of commercially available items that have a high status. Through this dowry payment, the entire extended family is brought together into a single family.

Non-Papuans are viewed as immigrants who travel to Papua to work and earn a living, according to the perspective of ethnic identity in relation to other Indonesians, which is based on elements of values and social norms. Non-Papuans are people who hitchhike on their land looking for food, while Papuans consider themselves landowners. When referring to the results of the Civil Service Candidate Selection (CPNS) or other competitions in which non-Papuans have a more significant degree, Papuans usually use this term.

Historical Aspects

The historical aspects that shape the perception of Papuan ethnicity include several events related to the events of Papua's transition period from the Dutch government to Indonesia in the post-colonial period in the region.

Table 5. Results of NVIVO Historical Aspects data Processing

code\\persepsi etnis\\sejarah
IMPORTANT DETAIL
pepera in 1969
the idea of the establishment of the state of papua
armed conflict

The three incidents in Table 5 are largely related to the ongoing dispute between the Indonesian government and Papua, which dates back to 1969. Under the auspices of the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA), Papua conducted an opinion poll called PEPERA in 1969, or popular opinion determination, in which participants cast their votes for Papua to join Indonesia. However, other parties rejected this result because they believed it was not applied fairly. When the idea of creating the state of Papua arose, an armed conflict arose as a means of confronting the Indonesian government. However, ethnic identity narratives are used by Papuan independence movements such as the OPM to support their political and historical claims. They seek international assistance based on human rights and self-determination principles, emphasizing ethnic identity as a basis for resistance to the Indonesian government.

From a historical perspective, non-Papuans are considered colonizers who came to deprive Papuans of their political and economic rights, which is why they are given this ethnic identity. On their land, Papuans were politically and economically marginalized, preventing them from making capital gains to compete with non-Papuans. Because of the associations that non-Papuans have formed in their perception, the freedom and existence of Papuans on their own lands have been compromised. Religious gatherings, business growth and political elections demonstrate this. Indigenous Papuans have been marginalized due to the concentration of political and economic power of non-Papuans in their own country.

The complexity of the problems arising from armed conflicts has increased the collective awareness of these problems. The resulting collective consciousness then developed into a sense of ethnic solidarity among fellow Papuans. The ethnic solidarity that developed among the Papuan people led the community to identify itself as a distinctive ethnic identity, united by the similarity of their historical experiences.

Political factor and strengthening of ethnic identity

According to the results of the study, a number of factors in Table 6 influence both the political factors leading to the formation of ethnic identity and its strengthening.

Table 6. Results of NVIVO Political factor and strengthening of ethnic identity data Processing

IMPORTANT DETAIL
code\\ethnicity perception\\political factors
papuan involvement in government politics
papua special autonomy policy

Papuan participation in government policy was still quite low before the ratification of Papua's special autonomy. Almost all Papuans are suspected of involvement in separatist movements, which contributes to their low participation in government politics. As an ethnic group dealing with similar issues, Papuans are gradually developing a sense of brotherhood due to their discriminatory treatment. To gain support, political elites often use this as an excuse to address the issue of ethnic identity politics.

Since the introduction of the Papuans' Special Autonomy Policy, the way Papuans view their ethnicity has changed. Instead of identifying with traditional territories, they now identify with autonomous regions administered by the government. This ethnic identification is established based on events at the time, such as the admission of civil servant candidates. They then began to organize themselves according to the tribes that came from their district. Another phenomenon is the use of funds from

special autonomy funds by the local government to provide study scholarships for students. The district's local government supports indigenous students with their tuition fees. However, this study support regulation also covers students who do not belong to the local indigenous tribes, but who have their permanent residence in the study support district.

Pertaining to the definition of non-Papuan ethnicity in light of political considerations and the fortification of ethnic identity through the idea of "birthright." The term "birthright" refers to the fundamental rights that are inherently linked to the Papuan people's identity. For example, in the context of the application of Law No. 21 of 2001 on Special Autonomy, later known as Law No. 2 of 2021, in which one of its articles defines indigenous Papuans. According to one verse of the article, the definition of indigenous Papuans also includes non-Papuans, who are designated and recognized as such. Other Papuans often opposed the widespread adoption and recognition of indigenous children by indigenous Papuan tribes over non-indigenous people. In order to protect the fundamental rights of the indigenous Papuans, they frequently raise their voices and say, "Don't sell your birthright," which means don't sell your original identity.

The Dynamic of Social Conflict

The conflict dynamics in Papua can generally be divided into three main periods, namely the period during Dutch colonial rule, the period during the New Order era and the period after the introduction of special autonomy. The third period of conflict in Papua is particularly related to the issue of Papuan ethnicity. These conflicts have generally been about recognition and respect for the ethnic identity of the Papuan people. This includes recognizing the rights of Papuans as indigenous people on Papuan land. In addition, this recognition also includes cultural aspects, including customs introduced by the Papuan people.

Period of conflict during the Dutch Government

The presence of Christianity in Papua at that time turned out to be a form of modernization of human civilization that sought to introduce the Papuans into a new civilization. Unfortunately, the Christian religious teachings applied at the time did not find a good response among the Papuans. F. C. Kamma said in his historical notes that the conflict in Papua was first recorded in 1863. The conflict arose as a form of resistance to the spread of Western Christian theology, which was then beginning to flourish in the region. This creates tension as it contradicts the indigenous theology that has long existed in Papua. The indigenous theology in question is the long-standing traditional beliefs of the Papuan people. The rejection of the development of the spread of Christian religious teachings was expressed in the form of a messianic movement or so-called liberation movement. The liberation movement referred to here is a form of conveying to foreign parties that their traditional beliefs are not inferior to the new doctrines that are already modern. The best known and most popular resistance movements as liberation movements are the choir movements.

On August 24, 1828, the Dutch officially founded Fort du Buis in Triton Bay as the first step in establishing their presence in Papua. The presence of the Dutch in Papua at this time led to the loss of power of the local ruler Kaimana, who felt that he and the people he led were oppressed and oppressed by the Dutch. As a result of the conquest of the population of Kaimana by the Dutch, there was an invasion of the Fort du Buis built there. The resistance of the Kaimana people at the time showed that there were differences in the perception of the distribution of power. This means that the ruler of Kaimana at the time exercised his power in the manner and traditions as well as the values and norms that prevailed there. On the other hand, the Netherlands came with a modern European style and changed the traditional patterns that existed there from the beginning.

This resistance movement is actually a resistance movement based on ethnicity and believes that all traditional forms of Papuans are not backward. Everything traditional that belongs to Papuans is an inherent ethnic identity. According to (Bhattacharya, 2024), a community is usually identified by its ancient cultural heritage; and as part of this, the community's traditional beliefs have held the helm for generations. For Papuans, customs and culture, including their beliefs, are their ethnic identity, preserved and maintained through generations.

The Resistance Movement carried out by Papuans at that time was a form of self-defense of Papuans against the onslaught of attacks by foreigners on the ethnic identity of Papuans. Although at that time

Papuans were not familiar with the concept of ethnicity, there was an awareness of their existence towards their ancestral land and culture which began to be eroded by foreign cultures. This awareness exists as a form of strengthening ethnic identity by identifying itself based on its traditions and culture. The resistance movement carried out at that time was not entirely an armed resistance movement although there was a recorded attack on Fort du Buis in Kaimana. In general, the resistance movement was manifested in faith movements with the aim of strengthening their ethnicity as a separate ethnicity and different from Europeans.

The next confrontation arises when the meaning of the resistance movement's purpose changes. The intended change in the purpose of the resistance movement was the political goal, namely the establishment of a utopian state. The planned political goals were politicized by the politics of ethnic identity constructed by the Dutch colonial rulers. The identity politics constructed in the Netherlands can be explained as a manifestation of ethnic identity based on traditional beliefs and politicized as a form of fear of geo-cultural development (Behera, 2024). The intended geo-culture is a transitional period in which there is a transfer of power between the Netherlands and Indonesia, in which there is a change in Indonesia's cultural influence.

The goal of identity politics as a form of Papuan resistance has a good place in the minds of Papuans when they begin to identify their ethnic identity as another ethnicity that is different from other ethnicities in Indonesia. The strengthening of ethnic identity during the transition period between the Netherlands and Indonesia led to resistance to the "freedom/independence of Papua" as a country initiated by the Netherlands. The goal of independence as a country subsequently failed because it was thwarted by the Indonesian government's diplomatic efforts, resulting in resistance to the government. Resistance is often carried out to gain the support of all Papuans by continuing to combine ethnic identity politics as a form of ethnic identity strengthening. The failure of the Dutch to realize their political interests in Papua resulted in them losing their negotiating position in the eyes of the Papuan people. In order to maintain their laughing position, the Dutch continue to nurture and nurture identity politics by emphasizing independence discourse based on racial differences, namely Papuans of the Melanesian race and other Indonesians of the Polynesian race.

The conflict period during the New Order government

The period of conflict that Papuans experienced during the New Order government began with the pre-conflict period that took place in the PEPERA findings in 1969. Pros and Cons. This led to historic acts of protest and resistance that had their origins in the debate over Papuan integration. Acts of protest and resistance against the government are a form of struggle for the recognition of ethnic identity. The implication is that in all aspects of diplomacy, policy-making and decision-making processes relating to the fate of the Papuans there is the impression that they have never been involved or included. The lack of participation of Papuans in the political decision-making process related to the status of Papua reflects the lack of recognition and respect for the existence and identity of the Papuan ethnic group. The embodiment of the Papuan resistance movement against the results of PEPERA came through the emergence of a new resistance movement organized by OPM.

The Indonesian government's approach to the Papuan people's resistance to the demand for recognition of ethnic identity is based on a strategy of militarization. The government's implementation of this militarization strategy triggered armed conflicts that impacted the complexity of key social and political dynamics. The armed conflict caused casualties, both among the civilian population and on both sides, namely the OPM and the Indonesian military. The most important thing that is interpreted in the conflict between Papua and the Indonesian side lies in the construction of Indonesian nationalism, which is defined militarily. The government interprets that preserving and maintaining the unity of the Republic of Indonesia is tantamount to waging war against the enemy. This approach further emphasizes the identification of Papuan ethnic identity as an ethnicity distinct from other Indonesian ethnicities.

The Indonesian side is present in Papua with the slogan \"NKRI - The Price of Death\" as an official slogan or text used to reconstruct the Papuans' ethnic identity through a militaristic approach. The slogan of the Republic of Indonesia is dead in its sense, which is explained by (Hasian & Muller, 2018) as \"hegemonic official text to explain nationalistic ideologies, and the apparent legalistic ability\". The

meaning of \"NKRI - The Price of Death\" reflects a process of re-identification that the Indonesian government is applying to the Papuan people, attempting to give the Papuan people a new identity.

Unfortunately, the implementation of the new identity under the slogan \"NKRI – The Price of Death\" is carried out using methods that are unacceptable to the Papuan people. This resulted in the failure to establish the new identity. The failure to cultivate new ethnic identities has left Papuans in an ongoing dilemma, particularly when it comes to recognizing their ethnic identity. This situation is further complicated by the fact that the ethnic identity of the Papuans cannot be accepted within the framework of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia, which is considered sacred and absolute. The gaps and dilemmas in the acceptance of the Papuan people's ethnic identity are exacerbated by discrimination and unfair treatment. Additionally, narratives portraying Papuan culture as primitive and outdated have been developed to reinforce the negative stigma and stereotypes against it.

In the context of development, there is a government strategy to shame Papuan culture, which has managed to convince people that they and their culture have no value, thus creating feelings of inferiority and inferiority. This forces them to undergo social transformation. Furthermore, the process of accumulated disappointment experienced by indigenous Papuans is exacerbated by the neglect of cultural rights that reflect their collective dignity. Indigenous Papuans experience a lack of recognition of their dignity and identity in various government policies such as: B. Transmigration programs, the refusal to recognize customary land rights, the exploitation of natural resources and the lack of opportunities to participate in government administration. This situation has given rise to a deep sense of frustration, which has been expressed in a number of peaceful demonstrations. In many cases, the inferiority complex of indigenous Papuans is closely linked to the loss of life caused by the use of repressive security approaches to resolve conflicts. These measures are consistent with the explanation (McGibbon & Policy, 2006) that the development program implemented by the New Order government influenced the strengthening of the government's identity in several aspects.

Period of conflict after the implementation of special autonomy

Papua's special autonomy is recognized as a national strategy for resolving political conflicts in Papua. Through special autonomy, the government commits to respecting human rights, religious values, democratic principles, and legal and cultural norms applicable to indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples refer to the traditions or cultures maintained by each ethnic group and include various aspects such as knowledge, behaviors, rules, laws and systems that serve to define and regulate individuals and social life in the legal context of that community. In addition, the implementation of the special autonomy also aims to appreciate the different types and diversity of socio-cultural life in Papuan society. The protection of the rights of indigenous Papuans, as expressed in the Commitment, includes the consideration of local cultures and values in development policies implemented in Papua and the empowerment of indigenous Papuans.

In practice, the implementation of the special autonomy policy failed to meet the expectations desired by the Papuan people. These measures lead to inequality based on low vertical trust between the central government and local communities in Papua. This inequality further impacts the quality of horizontal interaction between members of the local community. The Papuan people, essentially a collection of diverse ethnic groups, experienced increasing fragmentation after the introduction of special autonomy (Otsus). The discourse on the split between supporters of \"O\" (Special Autonomy) and \"M\" (Independence or separation from the State of Indonesia) has had a significant impact on social cohesion in civil society. The discussion created labels and emphasized the difference between those who support the status quo and those who feel excluded. This increasing mistrust contributes to a decline in human security and social capital, which in turn hinders the implementation of special autonomy in Papua.

The significant impact of the implementation of the special autonomy policy has influenced the strengthening of ethnic identity in Papua to the point of polarization. The Papuan people have redefined their ethnic identity within a narrower categorical framework. The definition of ethnicity in this narrow category is adjusted to the social and political dynamics that are evolving at any given moment at that time. For example, in a political moment, each tribe is unilaterally willing to base its existence on supporting candidates for regional leadership or parliamentary candidates based on its tribe. This ethnic identity pattern applies not only to Papua, but also to other Indonesian ethnic

groups in Papua. As a result, tribal groups have formed in Papua today, manifesting themselves as a form of geo-culture and showing their respective existence. Another moment is the process of accepting candidates for the state civil service or prospective TNI/POLRI students. The ethnic identification pattern currently applied is based on the ethnic identity of indigenous tribes who have residency cards in the local government area. The point is that those who come from the tribes of the local district or provincial administrative area must be given the main priority in the selection process.

CONCLUSION

The conflicts that have existed in Papua over a period of more than 50 years are conflicts based on ethnic identity. The strengthening of Papuans' ethnic identity is based on colonial geo-cultural policies for their specific purposes. During Papua's transition from the Dutch government to Indonesia, a process of penetration of Indonesian nationalism into the Papuans' ethnic identity occurred. The process of penetration of Indonesian nationalism has affected Papuans' ethnic identity to such an extent that it has increased the significant impact on the conflict. As a recommendation to this issue, there must be a public space as a means for peaceful dialogue between the Indonesian government and the Papuan people. The dialogue was carried out by bringing the framework of Indonesian nationalism to the correct and acceptable dimensions within the concept of Papuan ethnicity.

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