

Research Article

The Socio-administrative Study of Indigenous People in the Implementation of Education Policy in Merauke Regency

Casimirus Andy Fenanlampir

Doctoral Candidate of Public Administration, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Indonesia

Abstract.

This research, using a socio-administrative approach, aims to provide an in-depth description of the knowledge and understanding of the dimensions of indigenous people in the implementation of public policies in the field of education in Merauke Regency. It uses a case study method with qualitative research design. The study shows that the involvement of indigenous communities, particularly the Marind people, is crucial in the implementation of public education policies. Cultural values, socio-economic conditions, and regional topography are key factors that influence the success of these policies and must be considered in both policy formulation and execution. In addition, the existent factor of the indigenous institution as a representative of the Marind community is also important to consider and involve in every policy determination, even though legally formal duties, responsibilities, and authorities of the customary council have not been accommodated, either in the form of regional regulations, regent regulations, or in the form of village regulations. This study concludes that the success of implementing public policy in the field of education in Merauke Regency is largely determined by the involvement of the Marind indigenous people. The Marind indigenous people as subjects and objects of policy implementation are important to note. The unique priorities of indigenous communities for governance are important when considering the issues they experience.

Keywords: public policy, education policy, indigenous people

1. Introduction

Public Administration, especially those related to government policies, has undergone changes and developments in recent decades in accordance with the demands of the times. Citizens (society) are included and actively involved in every formulation, policy-making, implementing, and evaluating as a response to the increasing needs, problems and complexity of human life. In responding to environmental changes and providing solutions to complex and multidimensional societal problems, the emphasis on citizen or community involvement becomes important and is closely related to the individual's capacity to influence the political system, which implies active involvement in political life, known as "democratic citizenship" (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2007). Society

Corresponding Author:

Casimirus Andy Fenanlampir;

email: fenanlampir@unmus.ac.id

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is a complex system of interdependence that can be described and consists of various actors that can be categorized as: government, private actors, and non-profit actors including the public itself [1].

The implementation of education in Merauke Regency since the enactment of the Special Autonomy Law for Papua Province through Law Number 21 of 2001 (Republik Indonesia, 2001) and extended again by Law Number 2 of 2021 (Republik Indonesia, 2021), is still lagging in terms of access and quality of education. One of the dimensions of the Human Development Index related to education, namely the knowledge dimension, is measured using two indicators, namely Expected Years of Schooling (HLS) and Average Years of Schooling (RLS). HLS and RLS of Merauke Regency can be seen in the following:

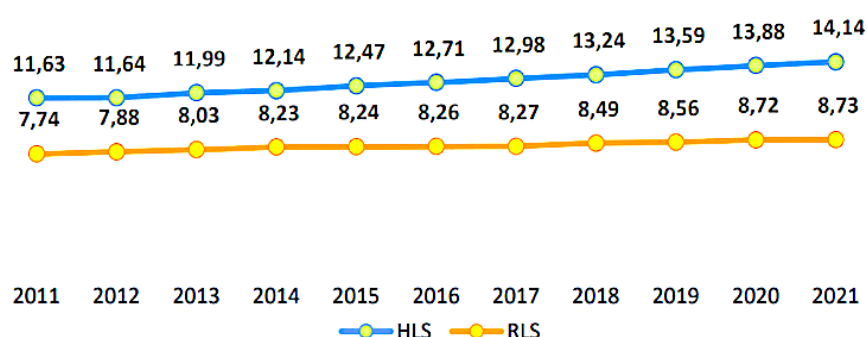


Figure 1: Expected Years of Schooling (HLS) and Average Years of Schooling (RLS) of Merauke Regency. Source: (Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Merauke, 2021).

Both indicators continue to increase from year to year. During the period 2011 to 2021, HLS Merauke Regency has increased by 2.51 years, while RLS has increased by 0.99 years. Although it has increased from year to year, if seen in more detail, the increase that occurred was mostly dominated by school-age children who were not indigenous or native Papuan children, and who lived in urban areas not in the interior of Merauke Regency. In addition, Human Development Index in Merauke Regency increases every year from 2022 to 2023 that is 0.94 points with a growth percentage of 1.29%. However, if the data is seen in more detail, it can be concluded that the Human Development Index of Merauke Regency is dominated by immigrant people who can easily access all available educational facilities, while local communities, namely papuan people, are left behind because they drop out of school or have never attended school. Merauke Education Observer, Sergius Womsiwor has long tried to initiate a focus on indigenous Papuan children who due to economic factors must become street

children, aibon children, scavengers and do not go to school. According to him, the Merauke Regency government needs to be open to listening to complaints that these children need serious services and attention. In addition to clothing, food and health services are also very much needed. The helplessness of indigenous Papuans (OAP) still occurs from year to year because the handling of education problems which are the main foundation has not been optimal in supporting all other aspects. If there is no serious attention, what will happen is a humanitarian disaster in Merauke [2]. This condition is inversely proportional to the funds that have been disbursed by the central government for education, which is IDR 115.60 trillion in 2024 (Kementerian Keuangan Republik Indonesia, 2024). This condition is very ironic and raises the question of what is wrong with human development, especially Papuan society in Merauke Regency, where the special autonomy law focuses and provides special provisions for Papuans' development in the field of education, by 20%. Preliminary study data shows that in the implementation of Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2018 concerning the Management and Implementation of Education in Merauke Regency is far from expectations which requires community involvement in the implementation of education including planning, supervision and evaluation of education programs is not carried out [3]. The preliminary data confirms that the public, especially Papuans' of Merauke (Marind), have never been involved in any policy making. They are always categorized as an object of public policy and in this case is educational policy.

One form of implementation of public policy in the field of education in Merauke Regency is the literacy eradication program called "Cas Kampung" where the program is a literacy movement that aims to create a society in Merauke Regency, especially Indigenous Papuans (OAP), free from illiteracy as a concrete manifestation of Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 59 of 2017 concerning the Implementation of Achieving Sustainable Development Goals and Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2018. The implementation of the "Cas Kampung" program initiated and implemented by the Merauke Regency Government has not been able to optimally solve the problem of illiteracy for indigenous Papuan students in local villages where most of the population are indigenous Papuans with high levels of illiteracy.

Unique conditions seen in the field when learning activities are carried out where some people are passive and even tend not to care. In schools located in local villages, the education process does not run as it should. There are schools that have teachers but no students and vice versa, there are schools that have students but no teachers. This condition occurs because the involvement of the community, especially indigenous

communities in local villages whose residents are mostly indigenous Papuans, is rarely or never involved in the process of managing and organizing education as referred to in the Merauke Regency Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2018 Chapter XIV concerning Community Participation Part 1 Article 113 states that the community is obliged to participate in organizing education including planning, supervision, and evaluation of education programs. In this context, the community in question is the indigenous Papuan people as the owners of customary land rights in Merauke Regency.

The theory of actors starts from the triple helix, quadra helix, to the penta helix, all of which are inseparable from the factors of power and interests. The study of stakeholders (i.e.: government, private sectors, and public), participating in public policy implementation originates from the study of business management and administration conducted by Brugha and Varvasovszky. They argued that the concept and understanding of stakeholders will depend greatly on the academic interests or perceptions of the scientists who study them. Stakeholders are often identified on a certain basis as stated by Freeman, namely in terms of the relative power and interest of stakeholders in the issue [4]. The triple helix concept model is a comprehensive and interdependent relationship consisting of government, business, and academics where academics take a more prominent role in determining the size of the risk for the business sector in order to generate income and the government sector is tasked with creating conditions and demands for innovation through policies in terms of developing conditions and demands for innovation, communication, transportation and resources. The triple helix assumes that stakeholders (government, business, and academics) know what is best for the market. On the other hand, the quadra helix, which is a development of the triple helix by adding one actor, namely the non-governmental organization (NGO) actor, emphasizes more on the balance of each actor in contributing. However, on the other hand, in this model, users are treated as consumers rather than partners in contributing together. The penta helix concept is an ideal tool for working with complexity and economic models, rather than consumer/market-based business innovation models by emphasizing the aggressiveness, competition, and risk of failure taken by the parties. In this penta helix model, the added actor is the mass media [4].

Ansell and Gash (2008) in their article: Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice, emphasize that the collaboration process is based on the availability of a forum as a container where the parties involved (government, private sector and community) depend on achieving a good cycle between communication, trust, commitment, understanding and results [5]. Bianchi, Nasi, and Rivenbark [6] in their article entitled:

Implementing collaborative governance: models, experiences, and challenges, advance our understanding of the cross-sectoral and complex issues of collaborative governance implementation by emphasizing shared understanding and enhancing interactions between service policies and service delivery in collaborative environments by redesigning state boundaries in the context of “governance without government”, sharing resources, managing interactions between actors, and directing collaborative governance initiatives through meta-governance [6]. Furthermore, Ulibarri et.al. in their study entitled *How does collaborative governance evolve? Insights from a medium-n case comparison* clearly describes the longitudinal dynamics of Collaborative Governance Regimes (CGR) over time finding that CGR characteristics including leadership, collaborative processes, accountability, and observed outputs/outcomes indicate that at some point, even stable and healthy collaborations experience a decline in resilience [7].

Those theories above showed that indigenous people as an actor is not accommodated yet. In the public administration studies, it is said that public policy can be successful and have an impact on society if it is implemented collaboratively through collective work from cross-sector parties based on the local character and wisdom they possess. The selection of actors in collaboration is also a concern for academics and practitioners to see how the tasks, functions, and roles of these actors are. Collaboration is often associated with positive outcomes both in terms of the process and the results achieved, although selecting suitable and appropriate partners to collaborate with can be difficult. Actors often have only limited information about the preferences, capabilities, and beliefs of potential collaborators, meaning that considerable uncertainty can underline collaborative choices [8]. Prymakova-Rivera states that the most effective response lies in local community-based solutions that involve a cross-sectoral approach, targeting all aspects of the problem and including a wide range of actors: citizens, governments, non-profit organizations and businesses [9]. It confirms that the active role of indigenous people is very necessary in decision-making regarding public policy. In the Indonesian context, the position of society, especially indigenous people, is very important and is recognized through Law Number 6 of 2014 which has been updated by Law Number 3 of 2024 concerning villages, namely in Chapter XII, part two concerning Village Customary Institutions and Chapter XIII Special Provisions on Traditional Villages which emphasizes that the unity of customary law communities and their traditional rights are still alive, both territorially, genealogically, and functionally and

it is in accordance with the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2024).

From a sociological studies point of view, the theory of cultural meanings includes the institutional context dimension which states that culture is produced by actors and organizations that require resources including material, organizational, and political if they want to develop a system of cultural codes, ritualize them, and transmit them to others [10]. Identity which may be conceptualized as the triangulation of self-identification, identification by others, and identification of others in the speaker's mental social map is a dimension of human experience that has affected the development of intra- and inter-community relationships for many, if not most, Indigenous peoples across the globe. The questions of "who is" and "who is not" have functioned as barriers, shelters, or sources of power and representation (and self-representation) which, in turn, have shaped or greatly affected the lives of Indigenous individuals and groups [11]. It can be said that the existence of indigenous people cannot be equated with society in general. Indigenous peoples are communities that have legal territory, rights, and wealth within their customary legal territory. Indigenous peoples are headed by a traditional chief or traditional elder who is also responsible for carrying out government duties, implementing development, and fostering community development at the village and sub-district levels. The role of the tribal chief or traditional elder is very real in encouraging and mobilizing community participation compared to the role of a village official. Neglect of the involvement and interests of indigenous people results in the community's response to the policies and programs issued always being negative and unable to achieve the outputs and outcomes that have been previously determined and has an impact on sustainability of the policy.

Indigenous community-based governance refers to governance systems that are rooted in the traditions, customary laws, and local values held by indigenous peoples. These systems often include collective decision-making, respect for all community members, including elders, women, and youth, and emphasize the relationship between humans and nature. Cornell and Jorgensen as quoted by Poliandri, proposed the extension of a "social inclusion" model of governance which Canada and the United States have as a strategy to increase the disadvantaged populations' level of participation in the economic, social, and polity life of the nation to indigenous peoples in a substantive, rather than assimilationist, fashion. They argue that remedying such a missing element would increase the footprint of effective indigenous governance in both countries, thus resulting in "more equitable outcomes for Indigenous citizens" [11]. Chand and

Thomas present the case of a positive, even constructive, relationship between state government and the Indigenous traditional leadership in Guyana. The authoritative efforts by the Toshaos, acting as mediators between their people and government, that have ensured their communities' high rate of compliance with the state imposed anti-COVID measures which, in turn, have resulted in a public health benefit for these communities. The fundamental role played by the Toshaos in today's Indigenous villages of Guyana is both testimony and a guarantee of "cultural continuity," which entails their role as guides for their people for the use of traditional practices and beliefs in the current world (which is not exclusively indigenous space).

The nature of the relationships between Indigenous communities and political-economic forces worldwide has ranged from cooperation to confrontation, and everything in between. Therefore, in-depth knowledge and understanding of the dimensions of indigenous people needs to be an important concern for stakeholders or parties who collaborate, as stated by Nakata and quoted by Coates which defines three important principles for indigenous people, namely: Cultural interface, namely the recognition of the way indigenous people know and understand discursively constructed in the knowledge paradigm; Indigenous agency, namely enabling indigenous people to see and uphold their position when compared to non-indigenous peoples; Constant tensions, namely: recognizing the ongoing tensions between indigenous peoples and non-indigenous peoples that go beyond the duality of descriptive analysis and empirical evidence and are actually experienced in a physical sense [12]. The unique priorities of indigenous communities for governance are important when considering the issues they experience. Keeping the collaborative governance in public policy aspect as a backdrop, this paper offers an indigenous dimension; exploring how indigenous communities actively engage with a policy while maintaining and adapting their identities, social and cultural practices to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities. This research wants to examine more deeply to the existence of indigenous people of Merauke especially the implementation of education policies in Merauke Regency.

2. Methods

This research approach uses a case study where the researcher explores programs, events, processes, and activities with one or more people. A case is bound by time and activities, and researchers continuously collect detailed data using various procedures

[13]. The research design used is qualitative. This design reveals and explains indigenous people in policy implementation as a new perspective or theory and solution approach to education problems in Merauke Regency. The research strategy used is a case study with an explanatory type, namely explaining educational phenomena where local communities (Indigenous Papuans) are very behind compared to immigrant communities.

Triangulation method is used to ensure the validity of data from various perspectives so that the results are obtained. Triangulation allows researchers to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Researchers can find many aspects, perspectives, or dimensions of the phenomena they study by integrating different approaches, data sources, or theories. In other words, Triangulation is used to minimize shortcomings and avoid bias in a study.

The data collection techniques were observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations are made mainly on tangible objects, such as activities related to the implementation process of educational policy. In-depth interviews were conducted with the informants, while documentation techniques were documents related to this study. The determination of informants in this research was carried out using purposive sampling, namely by selecting informants who were by the interests or objectives of this research to provide information. The informants are:

1. Regent of Merauke Regency
2. Representative House of Merauke Regency
3. Head and staff of Local Planning Agency
4. Head and staff of Education Agency
5. Head and staff of Village Community Empowerment Agency
6. Chairman and members of the Traditional Community Institution
7. Traditional community
8. Education observer Community Figure

This research uses a data processing process, namely data reduction, data presentation, and concluding/verification [14], and data analysis uses descriptive analysis of the case and setting. Data analysis techniques use pattern matching techniques and time series analysis..

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Topography and Social Factors

Merauke Regency, which is the largest regency in Papua Province (now South Papua Province) as one of the autonomous regions with an area of 46,791.63 km² divided into 20 Districts/Sub-districts and 179 Villages and a water area of 5,089.71 km². The geographical location of Merauke Regency, which is a lowland and surrounded by oceans with muddy and swampy topography, makes it difficult to build road infrastructure to open isolated nodes in remote areas. The location of the residents' villages, most of which are in coastal areas and in remote areas, is difficult to reach from the district city center and district/sub-district center.

The indigenous people of Merauke Regency, namely the Marind tribe, culturally live in small groups (sub-tribe) led by a tribal chief where their lives are very closed to outsiders. They still uphold the customs which are ancestral heritage, so it is still difficult to accept the changes that occur. Their lifestyle is also gardening, gathering, hunting, and fishing where at certain times or seasons, parents and children will enter the forest looking for food, for a long period of time so that the education that should be followed by school-age children at the elementary education level cannot run smoothly as it should.

The location of the village where most of which are in coastal areas and in remote areas, is difficult to reach from the district center and district/sub-district center. This condition makes it difficult for teachers to carry out their duties as educators properly, so that many schools are almost or even unable to carry out the learning process for students in general and especially indigenous Papuan children. The level of teacher attendance at school is very far from expectations, principals and teachers who are State Civil Apparatus (ASN) spend more time in the city with all kinds of business and reasons, both school business and personal business and reasons.

3.1.1. Economic and Cultural Factor

Cultural and economic factors also influence the implementation of education in Merauke Regency.

The indigenous people of Merauke Regency, namely the Marind tribe, culturally live in small groups led by a tribal chief where their lives are very closed to outsiders. They still uphold the customs which are ancestral heritage, so it is still difficult to accept the

TABLE 1: Data on area, distance and topography of the area.

	DISTRICT	AN AREA (Km ²)	DISTANCE FROM CITY CENTER (Km)	TOPOGRAPHY OF THE REGION
GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS	Okaba	1.560,50	112	The lowland areas include the coastal areas of Sanggase Beach and Okaba Beach.
	Ngguti	3.554,62	120	The lowland area mostly consists of swamps.
	Tubang	2.781,18	116	The area is lowland and mostly consists of swamps.
	Kaptel	2.384,05	125	The area is lowland and mostly consists of swamps.
	Muting	3.501,67	247	The area is lowland and mostly consists of swamps.
	Eligobel	1.666,23	240	Lowland areas and mostly consist of swamps.
	Naukenjerai	2.843,21	76	Lowland areas include the coastal areas of Ndalir Beach and Ong-gaya Beach

Source: Processed Observation and Documentation Data

TABLE 2: Economic and Cultural Conditions, District Population.

ECONOMIC & CULTURAL FACTORS	DISTRICT						
	Naukenjerai	Muting	Eligobel	Okaba	Ngguti	Tubang	Kaptel
Total population	2.508 Jiwa	6.088 Jiwa	5.123 Jiwa	4.146 Jiwa	3.630 Jiwa	2.688 Jiwa	1.802 Jiwa
Native People	Marind	Marind	Marind	Marind	Marind	Marind	Marind
Livelihood	unting, Farming, and Fishing	Hunting, Gathering, Farming, Fishing, and Palm Oil Company Workers	Hunting, Gathering, Farming, Fishing, and Palm Oil Company Workers	Hunting, Farming, and Fishing	Hunting, Farming, and Fishing	Hunting, Farming, and Fishing	Hunting, Farming, and Fishing

Source: Processed Observation and Documentation Data

changes that occur. Their lifestyle is also gardening, gathering, hunting, and fishing where at certain times or seasons, parents and children will go into the forest to look for food for a long period of time so that the education that should be followed by school-age children at the elementary education level cannot run smoothly as it should.

In addition, specifically for Marind residents in the Muting and Eligobel districts where some of the areas are oil palm plantations owned by several oil palm companies such as PT. Bio Inti Agrindo (BIA) and PT. APM, resulting in many school-age children dropping out of school due to lack of attention from parents who leave their children to work in oil palm companies.

On the other hand, speaking about basic education for Papuan Indigenous People that has been implemented in Merauke Regency, the facts show that with the economic level that is still below standard or still at the poverty level and/or extreme poverty level, the majority of indigenous people cannot enjoy education because of the high cost of education that must be borne even though the government has planned free basic education for 9 (nine) years such as: registration fees, uniform fees, and committee fees and other costs in the learning process where students are required to have gadgets (cellphones) as a source of digital learning based on the internet. In other words, education in Papua, especially in Merauke Regency, is not completely free.

The results of the data analysis of topography, social, economic, and cultural factor show that indigenous Papuan people (OAP) have never been involved in the policy implementation process as mandated in Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2018 concerning the implementation and management of education in Merauke Regency, Chapter XIV Community Participation Part One Article 113 which states that the community is obliged to participate in the implementation of education including planning, supervision, and evaluation of education programs (Bupati Merauke, 2018). In relation to the concept of indigenous people involvement, indigenous people should be required to act as both subject and object of the implementation of education policies. They must be involved and have their voices heard and become equal. It can be said that indigenous people are categorized as weak parties who do not have any voice representation even though they have organizations and status recognized by the government through the Indigenous People Institution. Indigenous people have a simple dream that their next generation through education can become human beings as mandated by the Special Autonomy Law that has been granted by the central government.

3.1.2. Indigenous Institution

As a form of realization of the mandate of the Papuan special autonomy law, a traditional community institution was formed which functions as a representative of the indigenous Papuan people in every development process and policy making.

TABLE 3: Indigenous People Institution Data.

INDICATORS	
Name of Indigenous Peoples Institution	Village Customary Council
Basis for Formation (Regional regulations / Village regulations)	None
Availability of Village Regulations	None
Availability of Customary Regulations	None
Village Program Manager	Village Head
Customary Responsible Person	Customary Chief

Source: Observation and Documentation Data

Table 3.3. above shows that from the perspective of indigenous people, although there are customary institutions and customary leaders as representatives of indigenous people in all government and cultural affairs, legally the existence of both customary councils and customary leaders related to duties, responsibilities, and authorities has not been regulated, either through regional regulations or village regulations. This results in the desires and needs of the community not being optimally accommodated. Representation and position of indigenous people as a minority community in the implementation of every policy and program.

Vierros and Fidler et al.. found that indigenous peoples and local communities have internationally recognized rights and roles in management have been known for a long time. Indigenous peoples and local communities have the capacity to participate in management. They found that well-managed can achieve goals without compromising the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities [15]. Similarly, Cornell and Jorgensen proposed the extension of a “social inclusion” model of governance – which Canada and the United States have championed (albeit with mixed results) as a strategy to increase the disadvantaged populations’ level of participation in the economic, social, and polity life of the nation – to Indigenous peoples in a substantive, rather than assimilationist, fashion. They argue that remedying such a missing element would increase the footprint of effective indigenous governance in both countries, thus resulting in “more equitable outcomes for Indigenous citizens”.

Data analysis shows that elements of indigenous community institutions play an important role as a forum for voicing the aspirations of indigenous communities so that they can contribute positively and be actively involved in every development process as mandated by law, especially the special autonomy law. However, this institution plays a greater role, and its existence is only visible in the political and land fields sector.

In politics, this institution functions only as a verification and validation institution for every citizen who wants to compete in the regional head election contest regarding the status of authentic identity as a native Papuan or non-Papuan. Furthermore, in land, this institution plays a role as an institution that has the right to issue land release letters for every citizen who wants to conduct land sale and purchase transactions where this letter will later be used by the National Land Agency as a basis for issuing land certificates.

In addition, in the process of changing and electing the management of indigenous community institutions, the candidate requirements are formulated and determined by the local government. This proves that indigenous people institutions that should be a forum for channeling indigenous community aspirations are still full of practical political interests so that indigenous community aspirations are difficult to accommodate and voice. The election and determination process based on these political interests causes the position and authority of indigenous people institutions to become weak and even used according to the wishes and interests of the authority holding power, namely the local government. The weak duties, authority and position of customary institutions certainly have an impact on every decision-making process for a policy. There are also contexts in which the nature of the relationship between indigenous peoples and state forces is more complex, one where both opportunities for and challenges to collaboration coexist. This usually forces Indigenous communities to make or be affected by difficult choices on things such as the degree of autonomy they retain or acquire in their decision-making power, the retainment or change of traditional governance structures, and the creation of new internal relationships among community members and existing and new indigenous institutions (Poliandri, 2022).

This phenomenon shows and proves that the position of actors, especially indigenous people institutions, in collaborating is not the same. Instead of voicing the aspirations and interests of indigenous communities, indigenous people institutions are more in conflict both internally and externally. Internally, the conflicts that arise are caused by the community's distrust of the performance of indigenous community institutions because the process of selecting and appointing administrators violates customary values and norms that have been passed down from generation to generation. Externally, the position of indigenous community institutions is considered as a practical political vehicle used for personal or group interests. This causes every policy decided by the government, especially education policies, to not be able to run well because they encounter resistance and distrust from the community, especially indigenous communities. Nikolakis and Nelson pointed at trust – whether inter-individual trust among

community members, political trust in Indigenous and state institutions, or social trust in one's own community in times of need – as a necessary component in the development of effective indigenous governance. Where and when such a trust, particularly that in state and institutional entities and policies, has not developed, Indigenous communities have resorted to alternative methods of governance to promote their interests and wellbeing [11].

Maintaining sustainability requires support and cooperation from various parties, including the government, stakeholders and the community. Indigenous peoples are a community that is proven to have the capacity and local wisdom to solve various problems, especially educational problems. However, globalization and modern technology are increasingly marginalizing indigenous communities. This is not because indigenous communities cannot adapt to technology, but because they still maintain traditional cultural values. Indigenous worldviews generally place humans in an interconnected web of life rather than in a dominant position over other life, and this understanding emphasizes the importance of holistic, ecosystem-based approaches. The existence of local wisdom values that are formed into social solidarity, networks and norms in indigenous community governance in the implementation of public policy is one way to bring out the community's ability to get involved in the local governance context in overcoming various policy implementations' problems. The community will find it simpler to form traditional groups, along with the capability to establish connections with different parties.

4. Conclusion

Research on this topic shows that there are forms of community leadership found in indigenous communities. Indigenous communities have the capacity to manage their territories and needs. This preservation has been inherited since ancient times. The indigenous people dimension in the implementation of education policies in Merauke Regency must be a concern for the government of Merauke in every planning and decision-making. Several factors related to dimensions such as regional topography, socio-culture, and economic factors of indigenous people are important to consider comprehensively. Otherwise, the Marind people will only be objects and spectators for every policy, and this is contrary to the mandate of the formation of special autonomy laws that have been given by the central government. Furthermore, traditional community institutions led by a traditional chief must also be accommodated through

regulations ranging from regional regulations, regent regulations, to village regulations so that their duties, authorities, and functions can run optimally in voicing all the interests and hopes of the Marind community as indigenous people, especially in the implementation and management of education in Merauke Regency.

Thus, the preparation and establishment of regulations starting from the provincial level to the village/sub-district level regarding the position, main tasks, roles and functions, as well as granting authority to indigenous community institutions is important so that participation, especially indigenous communities, is more optimal in planning, implementation and supervision in the administration of government and implementation of development which is directed as much as possible to meet the basic needs of the indigenous Papuan population by adhering firmly to the principles of environmental conservation, sustainable development, justice and direct benefits for the community.

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