Research Article

Normative Mechanisms in the Papua Special Autonomy Policy Implementation Network

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Abstract.
Papua Special Autonomy (Otsus) is a policy with strategic value in the context of improving services, accelerating development, and empowering all people in Papua. In the policy implementation network, normative mechanisms are needed as a basis for the policy network. This study aims to analyze the normative mechanism in implementing the Otsus policy. Qualitative research methods were used in this study. Data collection methods include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data sources consisted of primary and secondary data, while data analysis was conducted using interactive methods. The informants in this research are stakeholders who are directly involved in the implementation of the Otsus policy. The results of research on the implementation of Otsus policy show that normative mechanisms play an important role in shaping the behavior of actors in the policy network. In addition to normative rules such as regulations and standard operating procedures, cultural values and Papuan customary norms are also a reference in the implementation of affirmation programs. The implementation network is formed through collaboration between the local government, the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP), and the community. However, there is often a conflict between customary norms and values and the formal government bureaucracy.

Keywords: public trust, implementation, Papua Special Autonomy

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1. Introduction

The implementation of Special Autonomy (Otsus) in Papua represents a complex phenomenon in Indonesia's asymmetric decentralization landscape, which has undergone a systemic journey since the enactment of Law Number 21 of 2001. This policy was born as a strategic response to a series of structural problems that are historically rooted in the Papua region, presenting multidimensional challenges that cross the spectrum of development gaps, economic inequality, and the complexity of socio-political identities [1].

Empirical reality illustrates the complexity of the implementation of Special Autonomy that requires in-depth analysis. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency

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in 2022, Papua still faces significant development challenges, with the poverty rate reaching 27.5% — almost three times the national average. Papua's Human Development Index (HDI) only reached 60.48, the lowest in Indonesia, indicating complex and ongoing structural inequality. This condition illustrates the failure of the implementation of Special Autonomy in transforming the socio-economic structure of Papuan society.

Within the framework of contemporary public administration, the implementation of public policy cannot be understood simply as a linear administrative process. Instead, it is a complex arena of interaction with a multi-level network of actors carrying diverse interests, values, and norms. The policy implementation network approach offers an analytical perspective that allows tracing the interactional dynamics between various stakeholders — from central and regional government actors to customary institutions and civil society elements [2].

Normative mechanisms in the context of policy implementation play a fundamental role in forming interactional structures that direct and limit actor actions. Referring to [3] conceptualization, this mechanism is not merely a regulatory instrument, but a complex construction that significantly influences the quality and impact of policy implementation. In the Papuan context, normative mechanisms face unique challenges from socio-cultural complexity characterized by a strong customary value system that is often in tension with the formal system of government.

The Komnas HAM report recorded at least 16 cases of human rights violations in Papua throughout 2020-2022, indicating the fragility of the socio-political structure in the region. A study by the Center for Conflict Anticipation Studies, University of Indonesia, identified three fundamental challenges: the inconsistency of formal regulations with customary practices, fragmentation of interests between policy actors, and weak public accountability mechanisms.

The significance of the study on normative mechanisms in Papuan Special Autonomy can be constructed through five critical dimensions: the uniqueness of the socio-cultural context with 260 ethnic groups, the complexity of actor networks involving multiple parties, the dynamics of public trust, the economic and development dimensions, and the complexity of politics and law. This study seeks to explore how normative mechanisms operate in policy implementation networks, focusing on the interaction between formal and informal norms, and their implications for actor behavior and policy performance. The contribution of the study covers two main dimensions. Theoretically, the study is intended to enrich the conceptualization of policy implementation network

theory in the context of asymmetric decentralization. Practically, the study is expected to produce strategic recommendations for policy makers to design the implementation of Papuan Special Autonomy that is more responsive, inclusive, and in line with the complexity of the local socio-cultural context.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Public Policy Implementation

Public policy implementation is a crucial stage in the policy cycle that determines the effectiveness of a policy in achieving its objectives. According to [4], policy implementation includes actions taken by individuals or groups, government or private, which are directed at achieving the objectives set in previous policy decisions. Various policy implementation models have been developed, ranging from top-down models that emphasize clarity of objectives and implementation structures [5], [6], bottom-up models that emphasize the role of lower-level implementers and local adaptation [7], [8], to synthesis models and network models that integrate various perspectives [9], [10].

In the Indonesian context, studies on public policy implementation have developed significantly, especially after the reform and decentralization eras. Various factors that influence policy implementation in Indonesia, such as bureaucratic capacity, socio-political context, and actor dynamics, have become the focus of studies [11].

2.2. Policy Networks and Implementation

The policy network perspective emerged as a response to the limitations of traditional approaches in understanding the complexity of the public policy process. This approach emphasizes the interaction and interdependence between actors in policy formulation and implementation [12], [13].

The policy implementation network refers to the pattern of relationships between actors involved in policy implementation, including the structures, processes, and mechanisms underlying these interactions [14], [15]. Studies on policy implementation networks have produced various findings on how network characteristics affect policy implementation performance (Provan & Milward, 1995; Mandell & Keast, 2008). In the Indonesian context, studies on policy and implementation networks have developed, especially related to decentralization policies, regional governance, and public services

[16], [17], [18] However, studies that specifically examine policy implementation networks in the context of Papua's Special Autonomy are still limited.

2.3. Normative Mechanisms in Policy Networks

Normative mechanisms in policy networks refer to a set of rules, norms, values, and standards that serve as references for the behavior of actors in the network [19], [20]. These mechanisms can be formal, such as regulations and standard operating procedures, or informal, such as cultural values, social norms, and unwritten conventions. The study of normative mechanisms in policy networks has produced various perspectives. [21] emphasize the importance of the "rules of the game" that guide interactions between actors in the network. [22] distinguishes between regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars in institutions that influence actor behavior. [23], [24] developed the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework that emphasizes the role of rules and norms in the governance of common resources.

In the Indonesian context, studies on normative mechanisms in policy networks have been conducted, especially related to the role of cultural values, social norms, and local wisdom in policy implementation [25], [26], [27], [28]. However, studies that specifically examine normative mechanisms in the Papua Special Autonomy policy implementation network still need to be developed.

3. Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore in depth the phenomenon of the implementation of Special Autonomy (Otsus) in Papua in a real-life context. The qualitative approach was chosen to capture the complexity of social phenomena and provide a comprehensive understanding of the context, process, and meaning of the implementation of the policy. The research location was focused on Papua Province, with the selection of representative districts/cities based on criteria for the level of development, population composition, and dynamics of the implementation of Otsus. Data collection was carried out through four main techniques: in-depth interviews with key informants, direct observation of the policy implementation process, analysis of official documents and regulations, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) to explore diverse perspectives. Research informants were selected purposively,

including government officials, members of the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP), traditional leaders, academics, and representatives of civil society organizations who have direct involvement in the implementation of Otsus in Papua. Data analysis used the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which includes data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions with an in-depth interpretation process. To ensure the credibility of the research, triangulation was carried out by checking data sources, data collection techniques, and time, so that it can produce comprehensive and scientifically accountable findings..

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Forms and Characteristics of Normative Mechanisms in the Papua Special Autonomy Policy Implementation Network

1. Formal Normative Mechanisms

The research results show that the formal normative mechanisms in the Papua Special Autonomy policy implementation network include, First Regulations and Legislation where Law Number 21 of 2001 concerning Special Autonomy for Papua Province and its amendments are the main basis for implementing the Papua Special Autonomy policy. In addition, there are various derivative regulations, such as Government Regulations, Presidential Regulations, Ministerial Regulations, as well as Special Regional Regulations (Perdasus) and Provincial Regulations (Perdasi) which regulate various aspects of the implementation of Papua Special Autonomy. One informant from the Papua Provincial Government Legal Bureau explained:

"Perdasus and Perdasi are important instruments in implementing Special Autonomy values at the regional level. We strive to ensure that these regulations are in line with the Special Autonomy Law and also accommodate local needs and contexts."

Second, Various standard operating procedures were developed to regulate the technical aspects of implementing programs and activities within the Papua Special Autonomy framework. This procedure covers various areas, such as management of Special Autonomy funds, program planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. As expressed by an informant from the Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda) of Papua Province:

"We have developed a comprehensive SOP for each stage of Special Autonomy fund management, from planning, implementation, to accountability. This SOP is a guide for all SKPDs in implementing the Special Autonomy program."

Third, Organizational Structure and Coordination Mechanism where the implementation of the Papua Special Autonomy policy involves various institutions and actors with different roles and responsibilities. The organizational structure and coordination mechanism are developed to regulate the relationship and interaction between actors in the implementation network. One informant from the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP) explained: "The MRP has an important role in providing consideration and approval of Perdasus related to the protection of the rights of indigenous Papuans. Coordination between the MRP, DPRP, and the Provincial Government is key to ensuring that the Special Autonomy policy accommodates the interests of indigenous Papuans." Here are some findings in the formal normative mechanisms (Table 1):

TABLE 1: Formal Normative Mechanisms.

Aspects	Key Findings	Implementation
Regulation and Legislation	Law Number 21 of 2001 as the main basis, with various derivative regulations	Perdasus and Perdasi that accommodate local needs
Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)	Developed to regulate the technical aspects of the Special Autonomy program	Comprehensive SOP for managing Otsus funds from planning to accountability
Organizational Structure and Coordination	Involving various institutions with different roles	Coordination between MRP, DPRP, and Provincial Government in policy making

2. Informal Normative Mechanisms

In addition to formal normative mechanisms, the study also found various informal normative mechanisms that play an important role in the Papua Special Autonomy policy implementation network, including several things, namely first, Papuan cultural values and local wisdom, such as communal values, mutual cooperation, and harmony with nature, influence how actors in the implementation network understand and implement the Special Autonomy policy. As expressed by a traditional figure in Jayapura Regency:

"For us, land is not just an economic asset, but has spiritual and cultural value. Development policies within the Special Autonomy framework must consider the spiritual relationship of indigenous peoples with land and natural resources."

second Papuan customary norms and customary laws, which regulate various aspects of community life, from natural resource management to conflict resolution, are important considerations in the implementation of the Special Autonomy policy. One informant from a traditional institution in Mimika Regency explained:

"We have a customary system that regulates relations between tribes, land owner-ship and management, and conflict resolution. The implementation of the Special Autonomy program that does not consider this customary system often faces resistance from the community."

Third, informal networks and patronage relations, whether based on kinship, eth-nicity, or political affiliation, influence the allocation of resources and access to the Special Autonomy program. As expressed by an informant from a civil society organization:

"There is a tendency for the Special Autonomy program to be enjoyed more by groups that are close to the political or bureaucratic elite. This is one of the factors that causes inequality in the distribution of Special Autonomy benefits."

Here are some findings in the informal normative mechanisms (Table 2)

TABLE 2: Informal Normative Mechanisms.

Aspects	Key Findings	Implementation Examples
Cultural Values and Local Wisdom	Influences policy understanding and implementation	Indigenous peoples' spiritual views on land as a non-economic asset
Customary Norms and Customary Law	Regulates various aspects of community life	Customary systems regulate inter-tribal relations and resource management
Informal Networks and Patronage	Influences resource alloca-tion and program access	Tendency for the Special Autonomy program to be accessed by groups with political closeness

4.2. Interaction between Formal and Informal Norms in the Imple-mentation of the Papua Special Autonomy Policy

The results of the study show that the interaction between formal and informal norms in the implementation of the Papua Special Autonomy policy shows a complex and dynamic pattern. Some of the identified interaction patterns include:

a. Harmonization and Synergy

In some contexts, formal and informal norms complement and strengthen each other, creating harmony and synergy in the implementation of the Papua Special

Autonomy policy. For example, the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights in the Special Autonomy Law is in line with customary values that emphasize the collective rights of communities to land and natural resources. One example of this harmonization is in the implementation of the program to protect indigenous peoples' rights to customary land, where formal regulations recognize and protect rights that have been regulated by customary law. As expressed by an informant from the Village Community Empowerment Service (PMK) of Papua Province:

"The village community empowerment programs that we implement strive to integrate the formal development planning system with customary deliberation mechanisms. Through this approach, development programs become more in line with local needs and contexts."

b. Tension and Conflict

On the other hand, the study also found tension and conflict between formal and informal norms in the implementation of the Papua Special Autonomy policy. This tension arises when formal norms introduced through the Special Autonomy policy conflict with informal norms that have long been rooted in society. One example of this tension is in the implementation of the village government system, where the formal structure of the village government often clashes with the traditional customary leadership structure. As expressed by a customary figure in Yahukimo Regency:

"We have a customary leadership system that has existed for a long time, with clear roles and responsibilities. When the village government system was introduced, there was often overlap and conflict of authority between the village head and the customary head."

c. Adaptation and Hybridization

In dealing with the tension between formal and informal norms, various forms of adaptation and hybridization emerged in the implementation of the Papua Special Autonomy policy. This involves a process in which formal norms are modified or interpreted to better suit the local context, or conversely, informal norms are modified to accommodate formal requirements. One example of this adaptation is in the development of development planning mechanisms at the village level, where the formal format of the Development Planning Deliberation (Musrenbang) is modified to accommodate customary deliberation practices. As expressed by a village head in Jayapura Regency:

"We still implement Musrenbang in accordance with formal provisions, but we adjust the implementation process to our customary deliberation traditions. For example, we

involve customary figures in the decision-making process and use customary symbols to strengthen the legitimacy of decisions."

Here are some findings in the Interaction between formal and informal norms in the implementation of the Papua special autonomy policy (Table 3)

TABLE 3: Interaction between Formal and Informal Norms in the Implementation of the Papua Special Autonomy Policy.

Interaction Patterns	Characteristics	Concrete Examples
Harmonization and Synergy	Formal and informal norms complement each other	Recognition of indigenous peoples' rights in the Special Autonomy Law is in line with customary values
Tension and Conflict	Conflict between formal and informal norms	Structural conflict between formal village government and traditional customary leadership
Adaptation and Hybridization	Modification of norms for local context	Modification of Musrenbang by integrating customary deliberation practices

4.3. Influence of Normative Mechanisms on Actor Behavior and Performance of the Implementation Network

a. The Role of Normative Mechanisms in Shaping Actor Behavior

The results of the study indicate that normative mechanisms play an important role in shaping actor behavior in the Papua Special Autonomy policy implementation network. Normative rules such as regulations and standard operating procedures serve as formal references for actors in implementing Special Autonomy programs. As expressed by an official at the Papua Province Financial and Asset Management Agency (BPKAD):

"Various regulations related to the management of Special Autonomy funds serve as our guidelines in allocating and distributing funds. We always strive to ensure that every step taken is in accordance with applicable provisions."

In addition, Papuan cultural values and customary norms are also important references, especially in the implementation of affirmative programs that directly affect the community. These values influence how actors understand and interpret policy objectives, as well as how they interact with other actors in the network. A district head in Jayawijaya Regency stated:

"In implementing Special Autonomy programs, we cannot ignore the customary values and norms that apply in the community. An approach that is too bureaucratic and

formal is often ineffective, because the community has its own way of understanding and accepting development programs."

b. Implementation Network Through Collaboration Between Stakeholders

The study found that the Papua Special Autonomy policy implementation network was formed through collaboration between the regional government, the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP), and the community. This collaboration is key to ensuring that the implementation of Special Autonomy policies is in accordance with the goals and aspirations of the Papuan people. In the implementation of education and health programs, for example, there is intensive collaboration between the provincial government, district/city governments, and customary institutions. This collaboration is not only in formal forms, such as coordination meetings and consultations, but also through informal mechanisms such as dialogue and customary deliberations. As expressed by an MRP member from the La Pago customary area:

"The MRP not only acts as a formal institution that provides consideration for policies, but also as a bridge between the government and indigenous communities. We actively facilitate dialogue between the government and indigenous leaders to ensure that Otsus programs are in accordance with local needs and contexts."

c. Conflict between Customary Norms and Formal Bureaucracy

Despite collaborative efforts, the study also found that there is often conflict between customary norms and values and formal government bureaucracy. This conflict arises because of differences in paradigms and approaches in understanding and implementing development. Formal government bureaucracy tends to emphasize administrative, procedural, and measurable aspects, while the customary system emphasizes relational, consensual, and contextual aspects. This difference often creates tension in the implementation of Otsus programs. As expressed by a traditional figure in Mimika Regency:

"There is a difference in understanding between the government bureaucracy and our customary system. The government often applies the same approach as in other areas, without considering the uniqueness of our social and cultural systems. As a result, many programs are not on target or are not sustainable."

This conflict is also seen in the implementation of economic empowerment programs, where formal approaches that emphasize individual entrepreneurship often conflict with the values of communality in Papuan indigenous communities.

d. Adaptation and Integration as a Response to Conflict

Facing the conflict between customary norms and formal bureaucracy, various forms of adaptation and integration have emerged as a response. Several Otsus programs have succeeded in integrating customary values into the formal framework of policy implementation. One example is the customary village empowerment program, in which the government allocates Otsus funds to strengthen customary institutions and local knowledge systems. This program recognizes and respects the autonomy of customary villages in managing resources and regulating community life, while remaining within the formal administrative framework of government. As expressed by the Head of the Village Empowerment Service of Papua Province:

"We realize the importance of integrating customary values into development programs. Through the customary village empowerment program, we strive to strengthen the capacity of customary institutions to actively participate in development, while still respecting their autonomy and local wisdom."

Here are some findings in the influence of normative mechanisms on actor behavior and implementation network performance (Table 4):

TABLE 4: The Influence of Normative Mechanisms on Actor Behavior and Implementation Network Performance.

Aspects	Key Findings	Implications
Formation of Actor Behavior	Formal and informal norms influence behavior	The importance of considering customary norms in program implementation
Collaboration Between Stakeholders	Networks are formed through intensive collaboration	The role of MRP as a bridge between the government and indigenous communities
Conflict of Customary Norms vs. Bureaucracy	Paradigm differences in development	The gap in approach between administrative systems and customary systems
Adaptation and Integration	Normative conflict resolution efforts	A program for empowering customary villages that respects local autonomy

4.4. Discussion

The theoretical landscape of policy implementation in the context of Papua's Special Autonomy reveals a complex interplay between traditional policy implementation models and the emerging network approach to public policy. Drawing from the foundational works of Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), the study demonstrates that policy implementation extends far beyond a simple linear process of translating policy objectives

into action. Instead, it represents a multifaceted arena of interaction characterized by diverse actors, competing interests, and intricate normative mechanisms.

The policy network perspective, as articulated by Rhodes (1997) and Kickert et al. (1997), provides a critical analytical framework for understanding the implementation of Special Autonomy in Papua. This approach moves beyond traditional top-down and bottom-up models by emphasizing the interdependence and dynamic interactions between various stakeholders. The research findings substantiate the network approach by highlighting the crucial role of multiple actors, including government institutions, the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP), traditional leaders, and civil society organizations in shaping policy implementation.

Klijn and Koppenjan's conceptualization of normative mechanisms emerges as particularly insightful in this context. The study reveals that these mechanisms are not merely regulatory instruments but complex social constructions that fundamentally shape actor behaviors and policy outcomes. The intricate interaction between formal and informal norms – a key theoretical contribution of this research – demonstrates the limitations of rigid, bureaucratic approaches to policy implementation in culturally diverse contexts like Papua.

The theoretical implications extend beyond the specific case of Papua's Special Autonomy. The research challenges conventional understanding of policy implementation by showcasing how local cultural norms and informal networks significantly mediate formal policy processes. This aligns with Scott's (2001) institutional theory, which emphasizes the importance of regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars in institutional behavior.

Moreover, the study resonates with Ostrom's Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework by illustrating how local rules and norms govern resource management and social interactions. The complex dynamics of harmonization, tension, and adaptation between formal and informal mechanisms provide a nuanced understanding of policy implementation in asymmetric decentralization contexts.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the evolving discourse on policy implementation networks by demonstrating the critical role of normative mechanisms in mediating policy outcomes. It highlights the need for more flexible, context-sensitive approaches to policy design and implementation that can accommodate local cultural realities while maintaining administrative effectiveness.

5. Conclusion

The implementation of Papua's Special Autonomy Policy represents a critical juncture in Indonesia's asymmetric decentralization approach, revealing the profound complexity of policy implementation in a diverse and culturally rich context. The research illuminates the intricate interplay between formal and informal normative mechanisms, demonstrating that effective policy implementation transcends mere administrative procedures and requires a nuanced understanding of local social dynamics. The study uncovers three fundamental patterns of interaction between normative mechanisms: harmonization, tension, and adaptation, which collectively shape the policy implementation network. Key findings highlight the critical role of the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP) as a bridge between formal government structures and indigenous communities, while simultaneously revealing the persistent challenges of reconciling bureaucratic approaches with traditional cultural norms. The persistent tension between formal administrative systems and indigenous customary practices underscores the need for more flexible, context-sensitive policy frameworks that can genuinely accommodate local realities. Theoretically, this research contributes to the expanding discourse on policy implementation networks by demonstrating how normative mechanisms mediate complex social interactions, offering insights that extend beyond the specific context of Papua to inform broader understandings of asymmetric decentralization and policy implementation in culturally diverse societies.

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