



Strategy of Allocating Special Autonomy Funds (Dana Otsus) as an Effort to Strengthen the NKRI in Facing Threats in Papua

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the allocation strategy of Special Autonomy Funds (Dana Otsus) in Papua as an effort to strengthen Papua's integration within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) amidst challenges of separatism and social injustice. A qualitative approach was adopted, involving an in-depth literature review of policies, government reports, and academic resources. The study aims to analyze the effectiveness of Dana Otsus management in addressing development disparities, enhancing welfare, and alleviating social tensions in Papua. The findings indicate that major challenges in managing Dana Otsus include misalignment of development priorities with local needs, weak transparency, and limited human resource capacity. While Dana Otsus has had a positive impact, particularly in the education and healthcare sectors, its implementation remains suboptimal. The study concludes that improving coordination between central and local governments, ensuring transparency, and increasing local community participation are crucial. An inclusive and locally responsive allocation strategy is recommended to optimize the role of Dana Otsus in promoting equitable development and strengthening NKRI.

INTRODUCTION

Papua is one of the provinces in Indonesia that has cultural diversity, natural resources, and unique socio-political challenges. Its geographical location far from the center of government and its unique social conditions mean that Papua faces major challenges in terms of development and integration with the rest of Indonesia. One policy designed to address these challenges is the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus), which has been in place since 2001. This fund aims to provide greater freedom to local governments in managing development while strengthening Papua's integration within the Republic of Indonesia (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2022).

The Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) is a special budget allocation given to Papua since the enactment of Undang-Undang No. 21 Tahun 2001 on Special Autonomy. The main objective of this policy is to address development inequality between Papua and other regions in Indonesia, and to improve the welfare of the Papuan people through inclusive development. Special Autonomy funds are allocated to support priority sectors such as education, health, infrastructure, and economic empowerment of local communities. This policy is expected to reduce social and economic inequalities that have been the root of problems in Papua, including social tensions and the threat of separatism. However, the effective use of the Special Autonomy Fund is often hampered by various problems, such as a mismatch between central development priorities and the needs of local communities, low transparency in fund management, and weak human resource capacity at the regional level.

In the context of the Special Autonomy policy, the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) serves as one of the main instruments to improve the welfare of the Papuan people by providing additional funds that are not only limited to infrastructure development, but also to the education, health and community empowerment sectors. The central government through this policy hopes to create a more equitable distribution of development, and reduce the social gap that exists between Papua and other regions in Indonesia. However, this goal has not been fully achieved, mainly due to structural problems in the management of the funds, which include corruption, inequitable distribution, and local political influences that affect the allocation and use of the funds (BAPPENAS, 2021).

The ineffective allocation of Special Autonomy Funds (Dana Otsus) is a major challenge in dealing with existing threats in Papua, including separatism and social discontent. Since its inception, Papua has experienced a number of upheavals, both in the form of social conflicts and political tensions, most of which have been triggered by dissatisfaction with unequal development and unfair management of natural resources. The emerging separatism movement is one of the real threats to the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia, which is largely caused by a sense of injustice in terms of equitable development and resource distribution. In this case, the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) is expected to function not only as a development tool, but also as an instrument to reduce discontent that has the potential to exacerbate social and political tensions in the region (Siregar, 2019).

It is important to understand how the strategy for allocating the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) has been implemented, as well as the constraints faced in its implementation. Broadly speaking, the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) is allocated to important sectors such as education, health, infrastructure, and local economic empowerment. However, the implementation of this policy sometimes does not reflect its original objectives, namely equitable development and improvement of community welfare. Inefficient management, inappropriate use of funds, and low transparency are some of the factors that affect the impact of this policy (Yuliana & Taufik, 2020).

On the other hand, the success of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) in strengthening NKRI depends on the extent to which the allocation of these funds can touch the sectors most needed by the Papuan people. For example, the education sector needs more attention to produce quality human resources who are ready to compete in the global era. Similarly, the health sector needs to be strengthened to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of the Papuan people. Therefore, an appropriate allocation strategy based on the needs of the community is very important to achieve the desired goals (BAPPENAS, 2021).

In addition to the structural factors that influence the allocation of the Special Autonomy Fund, socio-political factors also play a role in determining the effectiveness of this policy. Political tensions that occur at the local level, both between the local government and the central government and between community groups, can hinder the equitable distribution of the Special Autonomy Fund. This shows that the management of the Special Autonomy Fund requires not only clear and firm policies but also good coordination between the central and local governments, as well as high transparency in the use of these funds (Pappoe, 2021).

Inappropriate allocation of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) could exacerbate existing social inequalities in Papua, as well as increase a sense of discontent that could lead to conflict and division. In the face of the threat of separatism and other social tensions, the proper allocation of the Special Autonomy Fund must be able to have a significant positive impact on the welfare of the community. In addition, this policy must also be able to build a sense of justice among the Papuan people, so that they feel that they have the same opportunities as other regions in accessing resources and development (Yuliana & Taufik, 2020).

This study aims to analyze the strategy of allocating the Special Autonomy Fund in Papua, focusing on the various factors that influence this policy, both in terms of central government policy and implementation at the local level. A better understanding of the dynamics of the allocation of the Special Autonomy Fund in Papua will pave the way for more effective policy recommendations to address the challenges and strengthen Papua's integration into the Republic of Indonesia (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2022).

In addition, this research also aims to evaluate the extent to which the Special Autonomy Fund has played a role in reducing social and political inequality in Papua, as well as its impact on strengthening NKRI. By looking at

the impact of the Special Autonomy Fund on infrastructure development, education, and the health sector, it is hoped that the factors that influence the success and failure of this policy can be found. This is important, given that the existing inequality in Papua is one of the root problems that needs to be addressed immediately so that existing conflicts and social tensions do not become more widespread (Siregar, 2019).

In addition, this research will also discuss the extent to which the Special Autonomy Fund contributes to the empowerment of Papuans in the economic field, such as the development of the agricultural sector, fisheries, and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Local economic empowerment through the Special Autonomy Fund can help create jobs, reduce poverty, and strengthen the economic resilience of the Papuan people. This is important because a strong economic sector can be one of the keys to strengthening Papua's integration with the rest of Indonesia (Pappoe, 2021).

Through this research, it is hoped that strategies for allocating the Special Autonomy Fund that are more effective and in line with the needs of the Papuan people can be found, and can contribute to the development of more inclusive and equitable policies. With a more comprehensive approach, the allocation of the Special Autonomy Fund is expected to truly become an effective tool in strengthening the Republic of Indonesia, especially in facing the challenges in Papua (BAPPENAS, 2021).

THERETICAL REVIEW

Special Autonomy and Special Autonomy Funds (OTSUS) in Papua

Special autonomy is a policy that gives greater authority to regions to manage their government and natural resources. In Papua, this policy is realized through Law No. 21 of 2001 which regulates the granting of the Special Autonomy Fund (Otsus). The main objective of the Special Autonomy Fund is to accelerate development in Papua to improve people's welfare and strengthen the integration of Papua within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) (Sihombing, 2016). This policy is also expected to reduce the development gap between Papua and other regions in Indonesia.

According to Putra (2019), the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) is designed to improve the social and economic welfare of the Papuan people through various development programs. However, its implementation often faces various challenges, such as bureaucratic constraints, weak inter-agency coordination, and lack of effective oversight. Therefore, optimizing the management of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) is crucial to achieving these goals.

Special Autonomy Fund Allocation Strategy

The strategy for allocating the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) includes allocations in various sectors, including education, health and infrastructure. The education sector receives special attention because the level of education in Papua is still lagging behind other regions in Indonesia (Dewi, 2020). Examples are the allocation of funds for school construction, teacher training, and scholarships. In the health sector, the Special Autonomy Fund

(Dana Otsus) is used to improve community access to health services, such as the construction of community health centers and the distribution of medical personnel to remote areas (Darmawan & Suryani, 2021).

However, the effective use of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) is often hampered by bureaucratic problems and mismatches between planning and implementation. Darmawan and Suryani (2021) also note that the lack of community participation in the planning and management of funds is one of the factors that reduce the positive impact of the Special Autonomy Fund. To address this, local governments in Papua need to improve transparency and accountability in fund management, including involving local communities in the decision-making process.

Threats in Papua

Papua faces various threats including social tensions, dissatisfaction with the central government, and separatism movements. The social and economic injustice felt by the Papuan people is often used by separatist groups to shake the stability of the Republic of Indonesia (Ristanto, 2021). Inequality in infrastructure development and public services between Papua and other regions in Indonesia is also a major trigger of this dissatisfaction.

Mulyadi (2018) explains that the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) can serve as a tool to ease social tensions in Papua by improving people's welfare and creating a sense of justice. For example, the allocation of funds for poverty alleviation programs, infrastructure development that supports inter-regional connectivity, and strengthening the local economy can help create stability. In addition, an inclusive and community-based approach to the management of the Special Autonomy Fund is believed to be able to strengthen the sense of togetherness of the Papuan people within the framework of the Republic of Indonesia.

The Relevance of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) Strategy for Strengthening the Republic of Indonesia

An effective and well-targeted strategy for allocating the Special Autonomy Fund not only helps accelerate development in Papua but also plays an important role in strengthening Papua's integration within the Republic of Indonesia. By prioritizing the needs of local communities, such as access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, the Special Autonomy Fund can be an important instrument in creating a sense of belonging and pride in the NKRI. According to Yudhoyono et al. (2020), policies that are responsive to the needs of local communities can reduce discontent and support national stability.

The success of this strategy relies heavily on the synergy between the central government, local governments, and communities. By paying attention to the principles of transparency, accountability, and participation, the Special Autonomy Fund can be a strategic step to deal with the various threats that exist in Papua.

METHODOLOGY

The approach used in this research is a qualitative method with descriptive analysis techniques. This research collects data through literature study and policy analysis of the allocation of the Special Autonomy Fund in Papua. Data were obtained from government reports, policy documents, and related academic journals. According to Creswell (2018), desk research helps researchers understand the research context, evaluate previous findings, and build a strong theoretical framework. In the context of this research, desk research was used to:

1. Identify the legal and policy framework related to the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) in Papua, including Undang-Undang No. 21 Tahun 2001.
2. Explore information on challenges and opportunities in the implementation of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus).
3. Understand the social, economic, and political dynamics in Papua that affect the successful allocation of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus).
4. Evaluate the impact of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) policy on strengthening the Republic of Indonesia based on available literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) Allocation Strategy

Indonesia, as a vast archipelago, faces great challenges in realizing equitable development in all regions. One of the regions that continues to experience underdevelopment is Papua, which has unique social, political and geographical characteristics. To overcome development inequality between regions, the Indonesian government has implemented various strategic policies, one of which is through the Special Autonomy Fund (Otsus) program for the provinces of Papua and West Papua. This program aims to accelerate the development of underdeveloped regions, reduce social inequality, and strengthen Papua's integration into the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI).

The allocation of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) in Papua aims to accelerate development and improve the quality of life of the community through vital sectors such as education, health, and infrastructure. However, although substantial funds have been disbursed, the realization of development is often not as expected. One of the main obstacles is the inability to manage it, which is related to coordination between the central and local governments. Suboptimal allocation of funds is often caused by differences in priorities between the two. For example, programs run by the central government may not always be relevant to local needs, leading to untargeted funds (Dewi, 2020).

The Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) is a special policy provided by the central government to support development in Papua and West Papua. These funds are allocated in significant amounts with the aim of accelerating development in various sectors, such as education, health, infrastructure, and community economic empowerment. Since the implementation of Otsus in 2001, the allocation of these funds is expected to accelerate regional development,

which has been lagging behind other provinces in Indonesia. The Special Autonomy Fund is not only for physical development but also to strengthen the capacity of human resources in Papua through education and training (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2022).

One of the biggest challenges to development in Papua is geographic isolation, which hinders people's access to basic services such as education, health and markets. Through the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus), the central government pays special attention to infrastructure development, such as roads, bridges, and other transportation facilities. Better infrastructure development will connect remote areas with major cities, thereby facilitating the distribution of goods and access to public services. With better connectivity, it is expected that the local economy can grow, as well as create more job opportunities for the Papuan people (Sihombing, 2016).

One of the main objectives of Otsus is to improve the welfare of the Papuan people, including indigenous peoples who are often marginalized in the development process. The program provides space for indigenous peoples to participate in the planning and management of development in their regions. In addition, the Special Autonomy Fund is also used for economic empowerment through skills training, business capital assistance, and the development of local economic sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and tourism. By empowering indigenous peoples, it is expected to create new jobs and strengthen a more independent regional economy (Putra, 2019).

The issue of transparency and accountability in the management of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) is a major issue. The lack of clarity in the use of these funds often triggers public distrust of the government's good intentions. Papuans, who feel marginalized, often perceive the management of these funds as unfair. According to Suryana (2022), this problem leads to public doubts about the effectiveness of the allocation of funds channeled by the government. Uncertainty in the use of funds can increase the potential for suspicion and trigger social tensions.

In practice, the management of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) is often hampered by the lack of an effective monitoring system. In Papua, this problem is exacerbated by limited human resources with the ability to efficiently plan and manage programs. Communities also have little scope to participate in the oversight of development programs, even though they better understand their local needs. Therefore, strengthening the capacity of local government apparatus and more training is needed to improve the management of the Special Autonomy Fund (dana Otsus) in the future. Without good oversight, many programs cannot effectively implement the allocation of funds (Dewi, 2020).

Factors Affecting the Allocation of Special Autonomy Funds (Dana Otsus)

The allocation of Special Autonomy Funds (Dana Otsus) in Papua is influenced by various internal and external factors. Internal factors include government policies that determine development priorities, human resource capacity, and the availability of accurate data. Government policies often emphasize physical development, such as infrastructure, although social

development and community empowerment are also important to improve long-term quality of life. One of the challenges often encountered is the imbalance between the needs of local communities and the central policies implemented. Development programs that are designed do not always consider Papua's unique social and cultural aspects, so the funds allocated are not always on target (Sihombing, 2016).

In addition to government policy, human resource capacity factors also play an important role in the management of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus). In Papua, many local governments lack experts in development planning and financial management. The lack of training for government officials in remote areas makes them less effective in designing and implementing sustainable programs. This causes the allocation of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) to not run optimally and development programs cannot be implemented properly (Sihombing, 2016). A large investment in education and training of the apparatus is needed to enable them to plan and manage programs efficiently.

Although the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) has been allocated, coordination issues between the central and local governments often hamper its implementation. Therefore, it is important to strengthen coordination between the central and local governments in the management and utilization of the Special Autonomy Fund. Local governments should be given the flexibility to plan programs that suit local needs, while the central government needs to ensure that the policies implemented do not only favor one sector but cover all aspects of development needed. The synergy between the two will ensure that the funds provided are not only quickly distributed, but also effective in achieving the development goals of disadvantaged regions (Sihombing, 2016).

The availability of accurate data also affects the effectiveness of fund allocation. In many cases, local governments do not have adequate data on the social and economic conditions of the community. Without the right data, development planning becomes undirected, and the allocated funds cannot be utilized optimally. In addition, local political dynamics, which are often fraught with group interests, can also affect the allocation of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus). Local governments in Papua are often caught up in political debates that lead to decisions that are not always based on the needs of the community, but rather on the interests of certain groups (Putra, 2019). Therefore, it is important to strengthen data collection and processing systems to improve the accuracy of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) allocation.

The Role of the Special Autonomy Fund in Strengthening NKRI and Countering Threats

The Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) can play a major role in strengthening the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) by improving the welfare of the Papuan people. One of the main objectives of allocating the Special Autonomy Fund is to reduce development inequality between Papua and other regions. By providing funds for the education, health, and infrastructure sectors, the Special Autonomy Fund has the potential to improve the quality of life of the Papuan people. For example, the development

of better education facilities will create a younger generation of Papuans who are better educated and ready to compete at the national and international levels. This can strengthen Papua's integration with the rest of Indonesia and help accelerate the development process in Papua (Mulyadi, 2018).

The Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) has also played a role in reducing social tensions that often arise in Papua, whether caused by dissatisfaction with development or by past social injustices. Development inequality in Papua has long been a source of social tension that leads to potential separatism movements. In this regard, the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) has the potential to ease these tensions by increasing the sense of justice among the people. With more inclusive and well-targeted programs, the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) can reduce the sense of injustice felt by Papuans and strengthen their sense of unity with Indonesia (Mulyadi, 2018).

Through good and targeted management, the Special Autonomy Fund can contribute to strengthening the Republic of Indonesia and strengthening social integration in Papua. However, to achieve these goals, more effort is needed in terms of transparency of fund management and stricter supervision. If the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) is managed well, it can serve as a tool to address development inequalities and strengthen the relationship between Papua and the central government. Therefore, commitment from all parties, including the government, indigenous peoples, and local community leaders, is essential to ensure that the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) can be used as effectively as possible to reduce the threat of separatism and strengthen NKRI (Putra, 2019).

CONCLUSION

The allocation of Special Autonomy Funds (Otsus) in Papua aims to address development challenges, social inequalities, and discontent that have become sources of social tension and threats of separatism in the region. Based on research, the current management strategy of the Special Autonomy Fund still faces major obstacles, such as a mismatch between planning and local needs, low transparency, and limited human resource capacity at the regional level. Funds allocated to the education, health and infrastructure sectors have had a positive impact in improving access to basic services for Papuans, but program realization often falls short of expected targets. Coordination issues between the central and local governments, as well as local political influence, have exacerbated the effectiveness of this policy. As a result, the Special Autonomy Fund has not been able to fully ease social tensions or accelerate inclusive development in Papua. Thus, structural and political constraints in the management of the Special Autonomy Fund are still a major obstacle in achieving the goal of integrating Papua within the framework of the Republic of Indonesia.

To address these challenges, strategic steps are needed that include increasing transparency and accountability in the management of the Special Autonomy Fund. The central and local governments need to coordinate development priorities in accordance with the needs of local communities, including strengthening the participation of Papuans in the policy planning and implementation process. In addition, improving the capacity of human resources

at the local level is essential to ensure more effective and efficient management of the funds. In the long term, the government should focus on community-based development approaches that can directly empower Papuans, such as the development of local economic sectors and the strengthening of public services. With more integrated and inclusive management, the Special Autonomy Fund can serve as an effective tool to address development inequalities and strengthen the sense of social justice in Papua. This will not only improve the welfare of Papuans but also strengthen Papua's political stability and integration within the Republic of Indonesia.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Improve Transparency and Accountability

The central and local governments should ensure transparency in the management of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) through regular and accessible public reports. External oversight, such as involving independent institutions and civil society, needs to be strengthened to prevent the misuse of funds and increase public trust in the government.

2. Aligning Central and Regional Priorities

The central and local governments need to develop development priorities that are in line with the needs of the Papuan people. This can be done through consultation mechanisms involving community leaders, traditional leaders, and local groups to ensure that the programs designed are relevant to the needs on the ground.

3. Improving the Capacity of Local Human Resources

Major investments in training and education for local government officials are urgently needed. These training programs should focus on planning, financial management, and evaluation of development projects so that local governments can manage the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus) efficiently and effectively.

4. Strengthening Local Community Participation

Papuans should be involved in every stage of managing the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus), from planning to evaluation. This participation will not only increase the relevance of the program but also help create a sense of community ownership of the development undertaken.

5. Local Economic Development

The Special Autonomy Fund should be allocated more to local economic empowerment programs, such as the development of the agriculture, fisheries, and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sectors. This step can create jobs, reduce poverty, and strengthen the competitiveness of the Papuan people.

6. Focus on Community-Based Development

Community-based development programs need to be improved to ensure that the benefits of the Special Autonomy Fund can be felt directly by the Papuan people. For example, through locally managed small-scale infrastructure projects or community-based education and health initiatives.

7. Strengthening the Monitoring and Evaluation System

The government needs to develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system to assess the impact of the Special Autonomy Fund (Dana Otsus). This system should include both quantitative and qualitative indicators that can provide a complete picture of program success.

8. Strengthening Coordination Between Actors

Synergies between the central government, local governments, and non-governmental organizations should be improved. Good coordination can prevent overlapping programs and maximize the impact of the Special Autonomy Fund.

FURTHER STUDY

In order to provide deeper insights and wider applications, further study is invited to go deeper into this area, addressing any potential constraints and broadening the scope of analysis.

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