

Analyzing Challenges of Noken System for Democratic Country: The Impacts of Regional Elections in 2018 towards Regional Development in Papua

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ABSTRACT

The use of the noken system in regional elections in Papua creates its own dynamics and challenges for regional development. This system recognizes the political rights of indigenous peoples, but it makes it difficult to achieve fair and equal development. This study looks at these problems, especially in Central Papua Province and Papua Mountains after the area was divided. This research uses a qualitative approach and descriptive analysis to identify the structural and multidimensional problems that cause the low Human Development Index (HDI) and high poverty rates in both provinces. The Noken system is usually considered legitimate, but using it can cause social conflicts, lack of accountability, and transparency in development. These findings suggest that the reasons for Papua's development problems are deep-rooted and require complete solutions, no matter what the electoral system is.

INTRODUCTION

General elections in Papua are always a bit different, and one of the things that makes them unique is the noken system. This system formally acknowledges the political and legal rights of indigenous Papuans as guaranteed by the constitution. It has also been legally confirmed through Constitutional Court (MK) Decision No. 47-81/PHPU.A-VII/2009 and reinforced by MK Decision No. 06-32/PHPU-DPD/XII/2014.

Noken is the name for a typical bag made by the Papuans. This bag is a typical Papuan handicraft made from bark. Noken is usually hung on the head or neck of Papuan women. These women are used to carrying crops and even babies. Noken is also a symbol of a good life, peace, and fertility. This bag, made from bark, is an important part of the culture of the Papuan people. Not everyone can make a basket from bark. Papuan women are the only ones who can make noken, and if they can't make them, they are often seen as immature and not ready to get married (Arizona, 2009). Meanwhile, Papua Governor Barnabas Suebu says that using noken as a substitute for ballot boxes in regional elections has been in place since 1971 (Arizona, 2009).

The use of the Noken system has fluctuated over time. In the simultaneous elections of 2014 and 2019, 12 districts in Papua still adopted this system. However, by the 2020 regional elections, only Yahukimo Regency remained, as permitted by the Papua Provincial Election Commission's Decision No. 98/PL.02.6-Kpt/91/Prov/XI/2020. Nevertheless, Noken practices were found in districts outside of Yahukimo, such as Nabire and Yalimo. These practices were subsequently annulled by the Papua Provincial Election Commission and upheld by a Constitutional Court ruling (Nashrullah, 2024) (Faiz, 2021).

The latest developments in the implementation of the Noken system demonstrate a notable decline since the addition of four new provinces in the 2022 Papua DOB. Of the 12 districts that held the 2019 Simultaneous Elections, all are now part of the Papua Pegunungan and Papua Tengah provinces. For the 2024 elections, the Noken system will be fully implemented in seven districts spread across two provinces: Central Papua and Papua Mountains. The other five districts will implement a mixed Noken and voting system. These changes are outlined in Article 118, paragraph (1) of KPU Regulation Number 25 of 2023 and KPU Decision Number 66 of 2024 (PKPU No 25, 2023)

The following districts in the Central Papua Province can conduct voting using the Noken system at all polling stations: Puncak Jaya, Puncak, Paniai, Intan Jaya, Deiyai, and Dogiyai.

In the Pegunungan Papua Province, Nduga Regency is the only one that uses the Noken system at all polling stations. The remaining five regencies Jayawijaya, Yahukimo, Mamberamo Raya, Lanny Jaya, and Tolikara use a combination of the Noken system and traditional voting methods in certain districts and villages. (Keputusan KPU Nomor 66, 2024) (Nasrun, 2024).

Papua Gubernatorial Election 2018

The 2018 Papua gubernatorial election (Pilgub Papua) took place on June 27, 2018. It determined the governor and deputy governor of Papua for the 2018–

2023 term. This election followed the schedule for the third wave of simultaneous regional elections in June 2018. There were two pairs of candidates (paslon) in the Papua gubernatorial election: Lukas Enembe–Klemen Tinal (Lukmen) and Jhon Wempi Wetipo–Habel Suwae (Josua) (wikipedia.org, 2018).

Based on the results of the plenary meeting for the tabulation of vote counts conducted by the Papua Provincial Election Commission (KPU), the 2018–2023 Papua Governor and Deputy Governor Election was won by the pair Lukas Enembe – Klemen Tinal. The Lukmen pair received 1,939,539 votes, accounting for 67.54 percent of the 2,871,547 total valid votes. Meanwhile, the Josua pair obtained 932,008 votes, accounting for 32.45 percent of the total valid votes. The open plenary meeting took place from Sunday, July 8, to Monday evening, July 9, at a hotel in Abepura District, Jayapura City, Papua. The meeting was chaired by the Chairman of the Papua Election Commission, Theodorus Kossay, and was attended by other commissioners. Out of the 29 regencies/cities in Papua Province, the Lukmen pair won in 20 regencies. The Josua pair led in the remaining nine regencies (CNNIndonesia, 2018)

This study aims to identify and thoroughly analyze the challenges to development outcomes in electoral districts with the Noken system, such as Central Papua and Pegunungan Papua, two new provinces formed from the division of Papua Province in 2022. The results are expected to inform relevant stakeholders on how to manage a safe and peaceful election process in these regions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Development Theory

According to (Kartono, 2019), development theory in the social sciences can be divided into two major paradigms: the modernization paradigm and the dependency paradigm (Lewellen). The modernization paradigm encompasses macro theories about economic growth and social change, as well as micro theories that emphasize the individual values supporting the process of change. The dependency paradigm, on the other hand, includes theories of underdevelopment, dependent development, and world system theory. Development theories can generally be classified into three categories: modernization theory, underdevelopment theory, and dependency theory. These various paradigms have given rise to diverse interpretations and approaches to development.

Meanwhile, according to (Afandi et al., 2022), development is synonymous with terms such as development, modernization, Westernization, empowerment, industrialization, economic growth, Europeanization, and political change. This synonymy arises because development is open to multiple interpretations. It is a series of planned growth and change efforts undertaken by the state toward modernity in the context of nation-building. The factors influencing the development process are as follows: First, natural resources: Human needs are almost entirely sourced from nature. Natural wealth, soil fertility, climate, forest potential, mining potential, and marine potential will significantly influence development. This is particularly related to the availability of raw materials for

production and ensuring the sustainable processing of these materials to create societal well-being.

Second is human resources. One of the main factors in determining the success of development is the size and quality of the population. A large population has great marketing potential for production results, while population quality greatly determines productivity levels. Third is capital. Adequate capital resources are essential for development. Capital resources are crucial for a country to process raw materials into finished goods that can be utilized directly by the public and that have a higher value than raw materials. Investment is necessary to explore and process natural resources so they have high economic value and support development (Afandi et al., 2022)

Fourth is employment. Unemployment caused by a lack of jobs hinders development. Conversely, job availability will positively affect growth and development. Fifth is expertise and entrepreneurship. Processing raw materials into finished goods requires certain skills. However, a community with expertise but lacking an entrepreneurial spirit will be unable to solve development problems. Therefore, a community needs both skills and an entrepreneurial spirit if a country's development is to succeed. Sixth is political stability. Unstable political conditions greatly hinder good development. Political stability is the foundation for carrying out development activities so that the community at large can enjoy them. Seventh is government policy, which greatly determines the development process so that it can be carried out effectively in line with community needs (Yamin & Haryanto, 2018)

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to identify and analyze the challenges of using the results of the 2018 regional elections that employed the Noken system, particularly with regard to regional development in Papua. The study primarily focuses on predicting and managing the security situation in areas that use the Noken system and its impact on stability and sustainable development. The results of this research are expected to provide stakeholders with insights and strategic recommendations for managing a safe, peaceful, and constructive local democratic process for development.

This study employs a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis methods. Data were collected through literature reviews from various sources, such as scientific journals, books, and relevant articles. The analysis process involved identifying, clarifying, and synthesizing information from various sources to develop a comprehensive understanding.

The data collection process included:

1. Search for and select literature relevant to the topic of the Noken system and regional development.
2. Collecting data from journals, online media, and institutional reports.
3. Analyze key issues related to security challenges and the validity of election results in the Noken system.

Conceptually, development is the process of transforming society toward a better way of life as outlined in the Constitution. Two important aspects of this process are sustainability and change. In the context of Papua, political legitimacy and social stability after the elections greatly influence the sustainability of development.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General elections in Papua are always marked by unique dynamics, one of which is the existence of the Noken system. The Noken system is more than just an electoral practice; it is a tangible manifestation of the political and legal rights of indigenous Papuans, as guaranteed by the Constitution. The Constitutional Court (MK) has reinforced its legal legitimacy with Decisions No. 47-81/PHPU.A-VII/2009 and No. 06-32/PHPU-DPD/XII/2014. This recognition positions the Noken system as a bridge between modern democracy and local wisdom, making it a phenomenon worthy of in-depth analysis from the perspective of development theory (Lisa Noviana, 2019), (Agus Riyanto, 2018)

The Papuan people call their distinctive bags or pouches made from bark cloth "noken." More than just a functional item for carrying crops or babies, the noken symbolizes a good life, peace, and fertility. The exclusive production of noken by Papuan women serves as an indicator of maturity and marriageability (Arizona, 2009), which highlights the significant role of the noken within the cultural structure of society. This cultural dimension is crucial to understanding the implications of the noken system for development because development involves more than economic growth; it also involves strengthening local identity and values.

As mentioned by the former Governor of Papua, Barnabas Suebu (Arizona, 2009), the use of noken in the election system (regional elections) has been in place since the 1971 elections. However, its implementation has fluctuated. In the 2014 and 2019 simultaneous elections, 12 districts in Papua still used this system. There was a significant decline in the 2020 simultaneous regional elections, when only the Yahukimo district was officially permitted to use the system under Papua Provincial Election Commission Decision No. 98/PL.02.6-Kpt/91/Prov/XI/2020. Nevertheless, noken practices were found in districts outside of Yahukimo, such as Nabire and Yalimo. However, these practices were later annulled by the Papua Provincial Election Commission and upheld by a Constitutional Court ruling (Nashrullah, 2024) (Faiz, 2021)

Recent developments, particularly following the establishment of the new autonomous regions (DOB) in Papua in 2022 with the addition of four new provinces, have shown a significant decline in the implementation of the noken system. In the 2024 elections, the noken system was fully implemented in only 7 districts spread across two new provinces, namely Central Papua and Mountainous Papua. Meanwhile, five other districts implemented a mixed system of noken and voting. This is regulated under Election Commission Regulation No. 25 of 2023, Article 118(1), and Election Commission Decision No. 66 of 2024. The Central Papua Province that fully implements the noken system includes Puncak Jaya District, Puncak District, Paniai District, Intan Jaya District,

Deiyai District, and Dogiyai District. In Papua Mountains, only Nduga Regency uses the noken system entirely, while the other five regencies (Jayawijaya, Yahukimo, Mamberamo Tengah, Lanny Jaya, and Tolikara) use a mixed system (PKPU No. 25, 2023; KPU Decision No. 66, 2024) (Nasrun, 2024).

The implementation of the Noken system raises crucial questions about its relationship with development outcomes. The 2018 Papua gubernatorial election (Pilgub Papua) was won by the Lukas Enembe–Klemen Tinal (Lukmen) ticket, who received a significant number of votes, demonstrating centralized political dominance. Lukmen received 1,939,539 votes (67.54%), outperforming the Jhon Wempi Wetipo–Habel Suwae (Josua) pair, who received only 932,008 votes (32.45%). (CNNIndonesia, 2018), (wikipedia.org, 2018). This victory, which was supported primarily by regions that use the Noken system, highlights the importance of analyzing how the Noken system influences the development process, especially in the newly formed provinces of Central Papua and Pegunungan Papua, which resulted from the division of Papua in 2022.

This research aims to identify and deeply analyze the challenges in development outcomes in electoral districts with the noken system. The goal is to provide stakeholders with input for managing a safe and peaceful election process and promoting people-centered development. To analyze the phenomenon of the noken system and its implications for development, we need to refer to Development Theory. According to (Kartono, 2019), development theory can be divided into two major paradigms: the modernization paradigm and the dependency paradigm (Lewellen). The modernization paradigm encompasses macro theories about economic growth and social change, as well as micro theories that emphasize the individual values supporting the process of change. In contrast, the dependency paradigm encompasses theories of underdevelopment, dependent development, and world-system theory. Development theories can generally be classified into three categories: modernization, underdevelopment, and dependency.

(Afandi et al., 2022) It explains that, terminologically, development is synonymous with modernization, Westernization, empowerment, industrialization, economic growth, Europeanization, and political change. This arises because development has multiple interpretations. It is defined as a series of planned growth and change efforts consciously carried out by the state toward modernity in the context of nation-building. To understand this concept more fully, let us examine the various factors that influence development within the Noken system in Papua.

The Paradigm of Modernization and Noken: Conflict Between Tradition and Modern Democratic Procedures

According to the modernization paradigm, development is a linear process in which "traditional" societies transition to "modernity" by adopting Western values, institutions, and technologies. In the context of elections, this means adopting universal electoral procedures: one person, one vote; direct, secret, individually accountable voting. The noken system, on the other hand, often

involves representative consensus or the delegation of votes to traditional or clan leaders, who then direct collective voting support.

From a modernization perspective, the noken system can be seen as an obstacle to full democratization. The argument is that the noken system reduces transparency, opens up opportunities for manipulation, and does not fully guarantee individual voting rights. This is evident in the Papua Provincial KPU's annulment of noken practices outside official provisions and is reinforced by the Constitutional Court's ruling (Kartono, 2019). The assumption of modernization is that, to achieve advanced political development, political institutions must be rational, transparent, and individualistic (Arizona, 2009).

However, it is important to note that the Constitutional Court's ruling in the (Agus Riyanto, 2018) that legitimized Noken demonstrates a recognition of legal and cultural pluralism. In this context, the relevance of modernization theory must be questioned as it pertains to indigenous communities. Does "modern" always mean abandoning tradition? Or, can a form of modernity accommodate local wisdom? If the goal of development is to improve holistic societal welfare, including cultural welfare, then the Noken system can be seen as an effort by the Papuan people to modernize the political process while maintaining their cultural identity. The challenge lies in finding a meeting point between modern political participation and the recognition of customary rights.

The Dependency Paradigm and Noken: Exclusion, Marginalization, and Resource Allocation

The dependency paradigm argues that poor countries remain poor because they are integrated into the global economic system in a disadvantageous way, making them dependent on wealthy countries. In the context of Papua, although it is not interstate dependency, this concept can be applied to the relationship between the central region (national/provincial) and the peripheral region (customary areas that use noken) (Afandi et al., 2022).

Most of the areas where Noken is used are located in the interior of Central Papua and Papua Pegunungan. These areas have historically been marginalized from access to development, infrastructure, and public services. The Human Development Index (HDI) is low at 60.25% in Central Papua (moderate) and 54.43% in Pegunungan Papua (low). These areas also have extremely high poverty rates, at 27.60% and 29.66%, respectively, which are far above the national HDI average of 75.02% and the national poverty rate of 9.03%. (BPS Nasional, 2024) (BPS Papua Pegunungan, 2025) (BPS Papua Tengah, 2024). These statistics indicate the presence of internal dependency structures.



Figure 1. National Statistics Agency (BPS) on the percentage of people living in poverty by province from March to September 2024.

In this view, the Noken system may not cause underdevelopment, but rather be a manifestation of underdeveloped conditions and structural injustice. Communities choose the Noken system because modern electoral procedures are difficult to implement in remote areas with limited infrastructure and uneven literacy rates. Additionally, the noken system can be a mechanism of self-defense for indigenous peoples, ensuring their collective voice is heard amid broader political domination and preventing social fragmentation that may arise from individualistic political competition (Afandi et al., 2022).

However, if the system is not managed transparently and accountably, it can exacerbate development problems. For instance, if noken votes are manipulated by local elites or used to secure development projects for specific groups, inequality can be reinforced and inclusive, equitable development can be hindered. The allocation of development resources after elections, for instance, may be unfair if based on opaque vote counting (Afandi et al., 2022).

Development Factors and Their Relationship to Noken

(Afandi et al., 2022) Identifying seven key factors that influence development; First, Natural Resources (NR): Papua, including Central Papua and Mountainous Papua, is rich in NR. However, the presence of NR does not necessarily correlate positively with development. From the perspective of dependency theory, the exploitation of NR often only benefits outsiders or certain elites, while local communities remain poor. In the context of the noken system, if the political process (including noken) does not produce leaders who are committed to sustainable and equitable management of NRAs, then this natural wealth can become a curse rather than a blessing. The challenge of development in Papua is how to manage NRAs so that their benefits are felt equally by all communities, including those using the noken system.

Second is Human Resources (HR). The quality and quantity of the population are key determinants of development success. Papua's low levels of education and health, as reflected in the HDI, indicate the need to improve the quality of human resources. If the noken system is considered an obstacle to individual political participation and education, it can indirectly hinder HR development. However, if the Noken system is viewed as a means of strengthening social and cultural cohesion, it can contribute to HR development by providing important social capital. HR development also involves raising political awareness and enhancing the community's ability to participate effectively in the democratic process, regardless of the electoral system employed.

Third is capital. Investment is essential for processing raw materials into finished goods. Limited capital in Papua, from both private investments and government budget allocations, poses a serious obstacle. If the noken system creates uncertainty or conflict after the elections, it could hinder investment. Conversely, political stability resulting from community acceptance of the Noken system could attract investment. However, the focus should be on sustainable investments that provide real benefits to the local community rather than exploitation.

Fourth, employment: Unemployment is a major problem in Papua. Job availability greatly influences growth and development. Limited access to education and skills training, as well as the dominance of the extractive sector, has led to a lack of economic diversification and employment opportunities. Regardless of the noken system, a transparent and accountable political process must produce policies that create decent jobs for the community. If the election results through the Noken system do not produce leaders who focus on creating local jobs, the unemployment problem will persist.

Fifth, expertise and entrepreneurship: Processing raw materials requires both expertise and an entrepreneurial spirit. A community with expertise but lacking entrepreneurship will be unable to solve development problems. In Papua, we need to encourage the development of local expertise and entrepreneurship. If the noken system can facilitate the emergence of visionary leaders who can develop local potential, it can support development. However, if the Noken system hinders innovation or limits access to individuals with expertise and an entrepreneurial spirit, it will pose a challenge.

Sixth, political stability: Unstable political conditions greatly hinder development. Political stability is essential for carrying out development activities. Post-election social conflicts related to the Noken system, such as those that occurred in Nabire and Yalimo, demonstrate how political instability can hinder development. Political stability requires that the electoral system, including Noken, be widely accepted and fair to all parties. If the Noken system becomes a source of division, it will negatively impact political stability and development.

Seventh, government policy: Government policy greatly influences the development process, allowing it to be carried out in a targeted manner that aligns with the community's needs (Yamin & Haryanto, 2018). In the context of

Noken, government policy must strike a balance between recognizing local wisdom and ensuring that universal democratic principles are upheld. The recognition and regulation of Noken through PKPU and KPU decisions demonstrate the government's efforts to balance these two aspects. However, further analysis is needed to determine the effectiveness of this policy in promoting sovereign and equitable regional development, especially by examining the HDI and poverty data.

Implications of the Noken System on Development Outcomes in Central Papua and Papua Pegunungan

Data from the Human Development Index (HDI) for 2024 shows that Central Papua's HDI is 60.25% (medium status), while Papua Pegunungan's HDI is 54.43% (low status). Both are far below the national HDI average of 75.02%. Furthermore, from March to September 2024, the percentage of the population living in poverty in Central Papua was 27.60% (the second highest), while in Mountainous Papua it reached 29.66% (the highest), far above the national poverty rate of 9.03%. (BPS Nasional, 2024) (BPS Papua Pegunungan, 2025) (BPS Papua Tengah, 2024).

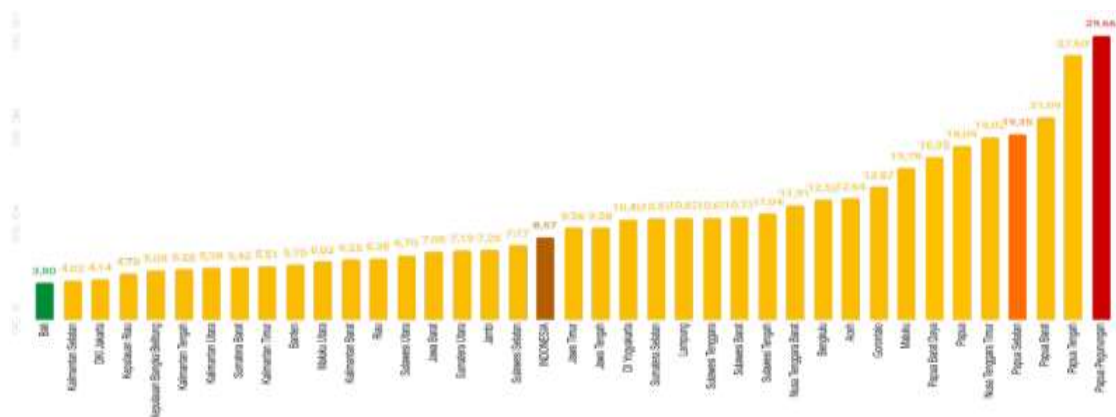


Figure 2. BPS Papua Pegunungan and Tengah. Percentage of Poor People in Central Papua and Papua Pegunungan Is the Highest

This striking gap indicates that development in the Central Papua and Papua Pegunungan provinces is progressing very slowly. There are several reasons for this, one of which may be the noken system, either directly or indirectly, particularly in terms of:

Potential for social conflict: Although the noken system is intended to promote consensus, its implementation often triggers disputes and conflicts. For example, the Constitutional Court annulled election results in Nabire and Yalimo due to noken practices that did not comply with regulations. These social conflicts disrupt political stability, which, as (Afandi et al., 2022), explain, is the foundation for development. When communities are divided by political conflict, the energy and resources that should be allocated to development are instead diverted to conflict resolution or post-conflict recovery. This delays investment, hinders aid distribution, and damages the social cohesion essential for participatory development.

Lack of Accountability and Transparency: The collective noken system, in which votes are transferred to traditional leaders, has the potential to reduce individual accountability and transparency in the electoral process. Without a clear mechanism for collective accountability, there is room for manipulation or abuse of power. From a modernization perspective, this lack of transparency poses a significant challenge to good governance. According to development theory, good governance based on accountability and transparency is fundamental to ensuring that development policies benefit the people and that resources are used efficiently. Without adequate accountability and transparency, elected political elites may be less accountable for their development promises, which can ultimately worsen conditions of poverty and underdevelopment.

Inefficiency in Regional Development: Inefficiency in the allocation of development resources may occur if the results of elections through the Noken system do not reflect the representative choices of the entire community or if they produce leaders who are not focused on inclusive development. For instance, if a small elite controls the majority vote, development projects may only benefit certain groups or regions, leaving most of the community without access to basic services or economic opportunities. This reinforces inequality and hinders equitable development. Additionally, prolonged or problematic election processes due to noken disputes can delay the inauguration of elected officials and the implementation of development programs.

The Dilemma Between Local Wisdom and the Universality of Democracy: Noken embodies a form of local wisdom deeply rooted in tradition. However, modern democracy demands individual participation and equality of voice. This dilemma places Papua at a crossroads of development. Should development sacrifice local wisdom for political "modernity," or can both be integrated into a development model? Contemporary development theories emphasize the importance of culturally sensitive and inclusive development. This approach values and utilizes local cultural assets as part of development strategies. Nevertheless, this necessitates dialogue and adaptation to guarantee that traditional practices do not undermine fundamental democratic principles, such as justice and transparency.

The extremely low Human Development Index (HDI) and poverty rates in Central Papua and Papua Pegunungan highlight that the development challenges in this region are structural and multidimensional, regardless of the electoral system used. These challenges are not limited to the noken system; they also include geographical access, the quality of education and health services, the availability of basic infrastructure, law enforcement, and effective governance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that using the Noken system for regional head elections in several Indonesian regions, particularly Papua, poses challenges to achieving sovereign and equitable regional development. These challenges include potential social conflict, a lack of accountability and transparency, and regional development inefficiency. This is

evident in Central Papua and Papua Pegunungan provinces, which have low Human Development Index (HDI) scores and high poverty rates.

From a modernization theory perspective, the Noken system may be seen as an obstacle to achieving an "ideal" and rational political democracy, which hinders economic and social development. However, from a critical point of view, especially considering the dependency paradigm, Papua's backwardness is not solely due to the noken system, but rather the result of historical injustice and marginalization. The Noken system may be an attempt by indigenous peoples to maintain their autonomy and identity within a larger political system.

Therefore, serious efforts are needed from local and central governments to establish a more democratic, transparent, and accountable system for electing regional heads, while also respecting local values and wisdom. This means:

1. Building a bridge between customary law and national law. The KPU and local governments must continue engaging in dialogue with customary leaders and the Papuan community. Together, they should develop mechanisms for implementing the Noken system that preserve local wisdom while incorporating stronger accountability and transparency principles. This could involve better documentation, a monitoring system involving more parties, or more intensive political education on individual voting rights within the noken context.
2. Improving Human Resource Capacity and Infrastructure: Development in Papua will not be effective without improving the quality of human resources through equitable education and healthcare, as well as adequate basic infrastructure development. These improvements will enable the community to participate more actively and be better informed in the political process, regardless of the electoral system used.
3. Strengthening Good Governance: Following the elections, elected officials must adhere to the principles of good governance, including accountability, transparency, participation, and the rule of law, whether through the noken or voting system. This is essential to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and that development policies benefit everyone, not just a select few.
4. Data-Driven and Equitable Development: The grim Human Development Index (HDI) and poverty data in Central Papua and Papua Pegunungan must be a top priority. Development policies must be based on accurate data and focus on reducing structural poverty, improving access to basic services, and creating inclusive economic opportunities for local communities.
5. Preventing Conflict and Building Peace: Election dispute resolution mechanisms must be strengthened and made easily accessible to the public. Post-election dialogue and reconciliation are important for preventing conflict and building social cohesion, an essential foundation for sustainable development.

Papua's development, characterized by its unique noken system, provides a complex case study of the interplay between tradition, democracy, and developmental challenges. To achieve inclusive and sustainable development,

Indonesia must continue seeking a balance between recognizing customary rights and upholding universal democratic principles. The primary focus should be on improving the welfare and empowerment of indigenous Papuan communities.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

1. The scope of the research is limited to the challenges of using the noken system in regional head elections in Papua.
2. The data used in this study is limited to secondary sources in the form of related literature and does not include primary data from the direct experiences of communities in areas that use the Noken system.

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