# Existence and coexistence of the Muslim migrants: the ecopolitics roles in Papua

by Mustaqim Pabbajah

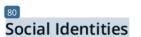
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## Existence and coexistence of the Muslim migrants: the ecopolitics roles in Papua

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This article explores Muslim migrants' economic and political contributions to Jayapura, Papua, as well as the tensions that have emerged therein. Through observation, interviews, and a review of the literature, it investigates the influence of Muslim migrants on Papuan life, as well as Muslim migrants' use of economic means to ensure their survival in the face of significant pressure. Although indigene – migrant relations have ebbed and flowed over time, Muslim migrants have not only influenced society through open communication and interactions with their peers, but also contributed to the social, economic, and political advancement of Papua. As such, this article recommends that future research should investigate how different elements of Papuan society recognize each other and work cooperatively and progressively towards achieving a better future.

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#### Introduction

Migrant Muslims have been the motors of Papua's economic and political development, being important actors in economic growth who provide goods and services in both traditional and modern markets. They also serve as intermediaries, collecting and distributing the foodstuffs and other supplies collected by indigenous Papuans or imported from outside the island. Furthermore, they have played an integral role in Papua's dynamic political growth, taking diverse political roles. Not only are they members of political parties, but they are involved in the local, provincial, and national elections (both legislative and executive) that are held every five years. Several Muslim migrants have been elected to parliament at the regency/municipal level, while others have gain positions within the executive branch. For instance, both the deputy mayor of Jayapura City – the capital of Papua – and the deputy regent of Jayapura Regency are Muslim migrants (Faisal, 2020; Iribaram, 2019).

Studies of migrants' positions and roles in host communities are widespread in the literature. Generally, such studies fall into three categories. First, studies that view migrants

as potential 'threats' (Abago et al., 2015; Nieke, 2011; Pasya, 2016), as creating tension by introducing new values into their host communities (Viartasiwi et al., 2018), where the Muslim-Chritian conflict originated. *Second*, studies that view migrants as stimulating growth by introducing new values into their host communities (Baharuddin et al., 2015; Paturusi, 2016; Simorangkir et al., 2017; Wulangsari, 2015), thereby stimulating socioeconomic development. *Third*, studies that investigate the new opportunities and synergy created by migrants upon their incorporation into host communities (Jayaputra, 2012; Jubba et al., 2020; Prasojo, 2016; Siagian, 2018). Such studies have not, however, specifically investigated the contributions made by migrants. Migrants have made significant contribution in economic and government sectors (Iribaram, 2019).

This article investigates the diverse contributions made by migrant Muslims in Papua, where they have long been viewed as simply eking out a living. To guide its investigation, this article poses three questions: first, what is the distribution and contribution of Muslim migrants in Jayapura, Papua? This question is inexorably linked to social conditions in host communities, as well as migrants' professional and socio-economic activities. Second, what factors enable Muslim migrants to persevere in the face of significant obstacles? Muslim migrants do not only make significant achievements in their day-to-day lives in Jayapura, Papua, but also face multiple obstacles – including continued identification as migrants despite being administratively considered Papuan. Third, what activities will promote future growth among Muslim migrants? This question is closely linked with Muslim migrants' survival strategies.

This article departs from the assumption that Muslim' migrants continued success in Papua is inexorably linked with their significant contributions to the strategic sectors in Jayapura, Papua, as evidenced in the region's rapid economic and political development. Migrants do not simply earn money; they also facilitate local residents' access to their everyday needs. Likewise, the transition to democracy since the fall of the New Order cannot be separated from migrants' political participation and contributions. As such, even when migrants arrive through transmigration programs, they contribute significantly to the creation of openness in Jayapura, Papua. These points are critically evaluated in this paper.

#### Migrant, migrant identity, and Migrant Muslim

The word *migration* is etymologically derived from the Latin word *migrare*, which means 'to change one's domicile or to move to another place (city, country).' Migration influences the demographic situation in the host community, and has significant implications for local politics, governance, services, crime, law, order, etc. (Popkova, 2019, pp. 298–302). Migration is commonly driven by economic factors, as migrants perceive migration as a potential solution to issues of poverty and unemployment (Ullah & Alkaff, 2018), but may also be motored by migrants' desire to reunite with their family or to ensure their own safety (Douglas et al., 2019). Migrants have often faced discrimination and hardship. For instance, Article 73, Additional Protocol I of the Fourth Geneva Convention (1977) notes that many of the people who migrated before and during World War II migrants existed as stateless persons without recognized rights (Yastrebova, 2019, p. 145). Similarly, studies have found that migrants in China and Hong Kong are often subjected to explicit discrimination (Rother, 2017, p. 5; Xie et al., 2017, p. 616).



Studies of migrant identity, viewing it as crossing borders (Madsen & Naerssen, 1986) or shaped by geographic conditions (Silvey, 2006), have stimulated significant debate. Migrant identity is constructed through the socio-political conditions of a specific area, wherein interactions between different groups occur (Ozasir Kacar & Essers, 2019). Migrants' mobility and travels cause significant socio-political changes in host communities, and can even affect the identities of non-migrant groups. Migrants can be categorized based on several elements, including language, employment (Borodkina et al., 2017), gender (Rydzik & Anitha, 2020), religion (van Es, 2019), ethnicity (Auwalin, 2020), livelihood (Schiller & Çağlar, 2013), and even minority status (Bulmer & Solomos, 2010). Indeed, migrants are commonly united by a shared religious, cultural, linguistic, or gender identity, as well as a desire to improve their situation (Liang, 2011). Liang (2011) has emphasized the importance of policy and state protection, and Lecovich (2011) notes that migrants can be best protected by establishing positive relations and distributing roles in a way that benefits all involved.

In migrant studies, one common subject has been Muslim migrants, understood as migrants whose religious (Islamic) identity shapes their political identity and informs their diaspora. For them, migration is not simply a matter of mobility, but also one of religion (Bava, 2011). Likewise, identity is not static, but created and maintained through an ongoing process (Madsen & Naerssen, 1986). Political studies of this topic have examined migrants based on their political networks and activities. Ozasir Kacar and Essers (2019), for example, argue that, through their political interactions with global superpowers, Muslims have established new groups with high levels of mobility. At the same time, however, as migrant communities are smaller than their host communities, they exist as minorities (Bulmer & Solomos, 2010). Consequently, they face disparate and even discriminatory treatment. According to Wigger (2019), stereotyping and bigotry – wherein persons of different cultures are homogenized based on their religious identities – are amongst the most common forms of discrimination faced by minorities (Mitha et al., 2017; Bava, 2011).

Newman and Krzystofiak (1998) investigate migrants' participation in many areas of their host communities, including these communities' social, economic, and political lives. They argue that migrants contribute to the structural and cultural transformation of their host communities, improving their openness and shaping a new social order. It is possible for migrant and host communities to build acceptance, including through political dialog, as seen in European nations and their development of new structural and cultural communities. Countries may implement policies that promote the fair and just division of roles, thereby facilitating the creation of open political dialog between the state and migrant communities (Malik, 2013). In developed nations, migrants can use their own approaches to contribute to national economic development, and indeed this is facilitated by government policy (Haberfeld et al., 2020). As such, migrants' new identity is shaped in part through open political dialog (Malik, 2013).

Recent studies of internal migration, also known as transnational migration, have explored the factors that drive it. Important to note is that internal migrants can replace local communities and take over their roles (Rees et al., 2017), as reflected in the distribution of labor in the host community (Caliendo et al., 2019). Often, such migrants help communities advance, or even develop entirely new ones (Rafiq et al., 2017). In Indonesia, internal migration has been driven primarily by the uneven

distribution of the population as well as the limited capacity to exploit resources (Auwalin, 2020). Such internal migration results in the redistribution of ethnic Javanese, Minangkabau, Batak, Buginese, Makassarese, Butonese, Sundanese, Bantenese, Madurese, and Betawi to less populated areas (McAreavey, 2017). Different forms of internal migration have occurred in Indonesia over time. Migration from rural to urban areas is commonplace and often driven by economic and employment factors (Pardede et al., 2020; McAreavey, 2017). Another factor that commonly drives migration is local communities' limited productivity, which leads to migrants being brought in to improve the local economy by increasing productivity (Bryan & Morten, 2019).

In developing countries such as Indonesia, productivity and labor capacity can only be improved through internal migration, wherein farmers are transported to improve agriculture and stimulate economic growth (Bryan & Morten, 2019). Importantly, migrants do not only improve productivity, but also transform their local communities and stimulate cultural change.

Internal migration is an interesting topic in ethnic and migration studies, as it is closely associated with social conditions, economic opportunities, and demographic changes (Caliendo et al., 2019). As newcomers with their own distinct identities, migrants are vulnerable to violence (Taha et al., 2015; Rafiq et al., 2017). Several studies have identified issues faced by particular migrant communities, such as Muslim migrant communities in Pakistan (Shahzad & Lee, 2016), Indonesian domestic workers, migrant children in the United States and Spain (Vives, 2020), gender issues amongst Indonesian migrant laborers (Chan, 2014), indigenous people versus migrants (Viartasiwi et al., 2018), and religious communities (Halabi, 2020). This study, conversely, employs a local perspective and emphasizes local issues faced by internal migrants – i.e. those who have traveled from one part of a country to another – no matter their motivation. More specifically, this study investigates how internal migrants in Indonesia have contributed to productivity and development in host communities.

Uneven population distribution and government policies have driven internal migration in Indonesia for decades, as seen (for example) in the New Order government's promigration program (Deng et al., 2020). Nevertheless, studies have tended to form migration from rural areas to urban ones. This article, conversely, examines internal migration in Indonesia within the context of government efforts to stimulate local development (Ueno, 2010). Migrants' particular sociological characteristics and identities must be protected through policy, and their equal access to the same opportunities must be protected. Efforts must be made to minimize ethnic and religious stereotypes, thereby eradicating discrimination (Auwalin, 2020). In this study, the researchers employ a model that recognizes urban-to-rural migration, and that understands such migration as promoting economic growth and productivity – thereby contributing to the development and betterment of local communities.

In Indonesia, Papua has been a common destination for Indonesian migrants. The island hosts migrants from various parts of Indonesia, and thus significant ethnic and religious diversity is evident. Indonesian migration to Papua became common when Indonesia entered Papua, after which the central government initiated a transmigration program to transport citizens from Java and other overpopulated islands. Such migration has had a significant influence on the island's demographics. Previously, Papuan Christians had been the majority; today, however, it hosts various ethnic and religious groups.

Merchant

Nonetheless, even as Muslim migrants have lived in an area dominated by Christians, they have influenced the social, economic, and political dynamics of local society. Statistically, the majority of indigenous Papuans are Protestant Christians; as such, Muslim migrants – lacking the structural support of religious and non-religious organizations available to Christians – have been disadvantaged (Viartasiwi, 2013, pp. 863–865). Some areas, nonetheless, have become Muslim enclaves. In West Papua, the majority of migrants come from Java; the indigenous Papuans, meanwhile, come primarily from the Arfak, Biaknumfor, and Afyat tribes. Today, West Papua is split almost evenly between indigenous Papuans (51.48 percent) and migrants (48.51 percent); as such, significant polarization has occurred (Ananta et al., 2016, p. 465). The central government has become the main sponsor which causes the number of migrants to increase from time to time for security reasons in line with the increase in the separatist movement in Papua (Pamungkas & Idriasari, 2021).

#### Methods

This study was conducted in Jayapura City, Papua, between 2018 and 2020. Jayapura was chosen as the research location due to its diversity, both religious and ethnic. Furthermore, Jayapura City is divided between indigenous and migrant communities. The latter are dominant, with migrants being far more numerous than indigenous persons; this situation contrasts sharply with areas such as Merauke, Keerom, Nabire, and Mimika, where indigenous communities are larger.

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and a review of the literature. Observation was conducted primarily in local marketplaces, and focused on the everyday activities of Muslim migrants (particularly their economic activities). Interviews, meanwhile, were conducted with fourteen informants, including Muslim migrants, indigenous Papuans, community leaders, religious leaders, politicians, academics, merchants, and youth leaders. Interviews sought to ascertain Muslim migrants' position in the local economy and contrast it with how they are perceived by indigenous Papuans. A list of informants is presented in Table 1 below.

Meanwhile, during the review of the literature, general information on Muslim migrants in Papua was collected. Further data were collected from official documents

40	Informant	Sex	Age	Area of Origin / Ethnicity	Identification
1	R1	Female	37	Papua	Youth
2	R2	17.1le	50	Sulawesi/Makassar	Merchant
3	R3	Female	43	Papua	Academic
4	R4	Male	39	Sulawesi/Bugis	Merchant
5	R5	Female	36	Papua	Private Sector
6	R6	Male	61	Sulawesi/Bugis	Social Leader
7	R7	Male	35	Papua	Academic
8	R8	Male	49	Papua Papua	Social Leader
9	R9	Male	48	Papua	Academic
10	R10	Male	55	Maluku	Religious Leader
11	R11	Male	53	Java	Private Sector
12	R12	Male	47	Sulawesi	Private Sector
13	R13	Male	39	Sulawesi/Buton	Politician

Papua

Table 1. Research Informants.

from government institutions, including Statistics Indonesia and the Secretariat of the Jayapura Municipal Parliament.

Data collected in this manner were subsequently classified, displayed, and analyzed using descriptive – analytical analysis. The analysis involved contextualizing and interpreting data that had been collected through the aforementioned approaches. Data are presented in this article in narrative, quotation, and table format.

#### Results and discussion

#### Muslim migrants: their distribution and social involvement

The arrival of Muslim migrants in Papua began with the transmigration program implemented by the New Order regime as a means of redistributing people away from Indonesia's most densely populated islands (Ullah & Alkaff, 2018; Viartasiwi et al., 2018). Problematically, however, this program was unable to minimize economic and political contestation between the indigenous and migrant communities (Scott & Tebay, 2005). In Papua, Muslim migrants have worked predominantly as farmers, traders, and service providers, and to a lesser extent as bureaucrats and teachers. Their contributions, thus, are most tangible in the economic sectors. Over the past few decades, Muslim migrants have become the primary economic actors in Jayapura and stimulated the growth of the local economy; at the same time, they have become prominent in non-economic sectors, especially in the political arena. This has given them significant prominence in Papuan society which triggered the later series of conflict.

This economic success has informed the fluctuating social relations between migrants and indigenous Papuans (Faisal, 2020). In other words, relations have tended to ebb and flow, being harmonious at times and tense at others. However, migrants' control of the local economy remains a sensitive issue; indigenous Papuans continue to face economic hardship, while migrants (of diverse ethnic backgrounds) generally have better economic standing. On several occasions, this has resulted in conflict. In 1990, for instance, widespread dissent amongst indigenous Papuans resulted in migrants being driven away from the city. Migrants' homes were razed, their possessions destroyed, and their assets seized. This incident, as well as several smaller-scale ones, signals that Jayapura has significant potential for conflict, and preventative measures must thus be implemented.

Looking at ethnicity vis-à-vis economic activities, it should be noted that the agriculture sector in Jayapura is dominated by migrant ethnic groups (particularly those from Java, Bali, and Sulawesi). These migrants, many of whom have prior experience in agriculture, have employed new and creative ways to work the land and ensure optimal production. In several Javanese enclaves, farming practices differ little from those in Java. Farmers employ a semi-modern system, cultivating rice, various vegetables, and secondary crops. Many keep livestock, such as goats and chickens. These farmers' social and religious practices differ little from those in Java; they meet routinely for such social activities as arisan, and conduct tahlilan, barzanji, and mauludan regularly.

Meanwhile, the trade sector is dominated predominantly by the Buginese and Minangkabau; there is also significant Javanese involvement. This dominance is evident in both traditional and economic markets. In Hamadi Market, for instance, migrants' stalls



line the market paths, where they sell fish, rice, cloth, and even gold. The surrounding area is replete with their houses and shops, which are combined in units known as ruko. The culinary sector, similarly, is dominated by the Javanese, Padangese, and Makassarese.

This causes significant competition, which poses significant obstacles for Papuans. One Papuan youth explained:

Us in Papua, we tend to focus on meeting our everyday needs. We cannot compete, because our goal is simply to feed ourselves. We can't compete with those migrants from outside Papua, those migrants from Java, Makassar, and elsewhere. (interview, R1, 2020)

Indeed, indigenous Papuans are involved predominantly in the small-scale cultivation and sale of tubers, bananas, betel, and fish. Few have their own kiosks or stands in the markets and shopping centers of Jayapura. Where Papuans are active in the markets, they work side by side with non-Papuans. One merchant from Sulawesi explained:

In the 1980s, there was collaboration between migrants and indigenous Papuans in trade. Migrants and indigenes embraced each other. In the 1990s, there emerged a belief that merchants in Papua had to succeed, and thus they began to control economic activities. In the 2000s, division emerged between merchants. Papuans sold betel, while migrants could not, because whatever they sold would sell well. (interview, R2, 2020)

Nevertheless, few of the kiosks and permanent stalls in the markets are owned by indigenous Papuans. This has changed little since Hanro Yonathan Lekitoo (2003) recorded that, in 2003, only one of the kiosks selling fish in Hamadi Market was owned by an indigenous Papuan. There was thus significant disparity in ownership and access to sales opportunities. Likewise, Papuan merchants' ability was still limited. This was recognized by one indigenous merchant, who stated:

We cannot compete with the Javanese, the Buginese, the Makassarese, and the others. We had places, but sold to them. We couldn't compete with them. They were more dedicated. (interview, R14, 2020)

Regarding migrants' role in the markets, as discussed above, it is apparent that they avoid areas dominated by indigenous Papuans. Migrants do not, for example, sell betel nuts or leaves, despite such crops being common in Jayapura, to avoid 'stealing' the market from indigenous Papuans. Nevertheless, there remains significant disparity in strategic areas, as evidenced even today.

#### The contributions of Muslim migrants

In Jayapura, Papua, Muslim migrants have contributed significantly to both the economic and the political sectors. They dominate the markets and shopping centers of Jayapura, and thus tend to have more stable family economies. This is rooted in several factors. First, domestic migration in Indonesia has been driven predominantly by economic and political factors. Muslim migrants first migrated to Papua mainly to improve their economic welfare. Indeed, as shown by the literature, economic motives are major drivers of migration (Liang, 2011). Widespread transmigration to Lampung was similarly driven by economic factors; Javanese migrants needed arable land, which had become increasingly scarce in Java by 1974. Practitioners of the Tolotang faith,

meanwhile, were forced to migrate from Wajo to Sidenreng, Sulawesi, in 1966 owing to unfavorable political conditions. Finding a better life has been the most important impetus in the migration process. When Muslim migrants arrived in Papua, they left their hometowns to find better lives elsewhere. This contrasted sharply with indigenous Papuans, the traditional 'owners' of the land. This was recognized by own Papuan youth leader, who stated:

Migrants usually work hard in order to find success. They come for a better life. They have a strong spirit and are unwilling to surrender. Meanwhile, Papuans don't feel it necessary to force themselves. There is a maxim amongst the Papuan people: 'opening our family's front door can bring food and assistance; opening the back door brings us our harvest'. As such, Papuans farm solely to meet their own everyday needs, while migrants seek profit, or even to further build their homes. (interview, R1, 2020)

A similar statement was made by an indigenous Papuan academic, who noted that migrants' are driven by stronger economic motives. She stated:

Papuan merchants, they seek only to earn enough for food, for sufficiency purposes. Meanwhile, migrant merchants, their orientation is profit. So it makes sense for migrant merchants to be more successful. (interview, R3, 2020)

This motivation gives migrants significant incentive to respond positively to the changing conditions around them, as well as to overcome various challenges and address complex issues. Migrants work towards overcoming the difficulties and anxieties inherent to their new conditions and situations, and are willing to employ creative approaches and alternative techniques to ensure their success. It is thus not surprising that migrants tend to be perceived as diligent workers, maintain a high level of communal solidarity and solidity, as strive towards excellence in even the most limited conditions.

Second, migrants' passion for life. Migrants have a natural tendency to work harder than non-migrants, as this is necessary to ensure their continued survival. They continue to develop themselves, to work towards ever-higher goals, and consider it shameful to fail to achieve these goals; failure to succeed would only mean that the decision to leave home was a mistake. As such, they strive to attain the greatest success possible, and this simple goal enables them to persevere. Among the Buginese, for instance, it is commonly said, 'jika layar telah terkembang, pantang surut biduk ke pantai' (once the sail has unfurled, never look back). This is commonly understood as a prohibition against returning to one's place of origin; doing so would only hinder one's efforts to achieve self-betterment.

Such dedication and unwillingness to surrender is important capital for merchants, as stated by one Sulawesian informant:

My business in Papua began with nothing. I was empty-handed, and my family and I fought to transform our lives. In our village, we lived as we could. Here, we had to work hard to succeed. We sold what we could, and sought means of increasing profit and improving our futures. (interview, R4, 2020)

Such motivation was also recognized by an indigenous Papuan woman, who stated:

The issue with migrants' economic control is, from the beginning, the Buginese, Makassarese, and Javanese were more mercantile than indigenous Papuans themselves. They dominated the marketplaces, much more than other migrants. (interview, R5, 2020)



Many studies have shown that migration, both domestic and international, is frequently driven by migrants' desire to improve their lot in life. As such, they tend to take a range of jobs, both to ensure their owner conomic security and to avoid the shame of failure (Umar, 2019). This also holds true for Indonesia's migrant workers, who – driven to improve themselves and their quality of life – are motivated to work harder and achieve better results. Such migrants, having left their homelands, dedicate themselves to their work and are willing to take all jobs available (Dhanendra & Indrawati, 2018). Unfortunately, however, this often results in conflict between migrant and indigenous populations.

Third, as a result of the above-mentioned factors, Muslim migrants have been able to recognize and exploit the economic opportunities available in Papua. Seeing that much of Papua's land remains 'at rest', they have begun working it and transforming it into productive land. Their ability to recognize the opportunities afforded to them is central to Muslim migrants' success. They recognize that indigenous Papuans rarely work their land, instead gathering what crops are available, and as such they are only able to fulfill their everyday needs, and thus migrants dedicate themselves to improving the land's productivity. Their economic potential, thus, differs from that of the indigenous Papuans (Ajoi, 2016); they are capable not only of fulfilling their everyday needs, but also of exploiting resources and transforming them into commodities. They are widespread, operating shops and kiosks, and control the distribution and sale of clothing and similar materials.

Such economic success, however, has not coincided with similar achievements in the political sector. Although the migrant Muslim population is sizable, especially in Jayapura City, few strategic positions are occupied by migrants - Muslim or otherwise (Iribaram, 2019). This may be attributed to several factors. First, Muslims may be unwilling to become actively involved in politics because they view it as less profitable than economic activities (Newman & Krzystofiak, 1998). Muslim migrants view economic approaches as providing more tangible and immediate benefits. This cannot be separated from their primary motivation for migrating to Papua: to better themselves through economic means.

However, in recent years some second-generation migrants have become involved in local politics. They have served as party administrators or contested executive and legislative elections. A few have been successful; one, for example, is currently serving as the deputy mayor of Jayapura City. However, owing to a range of factors (including local political ones), such migrants are involved merely as 'secondary actors'. As one politician (AL) explained:

... because of the conditions in Papua, with its special autonomy, we can't just hand things over. If the migrants are involved in the legislature and the government, they will help shape the situation. Even if they don't become top leaders, at least they have access to power, ensuring that they are recognized—especially by our fellows (i.e. migrant communities). (Interview, R6, Sentani, July 2018)

Ethnocentricity is common in government and bureaucracy, especially in the placement of individual staff. This issue is particularly problematic in Indonesia, especially in the years since the country began the dual processes of democratization and decentralization. As regional governments have received more autonomy and authority, electorates have increasingly prioritized indigenous candidates (popularly known as putra daerah). In

Papua, this has been further influenced by the issue of representing coastal Papuans and mountain Papuans; as both require a share, political opportunities for migrants are limited (Lefaan, 2013).

Second, indigenous Papuans dominate the government, and as such it is difficult for Muslim migrants to fed an entry point. This can be attributed, at least in part, to the continued application of Law No. 21 of 2001 regarding Special Autonomy in Papua, which includes several articles requiring the prioritization of indigenous Papuans in the government. One article, for instance, stipulates that the province's governor must be an indigenous Papuan. Indigenous Papuans view themselves as the sole owners of the land, and migrants as nothing more than occupants undeserving of political office. Some even view migrants as the vanguard of a neo-colonialist power, one that threatens the safety and prosperity of Papua. As such, few migrants are evident in government offices or bureaucratic structures; most occupy low-level positions. In Jayapura Regency, for example, almost all government units are led by indigenous Papuans.

Interviews with several informants indicated that bureaucrats and government officials are appointed based on specific ethnic considerations. One informant, confirmed:

What's most dominant in Jayapura's selection of officials is not religion per se, but rather shared tribal identity. Whosoever becomes mayor, they will install those around them. They do this because persons of other ethnic backgrounds would do the same for their peers. (Interview, R7, Jayapura, February 2018)

Since the implementation of special autonomy in Papua, strategic government positions have been occupied by indigenous Papuans; these even include those at the lowest levels. Such a tendency is not surprising, as the emergence of identity politics is often correlated with the desire to monopolize strategic positions (Haboddin, 2012).

Third, there is an unwillingness among indigenous Papuans to include (Muslim) migrants in the bureaucracy, a situation caused in part by the above-discussed conditions. Recruitment mechanisms remain dominated by clan (family) systems, wherein political leaders provide opportunities to those who enjoy emotional and political proximity with them. There is also a tendency for leaders to turn to those with whom they share historical ties; for instance, highland Papuans will not rely on lowland Papuans, and vice versa.

Looking at the composition of the Jayapura municipal government, as highlighted by a previous study (Iribaram, 2019), only five of the forty-five units are headed by non-Papuans. The city's deputy mayor is also a migrant, being of Buginese-Muslim heritage. One informant, employed by the Jayapura City government, indirectly acknowledged this practice:

Whoever becomes mayor, they rely on those closest to them to help them with their duties. Deputy mayors are only figureheads, as they don't do much. For instance, they may only inaugurate social events and whatnot. (Interview, R8, Jayapura, February 2018)

This not only hinders migrants, but also Papuans who lack access to the ruling elites and their networks.

All three of these elements have contributed to Muslim migrants' decision to focus on economic activities, as well as the relative lack of migrants in Papuan politics. There are still Muslim political elites who rely on the communal solidarity and solidity of migrant



communities. However, as they remain a minority, they have been unable to block policies that restrict migres communities' activities; such restrictions are permitted under the above-mentioned Law No. 21 of 2001 regarding Special Autonomy in Papua, which (as mentioned above) also contains a clause that prohibits non-indigenous Papuans from serving as governor.

#### Muslim migrants: between 'Prestige' and tribulation

Much literature have dealt with the question of indigeneity in Papua and the use of indigenous and non-indigenous labels. It has been noted that migrants are often associated with Islam, while indigenous Papuans are associated with Christianity. The terms 'Muslim migrants' and 'Papuan Christians' have been widespread throughout Papua since the New Order regime first implemented its transmigration program. In the 1970s, the Indonesian government - recognizing the overpopulation of Java - began transporting rural populations to less densely populated islands such as Papua, where much arable land remained available. The transmigration program itself was a political and security measure carrapidly increase the non-Papuan population to reduce the 'threat' to the integrity of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia (Putro, 2016). In addition to its location bordering Papua New Guinea which can threaten sovereignty, Papua's backwardness also affected development politics in an effort to accelerate modernization by placing transmigrants in the Papua region. This program then created problems for the threat of extinction of the original identity of the Papuan people. The marginalization of Papuans had a direct impact on the existence of Papuan culture. Importantly, this program also resulted in the transpormation of cultures, livelihoods, and even religious traditions (Saprillah, 2015).

In the first years of the transmigration program, the central government's hegemony remained strong, and as such state apparatuses were able to repress dissent even as migration continued and accelerated. Indigenous peoples, however, continued to bristle, fearing that ongoing migration would result in their marginalization. Tensions only increased further as migrant Muslims began to dominate the economy, especially in Jayapura. Traditional markets, modern shopping centers, and other commercial venues were controlled by migrants. In traditional markets, vegetables were sold by the Javanese, clothing and accessories by the Buginese and Makassarese, foodstuffs by the Buginese and Minangkabau, gold by the Buginese, etc. Migrants were the prime producers of products consumed by indigenous Papuans. Only in certain specially designated markets, such as Mama Papua Market in downtown Jayapura, were indigenous Papuans involved in mercantile activities, and these had little effect on the general welfare of indigenous Papuans.

The influx of migrants resulted in rapid population growth in a region that had hitherto been sparsely populated (with many areas untouched by humankind). Furthermore, migrants brought with them their own cultures, habits, and religious practices, all of which they continued and maintained. Indeed, they developed their own enclaves often named after their dominant ethnic group (i.e. kampung Jawa, kampung Enrekang, kampung Buton) - where their cultures, practices, and religious beliefs were dominant. These communities became sites of both settlement and commerce, with migrants opening their own food kiosks, shops, workshops, etc.

The emergence of such settlements, where 'imported cultures' were dominant, created tension. Transmigration, initially perceived as an extension of global migration, ultimately became seen as problematic. Migrants came from throughout Indonesia, but primarily Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi, and Maluku. The vast majority were Muslim, and thus they brought with them Islamic practices such as tahlilan and yasinan. Migrants used these practices to maintain their ethnic and religious identities in a land with significantly different traditions. As such, they were put vis-à-vis the indigenous population, whose traditions were strongly influenced by Christianity. In subsequent decades, these religious differences proved a sensitive – and even central – issue in migrant – indigene relations. Adaptation thus proved problematic (Viartasiwi et al., 2018).

Over time, various religious facilities were built, and mosques could be found in almost all Papuan villages by the end of the 1980s. Indigenous Papuans began to stifle; some even perceived the transmigration program as having been implemented to Islamize Papuans, thereby eroding their identity and undermining their traditional authority. Papuan society became increasingly polarized, segmented along ethnic lines, and tensions were increasingly evident in such public spaces as markets, roads, hospitals, and offices. Migrant communities, relying on the skills they had brought with them from their islands of origin, began to dominate the economic sector. Indigenous Papuans, meanwhile, maintained their traditional lifestyles and control of land.

Generally speaking, Muslim migrants had better-developed skills than the indigenous Papuans. They were more diligent and dedicated to their work, using creative means to achieve economic growth. This not only enabled them to ensure their families' survival, but also to improve their quality of life and to expand their production and distribution activities. Regarding this tendency, one indigenous Papuan noted:

Papuans have learned much from migrants, regarding the accumulation of capital and successful mercantile activities. (interview, R5, 2020)

A similar statement was made by an indigenous Papuan academic, who stated:

Papuans have learned much from the modern trade systems used by migrants. Many Papuans had continued to rely on traditional mercantile practices, often failing to repay their loans and thus closing their businesses. (interview, R9, 2020)

The above statement indicates that indigenous Papuans' 'failure' in local markets cannot be attributed solely to migrants' dedication; it is also affected by internal factors. Lekitoo (2003, p. 74) similarly argues that the marginalization of indigenous Papuans in the local economy could not be attributed solely to external factors; internal ones also contributed. One of these is indigenous Papuans' kinship system, which remains strong. As a result of this system, many Papuan merchants give away goods to their kin to support celebrations and other activities.

Lekitoo also contrasts the economic principles of indigenous Papuans and migrant merchants (particularly the Buginese). For the Buginese, wherever a transaction occurs, economic principles must be maintained. As such, goods may not be given away; they must be sold, even to friends and kin. One Buginese merchant told Lekitoo that:

For me, as a Buginese, if family came to me and asked me for money, even if my neck was adorned with gold necklaces and my fingers decorated with golden rings, or if I had millions in the bank, I'd say there's no money. (Lekitoo, 2003, p. 87)



Indigenous Papuans, meanwhile, are willing to give money and financial support to others even when they have limited financial resources. This illustrates the different perspectives held by indigenous Papuans and migrant traders. Indigenous merchants are often bankrupted through such loans, while (Buginese) follow a stricter business paradigm.

At the same time, indigenous Papuans appear complacent, enjoying the benefits of their land ownership (both individual and collective) and passively (rather than actively and creatively) exploiting its resources. They are unwilling to leave their comfort zone, to adopt new approaches, or employ new strategies. As such, migrants have been able to gain control of the Papuan economy - including the agriculture and trade sectors over time. They have become active economic actors, actively producing creative works that could better their socio-economic status (Pabbajah, 2017). However, migrants' success in the economic sector has not been balanced by adaptation; this has further exacerbated tensions.

Indeed, tensions between Papua's indigenous and migrant communities have been high in recent years, and disparity - rather than religious differences - has been the main driver. Ultimately, broad interethnic conflicts may be triggered by much smaller matters. In March 2020, for instance, a migrant truck driver was beaten to death by a mob of indigenous Papuans, resulting in widespread outrage from the victim's island of origin. The previous September, conflict had erupted between indigenous and migrant communities in Wamena and Jayapura, resulting in the collapse of these cities' economies. Although such conflicts have not been religious per se, religious identities have often been problematized when tensions are escalating.

The introduction of different values, religions, cultures, languages, bodies of knowledge, etc. to a land produces a new liminal situation that cannot be readily recognized or understood (Cannella & Huerta, 2019). When migrants enter an area, they require space in which they can create and renegotiate their (physical, behavioral, instinctual) identities and be better accepted by indigenous society (Hughes, 2019). This argument is reinforced by Kong and Woods (2019), who note that migration produces communities that live in close proximity but differ significantly in their practices and beliefs. Through migration, society becomes blended, and communities must regularly (re)negotiate their identities as they interact with each other. In Southeast Asia, including in Indonesia, it is not uncommon for ethnic minorities to differ significantly in terms of culture, demographics, and economic activities (Just, 2017); this is true for Papua as well.

#### The strategies of Migrant Muslims

Migrant Muslims in Papua, being migrants, require particular strategies to survive and thrive. As mentioned above, such strategies are commonly developed by migrant communities around the world as they adapt to life in new places and among different people. This is particularly necessary when migrants face resistance from indigenous communities, who perceive their arrival as disruptive to the existing social structure and order. In the case of Papua, this has become particularly important as tensions have emerged and indigenous Papuans have bristled at seeing migrants' success working 'their' land.

Three main strategies have been employed by Muslim migrants in Papua. *First*, they have sought to control the economy, developing businesses and ventures that are profitable and that accommodate local residents (for instance, by including them in the production process or by employing them in other capacities). Such a strategy has been used to create a sense of mutual dependence (Ajoi, 2016). In this manner, Muslim migrants have ensured that they remain needed by all, including indigenous Papuans. This strategy has been a fruitful one. After interethnic conflict erupted in 2000, migrants were driven away from Jayapura, resulting in the collapse of the local economy. As shops and kiosks were closed due to the ongoing conflict, foodstuffs such as rice were difficult to find; other economic activities were similarly disrupted. Indigenous Papuans were ultimately unable to ensure that their own needs were met, and migrants were welcomed back.

This strategy is a logical one, given that most sectors are closed to migrants. Being ethnic and religious minorities, Muslim migrants require space to compete with others while simultaneously affirming their own identities. Such capacity-building efforts have also been undertaken by Muslim minorities in Singapore in response to rapid technological and social developments. Even though Singapore prohibits veiling in public schools, Muslim migrants still send their children to such schools to ensure that they retain access to education and can remain competitive (Helmiati, 2013, p. 90). In this manner, they continued to be competitive in the Singaporean economy. In the case of Papua, Muslim migrants have orally passed their economic knowledge to their children to ensure their continued control of the economy in the future.

Amongst migrants, there is an understanding that employment in civil service and security is 'dedicated' for indigenous Papuans. As such, migrants focus primarily on economic activities. One Muslim leader, originally from Maluku, stated:

Now, Muslim migrants in Papua recognize that 80% of civil service and security positions are dedicated to Papuans, and only 20% are available to migrants—both Muslim and non-Muslim. The economy, meanwhile, especially the shops and markets, are dominated by migrants— primarily from Sulawesi—and thus have indigenous Papuans have trouble accessing the economy. (interview, R10, 2020)

There exists an 'understanding' regarding employment amongst migrants in Jayapura. This was acknowledged by a notary public, who explained that 'indigenous Papuans are indeed allotted more positions in civil service and the military/police, as well as other government sectors; migrants, because of their skills, prefer working as merchants' (interview, R11, 2020). Migrants' mercantile skills are recognized as better than those of indigenous Papuans, and this is influenced in part by their access to capital. R1 explained:

'[Indigenous Papuans] ability to manage capital is lacking. Merchants from elsewhere, they can usually manage their capital well, and even make plans for future economic development. Migrants can tell how much capital has been used, how much has been spent, how much has been received, and find solutions when goods aren't sold. They have everything ready.' (interview, R1, 2020).

This indicates that migrants have access to opportunities in the economic sector, which they can exploit without disrupting others. Migrants' mercantile skills and capital, as well as their networks with other migrants, have enabled them to exert greater control over the economy than over other sectors.

Second, Muslim migrants have limited their involvement in practical politics, and even they are active in Papuan politics, they avoid becoming its main actors. This decision, based on the principles of accommodation and affirmation, may be seen as being derived from migrants' understanding of their social status as well as the special positioning of indigenous Papuans. Migrant Muslims are not members of the political 'elite'; even when they enter political office, they are the deputies of ignigenous Papuans. Since the implementation of political reform, with the passage of Law No. 21 of 2001 regarding Special Autonomy in Papua, non-indigenous Papuans have been prohibited from serving as governor or deputy governor. Similarly, the Council of Papuan Peoples (Majelis Rakyat Papua, MRP) - as a cultural representation of the Papuan people - has precluded non-indigenous candidates from contesting the seat of mayor/regent in the name of protecting the political rights of indigenous Papuans. The authors note that similar practices are widespread in Indonesia, as they are used to affirm cultural dominance.

Migrants have, however, contested legislative elections at the municipal level, and several have been elected. Of the forty seats in the Jayapura Municipal Parliament for the 2019-2024 term, 27 (67.5%) are held by migrants (predominantly Javanese, Butonese, and Buginese); only 13 seats (32.5%) are held by indigenous Papuans. Most of these migrant politicians are Muslim. This is described in further detail in Table 2 below:

Table 2 above shows that migrants constitute the majority of Jayapura's municipal government, a fact supported by the solidity and solidarity within the migrant community. Migrants from South Sulawesi, for example, have established the Communion of South Sulawesi Families (Kerukunan Keluarga Sulawesi Selatan, KKSS), and have supported members of the legislature in their campaign activities. One informant, an entrepreneur from South Sulawesi, explained:

Amongst migrants, there is a strong sense of solidarity, and so if anyone is running for local parliament they will be supported by other migrants. This can be seen from the number of Buginese and Makassarese migrants in Parliament, many of whom have come from areas with large South Sulawesian communities. (interview, R12, 2020)

The political contributions of migrant communities are further evidenced in empowerment programs, including those designed to teach indigenous Papuans about the rights that have long been neglected by the government. One member of the Jayapura Municipal Government explained:

My colleagues and I, we always advocate for civil society, including those in the markets and the villages that have yet to receive the government's attention. We tell them about their rights, teach them that they have the right to receive government services and facilities. I speak to advance the interests of the people, they who must be defended. (Interview, R13, 2020)

A significant contribution of immigrants can be seen from their efforts to prevent corruption. In the context of Jayapura Regency and Jayapura City, the role of immigrants, especially those who occupy the position of regional heads in implementing good governance, including preventing corruption, can be seen as two inseparable sides of a coin. On the one hand, the presence of newcomers in government, especially at the

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Table 2. Members of the Javapura Municipal Parliament, 2019–2024.

Political Party and Number of Seats	Name	Area of Origin/Ethnicity
Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (3)	Umar Padessa	Sulawesi/Bugis
	Andi Sudirman	Sulawesi/Bugis
	Muh Tamrin Ruddin	Sulawesi/Bugis
Partai Gerindra (3)	H. Syahruddin	Sulawesi/Bugis
	Giovano Pattipawae	Maluku
	Eko Nurjaya	Java
Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (5)Perjuangan	Jhon Y Betaubun	Maluku/Kei
	Mukri Hamadi	Papua
	Theresia Tobi	Sulawesi/Toraja
	Mathelda Yakadewa	Papua
	Naftali Jacobus	West Papua/Sorong
Golongan Karya (6)	Abisai Rollo	Papua
3	Theos Revelino BA	Papua
	Yuli Rahman	Java
	Ulrike Stephanie TL	Maluku
	Yoan Alfredo W	Papua
	Akhmad Sujana	Java
Nasional Demokrat (4)	Silas Youwe	Papua
	Fajar Rizky Wanggai	Papua
	Stanis Hike	East Nusa Tenggara/Flores
	Agustina Itaar	Papua
Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (2)	H. Mursidin	Sulawesi/Bugis
<b>3</b>	H. Muh Tagwin	Sulawesi/Bugis
Partai Amanat Nasional (3)	Berthy CH Rubiak	Papua
	Harhan	Sulawesi/Bugis
	H. Syahril	Sulawesi/Bugis
Partai Demokrat (3)	Timbul Sipahutar	Sumatra/Batak
	Mialina Bembok	Papua
	Maria Pampang	Sulawesi/Toraja
Partai Keadilan Persatuan Indonesia (1)	Ridolf Veep Hassor	Papua
Partai Berkarya (2)	Mahmud, ST	Sulawesi/Bugis
•	Dona Murib	Papua
Partai Solidaritas Indonesia (2)	Laode Mohitu	Sulawesi/Buton
	Ismail B Ladupurab	East Nusa Tenggara
Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (2)	Lina Marlina	Sulawesi/Bugis
•	Hasanuddin	Sulawesi/Bugis
Perindo (2)	Tamara	Sulawesi/Toraja
5-7	Saling	Sulawesi/Bugis
Hati Nurani Rakyat (2)	Sarce Sorreng	Sulawesi/Toraja
, , , , ,	Irmanto Rannu	Sulawesi/Toraja

Source: Decree of the Governor of Papua No. 155/261/2019 regarding the Inauguration of Members of Jayapura Parliament, 2019–2024.

top of government leadership, can give a new athmosphere by becoming a reinforcement for regional heads, who are generally natives. Migrants, apart from having strong social capital, especially in political networks to the center of power in Jakarta, also have better abilities than natives. Migrants have higher levels of education and have better experience in the bureaucracy. On the other hand, the existence of migrants with their advantages has become the basis for discrimination and strict separation between immigrants and natives. Although the constitution has provided ample space for indigenous people to be involved in the bureaucracy, they still have to struggle for recognition. One of the underlying factors is the historical stigma built up in political discourse about Papuans who are backward, not educated enough and have low skills. Legislation which is a political decision for the open participation of

indigenous people is not enough to erase collective memory and change the general attitude about indigenous people as second class society.

Third, establishing open communication. Muslim migrants have avoided closing themselves off, embracing the principles of affirmativeness and collectiveness to ensure continued integration into local society (especially amongst indigenous Papuans). Even as they have established their own enclaves, which are often (but not always) quite distant from indigenous settlements, they have avoided exclusivism (lecovich, 2011). They have mingled with others, frequently taking advantage of increased mobility to interact with their indigenous neighbors in the markets, streets, and public spaces of Papua. Interactions are fluid. However, it cannot be denied that tensions remain, manifested in displacement, systemic discrimination, and rumors of neo-colonial intentions (Jubba et al., 2019).

Further complicating the situation, Muslim migrants in Papua do not share a single ethnic background or ethnicity; they are not only Javanese, but also Buginese, Minang, Madurese, Batak, Minahasan, Torajan, etc. Papua, especially in urban areas with large numbers of migrants, is a heterogeneous society in which diverse communities interact. Open communication is maintained, as are open social interactions; members of different communities may even intermarry readily. This openness facilitates economic activities and other ones. This can be seen, for instance, when migrants establish settlements near indigenous Papuans' communities. This is illustrated in Figure 1 below, which shows the distribution of indigenous and migrant communities in Jayapura, Papua.

From Figure 1, it can be seen that indigenous and migrant communities may be located in close proximity. Of the forty villages and subdistricts in Jayapura, twenty (orange sign) are identified as migrant villages; another seven (black sign) are identified as indigenous, being home to no migrants.

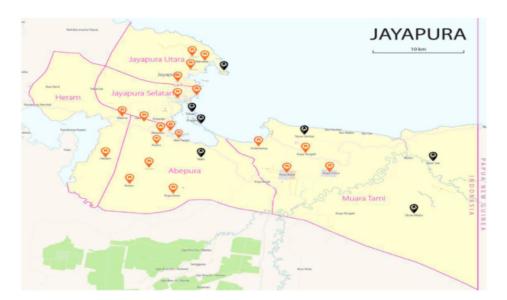


Figure 1. Map of migrant villages in Jayapura City. Source: www.maps.google.com, completed by researchers, 2021.

#### Conclusion

In Papua, Muslim migrants have employed layered strategies, involving different groups in different locations. However, they have generally focused more on economic activities than political ones. This reflects early migrants' main motivation: the achievement of personal betterment and financial stability through economic activities. This article has made three findings. First, Muslim migrants have contributed significantly to Papuan development, having not only earned a living but also fulfilled the material needs of the Papuan people. Their continued dominance of the economy may be understood as ensuring their continued survival in Papua, as well as guaranteeing their sustained contributions to Papuan society. Muslim migrants have dedicated themselves to their activities, strived to achieve self-betterment, and achieved economic success by continuously recognizing and seizing new opportunities.

Second, the success of Muslim migrants has been perceived diversely, with said perceptions reflecting particular regionalist sentiments. Indigenous Papuans' responses cannot be separated from their accumulated grievances with the national government and its failure to develop (or even its malignant ignorance of) Papua. This has been further fueled by historical transgressions against the Papuan people, including the use of the military to repress indigenous separatist movements. Trans-migrants have thus been perceived, at least to some extent, as the vanguard of a neo-colonialist power and as agents sent to conquer Papua without bloodshed. This has complicated the social, economic, political, and religious interactions in the region.

Third, Muslim migrants' decision to focus on economic activities has enabled them to create and maintain spaces for seeking acceptance. The economy is a vital sector, and thus it must accommodate the needs and interests of all of Papua's residents. Migrants have thus worked incessantly towards the advancement and development of Papua. With limited access to the political sector, Muslim migrants have used the economy as a means of realizing change and asserting their identities and their integrality in Papuan society. Migrants' economic activities have enabled them to create stability not only for themselves, but also for the indigenous peoples of Papua. Facilitating these activities, they have remained open in their communications and interactions with persons of diverse backgrounds. Public spaces in Papua offer all residents, both migrant and indigenous, a venue to freely interact and communicate, thereby thawing existing tensions and minimizing the potential for new ones.

This study has remained focused on the strategies used by Muslim migrants to persevere and overcome severe obstacles. Its findings, thus, would be complemented by an investigation of the strategies through which open communication between communities with different religious backgrounds can be created and maintained. Such a study, intended to better understand the relations between migrant and indigenous Papuans, would be further complemented by efforts to create a shared commitment amongst communities. Only then, when both migrant and indigenous Papuans recognize themselves as citizens with equal rights and obligations (particularly within the economic and political sectors), can conflict be avoided.

#### Note

1. Jayapura is home to several enclaves that are named after their inhabitants (i.e. *Kampung Jawa, Kampung Enrekang/Bugis,* etc.).



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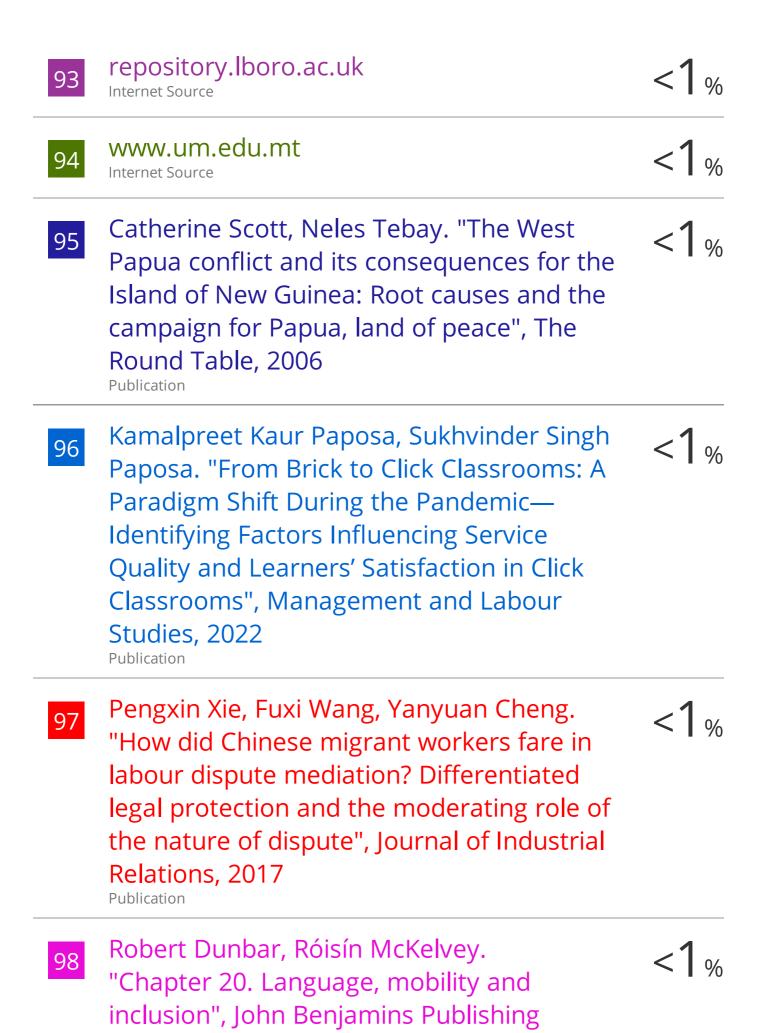
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