



Papuan Indigenous Women in a Patriarchal Culture: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the position and role of Indigenous Papuan women (OAP) in the context of patriarchal culture in Sebyar Rejosari Village, Tomu District, Teluk Bintuni Regency, West Papua. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection techniques including observation, in-depth interviews with ten informants (married and unmarried women), and documentation. The results of the study indicate that patriarchal culture significantly disadvantages women, as evidenced by their limited access to education and healthcare, both physical and mental. These limitations lead to stress and feelings of low self-esteem among OAP women. The author hopes for a shift through empowering women via higher education and equal access to resources. This research supports postcolonial feminist theory, which emphasizes the need for the decolonization of gender thinking. The best solution is to integrate local values with empowerment programs to improve the position of women in society. Independent and well-educated women are expected to contribute significantly to the development of their communities.

Keywords: indigenous Papuan women, patriarchal culture, a qualitative study.

1. INTRODUCTION

Patriarchal culture refers to a social system in which power and authority are primarily held by men, and women are considered a subordinate group in various aspects of life, such as politics, economics, and culture. Within the framework of patriarchal culture, values, norms, and social practices often position women in domestic or subordinate roles, while limiting their participation in the public sphere. This patriarchal theory has been widely developed in feminist studies, where scholars such as Sylvia Walby (1990) argue that patriarchy is not only a system of personal or interpersonal power but also a broader social structure that governs the distribution of power in society. (Walby, 1990) in her book *Theorizing Patriarchy* identifies six interconnected forms of structure within patriarchy: power in work, the state, the family, violence, and the media. In this context, patriarchy often serves as the foundation for long-lasting gender inequality in society. Additionally, social theories such as Raewyn Connell's (2005) concept of "hegemonic masculinity" add an important dimension by explaining how dominant masculinity norms are upheld and reinforced by social institutions, such as education, family, and media. The concept of *hegemonic masculinity* shows that patriarchal societies elevate idealized values of masculinity, which indirectly suppress women's roles and label women who do not conform to these norms as "deviant." International studies on patriarchal culture also highlight its negative impacts on women, including domestic violence, low political participation, and inequality in employment and wages. For Example, research by (Kabeer, 2016) in the *Development and Change* journal shows that patriarchal culture

continues to reinforce gender inequality despite policies aimed at reducing discrimination against women in many countries. Overall, patriarchy is not merely an individual or domestic issue, but a structural system that requires profound social change for gender equality to be achieved.

Figure 1: Map of West Papua in Eastern Indonesia



Source: (Munro & Baransano, 2023)

In Sebyar Rejosari Village, Tomu District, Teluk Bintuni Regency, West Papua Province, married indigenous Papuan women (OAP) are faced with heavy demands to perform domestic chores, earn a living, and manage the household's needs. The dominant patriarchal tradition in the area compels women to always submit and obey their husband's family, leaving no space for them to express opinions or voice their personal desires. For instance, unmarried OAP women often have to yield to their male siblings in accessing education, a practice that reflects deep-rooted gender inequality. In many cases, OAP women face restrictions in accessing the same educational opportunities as men, hindering their potential and personal development. These findings align with several studies indicating that gender inequality in certain areas of Papua significantly affects women's chances of attaining education and improving their socio-economic status. (Walianto, 2020).

In such a situation, OAP women have no space to express themselves, develop their potential, or plan for a better future. The deeply entrenched patriarchal culture denies women the opportunity to attain education and realize their potential, even though women should have the same rights to grow and pursue their dreams. The dowry, often a requirement in marriage, further worsens women's position, turning them into transactional objects viewed merely as commodities in social and economic exchanges. While the concept of dowry is seen as part of tradition, it often marginalizes values of equality and human rights, placing women in a weaker position and making them vulnerable to exploitation (McDougall, 2021).

Furthermore, this situation leads OAP women to be trapped in a cycle of poverty and dependency, where they lack sufficient access to improve their quality of life independently.

In many cases, women bound by these deeply patriarchal social structures are unable to make important decisions in their lives, whether it pertains to education, career, or even choosing a life partner. Therefore, empowering women in Papua must be taken seriously, considering the still-strong patriarchal culture in their social life, as well as to provide equal opportunities in education and personal development for OAP women.

Based on the statement above, this study aims to explore the position and role of women within the context of a deeply patriarchal culture. The patriarchal culture in Papua, which is deeply rooted in indigenous society, places women in a subordinate position, where men dominate almost all aspects of social and economic life. In many cases, women lack control over important decisions in the family and community, such as the management of natural resources and land (Kogoya, 2020). This study is important because, despite the significant contributions women make in everyday life, their roles are often marginalized and not formally recognized.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The terms 'perempuan' (women) and 'wanita' (ladies) are often used in discussions about women to refer to their bodies, the opposite sex, men, family, and age. In some categories, these terms essentially convey the same meaning, although there are subtle differences. Indigenous Papuans are defined as people belonging to the Melanesian racial group, which, according to Article 2 of the Special Regional Regulation of Papua Province No. 14 of 2016, consists of the indigenous tribes of Papua Province and/or those who have been recognized and acknowledged as indigenous Papuans by other indigenous Papuans.

One of the easternmost provinces in Indonesia is Papua, whose name is derived from the Malay term 'pua-pua,' meaning 'curly' (Koentjaraningrat, 1993 cit. Rumansara, 2015). Papua is classified under the Melanesoid race, a subrace of the Negroid race (Soeroso, 2008). The distinguishing features of the Negroid race include curly hair, wide lips, broad noses, and brown to black eyes, while the Caucasoid race is characterized by straight or wavy hair, thin lips, and a prominent nose (Lazi, et al., 2017). Anthropometric measurements of height and skull size among the Papuan tribes have been conducted by several physical anthropologists; however, these studies have yet to provide a comprehensive description of the physical characteristics of the Papuan tribes (Rumsara, 2015).

In the families of Indigenous Papuans, women hold an important position. They not only fulfill the role of mothers who manage the household and children but are also the primary breadwinners, serving as the backbone of the family. The economic activities of Papuan women

can be seen, particularly in traditional markets across Papua, where they sell various agricultural products such as areca nuts and fruits. The income from these sales is used to help cover family expenses, including children's education. Given the strategic role of these Papuan women, they represent an ideal target for community empowerment programs aimed at improving family welfare. Empowering Papuan women means empowering families, empowering communities, and ultimately empowering society (Panga and Ginting 2021).

The term "patriarchy" was first applied to the concept of a "patriarchal household," which refers to a "family controlled by men" (Israpil, 2017). The literal meaning of the word "patriarchy" is "patriarch" or "fatherly power." Alfian Rokhmansyah (2013) writes in his book *Pengantar Gender dan Feminisme* that the term "patriarchy" originates from a structure where men play the role of the sole, central rulers, controlling everything. The patriarchal system, which dominates society and serves as the root cause of gender injustice and inequality, impacts many aspects of human activity (Irma & Hasanah, 2014). As Walby (2019) explains in her research, patriarchy operates within modern society by distinguishing between its presence in political, economic, and familial institutions. This framework can help understand how patriarchal influences are present in traditional societies, such as among the Indigenous Papuans (Orang Asli Papua).

Many studies link patriarchy to issues of gender inequality, gender-based violence, and restrictions on women's rights. For example, (Manoby et al., 2023) highlight that in the context of patriarchal culture in Papua, women often have limited rights over natural resources and land. Research shows that while women are involved in resource management, they only have management rights, while ownership rights remain with men. This creates profound gender injustice and limits women's access to resources that are vital for their livelihoods.

The article *"Voting Rights of Indigenous Papuan Women in a Patriarchal Culture"* explains how the patriarchal system in Papua limits women's voting rights. The research reveals that women face numerous obstacles in expressing their political rights, influenced by factors such as education, economy, and culture. Despite efforts to increase women's participation in decision-making processes, significant gaps remain that need to be addressed to achieve gender equality at the local level. (Merina, 2024).

The concept of gender equality is referred to as emancipation. In Indonesia, a movement known as women's empowerment seeks to free women from their dependence on others, especially men (Anggraini, 2021). Emancipation is a feminist movement that combines the idea of equal rights for women and has evolved into a coordinated effort to realize women's human rights, beginning with awareness of the oppression and exploitation of women in all

sectors of society, including politics, economics, education, and social life (Wahono & Sumartini., 2015).

In the article written by Danomira and Safirah (2022), it discusses the educational diplomacy efforts conducted by PT Freeport Indonesia and AMINEF to promote gender equality in Papua. The study shows that although there are scholarship programs for women, many obstacles still exist, such as the lack of gender equality policies among the government, companies, and educational institutions. This results in low female participation in these programs, which hinders their potential to contribute economically and socially (Danomira & Safirah, 2017).

Judith Butler, a philosopher and gender theorist, argues in her book *Gender Trouble* (1990) that gender is not something inherent or natural to individuals, but rather a "performance" or act that is repeatedly enacted. According to Butler, gender identity is constructed through a series of social actions practiced by individuals, such as dressing, speaking, and interacting. For Butler, gender is a social construct that is not fixed, but dynamic and fluid, continuously shaped by societal norms and individual practices.

The research conducted by Sullivan (2018) demonstrates that in many traditional societies, cultural norms shape gender as something fixed and non-negotiable (Sullivan, 2018). In indigenous Papuan communities, women are often expected to adhere to predefined roles, which restricts their freedom to make life choices. Furthermore, Mitchell's (2020) research shows how certain cultural practices in Papua place women in subordinate positions within the household and the broader society (Mitchell, 2020).

3. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach, which is employed to gain a deep understanding of experiences, views, or specific social realities (Creswell, 2014). In this research, the focus is on observing and understanding the experiences, perspectives, and challenges faced by indigenous Papuan women in the context of a patriarchal culture that impacts their access to education, physical health, and even mental health. The primary data sources are obtained from the government and the local community. Research on Indigenous Papuan Women in a Patriarchal Culture is particularly unique because the study is conducted in the Sebyar Rejosari village, which is located in an area rich in biodiversity. This village is surrounded by mangrove forests and coral reef ecosystems, which support the local community's livelihoods and serve as an attraction for ecotourism.

The focus of the research refers to the limits of the study, indicating that within the research area, there are phenomena related to location, individuals, and activities, but not all locations, individuals, and activities are observed. Therefore, to make choices, there needs to be a limitation called the research focus. Hence, the focus of this study is on Indigenous Papuan Women in a Patriarchal Culture. The researcher will focus specifically on analyzing how the patriarchal culture in Papuan society affects women's sectors of life, namely education and health. The determination of research subjects was done using *purposive sampling*, where informants were selected based on specific criteria relevant to the focus and goals of the study (Snyder, 2019). In this case, the researcher selected five married women and five unmarried women, as they were considered to offer different perspectives on their experiences within the patriarchal culture in Papua.

The data collection techniques in this qualitative research include observation, interviews, and documentation. The data are analyzed using several steps in accordance with the theory of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2019), namely: first, data reduction, which involves sorting and filtering data that are relevant to the research focus; second, data presentation, where the reduced data are systematically organized to facilitate interpretation; and third, drawing conclusions or verification, where the researcher derives findings based on patterns or themes that emerge from the data (Miles et al., 2019). A triangulation approach is used to test the credibility, confirmability, and transferability of the data. Triangulation is carried out by comparing data obtained through field observations, in-depth interviews with Indigenous Papuan women, and analysis of local documents related to policies on education, health, and gender roles in the community. This aims to enhance the credibility of the findings, as explained by Lincoln and Guba (1985), who state that triangulation increases data validity by utilizing various sources of information and perspectives. Additionally, confirmability is tested by involving community members to provide feedback on the data interpretations, ensuring that the conclusions drawn are accountable and consistent with the local context. For transferability, the researcher provides a detailed description of the social, cultural, and economic context of Sebyar Rejosari Village, which allows readers to assess the extent to which the findings can be applied to other locations with similar characteristics (Patton, 2002).

4. RESULTS

Education

This study reveals important findings related to the unequal access to education experienced by women from the Indigenous Papuan (OAP) communities. The research indicates that, in the context of a strong patriarchal culture still prevalent in many Papuan societies, OAP women are often not prioritized in receiving quality education. In many cases, education for women is considered less important than education for men, who are viewed as the head of the family and community leaders. As a result, OAP women are often restricted in accessing formal education. Moreover, traditional values that regard women as household managers and caretakers of children exacerbate this situation, where they are seen as unnecessary to pursue higher education or even basic education. These limitations are further intensified by inadequate educational infrastructure in remote areas, where schools are more accessible to men, while women face physical and social barriers, such as long distances, lack of safety, and domestic responsibilities, which add complexity to their circumstances. In many cases, parents or families often prefer to send male children to school rather than female children, under the belief that women will soon marry and fulfil their traditional roles at home. This research highlights that this issue is not just about physical access to education, but also stems from a social system that discriminates against OAP women, preventing them from obtaining equal opportunities in education and developing their potential.

Health

a. Physical Health

The findings of this study show that Indigenous Papuan (OAP) women are in a highly vulnerable position regarding physical health issues. The primary factor exacerbating this situation is the dominance of patriarchy within their communities, where women are often positioned as weaker and do not have equal access to healthcare services. In many cases, they face structural and cultural barriers that limit their ability to obtain adequate medical care. For example, many OAP women lack sufficient access to healthcare facilities due to long distances, limited resources, and the shortage of medical personnel who are sensitive to the specific needs of women. Additionally, the traditional roles assigned to women in patriarchal societies, such as caregiving and household work, often sacrifice their physical health. Gender-based violence, both physical and psychological, further adds to their physical health issues, as women tend to carry a heavy emotional burden but rarely receive adequate medical or psychosocial

support. The study also found that limited knowledge about women's health rights and a low level of awareness about the importance of reproductive health further worsens the situation. Overall, OAP women face significant challenges in maintaining their physical health, and patriarchal culture exacerbates these conditions by reinforcing the inequalities in access to and provision of healthcare.

b. **Mental Health**

Research conducted in the Sebyar Rejosari Village, Tomu District, Teluk Bintuni Regency, West Papua, revealed that OAP women face major challenges in terms of their mental health. One of the key findings in this study is the low self-esteem experienced by OAP women, which is caused by a social environment that does not support them in self-actualization. The strong patriarchal culture in the local community places women in a subordinate position, where their rights are often neglected, and they are limited in accessing opportunities for personal and professional development. The environment, which does not provide space for women to speak out or make important decisions in their lives, further worsens their psychological condition. This situation exacerbates the mental health of OAP women, with many feeling alienated and trapped in traditional roles that do not allow them to freely explore their potential. The study also shows that OAP women often feel isolated, both within their families and communities, and they lack sufficient support to cope with the pressures arising from strong gender stereotypes. As a result, many of them experience stress, anxiety, and feelings of low self-worth, which in turn affect their overall quality of life. Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of changing existing cultural and social norms to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for OAP women to achieve better mental health and fully develop their potential.

5. DISCUSSION

Education

The strong patriarchal culture in Papua has created significant inequality in educational access for Indigenous Papuan (OAP) women. In societies dominated by patriarchal values, women are often considered less important in education compared to men. This is due to the belief that men have the primary role as heads of households and leaders, while women are positioned as supporters within the domestic sphere. Data shows that 70% of informants revealed that, when there are economic limitations, the decision to send a male child to school is prioritized. In Sebyar Rejosari Village, only about 35% of

women complete secondary education, while the figure for men reaches 60%. This reflects a clear gender bias in educational access.

Through in-depth interviews with ten informants, it was found that many Indigenous Papuan (OAP) women face various obstacles in accessing education. Married women often have to prioritize domestic responsibilities, such as caring for children and managing household tasks, while unmarried women face social pressure to marry instead of continuing their education. One informant stated:

" I want to go to school further, but my parents said it's better for me to get married and help my husband" (Informan 3).

This condition highlights how existing social norms place women in a subordinate position, where education is seen as incompatible with their traditional roles.

The patriarchal culture in Papua is deeply rooted and affects various aspects of life, including education. In the local perspective, men are viewed as the heads of households and the heirs of family lineage, making them more deserving of better education. This aligns with the findings of Sonya M. Uniplaita, who states that women are not given the opportunity to demonstrate their role in social life, particularly in the context of education (Musyarrofah & Sidra, 2019). When women attempt to pursue education, they often face social stigma and pressure from their families to return to their traditional roles as wives and mothers.

Current conditions show that despite government efforts to improve access to education for women through mandatory education programs, the challenges posed by patriarchal culture continue to hinder progress. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2021), the Human Development Index (HDI) reveals a significant gender disparity in Papua, where the HDI for men reaches 69.27, while the HDI for women is only 63.203. This reflects that, although education is nominally a right for all citizens, in reality, women are still marginalized.

Postcolonial feminist theory can be applied to analyze this phenomenon. This theory emphasizes how patriarchal social and cultural structures not only affect individuals but also shape a broader system in which women are continuously marginalized. In the context of this research, patriarchal culture not only serves as a barrier to access education but also reinforces negative stereotypes about women's abilities. This perspective highlights the intersection of gender, colonial history, and cultural practices, providing insight into how historical power dynamics continue to influence the opportunities and roles available to women in contemporary Papua.

The debate regarding access to education for Indigenous Papuan women (OAP) often centers around the need for a shift in societal views on the role of women. On one hand, there is an argument that education is key to empowering women and transforming existing social structures. On the other hand, some argue that change should be gradual, taking into account local cultural values to avoid resistance from the community. This highlights a tension between advocating for gender equality and respecting traditional norms, with the challenge being how to balance the two in a way that fosters sustainable and meaningful change for women's education without causing cultural backlash.

Overall, this study shows that the inequality in educational access for Indigenous Papuan women (OAP) in Sebyar Rejosari Village is the result of deeply rooted and systemic patriarchy. To achieve gender equality in education, collaborative efforts are needed between the government, civil society organizations, and local communities to break the stigma and create an environment that supports education for all genders. This calls for a comprehensive approach that addresses both the cultural and structural barriers, while promoting policies that empower women and challenge traditional gender roles.

Health

a. Physical Health

This study focuses on the physical health condition of Indigenous Papuan women (OAP) in Sebyar Village, Rejosari, Tomu District, Teluk Bintuni Regency, West Papua. Through interviews with ten informants, consisting of both married and unmarried OAP women, it was found that these women are in a vulnerable position regarding their physical health. This situation is exacerbated by the dominance of patriarchy in their community.

Based on the data collected, several key factors that influence the physical health conditions of OAP women include :

1) Limited Access to Healthcare Services

One of the main factors contributing to the poor physical health of OAP women is the limited access to healthcare services. Most women, both married and unmarried, expressed difficulties in reaching healthcare facilities due to long distances, high costs, and inadequate transportation. One married informant mentioned,

“We can only seek medical help if someone helps with the costs; if not, we have to wait until the condition worsens.”

2) Traditional Burdens as Family Caregivers

In OAP society, women often bear the dual role of homemaker and primary family caregiver. Even unmarried women are expected to assist with domestic chores. This burden is physically exhausting and also affects their mental health. An unmarried informant shared,

“Even though I’m not married, I still have to take care of my younger siblings and help my parents; this work is very tiring.”

3) Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a serious issue faced by OAP women, manifesting in physical, psychological, and sexual violence. Interviews with several married informants revealed that some of them experience domestic violence, which worsens their physical and mental health. One married informant said,

“My husband often gets angry and hits me, which makes me feel pain, but I can’t do much because I’m afraid he will divorce me.”

4) Lack of Knowledge About Women’s Health Rights

The lack of knowledge about women’s health rights is another factor that exacerbates their health conditions. Many OAP women are unaware of their right to receive adequate and free healthcare services. Most of them also do not understand the importance of regular health check-ups or contraceptive use. One married informant revealed,

“I didn’t know I could get free health check-ups at the health center. I just go to the village midwife when there’s an issue.”

The patriarchy in OAP (Original Papuan) communities plays a significant role in exacerbating the health conditions of women. In this context, women are often positioned as inferior in the social structure, causing their voices and needs to be overlooked. This is evident in social norms that require women to prioritize family needs over their own personal needs. As a result, they neglect their health in order to fulfill societal expectations. There is also a stigma surrounding healthcare, where many women prefer traditional healers over medical professionals. This traditional belief often hinders them from receiving the necessary medical care.

Feminist theory can be used to analyze the relationship between patriarchy and the health conditions of OAP women. This theory emphasizes how social and cultural structures discriminate against women and limit their access to resources, including

healthcare services. In the context of this research, some key points of feminist theory include:

- a. Power and Control, where patriarchy gives men the authority to make decisions regarding family health, often disregarding the views and needs of women.
- b. Social Structure, where OAP women are trapped in a social structure that places them in a vulnerable position. This creates a cycle of injustice where women not only face health issues but also lack control over decisions related to their own health.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the physical health of OAP women in Kampung Sebyar is highly vulnerable due to various interconnected factors. The dominance of patriarchy exacerbates this situation through limited access to healthcare services, traditional caregiving burdens, gender-based violence, and a lack of knowledge about health rights. Therefore, multidimensional interventions are needed to improve access to healthcare services and empower women to make more independent decisions regarding their own health.

b. Mental Health

The research findings indicate that OAP women face significant challenges related to mental health. Many of them experience stress, anxiety, and feelings of low self-worth. These issues arise from the low self-confidence that results from the restrictions placed on their roles within society. The strong patriarchal culture positions women in a subordinate role, where they are often seen as objects and lack a voice in important decision-making processes, both within the family and the community.

Based on the interviews and observations, it was found that OAP women in Sebyar Rejosari Village face significant challenges regarding their mental health. One of the main findings is the low self-confidence, largely caused by the patriarchal culture that restricts their roles. This situation is exacerbated by a social environment that is unsupportive and limited access to opportunities and their rights. As a result, many women experience stress, anxiety, and feelings of low self-worth.

In general, OAP women in Sebyar Rejosari Village face various difficulties that significantly affect their psychological well-being. Based on the data gathered, the majority of informants reported feelings of isolation, frustration, and a lack of social support, which contribute to high levels of stress and anxiety. They feel that their roles in the family and community are more limited than those of men, and they often do not have the space to express their opinions or make decisions regarding their own lives.

This is in line with a married informant who stated:

“I feel unappreciated because decisions are always made by my husband. Sometimes I feel like I have no voice in the house, and it makes me feel pressured.”

Meanwhile, an unmarried informant revealed:

“In this village, women are seen only as homemakers. I want to work, but no one supports me. Everyone says it's not a woman's place.”

One of the major issues faced by OAP women in Kampung Sebyar Rejosari is the lack of social support from the surrounding community. Based on the data collected, most informants expressed feeling that there is no space for them to grow. Although some OAP women have the desire to start a business or pursue further education, they feel that opportunities are extremely limited due to a culture that sees women as being meant to stay at home. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of facilities and resources that support women's empowerment in the village.

An informant who wishes to work outside the home shared:

“I want to learn and work, but there are no opportunities for that here. Everything done outside the home is considered not women's work.”

The research data also indicates that women's access to mental health services is extremely limited. Many informants expressed that they do not know who to turn to when feeling anxious or depressed, and there are no adequate facilities to support their mental well-being. This leads to difficulties in managing stress and feelings of low self-esteem.

The mental health challenges faced by OAP women in Kampung Sebyar Rejosari are clearly intertwined with the dominant patriarchal culture, an unsupportive social environment, and limited access to opportunities and rights. While some may argue that the primary factors influencing women's mental health are economic and social inadequacies, it is important to consider these alongside the cultural factors that restrict women's roles.

On the other hand, it can also be suggested that changes in culture and societal mindsets can help mitigate mental health issues for women. More inclusive education, women's empowerment, and better access to economic and social opportunities are expected to alter society's views on the role of women, creating a more supportive environment for them to thrive.

From this discussion, it can be concluded that OAP women in Kampung Sebyar Rejosari face significant mental health challenges, influenced by patriarchal culture, an unsupportive social environment, and limited access to their rights. These three factors are interconnected and exacerbate the psychological condition of women, causing stress, anxiety, and feelings of low self-worth. Therefore, interventions are needed that involve cultural change, improved access to opportunities, and empowerment of women to address these challenges.

6. CONCLUSION

This research reveals that the patriarchal culture in Kampung Sebyar Rejosari, Tomu District, Teluk Bintuni Regency, West Papua, is heavily biased against women. Three key aspects that are highlighted in the study are education, physical health, and mental health.

- a. **Education:** Patriarchal culture limits women's access to education on par with men. Many Indigenous Papuan women (OAP) are forced to end their education prematurely due to domestic demands or social norms that place them in traditional roles. This results in a low level of education and skills among women, which in turn limits their opportunities to contribute economically and socially.
- b. **Physical Health:** Access to healthcare is also affected by patriarchal culture. Women often lack autonomy in making decisions regarding their own health, including access to necessary healthcare services. Inability to access adequate healthcare can lead to prolonged physical health issues.
- c. **Mental Health:** The most significant impact is seen in the mental health of OAP women. Pressure from patriarchal norms creates high levels of stress and anxiety, as well as feelings of low self-esteem due to the lack of social support and recognition of their contributions to society.

The author hopes for a significant shift in societal views on the role of women. According to postcolonial feminist theory, change must involve the decolonization of gender and power thinking. The author does not oppose this theory; on the contrary, this research supports the argument that achieving gender equality requires a collective effort within the community to dismantle existing patriarchal norms.

In the context of OAP culture, the best solution is to integrate local values with a women's empowerment approach. This can be done through educational programs that respect tradition while providing the necessary knowledge and skills to enhance women's status in

society. Additionally, involving traditional leaders and community heads in dialogues about the importance of gender equality can accelerate positive change.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that women must be empowered to be independent and pursue higher education. Education is the key to unlocking opportunities for women to actively participate in various aspects of life. By improving education levels, OAP women will not only be able to improve their own quality of life but also contribute to the development of society as a whole.

Thus, awareness of the importance of women's roles in society must be continually raised so that patriarchal culture can be transformed into a more just and equitable system for all genders.

LIMITATION

This study is focused solely on OAP women in Kampung Sebyarejosari, Tomu District, Teluk Bintuni Regency, West Papua Province. The main objective of this research is to explore the conditions, roles, and challenges faced by OAP women in their daily lives in this region. The informants involved in this study consisted of 5 married women and 5 unmarried women. The selection of these informants was based on the consideration that both groups of women could provide diverse perspectives on social, cultural, and economic life in Kampung Sebyarejosari. However, it is expected that in future studies, a broader representation of informants from other districts in Teluk Bintuni Regency will be included. Future research should also aim to involve more women from various life backgrounds, such as those with different levels of education, as well as women residing in different villages or districts across West Papua Province. This would provide a more comprehensive and representative picture of the overall condition of OAP women in the region.

It is also hoped that future research will explore other aspects, such as the role of women in the economy, politics, and their access to education and healthcare services, by involving more informants from various villages or districts in West Papua.

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