

Dynamics of intercultural communication: Papuans in Gorontalo

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Abstract

This research discusses the dynamics of communication between two different cultural groups applied by ten Papuan student informants in Gorontalo and at the same time identifies that Gorontalo, which according to the researcher's observations has no cases, information, incidents of discrimination against Papuans, has the possibility of discrimination. This research uses Mark Orbe's Co-cultural theory with an interpretive phenomenological analysis study. The results of the research show that the minority group of Papuan students in Gorontalo uses communication dynamics using accommodation, which is a form of establishing good ties with the majority group without losing the original identity of Papuans. Assimilation is also the second dominant dynamics used by Papuan students in Gorontalo, namely adopting the culture of the dominant group. And there is discrimination in the Gorontalo area even though there are no records, cases or even official information.

Keywords: papuan students, discriminative, co-cultural, interpretative phenomenological analysis.

Introduction

Papuan students in Gorontalo started in 1988 through an educational network. They continued to grow every academic year as education continued and finally they were able to form an organization which was protected by the Gorontalo city regional government and structured (Pigome, 2017) According to research on internet networks, there were no cases of discrimination or racism by the Gorontalo community against Papuan students (Karsum, 2019). According to Ntobuo & Nteya (2023), the level of peer social support for Papuan students in Gorontalo is at a high criterion, and there is a positive relationship between Papuan and non-Papuan students in Gorontalo.

Karim (2019) explained that even though there had been deviations in communication between Papuan students and the people of Gorontalo, it did not cause discrimination between the two. Looking from the perspective of student life in research conducted by Pigome (2017) Papuan students who were in the city of Gorontalo from 1998 to 2016 have never had a record of having disputes with the native people of Gorontalo city. Papuan students in Gorontalo have reasons why they study in Gorontalo, this is because the universities in Gorontalo can be said to be good and the cost of living in Gorontalo can be said to be cheaper compared to other cities (Ntobuo & Nteya, 2023).

Papua and Gorontalo are two regions that have different cultural backgrounds, as research conducted by Karim (2019) states that intercultural communication between Papuan students and the people of Gorontalo is distorted and some still understand the reasons for their respective regional accents. use Indonesian. The perception and communication carried out by Papuan students shows careful communication because they predict that the person they are talking to will be afraid of being offended, while the perception and motivation of the Gorontalo community shows openness to communication because they are curious about Papuan people. So, seeing that these two groups have both different perceptions and motivations in communicating, it can be said that their communication is at an uncertain level.

However, when some people are asked about Papuans, they feel intrigued, especially by the dialect that Papuans have (Karim, 2019) Usually there are deviations in messages between Papuan students and the Gorontalo community and also Gorontalo students. This is because the cultural background of Papuan people is to convey information or even interact in a rushed way so that it is less clear and this creates stereotypes by building discriminatory

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behavior between one another. people and other people where in problems like this the community must be able to judge intelligently and intensely, especially as they are people who have a process of adapting. This is in line with what was said by (Wijanarko & Syafiq, 2012) that discriminatory behavior towards Papuan students can arise from when Papuan students always have difficulty in interacting because they are afraid of being ignored and misunderstood by other people, which then causes small seeds. racism, those stereotypes arise against them.

Apart from having an impact on Papuan people's stress and worry about other people's views of them, the emergence of stereotypes and discrimination is because they have real obstacles, namely difficulty in choosing new environments and socializing. This opinion is in line with research conducted by (Sari & Samsuri, 2020) assuming that Students who migrate are sometimes or even rarely found to have difficulty joining or adapting to a new environment, which has an impact on their social life and ultimately seems to only be joining other Papuans. From this it can be seen that discriminatory behavior may occur because there are many other trigger factors that can arise for this phenomenon.

According to Irianto (2020) students from Papua who migrate to various regions often experience discrimination from the local community in a mild form because according to them there are differences in language, physical characteristics and their habits which are in contrast to the local community. Apart from that, the most striking thing about the difference between non-Papuan Indonesians and Papuan people is skin color (Sari & Samsuri, 2020) so that they can experience physical discrimination, experiences or tendencies toward something negative (Khakim, 2020). The existence of increasingly developing times means that forms of discrimination itself can be accepted in various ways or because of generational differences, one of which is in research conducted by (Tanaga, 2018) although all minorities are discriminated against, there are some whose forms of discrimination are soft and accompanied by physical or disputes. extensively.

Affirmation The city of minimal discrimination in Gorontalo still has another side that is not widely visible to the public. As reported by (Moko, 2019) the problem of racism against the Papuan people is also felt in Gorontalo. In the field or in practical daily life, they often face verbal discrimination, so they strongly condemn acts of racism against Papuans by holding demonstrations. Apart from that, there is a statement that problems related to the threat of national disintegration leading to the separation demanded by people from all over the world have quite a large influence in Gorontalo. Apart from that, based on researchers' interviews with several Papuan students in the city of Gorontalo, Papuan students often experience verbal discrimination such as physical abuse. The difficulty of finding genuine friends from Gorontalo is one of their worries, so it often seems that they only interact in groups with fellow Papuans. Discrimination like this is caused by bad stereotypes that have long been known to the public, such as people who like to drink, are noisy when sleeping at night and don't even pay for meals (Ajy, 2022) Not only that, the discrimination cases in Malang in 2019 also added to the stereotypes of Papuan students, where some residents in Gorontalo also considered them to be the same as Papuan people in Malang

This problem is increasingly complex with the political realities that plague Papuan society. Suryawan's research (Ajy, 2022) shows the fact that Papua was once a de facto independent country but because of geopolitical interests between Indonesia, America, the Netherlands and Australia, integration was carried out (Suryawan, 2013). This is the reason (language concept) (Meteray, 2012), Papuan people have dual nationalism. An attitude of self-denial towards the existence of Papua from parts of Indonesia. (Drooglever, 2010) sees this problem of dual nationalism as a result of Indonesia's failure to build a nationalist construction for the Papuan nation as part of the Indonesian nation. The entry of Papua into Indonesia by force meant that the Papuan people lived in a situation that was never calm and had to implement communication dynamics in a society full of culture, which was different from other regions such as Gorontalo, where the process of unification with Indonesia was through an agreement process that was legitimized in 2000.

The Papuan people who live in Gorontalo itself are mostly dominated by students, they live in several dormitories and boarding houses in various areas of Gorontalo. In this context, meeting spaces, interactions and communication dynamics occur between Papuans and non-Papuans. Regional proximity is the main factor in this matter. The results of differences in communication from two different cultures like this can lead to misunderstandings, disputes and learning about

cultural differences. It could be that between these two different cultures, there are those who apply accommodation, assimilation to separation. We can hear a positive picture of Papuan students from the story of Neson Alfredo, who is a student at Gorontalo State University. The high number of Covid-19 patients that have hit Indonesia since March 2020 has made a number of campuses choose to eliminate the lecture process in classrooms and replace it with online lectures. Under these conditions, many students ultimately chose to return to their respective hometowns. Nelson Alfredo chose to stay abroad because he was afraid of bringing the virus to his hometown. *"That's why I chose to stay here, in someone else's village. I'm afraid that if I go home and catch the coronavirus, my parents will also be exposed to the coronavirus."* (Lahay, 2021)

Research on the cultural theme of Papuan students in Gorontalo is still minimal. After searching with the keyword "Papuan students in Gorontalo" via the Garuda page (National Journal Base), only 2 documents were found. This of course shows the low level of interest in studying the lives of Papuan students in Gorontalo. The first research was by Rusli Moko and Mika Mokoginta (2019) found that there was no discrimination that they received while in Gorontalo, on the other hand, the people of Gorontalo were very open and accepted their existence with full tolerance between each other. The things that are considered by those who do not agree with the referendum demands are 1) regarding the educational aspect, they have been given special treatment by the state through the university entrance route and the education costs they receive, apart from that, domicile is also a dominant consideration for Papuan students in Gorontalo in the world of education. 2) the equality and specificity of development policies in Papua makes Papuan students in Gorontalo feel that the presence of the state has brought a changing effect to Papuan society. 3) love and a sense of belonging to the country as a determining factor for students not agreeing to the demands of a referendum which leads to the disintegration of the nation. (Rusli, Moko & Mokoginta, 2019)

The second research was conducted by Fendi Ntobuo and Nur Qomariah Nteya (2023) found that the level of peer social support for overseas students from Papua at the Muhammadiyah University of Gorontalo is at high criteria. The dimensions of personal adjustment in the indicators of the absence of hatred, no desire to run away from life and belief in the potential that exists in oneself show that Papuan students find it a little more difficult to find comfort because they are often the center of attention of the surrounding community so that Papuan students are required to more positive perspective to feel comfortable (Ntobuo & Nteya, 2023)

In the first and second studies, it appears that there is something in common that the identity of Papuan students in Gorontalo cannot be separated from the historical roots of the Papuan nation which is full of the problem of discrimination. Apart from that, both of them also use Papuan students as the main perspective. What differentiates the two is their different identities. The first research looks at political identity while the second research looks at student identity. Apart from that, both of them still touched on the culture inherent in Papuan students. In this article, the perspective used is minority culture, or intercultural communication within minorities. Therefore, it is important to see the dynamics of intercultural communication between Papuan students and non-Papuan students (Gorontalo Community) in finding common ground. The process of understanding intercultural communication between Papuan students in Gorontalo needs to be studied using Co-Cultural theory, in which we can see the dynamics of communication used by minority groups and majority groups (Gorontalo and Papua).

From the explanation above, we can see that there have been no cases or incidents of discrimination against Papuan students in Gorontalo, but on the one hand we have also found that there are reasons that trigger or give rise to discriminatory behavior that occurs against Papuan students. So, this research aims to explore the communication Dynamics of minority Papuan students in Gorontalo, an area that is considered safe and free from discriminatory culture or behavior. Even though Gorontalo is considered safe from discriminatory behavior, this research seeks to identify that in an environment that does not have an official record of discrimination against Papuan students there may still be nuances of co-cultural communication. This research also focuses on digging deeper into the findings of the Dynamics they use with concepts such as "Assimilation, Accommodation and Separation" in other words providing deeper insight into the Dynamics of inter-ethnic minority communication in environments that may not show explicit signs of discrimination.

Intercultural communication is communication that occurs between people who have different cultures. These can be differences between ethnicities, races and groups (often abbreviated as SARA) or socioeconomics, or a combination of all these differences. When there is communication between people who have different cultures, that is where intercultural communication occurs. Our group also believes that the existence of knowledge such as intercultural communication is a good intention, in order to create understanding and mutual understanding. So that it brings harmony in communication, even between people of different cultures (Septian, 2018) But what especially marks intercultural communication is that its source and reception come from different cultures. This characteristic alone is sufficient to identify a unique form of communicative interaction that must take into account the role and function of culture in the communication process. Intercultural communication occurs when the message producer is a member of one culture and the message recipient is a member of another culture (Mulyana & Rakhmat J, 2005).

Co-cultural theory (Orbe M, 1997) provides a framework for thinking to map and see that co-cultural groups such as Papuan students choose and apply certain types of communication when faced with a discriminatory culture. This theory provides an overview of the adaptation efforts of minority cultural groups (Orbe calls them co-cultural cultures) who live amidst the dominant culture. Orbe suggests that using the term “co-cultural” can convey the idea that no one culture is inherently superior to another (Jandt, 2007). Co-cultural theory pays attention to how minority cultural groups such as Papuan students apply certain communication typologies amidst the dominant culture and how they deal with, manage and negotiate communication processes carried out by the dominant cultural group. In short, this theory pays attention to when, where and why someone from a marginalized group applies a certain communication Dynamics towards other people from the dominant cultural group.

Co-cultural theory consists of five basic assumptions and main premises (Orbe M, 1997) The first assumption is that hierarchies in society tend to privilege certain groups. The second assumption is that dominant groups occupy power that allows them to create, shape and continue systems that reinforce their perspectives and experiences, and silence other group members. The third assumption is that the communication system of the dominant cultural group functions to distance the position of members of the Co-cultural cultural group from the center of power. The fourth assumption, Co-cultural cultural groups share a marginalized social position in the dominant cultural group system even though Co-cultural cultural groups actually have the right to consider various positions. The fifth assumption, members of co-cultural cultural groups communicate to negotiate their position in the dominant cultural system.

Then the premise of this theory is as follows. The first premise, Co-cultural theory is that members of a cultural group are marginalized in a societal structure formed by the dominant cultural group. The second premise, members of co-cultural cultural groups apply certain communication typologies to achieve success when confronting the pressures imposed by dominant structures (Littlejohn & Foss 2009).

Co-cultural theory has three communication orientations that can explain how members of co-cultural cultural groups are more likely to assimilate, accommodate or separate in interacting with dominant cultural groups. The assimilation orientation tries to get rid of all cultural differences in order to 'enter' the dominant culture. Then there is the accommodation orientation which insists on the opinion that the rules of society can actually be changed so that they can accommodate the life experiences of each cultural group. Lastly, separation, this orientation rejects the idea of forming common ties with the dominant group and seeks to maintain a separate group identity outside the dominant structure (Littlejohn & Foss 2009).

Co-cultural theory also provides three types of approaches to communication, including non-assertive, assertive and aggressive. The non-assertive approach explains the behavior of individuals who tend to be non-confrontational and put other people's needs before their own needs. The assertive approach describes a more expressive communication practice that takes into account the needs of others and oneself. An aggressive approach reflects communication practices that express oneself and often offend other groups. In this approach, individuals take control over other people's choices (Littlejohn & Foss 2009). The communication approach is also influenced by local

culture, and because of this it becomes a consideration for someone before choosing a particular approach. Not all cultures accept an assertive or aggressive approach, for example a combination of orientation and communication approaches can produce a communication Dynamics of Co-cultural cultural groups (Orbe M, 1997).

In co-cultural group members who apply the non-assertive assimilation Dynamics, it emphasizes efforts to adapt and be accepted by the dominant cultural group. The assertive assimilation Dynamics resists the differences that exist in the co-cultural culture and tries to adapt to the existing dominant structure. Members of co-cultural cultural groups who apply the aggressive assimilation Dynamics strive to be like the dominant cultural group even though it means that they distance themselves from the co-cultural cultural group.

Non-assertive accommodation emphasizes integration into the dominant culture but at the same time demands that the dominant cultural group recognize the existence of co-cultural cultural groups. Assertive accommodation seeks to find a balance between the interests of members of the co-cultural cultural group and the dominant culture. Aggressive accommodation involves the inclusion of members of a Co-cultural cultural group within the structure of the dominant culture, then working from within the dominant culture to achieve significant change such as gaining equal rights for all members of the cultural group. Non-assertive separation is used by members of co-cultural groups who feel that separation is part of everyday life. Assertive separation is usually applied when decisions are made consciously to maintain distance between members of a co-cultural cultural group and the dominant cultural group. Meanwhile, the type of aggressive separation is applied by those who feel the need to prioritize members of the dominant cultural group or members of the co-cultural cultural group.

Method

The research with a qualitative approach is a process of scientific investigation aimed at obtaining a holistic understanding of human problems, with the social context that surrounds it as an effort to create a comprehensive and complex picture that is presented in detail from information sources. This research uses a constructivist paradigm. Creswell view Purpose of *constructivism* is to rely as much as possible on the views of the participants about a particular situation. Often these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically. In other words, various realities are built through interactions in social life and through historical and cultural norms that apply in the individual's life. Researchers create inductively develop theories or patterns of meaning (Batubara, 2017) According to Sarwiji, what is meant by the meaning of construction is the meaning contained in a construction of validity (truth) (Lasmerly, 2018) So, construction meaning can be interpreted as meaning related to sentences or groups of words contained in a word in validity studies. Use strategy interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) which aims to combine stories from informants about experiences that they feel are very valuable in their lives and how researchers interpret their stories and experiences (Tanaga, 2018). IPA is concerned with the detailed examination of human life experience with the aim of carrying out this examination in a way that as far as possible allows the experience to be expressed in its own terms, rather than according to a predetermined system of categories (Smith & Flowers, 2009) IPA is a method that wants to know in detail people's experiences, what meaning these people make of what happens to them (Bustard, 2019).

In this research, data collection was carried out by direct observation and in-depth interviews with informants as well as online via WhatsApp who were the research subjects. The informants in this research were ten Papuan students who were in Gorontalo and were selected by paying attention to all aspects, namely the field of experience, life history or memorable life history, life goals or hopes for life and situational context or the context of the situation. Data from Papuan students in Gorontalo like this is very important for the development of studies that use Co-cultural. With conceptual considerations, the researcher chose informants who could fulfill the objectives of this research with criteria including the first criterion, the informant must be of native Papuan blood. Second, the informant is an active student in Gorontalo. Third, informants have experienced discriminatory behavior, either on campus or outside campus, to see how this discrimination influences the selection and application of various communication typologies. The final criterion is

that the informant is always active in anti-discrimination actions against Papuans in Indonesia. The researcher wanted to see the possibility that the existence of discrimination cases as a background to anti-discrimination actions had an influence on the communication Dynamics chosen by informants, especially those who felt devastated by cases of discrimination against Papuans in Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

Maintaining Papuan Identity in an environment of discrimination

The communication dynamics used by informant AGG depends on the context of the current or complex situation. When he first entered college in the first semester, AGG found it difficult to adapt because the surrounding environment considered him a Papuan who had body odor. Even so, he still felt happy because the curriculum or material lessons compared to Papua were very lagging behind (*assertive accommodation*). Every day AGG feels discrimination because she is a minority and the only Papuan in her class. He was often said to not know how to bathe and when AGG did not attend college classes he would be discriminated against by being teased about his skin color, laughing at AGG and covering his nose when AGG passed in front of them. This traumatized AGG and he often didn't go to college, he felt school was like a prison, different from outside campus, he felt free without being pressured (*Aggressive separation*). However, even though AGG never got angry or committed violence because according to AGG such behavior was not good and finally AGG joined the Papuan organization (*Nonassertive accommodation*). According to AGG, this discrimination is actually beneficial for him because his mentality is getting stronger and this can lead him to get the position of head of government in Gorontalo (*Nonassertive accommodation*). In Gorontalo, AGG continues to use standard Indonesian to communicate with the people in Gorontalo (*nonassertive assimilation*).

“Actually, things like this bother me mentally, leave an impression on my heart. I wanted to get a lot of knowledge when I came to study here, but what I got was the opposite, so it had an impact on my health, but with the actions of my friends, I actually managed to get appreciation from trusted people where I live, here I always help with paperwork - documents in a neigh boring office which can now motivate me to survive this study” (informant AGG)

Informant AGS, a development economics student class of 2020, since entering college, has often received questions that are discriminatory in nature. Like asking about AGS's physical appearance which is different from the environment where he lives. AGS doesn't bother and continues to mingle with students and even joins organizations on campus (*Nonassertive accommodation, nonassertive separation, nonassertive assimilation*). However, since semester 3 where discriminatory cases against Papuan students were being widely discussed, AGS again and again received discrimination in the form of questions that cornered their culture so that AGS experienced trauma and since the discriminatory case occurred in Malang it has actually increased the fear of AGS in overseas countries (*aggressive separation*). In the end, AGS only dared to tell his problems to his fellow Papuan friends compared to his non-Papuan friends (*Assertive assimilation*). Even though until this year he still experiences discrimination, AGS still wants to continue his studies until he graduates with a bachelor's degree, because Gorontalo is the second region that AGS considers home. AGS hopes that he will adopt the very collectivist culture of Gorontalo (*nonassertive assimilation*).

“Are all Papuans black? Are there white people in Papua? why is your hair curly? is it true that the people there have a tough character? These are the questions that I often encounter every time I meet new people on my campus, but I don't want to see everyone on this campus as the same, there are still good people who respect me and my Papuan friends and we are always taught by our parents "Wherever we go and as long as the person is nice to us, doesn't hit us, we have to be kind and patient." (Informant AGS)

Likewise, informant GHY, midwife profession students in 2023 at health universities have experienced discrimination since the start of their studies. GHY's classmates, who are the majority of Gorontalo, show behavior that demeans GHY and lacks respect for GHY's opinions and contributions in class or midwifery group practice. Facing a situation that made her tired, GHY decided not to go to college for a few days and isolated herself in her boarding house (*aggressive separation*). This became a form of mental rest for him and even so, GHY never showed his annoyance and anger or even had disputes with his classmates (*nonassertive accommodation*). When facing this problem, GHY told it to a non-Papuan friend who he trusted as his close friend and also got it *feedback* which is very good and makes him excited (*nonassertive accommodation*). On the other hand, GHY tries to introspect herself and maintain a good mood. In this way, her classmates gradually begin to respect GHY, because she begins to adapt the way she communicates with them, such as using a Gorontalo accent and dialect, adjusting her clothes to suit her needs. culture in Gorontalo and participate in campus organizations (*nonassertive assimilation*). In this way, seeing GHY's efforts and perseverance can prove that even though she comes from a minority group, her ability to understand and find out about cultures that must be applied and diversity is actually a strength for her (*nonassertive assimilation*).

"I still communicate well even though I am mostly silent in class, maybe there is a way I speak that offends my friends which I accidentally don't realize so they do things like that, it's not a reason for me to do the same thing, in the end I adjusted with the accent and accent here, for example the tone is a little low and rhythmic. In my opinion, Gorontalo language is easy to learn, because it is not too much similar to Papuan language." (Informant GHY).

Based on the narrative and interviews, the researcher concluded that the journey of Papuan students who maintain their identity in an environment filled with discrimination illustrates the complexity and dynamics in identity construction. In this case, the two students through their actions maintained their identity, rejecting a single narrative or stereotype that is often attached to their group, namely *nonassertive accommodation* to wanting to adopt the culture of the majority group in this case as *nonassertive assimilation*. Even so, surely by reaching the point of reconciliation they have experienced something like that *aggressive separation* which reverses the facts by stating that Papuan people have a strong and tough character. This action can be interpreted as an effort to deconstruct the conventional understanding of Papuan identity, where identity is not only seen as something static, but as an entity that is continuously built and reconstructed in interaction with the surrounding environment. In facing discrimination, these students not only keep their identity intact, but can also be involved in the process of forming a broader meaning about Papuan identity. This overall experience shows that identity is a complex construct that involves constant negotiation with various elements in society.

The 2019 Malang Discrimination Case Has an Impact on Communication

Informant YSP is a student class of 2018, majoring in management. He studied at Gorontalo State University because some of his family lived in Gorontalo and for that reason YSP decided to study in Gorontalo. YSP felt the difference in the Gorontalo environment, but this made him interested and learned a lot from his village in Papua, from having lived in the forest to now being in the Gorontalo environment and finally he got used to Gorontalo culture and wanted to settle in Gorontalo (*nonassertive assimilation*). Even though there are physical differences with the people in his environment, this does not limit the way he communicates with his environment, because according to him, as long as they don't bother him or isolate him, YSP still wants to interact and vice versa (*nonassertive assimilation, nonassertive accommodation*). Most YSPs introduce cultures to their college friends, so there is respect for fellow languages and cultures even though most of the YSPs use a Papuan accent when interacting (*nonassertive accommodation*). But because YSP has been in Gorontalo for a long time, he has mastered the use of the Gorontalo language and accent both with his friends and lecturers and sometimes jokes with them using the Papuan accent (*nonassertive assimilation, nonassertive accommodation*). This also started when he joined a joint organization between Papuan and non-Papuan students who supported each other, especially when the discriminatory case in Malang, Surabaya in 2019 made his non-Papuan friends feel afraid of

him, some even intended to expel him. YSP and his friends gathered at a cafe. Even so, there are still many friends who support him to keep up his enthusiasm. YSP explained that since there was a large-scale action in Gorontalo regarding discrimination, the discrimination that has arisen to date has become less and less and they feel like they want to stay in Gorontalo (*nonassertive assimilation, nonassertive accommodation*).

"This very busy incident made me afraid when I was overseas, at that time I was seen as the same as the Papuan people in Malang, even so I still acted normal as if people still saw me as a good person, I also communicated I use funny language that they understand, sometimes I also like to use a Gorontalo accent so they aren't too afraid of me even though the viral news changes the perception of the people closest to me." (Informant YSP)

The increasing number of discriminatory cases against Papuan students in Malang, Surabaya, became a turning point for informant JPI in viewing its identity as a Papuan. Discrimination in 2019, the year he entered college for the first time, made him realize that Papuan identity as a minority was different from other cultural groups and he became afraid because of this. Learning from this incident, JPI is of the view that there are discriminatory cases against students in Malang, Surabaya, and even cases in other areas that have occurred, it is better to discuss them openly and have heart-to-heart discussions compared to scaring students with the sound of gun shots and surrounding students (*nonassertive accomodation, assertive accommodation*). This thought emerged when JPI took part in action against discrimination with Papuan and non-Papuan student organizations joining forces. In that action, JPI said there was also small discrimination where there were women who did not want to be close to him because they were afraid of JPI, realizing this, JPI gave their opinion well and JPI understood the concerns of the minority of Papuan students at that time (*Aggressive accommodation*). But through this, JPI agrees that it is good that when we have things embedded in our hearts, we as Papuans must be more open to our friends and society (*Assertive and nonassertive accommodation*). An interesting experience from JPI was also that when carrying out on job training in Pohuwato district, JPI chose to be involved directly in interacting with the community, helping move cows, making broomsticks because JPI felt appreciated and seen as the same as Indonesians without being differentiated (*Nonassertive assimilation, nonassertive accommodation*).

"Because of this case, I also feel uncomfortable talking to my non-Papuan friends, I feel worried, anxious about being shunned. Moreover, the experience is that there was a woman who was afraid of me because of that case, where I talked to her who didn't want to look at me and responded to the conversation even though previously the friendship was fine, even so, I will try to show that I am a Papuan person who is good in behavior and speech. say. I also always enjoy helping the local community near my lease, especially in farming." (Informant JPI)

The experience of Papuan students who are seen as "scary" because of the case in Malang and there are efforts to equate their behavior or way of communicating in a uniform way is a clear example of the deconstruction of narratives or stereotypes, this is in stark contrast to the data which states that discriminatory behavior is not there is one in Gorontalo. In this case, the communication dynamics used by Papuan students actually reject the imposition of a single narrative or generalization that reduces individual diversity. In this case, awareness of the differences in Gorontalo highlights the richness in the ways of communicating and acting among Papuan students. In fact, not all Papuan students have the same behavior or way of communicating. Each individual brings unique experiences, backgrounds and identities, creating a rich and complex spectrum. Therefore, according to researchers, the city of Gorontalo should not be labeled as a city without discrimination.

Hiding identity due to discrimination

Informant AB is a Papuan student who since 2019 has become accustomed to mingling with cross-ethnic communities. Since graduating from junior high school until college, AB has often traveled overseas to various regions in Indonesia. Since high school, AB has been very

interested in the world of film and has associated with many Papuan organizations. A sad thing happened when AB was rejected from film school because he was Papuan and black. AB was forced to hide his identity as a Papuan, bleach his skin, straighten his hair and remove his native Papuan accent (*Nonassertive Assimilation*). Because of the actions taken by AB, he received a warning from his parents and because this action made him wasteful and disturbed his health, he finally decided to change his appearance back to its original appearance. With a heavy heart, AB left the world of films and established himself as entering the world of college (*nonassertive assimilation, nonassertive accommodation*). When he entered the world of college in Jakarta, AB continued to experience discrimination which caused him frustration and stress and finally enrolled at a university in Gorontalo with a major he didn't like (*nonassertive admiration*). However, until now, before his graduation at Gorontalo University, he was used to it and chose not to bother with differences in majors and discrimination laced with jokes, as long as AB felt undisturbed, AB was safe and comfortable (*nonassertive assimilation, nonassertive separation*). Until now, AB has always been active in various activities to defend Papua and has joined Papuan organizations in Gorontalo (*nonassertive accomodation, assertive accommodation*).

“Removing my accent, whitening my skin and straightening my hair were embarrassing events that remain with me to this day, many regret it because it affected my health just for the sake of something I couldn't possibly achieve because I was a minority. In my opinion, using the accent of another region is fine as long as it is in the region, what was wrong with me was that there was an intention to eliminate it because of film ideals. In Gorontalo, it feels like physical racism is commonplace and not too painful because it is always done as a joke and not always taken seriously. Moreover, the tone in communication between Papua and Gorontalo is sometimes similar so I don't think it's difficult to communicate in this area, in fact it's easy between cities. cities I've ever visited.” (Informant AB).

Informant MFD is a close friend of AB. Just like AB, MFD has experienced discrimination since 2017, the first year he entered college as a nursing student. When his new surroundings found out he was a nursing student, he was laughed at and ordered to change his major to engineering or animal husbandry. This did not discourage MFD, his love for the nursing profession actually increased his enthusiasm for completing his studies (*nonassertive accommodation*). As a nursing student, most of MFD's friends have white skin, this makes MFD whiten their skin by using whitening products obtained from e-commerce (*nonassertive assimilation*). However, due to warnings from his college friends, MFD stopped using these whitening products and his skin returned to its characteristic appearance, because according to MFD, when his skin was white, he felt he was not Papuan (*nonassertive accommodation*). Because according to him, being a Papuan in Gorontalo is something to be proud of and doesn't need to be covered up and Papuans are sweet and beautiful with their own characteristics (*nonassertive accommodation*). MFD explained that, in fact, the discriminatory case in Malang, Surabaya in 2019, made their parents in Papua worried and finally the governor of Papua sent them back to Papua because they were worried that it would actually increase discrimination against their MFD colleagues (*nonassertive accommodation, aggressive separation*).

"Initially, white skin was my dream, because I saw that is the standard of beauty in Indonesia. I also saw that white skin was always appreciated and many people would like it if they had white skin. When my skin was white, it felt like more people wanted to communicate with me. When my skin color returned to normal, slowly there was a circle of friends in me but being kind, communicating like a Gorontalo student was my pride even without losing my Papuan characteristics. My hope as a Gorontalo student is, please treat us as equals to you." (Informant MFD).

Not much different from informant PDW who is an electrical engineering student class of 2018 whose parents, especially his mother, are native Gorontalo people. PDW also becomes more familiar with the culture of the dominant group. Since he was 3 years old, he has been a citizen and

resident of Gorontalo, so that later on, without PDW realizing it, he discriminated against Papuan people who were also part of his culture (*nonassertive separation*). When he meets or plays with his non-Papuan friends, PDW never admits that he is Papuan and admits that Gorontalo is one of the tribes he was born into (*nonassertive assimilation*). PDW dares to admit that he is Papuan to fellow Papuan students or friends (*nonassertive accommodation*). When PDW wore typical clothes and decorations from Papua, he felt very happy because he thought they were unique and were given to him by his father (*nonassertive accommodation*). The incident of discriminatory cases against Papuan students in Malang made PDW feel disturbed because according to him Papuans are still Indonesians and took part in the field action with other Papuan students (*nonassertive assimilation*). Not long after this action, PDW joined the Papuan student community and actively discussed and always took part in actions to defend Papua (*nonassertive accommodation*).

"Actually, this is embarrassing, maybe because I have been in this area from childhood until now and my mother is from Gorontalo. However, Papuan blood is still in me because my father is a native Papuan too. Hiding my identity is actually because I'm afraid of discrimination from people and even friends, because when I was 7 years old I started to know what people's perceptions of Papua were like, but as I got older my thoughts weren't like that anymore and I was open that I was Papuan and actually comfortable with Papuan friends and learning the accent and culture that I may have never known. "Communication with Papuan and non-Papuan people in this area also feels different, so right now I'm just adapting to the person I'm talking to." (Informant PDW).

Based on the three narratives and interview excerpts, the researcher can draw the conclusion that the act of hiding one's identity is a response to discrimination which illustrates the complex dynamics in identity construction in an ever-changing society. Individuals who choose to hide their identities demonstrate an understanding that identity is not a static entity, but rather a work of art that is constantly being redefined. These actions reflect the concept of deconstruction, where individuals respond to discriminatory norms by reconstructing their identity narratives. In circumstances of uncertainty and complexity of social relations, hiding identity can be interpreted as a form of adaptation and negotiation, where individuals try to protect themselves while maintaining a balance between autonomy and uncertainty inherent in stressful social realities. This conclusion underscores the importance of understanding that every act of hiding one's identity is not a uniform act, but rather a dynamic and personal work of art in the face of complexity in a diverse society.

Avoid conflict and loving culture

Informant Zs is a very realistic figure when someone discriminates against him in everyday life. When ZS was shouted at *Pace* or *Ungke* On campus, ZS would reprimand this person and some time ago there had been a dispute between his colleagues (*Aggressive accommodation, aggressive separation*). Apart from these problems, ZS continues to carry out his lectures as usual and uses yesterday's problems as learning only. Because this experience can encourage ZS to shift his communication Dynamics towards accommodation, rather than spending time arguing with colleagues. One of them involves himself in various internal and external organizational activities within his campus environment (*assertive accommodation*). Active in arts organizations, active as an activist, even though there is a risk of having disagreements or opinions with seniors, ZS tries to neutralize it so that it no longer becomes a dispute like the one he avoided when he first entered college (*assertive accommodation*).

"As much as possible to carry the name of Papua well in other people's lands or other areas, keeping yourself busy is one solution. I like art, and I want to know and learn about the unique cultures in this area, from language to other traditional customs, I avoid disputes as much as possible. Having lots of friends and good relationships is one of my goals. My hope is not only for the people here, for all Indonesian people, to stop discrimination, we all have our own uniqueness." (Informant ZS).

In communicating with the people of Gorontalo, especially close friends or classmates, CK is very adept at using the Gorontalo accent (*nonassertive assimilation*). This is because CK has been a permanent resident in the city of Gorontalo since he was in the 2nd grade of junior high school. Even though he is a permanent resident in Gorontalo, CK sometimes uses a Papuan accent when joking with his friends (*Nonassertive accommodation*). Likewise, when he meets friends from Papua, he still doesn't hesitate to use Papuan language and culture. In contrast to previous informants, CK is an informant who does not experience discrimination at all in Papuan society, according to him this is because his physique is different from most Papuan people. Even so, according to him, being part of a large family from the Papuan tribe is his pride (*aggressive accommodation, aggressive separation*).

"Start from within yourself first, love your own culture first and then other people's culture. Even though I didn't grow up in Papua, I started by loving the culture I came from, the language, the way of communicating, the accent, the accent and the customs, even applying typical Papuan communication to Papuan people I met directly as a form of respecting my culture, after That's just what we learn about other people's cultures and one key concept for me to avoid discrimination is to remain friendly and always smile." (Informant CK)

Based on the two experiences of the informants above, the researcher views efforts to avoid conflict while loving the majority culture as also a form of complex negotiation in the formation of individual identity in the midst of a multicultural society. Choosing to avoid conflict reflects an understanding that confrontation is not always a productive solution in complex identity dynamics. Rather, these actions can be seen as a form of deconstruction, where individuals actively determine how they engage with cultural differences and construct narratives of their identity that are inclusive and cooperative. Loving culture highlights an appreciation for the complexity and diversity in society, where identity is not only seen as a static concept, but as a dynamic journey involving relationships with various cultural elements. This conclusion emphasizes the importance of combining respect for differences with the desire to build peaceful and mutually supportive relationships, creating a social reality that is dynamic and open to multiple perspectives of interpretation.

The ten Papuan students in Gorontalo who were informants in this research predominantly used the accommodation communication Dynamics, either through a holistic approach. *Assertive, nonassertive* even aggressive. Apart from accommodation, informants also tend to use assimilation which is more likely to adapt to be accepted by the dominant group. These two typologies are used by Papuan students in Gorontalo when they feel they do not want to cause disputes or prolong problems with the dominant group, especially when they face discrimination that makes them not want to blend in or not go to college.

Researchers cannot formulate the reasons why all informants prefer the accommodation communication Dynamics, but this research leads to the analysis that the Co-Cultural group understands that this Dynamics can suit the interests of Papuan students in Gorontalo. This choice is based on life experience or life history, hopes and the context of the situation that occurred.

Regarding the context of the situation that occurs, keywords that often arise and are acknowledged to have an influence on their communication are discrimination carried out by non-Papuan people (classmates and the community) and although discrimination among Papuans still occurs, it is very small based on information from informant. However, by using Co-Cultural theory which refers more to discussions of communication typologies and ignores heterogeneity in cultures that have similarities, according to researchers, this research needs to be developed further. Regarding the context of micro situations, it has a close relationship with the experience factors that make the most impression on them (*field of experience*) which means it is more personal and what they go through is definitely different between one Papuan student and another.

Meanwhile, regarding macro situations, there are two common threads that are often mentioned by informants in every experience they tell researchers. The most important and first thing is that they always experience discrimination because of their race, ethnicity, physique, and they are even more often discriminated against regarding their body odor. Second, the solidarity attitude they have is shown by all the informants who invite each other in a special organization for Papuan students in Gorontalo, the organization always voices or carries out their actions such as anti-discrimination, with discriminatory cases in Indonesia such as what happened in Malang, Surabaya in 2019 it actually makes them more open to society and proves that they are actually good people unlike those in the news and have the right not to be discriminated against, even though some of them are viewed by society in a way they don't want because of this case.

Seeing the differences in batches and how long the students had been in Gorontalo, not all informants had an impact caused by major cases of discrimination against Papuan students in Malang Surabaya in 2019. Papuan students in Gorontalo such as JPI, MFD, YSP, AGS and AB because already have a lot of experience and have lived in Gorontalo for a long time, only JPI and AGS experienced discrimination due to this incident, partly for MFD, YSP, and AB, in fact, this incident made them stand up and voice their rights through large-scale actions in Gorontalo. The existence of discriminatory events such as in Malang, Surabaya is an important context for informants to build views or perceptions of the Gorontalo people who show their rejection of discriminatory treatment in any area and accept them without any reason.

Regarding their hopes in communicating with the people of Gorontalo, they hope to be seen as the same without being differentiated, even though they still use their Papuan accent, they do not want to be teased and make fun of their cultural language, because after all they are trying to accommodate and assimilate with the people of Gorontalo. Then, by looking at events in several regions of Indonesia, they hope that non-Papuan people will also come down and take part in voicing their rights.

When they want to apply a certain communication Dynamics, Papuan students in Gorontalo will consider risk factors, for example they think about whether they use a Papuan accent when interacting, whether other people understand, whether they speak too quickly or in a hurry, even when they want to buy in a shop they will think about it. the price was made expensive, which was similar to the incident experienced by AGG. He felt that when he had a tire repaired at one of the Gorontalo workshops, the price was doubly expensive because he was a Papuan who was considered rich and had a lot, but this did not become a long dispute even though AGG still complain about what happened at that time. PDW chose to use his identity as a Gorontalo person, even though he also had an identity as a Papuan and did not admit it because he was afraid of the discrimination that would occur in the future, even though in the end he still only admitted it to fellow Papuans. Likewise, AB hid his identity as a Papuan in order to avoid discrimination that had occurred before regarding his future dream profession that he had to achieve.

This research also identifies areas that do not have records, news or even official information related to discrimination against minority groups, in this case referred to as Co-cultural, through the results of this research, it can be seen that there is still discriminatory behavior towards minorities, namely Papuan students in the dominant group. Gorontalo community. The discrimination experienced varied because it depended on the experiences of the ten informants which were clearly heterogeneous. This research itself still requires a different review to address the problem of the dynamics of intercultural communication between Papuan students in Gorontalo. For example, research from the perspective of Gorontalo/Sulawesi people can complement the data found in this research, or researching the dynamics of intercultural communication among other overseas students can also provide a comprehensive explanation in the study of intercultural communication dynamics.

Conclusion

Papuan students in Gorontalo are more likely to be able to adapt to the dominant culture without having to lose their original identity as Papuans. Not only accommodation, assimilation is the dominant dynamics after accommodation, namely where some Papuan students in the city of Gorontalo want to settle and live in Gorontalo, there are those who have implemented native Gorontalo culture and others considering that this research is based on the experiences of heterogeneous informants, as well as the similarities between all of them. is that they experienced discrimination in the form of ridicule regarding their race, ethnicity and physical appearance as Papuans, even a small number of informants experienced discrimination resulting from the impact of the 2019 discriminatory incident cases in Malang. This research also finds novelty, where discrimination is not only carried out by non-Papuans and Papuans, but discrimination between fellow Papuan students also persists from the results of the researcher's interviews. The existence of this fact shows that the reason is because Papuan tribes also show a dynamics of assimilation, such as some who have mixed into the dominant group and choose to have families in Gorontalo even though the numbers are limited.

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