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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE USE OF SPECIAL AUTONOMY FUNDS IN IMPROVING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF EDUCATION INDICATORS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how well Special Autonomy Funds (otsus) boost education in Manokwari Regency from 2020 to 2022. The research uses a qualitative descriptive approach with inductive methods. It looks at otsus money for education and school enrollment rates at primary junior high, and high school levels. In 2020, Manokwari's otsus education fund was Rp 290,000,000. It dropped to Rp 250,000,000 in 2021 but jumped to Rp 334,868,208 in 2022. The analysis shows primary schools saw more kids enroll. The net enrollment rate rose from 91.29% in 2021 to 92.44% in 2022. The gross rate climbed from 102.33% to 105.24%. This suggests that money helped more kids go to primary school. But junior high and high schools saw fewer students. Junior high net enrollment fell from 70.56% in 2021 to 69.02% in 2022. The gross rate dropped from 108.69% to 104%. High school net enrollment dipped from 62.75% in 2021 to 62.70% in 2022. The gross rate took a big hit falling from 100.25% to 93.57%. The average school duration saw a tiny uptick from 11.56 years in 2020 to 11.59 years in 2022. This falls way short of UNDP's ideal 15-year standard. This study concludes that special autonomy funds for education in Manokwari Regency haven't boosted overall education indicators. The study suggests more cash for school buildings, teacher training programs, scholarships, and community awareness campaigns to increase effectiveness. Regular check-ups and reviews need to happen to make sure the money's spent right and does its job.

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INTRODUCTION

Papua has gotten loads of cash through special autonomy funds since Law 21/2001 kicked in. By 2021, Papua and West Papua raked in about 104 trillion IDR. But even with all this dough, education gaps still stick out like a sore thumb. This study digs into how these funds are used and if they're making a difference in primary and secondary schools in Manokwari district. The special autonomy funds' effect on boosting primary and secondary education in Manokwari district Papua, is a big deal. Papua and West Papua provinces have scored a ton of financial support since Law 21/2001 came into play. Even with all this cash flowing in, education gaps refuse to budge. So, we need to take a hard look at whether these funds are doing what they're supposed to. Jackson and his crew (2015) found something interesting - bump up per-student spending by 10% each year for 12 years, and you'll see better education fatter paychecks, and less poverty. This works wonders for kids from families scraping by. Besides, special autonomy funds are pointed out by Sugiharjo et al. (2022) as very important in the struggle against underdevelopment through investment in the education and health sectors, which also makes it clear that these funds can bring positive results in poverty alleviation if used correctly. Versteegen (2015) also states the connection between funding gaps and segregation/inequity in education and sheds light on

the tremendous role of financial resources in student learning outcomes. Lafortune et al. (2018) examined school finance reforms' effect on student achievement. They put the stress on the need for the equal sharing of resources for better educational outcomes. Poverty and equity issues are related to the role of school finance reform, as Atchison (2019) has pointed out, where money needs to be directed toward the schools where the most economically disadvantaged students are served. The previous Sari & Ghifari (2020) made the root impact of regional autonomy on economic development by discussing the government's financial footing on economic growth. On the other hand, it was done by Rumere et al. (2022) who looked at the significance of special autonomy on education and health facilities which in turn paved the way for the assessment of such institutions of their firepower strengths in terms of educational attainment and health status. Congress should improve the allocation of money for schools so that the children of not only the rich but also the poor can afford a quality education. Policymakers can consider research on education investing, funding equity, and the influence of regional autonomy on development for the best use of special autonomy funds for optimal high-quality education in the region. The key factor in this study is the successful usage of the special autonomy funds being the means to the quality improvement of the educational system in Manokwari district. The distribution of funds in primary and secondary schools has been quite big, notwithstanding such, there are inequalities in the

educational performance achieved. This involves the mishandling of the funds, the lack of information about the program for the community, and the socio-political hastenings in the policy's operation. This research seeks to determine the amount of funding allocated for education under the special autonomy program, examine how the money is being distributed and used, and examine whether it is helping to improve the education system in Manokwari. This study is intended to be a research of the amount of special autonomy fund allocations used in the quest of bettering the quality of primary and secondary education in the Manokwari District. The study also takes a closer look at the mechanisms of regulation and use of these funds at the regional level. Therefore, through this analysis, the main purpose is to give a complete understanding of how special autonomy funds are managed and also how effective this policy is in achieving the goal of education quality improvement. The research outputs can be assumed to come up with sound proposals for the local authorities as to the most effective methods for the utilization of special autonomy funds for education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Special Autonomy Fund in Papua: The Special Autonomy Fund, which is governed under Law No. 21/2001 and its adjustments, is an indispensable tool in financing the education, health, infrastructure, and empowerment of the Papua and West Papua ecosystems, bridging the development disparity (Ginting, 2024). These are nothing short of the major elements that have helped in narrowing the development gap in the two provinces that have been granted the status of special autonomy for barely almost two decades (Boinawu & Hussein, 2020). A key part of the policy of special autonomy for Papua is essential for the possible betterment of public services and regional motivation (Mussad, 2022). Papua gets an additional special autonomy fund amounting to 2% of the national General Purpose Fund, which will boost its development (Resosudarmo et al., 2016). The changes and impacts of the special autonomy in Papua are quite clear and varied and it reaches issues such as governance, information management infrastructure, and economics (Bachmid, 2022). People-engaged unified projects in Papua under the special autonomy system are focused on education, information, technology, and vocational skills as key tools to the road to the development of regions, we will write more elaborated text for example... They called (Hergianasari et al., 2022). The geography of Papua is an influencing factor in the role of the Special Autonomy Fund that provides infrastructures such as roads to narrow the development gap (Saktina & Khoirunnurofik, 2022). The methods for transparency and fund management that involve the community are the heart of sustainable development in Papua (Way, 2021). Piecing together trust fund challenges in Papua and the significance of fiscal transfers such as the Special Autonomy Fund to implement development programs (Gloria et al., 2022).

Papua's Special Autonomy Fund targets to a large extent, in the education, health, and economic sectors, the upliftment of human development in the region (Mandacan et al., 2022). The Payback of prosperity caused by special autonomy in Papua over two decades is being re-evaluated to measure its impact on the welfare of the region and regional autonomy (Setiawan, 2022). Special autonomy's fiscal policy has remarkably enhanced Papua's economic development, especially, through the allocation of enormous funds to education and a string of other variables that induce economic growth (Sanggrangbano, 2024). The Special Autonomy Law in Papua has to do with governance, welfare, and the reduction of development issues and interrelation with other regions in Indonesia (Kusumaryati, 2024). Bottom-up approaches that have taken into consideration Indigenous territory and human development paradigms should be the vehicles toward sustainable development in Papua. Stated differently, global competitiveness has to be balanced with values at the local level. Considering that the block grant fund for special autonomy for both education and health has contributed to the Human Development Index in Papua, evaluating its influence will breed a policy on its effectiveness. Asymmetric democracy inflicts ample problems upon Indonesia, and it reveals that effective local government institutions

are very much necessary, particularly in a Special Autonomy region like Papua. Special autonomy implemented in Papua and West Papua presumably creates governance problems in finances, personnel, and government and brings implications for people's welfare. One of the reasons the Special Autonomy Fund was implemented in Papua is because it was very effective in improving public services and the welfare of people in Papua. Knowing how funds and regional revenues in Papua affect the distribution of poverty across different levels is very instrumental, and then adopting interventions that fix that kind of poverty. Successes or struggles of policies are stunning and are the draw of insight into the development of a special evaluation model for autonomy uniquely in Papua and West Papua. Definitely, among the most compelling reasons for in-depth exploration would be to set a path to solving human security that has been crucial in improving welfare in Papua and achieving the practical realization of special autonomy in Papua. The most critical role played by the Special Autonomy Fund is concerning the development gaps between Papua and West Papua, through financing or supporting strategic sectors like education, health, infrastructure, economy, and employment. Effective management and utilization should achieve improvements in public services and welfare for the population in both provinces.

Previous Research: Influenced by the behavior of various effects of special autonomy funds on economic growth and regional development, in 2011, Subroto Hadi and, in 2012, Hutajulu refuted the argument. From the results, findings underline the need for effective management if the best is to be obtained out of these funds. The findings of these studies, however, argue for the differentiated influence of patterns of utilization and expenditure of special autonomy funds on choices of development trajectories in Aceh and Papua. In banks, this means strategic planning and supervision over the fund expenditure process are important and urgently needed. Previous research showed that the management or expenditure of the special autonomy fund has been one of the major dominant contributing factors to better economic performance and welfare indices of several districts or provinces within Indonesia, such as Yogyakarta, Aceh, and Papua. It is for this reason that policymakers require a clear overview of money allocation and spending in education, health, and poverty if they are to make effective decisions on how to use it. These studies further bring out the proposition that special autonomy funds making a difference at local levels hinge on one major key: the effective implementation of transparent and accountable management practices. Such studies also underline the complexities in special autonomy policy implementation, especially concerning the condition of Papua and Aceh, where it can be highly debated whether these funds can reduce poverty and increase welfare. The creation of welfare in its paradoxical relationship to persistent poverty within the special autonomy status raises concerns over the mechanisms that underline money-dishing and the impacts this will have on the local economy. More than that, the assessment of prosperity trajectories after all years of special autonomy implementation confirms that it is a process that requires continuous evaluation of policy and related adjustments to achieve desirable results (Górska et al., 2022).

Special autonomy funds research in Aceh and Papua has been done to present the challenges and opportunities associated with these financial mechanisms. Although the potential is there, their impact, of course, depends on governance, accountability, and targeted interventions. Fund management practices play important roles in ensuring that the resources go towards initiatives that would enhance welfare and promote people's sustainable growth. The transactional political practice on asymmetric decentralization systems is premised on how governance structures shape special autonomy fund management outcomes, as documented by studies. In general, research into special autonomy funds for several regions of Indonesia provides great classes on the complexity of management of these funds, their impact on economic growth, and problems relating to the derivation of expected welfare results. If the effectiveness of using these funds is checked carefully, transparency and accountability promoted, and interventions aligned towards the goals of

development, the potential offered by special autonomy funds to drive positive change and sustain growth in such regions may be realized.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is descriptive and qualitative, involving an inductive approach where an in-depth investigation regarding the utilization and effectiveness of Manokwari District's special autonomy funds in the education sector will be pursued. The current message resorts to the secondary data from published government reports, financial reports, and statistical data from 2019 to 2023, coming from the related agencies at the provincial and district levels. In this study, data analysis has been done concerning effectiveness and efficiency criteria as described by Mahmudi, which involves the comparison between the actual use of funds against targeted results. Effectiveness of funds management is measured as the ratio of revenue realization against the set revenue target, while efficiency shall be measured by the ratio between local revenue and costs incurred on the collection of local taxes. This will make it easier to draw out interpretations of the collected data, establishing the patterns of challenges and opportunities in the influence of management of special autonomy funds on the quality of education in the Manokwari district.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Allocation and Use of Special Autonomy Funds: Within the years 2002-2021, for 19 years, special autonomy funds transferred to and received by the Papua Province reached the sum of IDR 77,306,000,000,000,- (Seventy-Two Trillion Three Hundred Six Billion Rupiah); and after West Papua was recognized as an independent province, from 2009 to 2021 or for 13 years, special autonomy funds of IDR 26,728,000,000,000, - were transferred to West Papua. With these funds, Papua and West Papua Provinces received very significant additional fiscal resources to finance development in the two provinces so that in the second volume of the enactment of Law Number 2 of 2021 concerning amendments to Law Number 21 of 2001, this province should show better development in various fields than other regions in Indonesia. Implementation of special autonomy, according to Law No. 21 of 2001, governs the existence of the Papua Special Autonomy Fund (Otsus). This grant was meant to accelerate development in both provinces, Papua and West Papua, especially in areas like education, health, infrastructure, construction, and maintenance, with an addition of economic empowerment. From 2002 to 2021, Papua received IDR 77.306 trillion, while West Papua, since it was established in 2009 until 2021, received IDR 26.728 trillion. This provided additional fiscal resources for the fund in both provinces, thus boosting development in various aspects over more than fifteen years. In this effort to increase the implementation of the special autonomy policy in Papua Province, General Plan of Regional Spatial Planning (RTRW) Local Regulation No. 13/2016 was issued as a replacement for the Special Regional Regulation of Papua Province No. 25/2013, which is associated with the distribution of revenue and financial management regarding the special autonomy fund. Article 11 of this regulation has set the tone very clearly in its letter that at least 30% of the special autonomy fund should be allocated for funding education services, completion of illiteracy education, secondary education, non-formal education, and higher education. According to data on the allocation of special autonomy funds and additional infrastructure funds for West Papua Province in the period from 2020 to 2022, the trend tends to increase every year. In 2020, the total special autonomy fund was IDR 2.667 trillion, while DTI was IDR 1.583 trillion, so the total funds were IDR 4.251 trillion. While in 2021 the Special Autonomy Fund rose by 1.65 percent to IDR 2,711 trillion and the DTI rose 1.05 percent to IDR 1,600 trillion, it followed a trend of increasing once more in 2022 by 3.74 percent to a nominal value of IDR 2,813 trillion and the DTI by 3.13 percent to IDR 1,650 trillion, totaling at IDR 4,463 trillion.

Table 1. Special Autonomy Fund and Additional Infrastructure Fund for West Papua Province 2020-2022

Year	Special Autonomy Fund	Additional infrastructure fund	Total
2020	2.667.894.000.000	1.583.397.000.000	4.251.291.000.000
2021	2.711.826.203.000	1.600.000.000.000	4.311.826.203.000
2022	2.813.282.830.000	1.650.000.000.000	4.463.282.830.000

Source: West Papua in 2023 Figures

With increased allocation, it simply shows that this government is mandated to accelerate development in West Papua, in particular, education, health, and infrastructure. This annual increase, on the other hand, proves that the government does not remain unaware of the necessity of sufficient budget allocations for reducing development gaps in the region. On the other hand, the increase in DTI shows special attention being given to infrastructure development, which determines support for economic growth and an improvement in the quality of life for the people. However, even with the increase, the problem in the implementation of the funds remains huge for special autonomy and DTI. The mismanagement of the fund, lack of awareness in the community, and socio-political barriers are some of the main hindrances to the optimal utilization of such funds. The issues can only be solved by better management, transparency, and accountability in utilizing the funds. Moreover, how active and participative the community is in monitoring and ensuring programs have to be an integral part of ensuring that the funds are effectively spent back onto the target. It is expected that funds for special autonomy and DTI will enhance the quality of education, infrastructure, health services, and economic empowerment in West Papua. Nevertheless, all this depends upon the capacity of the local government and the people to manage and mobilize the funds effectively. Very close supervision and transparency in the reporting of the use of funds will be important to guarantee that this increased allotment of funds truly brings maximal benefit to the people of West Papua. This relation argues that in the absence of good management and active participation from all parties involved, this increased allocation of funds will not be able to achieve the main objective of reducing the development gap between regions and improving people's welfare.

Table 2. Special Autonomy Funds to finance the Education Sector Manokwari Regency 2020-2022

Years	Special Autonomy Fund for Education
2020	Rp 290.000.000,00
2021	Rp 250.000.000,00
2022	Rp 334.868.208,00

Source: West Papua in 2023 Figures

Data on the use of special autonomy funds in the education sector in Manokwari Regency during the period 2020-2022 shows turbulence in fund allocation. The total special autonomy funds allocated for education in the year 2020 reached IDR 290 million. Then, in 2021, it decreased by 13.79 percent to IDR 250 million. This drop is most likely due to money being channeled to cushion the COVID-19 pandemic, which requires adjustment to the budget priorities of local governments. Special autonomy funds for education increased again drastically in 2022 to IDR 334,868,208 by 33.95%. It portrays increments and decrements in allocations as a result of dynamics in the management of the education budget amidst screaming challenges, including pandemic conditions and other immediate needs. Despite this increase in 2022, the total funding allocation to education during this period is still unstable, which may affect the consistency and effectiveness of education programs in Manokwari district. Stable and increasing funding allocations are important in education. Education is one of the best long-term investments to improve the quality of human resources. With adequate and stable financial resources, local governments can institute vzdělávání projects viable for the long term, such as teacher training, acquiring educational buildings, and scholarship plans. Funding allocation instability disrupts the continuity of such programs and affects educational achievement negatively.

This is to say that for quality education, more has to be done by a local government than merely increasing the budget; the governments should also ensure that money is well spent. Close supervision and transparency in using funds, with the involvement of the community in the supervision, can reduce the likelihood of mismanagement and make sure special autonomy funds are spent on the improvement of education quality. It means that by increasing community involvement and creating awareness about the importance of education, the proper use of special autonomy funds can also be improved. In this case, special autonomy funds will be used for local needs and priorities through effective socialization programs and the involvement of the community in the planning and monitoring process. From data on net and gross participation rates relating to the Manokwari district for 2021 and 2022, there is variation in school enrollment at different levels of education. Enrollment at the primary school level increased from 91.29% APM in 2021 to 92.44% APM in 2022, and APK also increased in the same period from 102.33% to 105.24%. These increases indicate more children of primary school age enrolled and participating in primary education—a testament to successful efforts of improvement of access to, and participation of, children at this level.

Table 3. Percentage of Pure Participation Rate (APK) and Gross Participation Rate (APK) by Education Level in the District

Education Level	2021		2022	
	APM	APK	APK	APM
SD	91,29	102,33	92,44	105,24
SMP	70,56	108,69	69,02	104
SMA	62,75	100,25	62,70	93,57

Source: West Papua in 2023 Figures

At the junior secondary education level—that is, SMP—in 2022, however, APM fell from 70.56 percent in 2021 to only 69.02 percent, and APK dropped from 108.69 percent to 104.00 percent. The drop shows a problem regarding the retention rate of students at the junior secondary level. While it remained almost constant at the senior secondary level—the reduction was merely from 62.75% in 2021 to 62.70% in 2022—the APK dropped drastically from 100.25% to 93.57%. This reflects problems in attracting and holding students at the senior secondary level. One palpable positive result is increased enrollment at the primary level, which, with improved facilities and quality of education, needs to be maintained and improved. On the other hand, reduced values for APM and APK at the junior and senior levels of secondary school make a case for serious attention and much more intensive intervention. This decline may be caused by the lack of facilities, economic problems that force students to work, or merely a lack of awareness regarding the importance of secondary education. In consequence, strategic steps must be taken to be able to deal with these issues. These include investment in school infrastructure, with non-stop training programs for teachers, scholarships, and monetary support provided to unfortunate students, as well as a more robust socialization program to make society fully aware of the significance of secondary and university education.

Analysis indicates that though a lot of money has been made available for use in the education sector, several factors serve to hinder its effective utilization. The Papua and West Papua Provinces have received significant funding allocations since the enactment of the Special Autonomy Law. Most of the funds are intended to improve the quality of education. However, it is often mismanaged funds that form the major barrier to attaining the aspired goals. As such, in most cases, these funds meant for the development of education infrastructures, provision of learning resources, and training of teachers are mismanaged, hence the benefits end up not being optimally felt by the community. This is coupled with poor management of the funds; from what was gathered, people do not truly understand the program on special autonomy funds and its benefits; their understanding is very minimal, thereby leaving these communities not knowing the importance of these funds and how to improve the quality of education obtained by their children. This often also leads to a lack of participation and support from the community toward the implementation of special autonomy-funded

education programs. This situation is further worsened by ineffective socialization and less than optimal communication between the government and the community, thereby causing programs not to work as expected. Another factor is the socio-political barriers to the use of special autonomy funds. It is expected that complex, often unstable, local political dynamics and central-local government tensions can trigger inequitable allocation of funds and further Qualified Use of Funds Not in line with Priority Needs in Education. In addition, conflicting political interests may weaken policy implementation that should be targeted at improving the quality of education. The allocation patterns in this study, combined with the regulatory framework of the special autonomy funds, basically give insight into the usage. As reflected through the data analysis, despite holding within the bounds of the existence of clear regulations parceled concerning fund allocation, its implementation at ground levels does not correspond to what is expected. Some of the factors that have facilitated this include the lack of effective oversight, weak accountability mechanisms, and low transparency in reporting about the use of funds. For these matters, the concern should be the reform of management and supervision of special autonomy funds. Important reforms are also the capacity building of government officials in managing funds, transparency, and accountability. Moreover, better socialization, which will further raise public awareness and participation, ensures special autonomy funds translate into reality on the ground, especially in improving the quality of education in Papua and West Papua. Public confidence in the management of this special autonomy fund goes a long way in achieving this noble objective, which in itself has a wider implication for reducing the development gap and improving the standard of living of the Indigenous Papuans in general, but especially in the education sector.

Impact on Educational Outcomes: While so, the education outcomes, both in terms of the school enrollment rate and average years of schooling, remain below the national targets. From the data obtained, Manokwari District's net and gross enrollment rates have fluctuated drastically in 2021. At the primary school level, APM was 91.29 percent, while APK was 102.33 percent. At the junior secondary school level, it was 70.56 percent for APM, against 108.69 percent in APK. The data provides an honest picture of the progress made, though the national target of 94.8 percent for APK is far from being met. The average length of schooling in Manokwari district has also increased from 2020 to 2022 but is still far from the ideal standard expected. In 2020, the average years of schooling was 11.56 years, increasing slightly to 11.59 years in 2022. The ideal standard for average years of schooling according to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is 15 years. This indicates that there are still many children in Manokwari district who do not complete their education, either due to financial constraints or social factors such as promiscuity and drug abuse. Based on data analysis regarding the use of the Special Autonomy Fund (Otsus) for the education sector in Manokwari District during the 2020-2022 period, it appears that the effectiveness of these funds in encouraging the achievement of education indicators is still not optimal. The net enrollment rate (APM) and gross enrollment rate (APK) at the primary school level showed a positive increase, with the APM increasing from 91.29% in 2021 to 92.44% in 2022 and the APK increasing from 102.33% to 105.24% over the same period. This increase reflects the success of the special autonomy fund allocation in encouraging student participation at the basic education level.

However, the participation of junior secondary school and senior secondary school students was tapered off. The APM at junior secondary level fell from 70.56 percent in 2021 to 69.02 percent in 2022, while APK went down from 108.69 percent to 104 percent. Even as the APM remained consistent with a minor drop from 62.75% in 2021 to 62.70% in 2022 at the senior high school level, the APK dropped drastically from 100.25% in 2021 to 93.57% in 2022. The drop portrays that despite the amplification of funding into it, its effectiveness has not been very optimal in helping to maintain students at the secondary education level. These are some of the major causes for this decline: lack of adequate facilities for education, economic problems that make students drop out of work, and a lack

of awareness about the importance of secondary education. The average years of schooling in Manokwari District increased from 11.56 years in 2020 to only 11.59 years in 2022, which is still very far from the ideal standard of 15 years, according to UNDP. What this means is that many students, due to various constraints like the high cost of education, having to work, and other issues in society such as promiscuity and drug abuse, never get to complete their education. From this very data, it could be concluded that the utilization of special autonomy funds in the education sector within Manokwari District so far has not been effective enough to encourage the realization of all indicators of education. There is an enhancement at the primary school level; however, at the junior and senior high school levels and in achieving the ideal average length of schooling, serious challenges remain. Moreover, the effective use of special autonomy funds should still be enhanced through further investment in the building and improvement of facilities in schools, especially junior and senior high schools. Additionally, the provision of continuous training for teachers, scholarships, and financial aid to students from underprivileged families, and raising public awareness regarding secondary and tertiary education are still needed through intensive socialization programs. Similarly, there should also be periodic monitoring and evaluation of the appropriate use of the special autonomy funds and their effectiveness and adjustments given the results from the evaluation. It is expected that the use of special autonomy funds will become more effective toward improving the achievement of education indicators in Manokwari District if the above measures are followed, in which all children will be fully assured of getting proper and qualified education based on national standards.

It identified some specific areas that need improvement to bring about better educational outcomes; among these areas is the improvement of teacher training and quality. Well-trained and qualified teachers would be able to provide better and more effective education to improve student learning outcomes. Next, it shows that the development of education infrastructure is also one of the key factors. Adequate infrastructural facilities, especially good learning facilities, are extremely important for the emergence of an effective learning process. Community participation is another important element in seeking to achieve better learning outcomes. The current good socialization on the importance of education and the use of special autonomy funds needs further work. Specifically, many communities do not know how to take advantage of these funds so that quality schooling can be provided for their children. With more awareness and participation of the community, hopefully, the utilization of the special autonomy funds could be better optimized and targeted. In addition, stronger policies and explicit sanctions should be provided for those officials who have seriously misused special autonomy funds. Higher order transparency and accountability in managing the funds must also be guaranteed so that the funding for the sector leads to better learning outcomes rather than enriching some individuals or groups. These obstacles could be overcome by improving the quality and qualifications of teachers, developing education infrastructure, and increasing community involvement. Had all that been done, then the main objective of the special autonomy fund, such as reducing development gaps and living standard improvement for indigenous Papuans, generally in the education sector, would have been achieved.

Conclusion and Recommendations: This paper concludes that while the allocation of special autonomy funds for education in Manokwari District has increased significantly, effective utilization still is not optimal. Some of the main challenges to using these funds are mismanagement, lack of awareness among communities, and socio-political barriers. The data reveals that both school enrollment rates and average years of schooling remain below national targets. That means huge funding is not a guarantee of improvement in education if there is no effective management and proper strategy to execute it. Quite rich in scope is the need for more extensive teacher training and development of educational infrastructure, greater community involvement, and more transparent and accountable management of the funds. This will ensure funds are utilized for the intended purpose.

Recommendations

1. Enhancing the quality and qualifications of teachers: There should be additional professional development training for human resources in teaching; precisely, for teachers to ensure that they acquire specific skills and knowledge that will realize an improved state of education. Local governments should hence liaise with the relevant institutions and recognized associations that provide continuous training for teachers.
2. Education Infrastructure: A call for investment in the building and upgrading of schools to provide an environment conducive to learning. Preference shall be accorded to schools in remote and less-developed areas to ensure equal access to education.
3. More community involvement: There needs to be a more effective socialization program set up to raise the awareness of the community concerning the importance of education and how to use special autonomy funds. The community needs to participate in the planning process and have control over the use of education funds in a hands-on approach to ensure transparency and accountability.
4. Strengthening monitoring and accountability: The Government shall create a tight monitoring and accountability mechanism in the management of special autonomy funds to obviate mismanagement and misuse of such funds; Strict administrative sanctions against officials erring in misappropriating special autonomy funds shall be imposed to instill discipline and compliance.
5. Stakeholder Engagement: The cooperation of all stakeholders, whether the government, education institutions, NGOs, or the private sector, has to be enhanced for the effective utilization of special autonomy funds; Active forums or steering committees involving representation from all relevant stakeholders can help develop policies that are more effective and have greater long-term sustainability.
6. Use of Data and Technology: The use of information technology in the management and reporting on the use of the funds adds to transparency and efficiency. There is a clear need to enhance data collection and analysis to track progress and measure the impact of programs being financed from special autonomy funds.

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