

Communication between Nations inside Indonesian Softpower Diplomacy in the South Pacific Region

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Political, financial and operational supports given to these small states to the separatist freedom movement (OPM) has been done in a spirit of togetherness among the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG). This international organization based on identity of Melanesian brotherhood which formed in 1986 by 4 small states in the Pacific Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon and Vanuatu, also by Kanak National Liberation Front from New Caledonia. This organization was keen enough to promote the freedom movement of OPM to achieve independence Papua, that was why Indonesia tried to achieve the membership of Melanesian Spearhead Groups (MSG), because Indonesia has a strong argument that as an island country, it has 11 million Melanesian descendants on its scattered island as Papua, Mallocca, Buton, Southeast Nusa) characterized by their hair type, skin color, body figures and have similarities to the Melanesian in the south pacific. The emergence of political maneuver that continue to attack sovereignty of the Indonesian government against Papua, raising a view of a need to have a grand strategy to enhance more understanding and gaining supports from the small island states regarding the free movement for Papua, especially in the UN forum through public diplomacy in the perspective of communication among nations.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

One of the effect caused by the end of the cold war is the emergence of island and small states with few population around the world. These islands geographically in general scattered around Caribbean sea and Latin American are about 23 states, around the Indian ocean to Africa there are about 9 states, also around Australia and the Pacific ocean are about 25 states. The total of these small states around the world is 189, 57 of them are members to the United Nations.

In various international forums, including the United Nations (UN), these small states are bound to the small developing states. These small states group sometime surprising international forum with a hard statement, so that they are recognized by the world, because their voting rights are equals to other members [1-3].

In the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly, 29-30 September 2014, a new prime minister of Vanuatu, Mr. Joe Natuman, raises an issue of West Papua and new Caledonia. Natuman stated that New Caledonia is still under the ruling of French and Papua under the authorization of Indonesian government, and at the end of his speech Natuman asking the UN to alleviate these facts. This speech quite upset the Indonesian government and in view of Vanuatu intervention to its domestic affairs and also undermining the country.

What has been done by the representative of Vanuatu in the UN was one of several supports made by the small states in the South Pacific region for Papuan separatist freedom movement (OPM), who's members still living in these states. Solomon, another small state, with a politically weak government, its Prime minister's speech also disturbing Indonesian sovereignty in the 70th session of the UN General Assembly in September 28th till 3rd October 2015 in New York. Prime minister Manasseh Sogavare critized and recalled the leaders of the pacific to take a fast move and send a fact-findings team to Papua as Sogavare suspected Indonesian government of wrong doing such as human rights violation over there.

Political, financial and operational supports given to these small states to the separatist freedom

movement (OPM) has been done in a spirit of togetherness among the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG). This international organization based on identity of Melanesian brotherhood which formed in 1986 by 4 small states in the Pacific Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon and Vanuatu, also by Kanak National Liberation Front from New Caledonia.

This organization was keen enough to promote the freedom movement of OPM to achieve independence Papua, that was why Indonesia tried to achieve the membership of Melanesian Spearhead Groups (MSG), because Indonesia has a strong argument that as an island country, it has 11 million Melanesian descendants on its scattered island as Papua, Mallocca, Buton, Southeast Nusa) characterized by their hair type, skin color, body figures and have similarities to the Melanesian in the south pacific [4-6].

The emergence of political maneuver that continue to attack sovereignty of the Indonesian government against Papua, raising a view of a need to have a grand strategy to enhance more understanding and gaining supports from the small island states regarding the free movement for Papua, especially in the UN forum through public diplomacy in the perspective of communication among nations.

This study tried to raise it as an issue, besides undermining Indonesian government's sovereignty, the issue also damaging the Indonesian image as a peace loving country and also endangered the future of Papua region under Indonesian unity government. Indonesian territories are starting from Sabang at the west side until Merauke at the eastern end of the country, and from Miangas island at the north up to Rote island at the Southeast part of the country.

In relation the above mentioned issues, the study intended to explore few questions:

- (1) Why few south pacific island small states are still actively providing support to the propaganda done by freedom movement to Papua (OPM) in various international forums?
- (2) The effectiveness of soft power diplomacy done by Indonesian government so fat in targeting more understanding among these states so they can reduce their support to the OPM.

- (3) How do the formulations of Indonesian soft power diplomacy in influencing small island states in South Pacific's foreign policies?
- (4) From which aspects soft power diplomacy can be seen as an activity of international communication?
- (5) What are the channels for effective communication instruments which could be used for soft power diplomacy in a relation to the issue of Papua in the South Pacific region?
- (6) What are factors could be used (obstacles, force, opportunities, threats) faced by Indonesian government in implementing soft power diplomacy to create positive image in Melanesian solidarity in international forums?

This study is aim to seek a practical and application aspects, such as:

- (1) Looking for some inputs for policies preparation and strategic soft power diplomacy in Indonesian foreign policy.
- (2) Through material discourse, for all stakeholders involved such as businessmen, social workers, and other Indonesian professionals in the activities of international cooperation in order to form a human and friendly soft power diplomacy.
- (3) Remind all stakeholders of independence of Papua, that Indonesian' s unity and sovereignty is a fix price and Papua as part of Indonesia is a must.

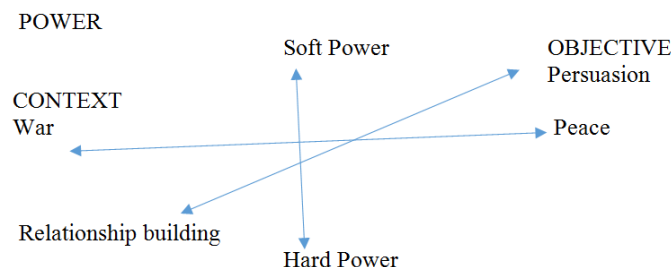
the public diplomacy developed by International Relations theories, (b) the occurrence of inter-disciplines in the international relations study with international communication study as an integral effort to find solutions for overcoming difference approaches in both studies.

- (2) To actually answer all the above questions, this study conducted an investigation into earlier studies, such as of Nye [7-10] who introduce soft power diplomacy as a form of public diplomacy which illustrated the ability of one state in persuading others without coercion activities, but through invisible channels (lobby) and other peaceful means

Nye further explained that with soft power "...The best propaganda is not propaganda"...Nye introduced this term in his book: "Bound to Lead: the changing of American power" (1990), then he developed the concept further through the book of soft power: "The means to success in the world politics" (2004). The term of soft power is now used widely in the domain of the international relations either by analysts and practitioners and also statemen. According to Nye, a country can use soft power approach in the following formulations a) cultural activity,(b) political values used inside the country and abroad,(c) a good morality within foreign policies

2.2 Public Diplomacy

Szondi [11] also made a reference about the purpose of cultural relations is to ensure mutual benefit among countries by understanding and cooperation inside it. Furthermore, Szondi stated that even though there is a few difference between nation branding and soft power, cultural diplomacy is always a pillar for many foreign policies, for example in the central Europe countries. Below is the figure of public diplomacy by Szondi:



Picture 1. Szondi explained how soft power became a pillar to targeting peace, as another option besides war, it is done by persuasive instruments and relationship building

2.3 Soft Power Diplomacy could not done Alone

The study of Lina and Klaus [12] showed an insignificant growth on the use of broadcasting as a public diplomacy. United States of America (U.S.A) who founded Al-Hurra television to convinced Arabic world, failed to compete with Al Jazeera's domination in the region. Malone [12] saw soft power diplomacy alone could not overcome a tension already exist between countries, even though cultural diplomacy could repair some breaches that might exist in the relation between nations. They gave example, in Southeast Asia, there is a network formed by ASEAN and Indian university authorities to compliment joint research, exchange student and professors in the area of bio-technology, bio-medical and other social science including economic [13,14].

2.4 The Advancement of Communication Technologies

Ryniesjka-Kiednowicz (2015) saw a progress being made in communication technologies have changed our way of communication; also changed public diplomacy's practices in the world. Those advancement easing the delivery of news across the world, but also at the same time increase the importance of Good image of foreign policies of the countries around the world, since the impact would be quicker than before.

2.5 Local Wisdom as One of the Instrument for Soft Power Diplomacy

Pramono, a researcher, the Head of Policy Analysis and Development Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, stated that Indonesian must engage in the global competition with the involvement of the local wisdom as part of soft power diplomacy. Asian market has to be treated with ASEAN's common values that have an universal character, so that it capable to integrate into global marker and still maintain its originalities on their own cultural identity of Asia.

Pramono stated that seeing from the experiences from two big countries such as India and China, whom already using their own cultures and developed it through the world, he said that it is important for Indonesia to explore its own local wisdom which already integrated in its national identity. He saw "pluralism accommodative" as the tie to relate sustainability of Indonesia as a nation.

2.6 Research Methodology

Another research methodologies used in the study is include the qualitative research method and collecting data qualitatively with 11 key persons who understanding the issue in the in-depth interview through emails, focus group discussion and content analysis to the issued in online media or social media related to the issues within South Pacific countries and Papua in general.

From the collection of data and the analysis used in the study, so that it has a funding that: Few South pacific countries that tend to support provocative agendas of Freedom Movement of Papua (OPM) in the international forums based on Melanesian brotherhood and misinterpretation of violation of human rights in Papua, slowly but sure changed their view and sees Indonesia as their partner (*Indonesia is my friend*). The proof is that from 7 states which gave their support before, nowadays only one country left, that is Vanuatu that still support the OPM.

The government of the Republic of Indoneisa has done many forms of soft power diplomacy as a tool for public diplomacy to influence foreign policies ot small states in the South Pacific region in order to reduce the tension and political support for Papua freedom movement, such as: Visits of the Head of the country, Indonesian participation in many forums in the south Pacific, sending invitation for officers from states in the South Pacific region to participate in Bali Democratic Forum, Cultural mission to the South Pacific region (Fiji and Solomon lead by Minister Wiranto for example), Cultural Festival International Melanesia, the printed out of Book Melanesian Nusantara, Scholarship for Arts and Cultural of Indonesia, scholarship for best students from the South pacific region, Technical training cooperation in agricultural, machineries, computer and journalistics support from Indonesian government through organization of APEC, and also humanitarian assistance for disasters, are all ommunication channels to implemented Indonesian's support for the region. Small publication in the media about all of those cooperation also some forms of Indonesian's care for the region.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The above efforts done by Indonesian government to show its care and to change the Indonesian image among the South Pacific

states to reduce the support for Papua freedom movement among them, especially to counter attach the propaganda done by the OPM in international forums, especially the UN. Some of the actors inside the OPM seem desperated to offend Indonesian activities through cultural diplomacy as part of the soft power in the public diplomacy.

Diplomacy is a communication process so that in its interaction and dialogue involving people who act on behalf of their country. Soft power diplomacy done by Indonesian government in targeting the good image of Indonesia in the view of the South Pacific island states, were done by many formulations, such as (a) Interpersonal

communication in the form of private contact via telephone, or private meeting of officers, diplomats and others, (b) Group communication in the form of formal correspondents, meeting in the international and regional forums, in Papua new guinea, Solomon, Nauru and Fiji and also in Democratic Forum Bali, cultural festival. Melanesian Culture festival, and the likes, (3) Mass communication through mass media coverage, many diplomatic visit, APEC forum, and the likes (Pacific International Forum /PIF), or other events, (d) Digital communication which covered activities in the websites , so that public could open and sees many activities done by the governments so far.

Table 1.

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Threats | (a)Papua which has rich natural resources could attrack big countries such as USA; Australia, New Zealand and China, whom have its own interests, either openly or in discreet. This could give effect other South Pacific states whom could influence by the OPM. (b) The strong force of the OPM to separated themselves from Indonesia, has to be watched especially if there is an indication of foreign' influences. |
| 2 Opportunitie s | (a)Geographically, Pacific is not far away from Indonesian territories, cooperation could be done in the maritime technology, because similarity as an island state(b) similarities in race (Melanesian in Indonesian territories) could become an opportunities for enhancing people to people contact to strengthen the relation between people, communities leaders, cultural workers and the likes (c) Economic impediment of the island states could become an opportunities for Indonesia to offer assistance, partnerships, and technological training in the area of health, cultural cooperation or other economy activities, (d) Government in the South Pacific could contribute in maintain in a stability in the region by developing democracy values, exchange of views, exchange of best practices, and lessons learned from democratic process South pacific region is a market for Indonesian products, that is why economically these states could attract investors from Indonesia (f) Technical and capacity building assistance could be given to the small states in the South pacific. |
| 3 Weakness | There are one or two states in the Pasific Island Forum (PIF) who give support to OPM, in the form of license for them to open their office in the states. also giving them some financial support. |
| 4 Strength | (a) The acceptance of Indonesia as a member of the Melanesian Spearhead Groups (MSG), showed that Indonesia is un-separable from Melanesian issue. Through this forum OPM slowly but sure is loosing their influence in the region. (b) Visits of head of states to the south pacific region could change the image of Indonesia as one of big country with big natural resources , human resources and technology which could assist the region, so that their wishes to become a partner in their development process (c) The acceptance of Indonesia as non regular member of Security Council of the UN in 2019 has a big impact for the South pacific states to accept Indonesia as their partner, in order to struggle for economic success, in the area of ocean based economy, climate change, and disaster management. This new impact hopefully would reduce totally their support for Wes Papua freedom movement (OPM). |

4. CONCLUSION

Some study's questions have been investigated, below are the conclusions:

1. Why some of the small island states in the South Pacific region still actively supporting the propaganda done by free west freedom movement (OPM)?

- The answer started by understanding the process to fight for their independence in the 1950's and further, they have set up such regional organizations such as Pasific Islands Forum (PIF), South Pasific Commission (SPC), Pasific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER), and also Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), that is for the first time the OPM who did not satisfied with the emerge of Papua (Irian Jaya) into the Republic of Indonesia with PEPERA did some propaganda activities to these small island states by promoting Melanesian etnical brotherhood spirit.
- Beside the spirit of togetherness inside Melanesian Spearhead Group, there is still few negative opinions shared in these states regarding human rights violation, and also few actors of the human rights violation's acts who have not been punished by Indonesian government. Economic disparities between island of Papua and island of Java sometimes used by the organization of OPM , and they asking supports from government in the small island states in the South Pacific, by pointing out the spirit of Melanesian brotherhood, some supports from Churches in Australia and New Zealand still accepted by the separatist movement so far.
- Indonesian government c.q Ministry of Foreign Affairs aware of this trend and from the beginning always act in accordance with soft power diplomacy in the form of communication among states to approach and outreach these states, so that they could reduce their support to the organization.

2. How efective the softpower diplomacy done by Indonesian government to increase the understanding among the island states in the South Pacific so that they could not support the separatist movement in Papua?

Indonesian government done some cooperation in the fields of Politic, Economy, Education,

Cultural and social and technical assistance also visits of High officers and other activities accordance to the soft power diplomacy.

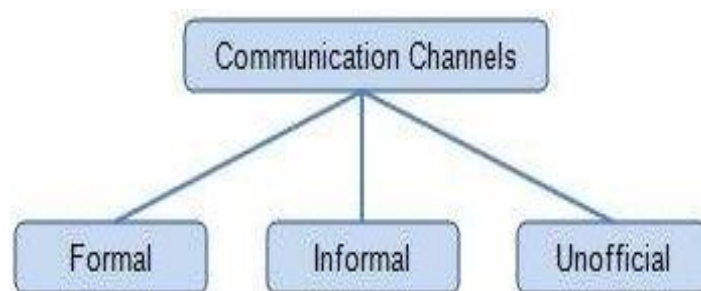
3. How was the formulation of soft power diplomacy as public diplomacy used by Indonesian government in influencing the foreign policies of the small island states in the South pacific to reduce political support and tension in the issue of free west Papua movement in the international forum?

The use of soft power diplomacy in the formulation of cultural diplomacy have positive impact and open up cooperation and partnership between Indonesian and the small states in the South Pacific region. Indonesia has succeed to show them that Indonesia has developed as a stable and economically better than the rest of the region ,by maximizing its human and natural resources, all of these could be utilized by these small states. Activities in the forms of partnership, cooperation, assistance, aids have been proved very effective to reduce the support from these government to the Papua's separatist movement, 7 of the small states islands who supported the movement, now only 1 country (Vanuatu) who still supports this.

4. What aspect in the soft power diplomacy used by Indonesian government in outreach the small island states in the South pacific Island in supporting the separatist movement in Papua could be seen as communication among states activities?

If diplomacy is an art of negotiation, so that we could figure out that inside this action there is a communication process, aim to achieve an understanding between two parties involved in the process, expected to solve one or two issues or conflicts. Indonesian government activities to achieve common view of the issue in the Papua shared by some of the small states in the South Pacific island, is the activities of international communication among nations or states or countries.

Communication as a process could not be done without channels of communication, such as mass media, exchange of visits among officers, congress, seminar, festival, and the publishing of cultural book, etc. All of these activities are media for communication to strengthen cooperation among the south Pacific island states with Indonesia.



Picture 2.

5. What are channels for communication effective for soft power diplomacy in approaching the small states islands in the issues of free west papua movement?

All activities included in the negotiation process are very effective in enhance the positive Image of Indonesia in the view of the small island states in the South Pacific .Communication process in the form of interpersonal communication, public communication, mass communication, communication between cultural aspects, people to people or government to government. Markham (1970) before stated this as a Mass Mediated Communication.

In picture 2 is the formulation of 3 channels in communications: Formal usually done by government between 2 states or more (Government to Government = G to G). Informal channel usually done outside the formal meetings and un-official communication done in other forums such as private organizations, and other unofficial contacts. Picture of Communication Channels is presented in picture 2.

6. What are factors become a strength, weakness, opportunities and threats in implementing soft power diplomacy for the small island states in the South Pacific in the issue of the free West Papua movement in the international forum

Explained in Picture 1 (Table 1).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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