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**Indigenous Women Traders in the Negotiation of Space,  
Place, and Identity in the Merauke Regency, Papua Province,  
Indonesia**

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

of

**Master of Social Sciences in Women's and Gender Studies**

at

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by

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## Abstract

This research focuses on Indigenous women traders in Merauke regency, Papua Province, Indonesia. Indigenous women traders, known as Mama-Mama, are a group of women who play a very important role in distributing local products from rural areas to the market as well as the role as a family food provider. They are also involved in maintaining and strengthening the existence of traditional knowledge. In the last four decades, the presence of Indonesian traders at the market has exceeded the number of native traders. The market which is vital for the Papuan community has become dominated by Indonesian traders. The first issue faced by Mama-Mama is the development of concrete stalls at Wamanggu in a way that did not consider Mama-Mama's needs. Furthermore, Mama-Mama experienced high competition in selling their traditional goods because of their lack of skills and limited access to resources as compared to Indonesian traders. Lastly, a mega project in 2010 set up by the Indonesian government called MIFEE (Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate), which aimed to overcome a food crisis in Indonesia, has led to massive deforestation. Deforestation has, in turn, reduced the population of sago trees in the forest. Sago is one of the indigenous traditional foods which also represents the cultural identity of Merauke's local tribe, the Marind tribe. Another concern appeared when the distribution of sago flour at the market declined slightly. This affected sago consumption among the local people because rice was available as a substitute meal. The shrinking of sago production has also affected Mama-Mama's daily earnings.

Several times, with assistance from Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian Keuskupan Agung Merauke (SKP-KAME) and Lembaga Advokasi Peduli Perempuan (eL-AdPPer), Mama-Mama have been tried to speak up for their rights. They have tried to convey their problems to the House of Representatives (DPRD), but they found it difficult to penetrate the government hierarchy. Mama-Mama's voices almost never been well followed up by the member of the House of Representatives, while their problems have been used by a certain candidate as one of political campaign issues to win the election. This study explores the

presence of Indonesian traders which affected Mama-Mama's access to adequate stalls, trading opportunities and their roles in reproducing and maintaining the production of traditional knowledge. Further, this study also analyse how power, space, and place are interconnected in dealing with the market complexities.

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## Bahasa Indonesia Glossary

DPRD	: Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (House of Representatives regional level)
DPRP	: Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Provinsi (House of Representatives provincial level)
DAMRI	: Djawatan Angkutan Motor Republik Indonesia (State-owned public transport/city bus)
MIFEE	: Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate (A mega project which used a big area for industry, mainly palm oil and food crops agriculture in Merauke regency)
SKP-KAME	: Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian Keuskupan Agung Merauke (Justice and peace commission of the Archdiocese of Merauke)
SKP-KC FP	: Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian Keutuhan Ciptaan Fransiskan Papua (Justice and peace commission under the Franciscan congregation)
eL-AdPPer	: Lembaga Advokasi Peduli Perempuan (A women's advocacy institution)
SOLPAP	: Solidaritas Pedagang Asli Papua (Solidarity for Papuan traders)

TNI	: Tentara Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Army)
Dispenda	: Dinas Pendapatan Daerah (Regional Income Department)
Pokja Papua	: Kelompok Kerja Papua (Papua Team Work)
Otsus	: Otonomi Khusus (special autonomy)
Satpol PP	: Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja (Civil Service Police Unit)
Stisipol Yaleka Maro	: Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Politik Yayasan Lentera Kasih Merauke (Private University under Lentera Kasih Foundation)
Raskin	: Beras Miskin (rice subsidy from the government)
Bupati	: The head of the region
Kantor	: Office
Mama	: Term for a married woman (mother/wife)
Pasar	: Market
Becak	: Motor cab
Kios	: Small shop
Sayur	: Vegetables
Mujair	: Tilapia (type of fresh water fish)
Noken	: Traditional bag made from tree bark/wild orchard skin
Noken Sai	: Name of a local building in Merauke

Sago : Type of traditional food in Eastern part of Indonesia

Bahasa : Language

Koperasi Simpan Pinjam : Savings and loans cooperative

## Chapter One: Introduction

*“Mama-Mama itu dong jualan itu bukan untuk cari keuntungan, tapi dong jualan untuk cari makan. Pasar itu dong punya jantung, karna dari pasar itu dong bisa makan dan kasih sekolah anak. Sebagai masyarakat pribumi, Mama-Mama punya hak untuk bisa dapat tempat jualan yang layak, dong juga punya hak supaya bisa dapat pinjaman modal usaha, dan supaya bisa terlibat dalam setiap program peningkatan kapasitas. Dengan demikian, Mama-Mama dong bisa gampang tuk taruh dong pu hasil kebun di pasar dan dong bisa mampu bersaing dengan pedagang non-Papua”. (Penulis)*

*“Mama-Mama sell their goods not for profit, but they sell goods only just to meet their daily needs. The market is becoming the center of their lives because through the market, they can provide food for their family and send their children to school. As the native people, Mama-Mama have the same right to gain access to adequate stalls, loans and capacity building programmes so that they could easily display their traditional goods at the market, and compete with non-Papuan traders”. (Author)*

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Papua and Papua Barat province are also known as West Papua. The term West Papua is often used internationally to describe the western half of the island of New Guinea which has been governed by Indonesia since 1960s (Stoot, 2011). The use of this term also implies a political aspiration in association with self-determination movements. Under the rule of Indonesia, since 2003, the West Papuan territory has been divided into two provinces, Papua and Papua Barat. Papua and Papua Barat are the easternmost provinces of Indonesia and are rich in gold, copper, natural gas, forests, and fisheries (Stoot, 2011). These resources allow West Papua to become the largest economic entity of Indonesia. Papua and Papua Barat were also targeted as transmigration destination in Soeharto’s (the former president of Republic Indonesia) New Order regime in 1970s (Stoot,

2011). Transmigration programme was adopted by Indonesian government since the Dutch colonial era to reduce the population density of Java Island by sending people to other areas which are still sparsely populated (Stoot, 2011). Since then, the presence of Indonesian settlers in Papua and Papua Barat has brought massive influences on the life of the native people. For example, the traditional land was taken and converted to settlement, farming, and agriculture areas, while natural resources were extracted to fill the needs of new settlers.



Figure 1.1 Papua, Papua Barat & Papua New Guinea Map

Source: <https://www.google.co.nz/maps/place/Papua+New+Guinea>

In 2001, the Indonesian government gave *Otonomi Khusus*, which means special autonomy, to Papua and Papua Barat. The *Otonomi Khusus* which is shortened as *Otsus*, aimed to address the Indigenous Papuan's desire to be independent from Indonesia (Surwayan, 2010). Through the *Otsus* budget, Indonesia gave an opportunity for Papua and Papua Barat to organize and develop themselves under intensive supervision from the state government of Indonesia. The *Otsus* discourse and expansion of several new regencies were expected to bring prosperity to the life of the indigenous people. However, trillions rupiah of *Otsus* money, which flowed to both provinces, have created a lot of tensions among the indigenous people. The *Otsus* money was absorbed by some local

elites for individual purposes, while the expanded regencies led to the desire of certain groups to obtain a strategic position in the government sector (Surwayan, 2010). Most Indonesians also took advantage of the *Otsus* opportunity by running their private business and offering services or expertise to the local government. Meanwhile, the flow of *Otsus* money is not being fully used to develop the native people. It seems like physical development is the main priority, while the development of human resources is being neglected. Some Papuans who live in remote areas can only hear the word *Otsus* but they have no idea what the meaning of *Otsus* has in their lives.

The increasing Indonesian population, through the transmigration programme, has exceeded the numbers of the local population. According to Elmslie (2017), one example of this demographic transition has been well researched in Papua province is the Keerom regency. The Keerom regency used to be 100% Papuan in 1963, but has shifted to around 40% Papuan in 2010 (Elmslie, 2017). Another example comes from the southern part of Papua, the Merauke regency, where the number of non-indigenous people has increased significantly every year. According to the 2010 Indonesian Population Census, the total population of Merauke was 195,716 but only 73,000 were indigenous people (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Papua, 2011). While the original data has been removed by the statistical department of Indonesia due to political reasons, the data shows a huge gap in the numbers of indigenous people and non-indigenous people in the Merauke regency. Besides the transmigration programme, which is run by the state government, there were big number of spontaneous trans-migrants who have been migrated to Papua and Papua Barat (Stoot, 2011). Most people from all around Indonesia come to Papua, especially Merauke to make a living. Some of them come because of official duties as civil servants, volunteers, or missionaries, but most of them come due to a personal intention to start a business. Surwayan (2016) stated that in Manokwari, the capital city of Papua Barat province, people from outside Papua keep coming by sea and air. They were freely entering Manokwari to start their businesses and new lives and consequently dominate the space and place of the native people (Surwayan, 2016).

Stott (2017) argued that the overwhelming presence of Indonesian settlers has caused displacement, limiting the space and place of the indigenous people due to the needs of traditional land for mining operations, palm oil plantations, and transmigration settlement. An example of this is the presence of Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate programme, known as MIFEE, in Merauke regency. The MIFEE was a project set up by state government of Indonesia in 2010. This project aimed to solve the Indonesian food and energy crisis by taking up 970,000 hectares of indigenous land for the purposes of investment activities (Tri & Haksoro, 2010). Because of this project, traditional sago forests have been converted into plantation areas. A story from Zanegi village where the presence of PT Selaras Inti Semesta company, which is known as PT SIS, has caused a change from traditional sago forest into industrial forest projects. It caused the loss of sago, the traditional food of the native people that also represents the cultural identity of the Marind tribe (Ginting & Pye, 2013). Traditionally, the wild sago trees have been the main food producing trees of the Marind tribes. One big tree can produce three baskets of dry flour, which can feed one family for six months. In addition, the stems of the sago trees are used as house pillars, and the woven leaves can be used for roofing traditional houses. Today, the sago population has decreased due to massive deforestation in Merauke regency which leads to a scarcity of sago flour at the market. As a result, the price of sago has become very expensive and native people tend to buy rice as a cheaper substitute.

Another problem faced by indigenous women traders is that the market, which is usually used as a place to generate income, share news, and reproduce traditional knowledge, now has become dominated by Indonesian traders. This study discusses the domination of Indonesian traders in the informal economy which has consequently marginalised the native traders in Merauke regency.

## **1.2 Who is Mama-Mama?**

Mama-Mama is a term addressed to married Papuan women (Wanggai, 2007). The word 'Mama' is an Indonesian word which means 'Mother'. Mama-Mama play a pivotal role in the market and family. They connect rural producers and urban consumers, and make a living from selling and buying local products to fulfil their family necessities (Wanggai, 2007). In the Merauke regency, the indigenous women traders are mostly dominated by the Muyu, Mandobo, and Wamena tribes. Only small number of the Marind tribe who usually involved in trading activities. Traditionally, the Marind tribe use the resources that are gathered from nature for their own needs.

## **1.3 The Market Complexities in Merauke Regency**

In the last four decades, massive changes have occurred at the market place in the Merauke regency. The Pelita market, in the 1970s, used to have organised stalls for all traders, and the trading atmosphere upheld cultural and moral values (Kurupat, personal communication, July 6, 2017). This was followed by the presence of the Ampera market during the 1990s where the Mama-Mama used to have proper stalls and good trading opportunities (Kurupat, personal communication, July 6, 2017). However, the growing number of Indonesian traders from the 1960s until 2000s at the market have marginalized the Mama-Mama, where now it is getting difficult to attain space and place at the market. As a minority group in the market, they also face very high competition in selling their traditional goods because they lack skills and have limited access to resources as compared to Indonesian traders. Local government intervention, which was strongly expected by the Mama-Mama to be able to overcome the market problems, seems to be very slow in responding to the needs of the Mama-Mama (Kurupat, personal communication, July 6, 2017). Through local assistance from one of the Catholic church organisations, named Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian Keuskupan Agung Merauke (SKP-KAME), the Mama-Mama have tried to speak up for their rights.

In 2014, SKP-KAME, in collaboration with Lembaga Advokasi Peduli Perempuan Merauke (eL-AdPPer), Yayasan Satunama Yogyakarta and Stisipol Yaleka Maro Merauke assisted Mama-Mama and discussed their rights with the House of Representatives of Merauke regency or in Bahasa Indonesia known as Kantor DPRD Kabupaten Merauke (SKPKAME, 2016). Although Mama-Mama have presented their problems to the House of Representatives, they had to wait without any feedback and confirmation. Their aspirations do not seem to have been heard and followed by the House of Representatives Board, as they have only been given promises from year to year. Surprisingly, problems about the market always becomes an annual issue often used by certain candidates in their campaign elections to gain public sympathy (Kurupat, personal communication, July 6, 2017). Mama-Mama's voices have been lost through political dynamics and have almost never been heard by the local government. They were being marginalised and discriminated and exploited for political campaign purposes from year to year (Kurupat, personal communication, July 6, 2017).

#### **1.4 Description of the Research Location: The Merauke Regency**

This study is conducted in my home region, the Merauke regency which also has become one of transmigration destinations in Papua province. Its located in the Southern part of the Papua province and has an area of 46,791,63 km<sup>2</sup> (Merauke statistical data, 2014). Merauke is bordered in the east by Papua New Guinea, in the south and west by the Arafura Sea which separates it from Australia and in the north by the Mappi and Boven Digoel regency. Most of the area is flat and marked by rivers, swamps and meadows. There are significant populations of termites, kangaroos, birds of paradise, wild crocodiles, deer and cassowary. Some of the flora and fauna present are not found in other parts of Papua and the Papua Barat province, but is quite similar to that which is present in Darwin, Australia.



Figure 1.2 The Merauke Regency Administration Map

Source: <http://irwanto.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/PETA-KABUPATEN->

According to the 2010 Indonesian Population Census, the total population of the Merauke regency was 195,716, but only around 73,000 were indigenous people. While the actual data has since been removed by the statistical department of Indonesia due to political issues, the data has shown a huge gap in the total between Papuan and Non-Papuan's in the Merauke regency. The indigenous people of the Merauke regency are the Marind tribe. The Marind tribe is the largest tribe in Merauke who live along the coastal areas and by the Maro riverbank. Bonifacius Gebze (as cited in Sujana, 2012), stated that the Marind tribe have fully integrated their lives with the natural environment and rely on the forests for their subsistence. Men freely hunt animals while women look for clean water and gather foodstuffs from the forest. Children are free to play in nature, swim at the river, and they often help their mothers to gather firewood from the forest. According to Bonifacius Gebze (as cited in Sujana, 2012), the Marind tribe recognises the forest as their 'Mother', who usually feeds and protects her children from hunger. All their needs are available in the forest. As well as the Marind tribe, there are also some other local tribes who come from other parts of Papua and Papua Barat province such as the Muyu, Mandobo, Asmat, Mapi, Wamena, Serui, Biak, etc. Some of them work in government offices as civil servants, soldiers, teachers, farmers, and traders.

There are currently two markets that have been operating in the Merauke regency for the last five years. The first market is the Mopah 2 market, also known as the old market, and the second is Wamanggu market or the new market.

#### 1.4.1 The Mopah 2 market

The Mopah 2 market was built as a temporary market to accommodate all the traders who were victims of the fire from Ampera market. The market is surrounded by several schools and government buildings. It is bordered by Jalan Pembangunan in the East, a state secondary school, and a community health centre in the West. In the South, it is bordered by the airport areas, and by Jalan Pemuda in the North. It is a temporary market mostly constructed of wood. This market used to have electricity, but currently do not have access to electricity, security and garbage management, and the traders are no longer taxed. There are many stalls that are not used, and some stalls have been damaged and are no longer maintained. Some traders often call this market a ‘wild market’ or ‘pasar liar’ in Indonesian because it is no longer under government supervision.



Figure 1.3 The Mopah 2 market's main entrance

Source: Veronika Kanem, January 2017

The market usually operates from 6am until 8pm in the evening. Both Indonesian and indigenous women traders will sell their produce inside the market

from 7am in the morning until midday. After lunch time, around 2pm in the afternoon, some Papuan and Indonesian traders will move all their goods to the car park outside the market. The afternoon market usually operates around 4pm until 8pm. Although there is no electricity, some Indonesian traders use their own electricity generator machines while Papuan women traders use candles and traditional oil lamps known as 'pelita'.

#### **1.4.2 Wamanggu market**

Wamanggu market is a new market located in the city centre. This market is also known as a modern market. Wamanggu market was built in the same location as Ampera market. It is bordered by Jalan TMP Polder in the East, Bintoro Shopping area in the South, Jalan Gor in the West, and Jalan Paulus Nafi in the North. It is a permanent building with a very modern design. The building is designed as a semi-mall market. There are 1,179 stalls provided for traders. This is broken down into 515 for indigenous traders, 636 for Indonesian traders, and 28 for both Indonesian and Papuan official elite groups (Katayu, 2015). There is a terminal for public transport and a mosque built in the east part of the market. This market is new and equipped with several toilet facilities, garbage bins, security service, and a water supply.



Figure 1.4 The Wamanggu market's main entrance

Source: Veronika Kanem, January 2017

## 1.5 The Study's Objectives

The aim of this research is to examine the power dynamics within and between indigenous and Indonesian traders in the Merauke regency of Papua Province, Indonesia. I mainly focused on exploring indigenous women's strategies in negotiating adequate space to sell their products in the marketplace, and seek to understand the factors that constrain their abilities and efforts in competing with Indonesian traders

There are four objectives to this research:

- a. Assess the presence of Indonesian traders and identify how this has affected the representation of traditional products in the market;
- b. Examine how the implementation of the Indonesian government in economic programmes influences indigenous women trader's space in the market and the production of traditional knowledge and cultural practices of the indigenous traders.
- c. Identify why Indonesian women traders are more successful compared to indigenous women traders in the market;

- d. Investigate existing local government interventions designed to address market issues, specifically seeking to understand how well they align with the needs of indigenous traders.

## **1.6 Significant of the Study**

In the past, there have been studies conducted on market issues by national and local NGOs in Papua which have produced organisational reports and several publications in local and national newspapers. However, the data and information from previous studies have not had any impact on Mama-Mama, whose issues continue unresolved and have even got worse in some cases. I believe that by conducting this research, the problems faced by the Mama-Mama in the market would be better highlighted so that the Mama-Mama could confidently speak for their rights based on these findings. In addition to being part of the requirements for my thesis at the University of Waikato, these research findings would benefit the next researchers, students or anyone who is interested in learning and exploring the market complexities in Papua and Papua Barat. Importantly, these research findings could contribute to those interested in regional development purposes, particularly for those investigating future market development programmes in Papua and Papua Barat.

## **Chapter Two: Women's Market Challenges and Limitations**

This chapter discusses previous market studies done by academics, activists, and Non-Government Organisations in Papua and Papua Barat Province, Indonesia. It starts with market case study from the capital city of Papua province, Jayapura, and other regency including Sorong, Manokwari, and Merauke. In the second section, this chapter discusses the traditional value of the market for the native people, and various market related issues in other part of the world.

### **2.1 The Descriptions of Market Complexities in Papua and Papua Barat Province, Indonesia**

#### **2.1.1 The Jayapura case study**

As the capital city of Papua province, Jayapura is the centre of the provincial government, education, and business industries. There is very tight competition between indigenous people and migrants in various aspects of the development programmes. As a modern city, the dissemination of information in Jayapura is faster than in other regencies. Further, as compared to other regencies in Papua and Papua Barat, Jayapura people obtain many more opportunities and they are actively involved in different kind of activities which could boost their capacities.

A market study has been conducted in Jayapura from 2004 until 2016 by the Sekretariat Keadialan dan Perdamaian Keutuhan Ciptaan Jayapura (SKP-KC). The study discovered some issues faced by indigenous women vendors in negotiating their space, place, and identity. In Jayapura city, most of the Mama-Mama used to sell their local products in an open space or on a pedestrian pathway in front of Gelael Supermarket. There were no stalls or tarpaulins provided by the local government to protect them from the sun or the rain because their presence in that space was categorised as illegal vendors (Wanggai, 2007). In 2004, the Mama-Mama who sell their local produce along Matahari street and

Gelael Supermarket were forcibly evicted by the city planning department of Jayapura province in collaboration with the Indonesian National Army (TNI) and police officers (SKP-KC, 2011). The native traders then packed their goods and ran away to avoid the water cannons from the fire trucks which were pointed at their open stalls. A few days after the incident, the bishop of Catholic Diocese of Jayapura, Mgr. Leo Laba Ladjar, OFM wrote an open letter to the Jayapura city council which expressing his concern about all the indigenous women merchants who were being evicted under the local government city planning policy.

SOLPAP, standing for Solidaritas Pedagang Asli Papua or Solidarity of Papuan Traders was established in 2007. This group was created because of a specific concern from various stakeholders about the struggle of the Mama-Mama in finding their proper space to sell their local produce. The members consist of university students, activists, church members, and general citizens. The Mama-Mama have conducted some activities with the assistance of SOLPAP in bringing their voices up to the local government. These activities were social campaigns through media, public discussions, meeting with government officers and city council, lobby, and advocacy. In 2010, the previous governor of Papua province, Barnabas Suebu inaugurated the use of a temporary traditional market in the centre of Jayapura (Surwayan, 2016). Mama-Mama who sold their local produce from the front of Gelael supermarket were moved into this temporary market. With assistance from SOLPAP, Mama-Mama have started their trader activities and made their own cooperative saving and loans scheme with some funds from the local government. SOLPAP has organised training to increase Mama-Mamas' skills and capacities in marketing. By this time, however, the temporary market was not able to accommodate all of the Mama-Mama from around the city. This situation forced the Mama-Mama to keep fighting for their rights to a permanent market building which was expected to be a lot bigger than the current temporary market.

In 2014, the current president of Republic Indonesia, Joko Widodo (Jokowi), visited Jayapura for his presidential campaign. The Mama-Mama took that moment to bring their issues to the presidential candidate. One of Jokowi's

campaign promises to the Papuan community was to build a special market for all the native women traders in Jayapura. When Mr. Widodo was selected, and inaugurated as the seventh president of Republic Indonesia, the Mama-Mama then pressured him to fulfil his promise. Although, there were many obstacles encountered by the Mama-Mama, they never gave up the fight for their rights. According to Yuli Languwoyo (personal communication, July 17, 2017), the Mama-Mama's permanent market building was built in 2016, and Mama-Mama are still waiting for the inauguration ceremony by president Widodo and the Jayapura city council which was planned to be implemented by the end of 2017.

The Jayapura market story is becoming one of the greatest social movement stories among indigenous women vendors in all regencies across Papua and Papua Barat province. From that study, issues dealing with the Mama-Mama have garnered a lot of attention and support from numerous parties. Although their struggle to get a better place to run their traditional economy took nearly 13 years, their voices finally had been heard by both the local and state governments. Cyntia Warwe (personal communication, July 3, 2017) said that although the new 'Mama-Mama Market' building has been built in Jayapura city, Mama-Mama in Jayapura still faced another issue related to the management of the market. Perkumpulan Masyarakat Jakarta Peduli Papua also known as Pokja Papua is a non-profit organisation established in 2002 since the implementation of *Otsus* in Papua and Papua Barat. This time, the Pokja Papua aimed to supervise the development of the Pasar Mama-Mama Papua in Jayapura, and provide training and personal assistance to increase the capacity of Mama-Mama in marketing. However, the intervention of the Pokja seems exaggerated and limited the Mama-Mama's mobility and access to the market (Langowuyo, personal communication, July 17, 2017) because all decisions about the market including the use of space at the market was made by Pokja Papua without involving SOLPAP and Mama-Mama.

### **2.1.2 Indigenous women trader's space negotiation in Sorong, Manokwary, and Merauke regency**

Although the indigenous women's market in Jayapura was successful in obtaining a new space, there are still many indigenous women traders in other parts of Papua, and Papua Barat who struggle for access to proper stalls at the marketplace. There are some market related issues which also appeared in Sorong, Manokwari, and Merauke regencies. Boari (2014) found some issues experienced by Mama-Mama at Remu Market, in Sorong regency, Papua Barat. The first problem concerns the unbalanced distribution of stalls between indigenous women merchants and Indonesian traders. This is caused by the lack of supervision from related authorities. Lack of coordination between the city council and local districts has caused confusion among native and Indonesian traders. As a result, some indigenous women traders tend to occupy parking areas and vacant lots because they are free. However, the use of parking space requires them to provide their own stalls. The second problem found by Boari (2014) is related to the selling or renting space from native traders to Indonesian traders at the marketplace. A high degree of competition at the market has affected Mama-Mama's daily earnings and forced them to sell or rent their stalls to Indonesian traders. These decisions are made by Mama-Mama due to personal considerations for family survival or to keep their children in school. Through this new space, the Indonesian traders are able to distribute goods mostly imported from outside Papua, expand their family business, and make a lot of profits. Boari also found that it is obvious that social jealousy occurred at the marketplace because of unequal attention given by the local government towards Mama-Mama. The local government was more aligned to Indonesians traders than Mama-Mama because of their ability to pay tax regularly (Boari, 2014). The higher the income made by Indonesian traders, the more attention and higher priority they obtained from the local government. Meanwhile, most of the indigenous women traders are only able to make a small amount of money every day, which often results in them refusing to pay tax. Their small income is due to the type of goods that they usually sell in the market and due to their difficulty in accessing transportation and loans, and basic marketing skills.

Surwayan (2016) found that the Mama-Mama in Sanggeng market, Manokwari, Papua Barat Province were dominated by Indonesian traders from Java and Sulawesi. Most Mama-Mama sell their local produces on the ground as they could not afford to rent proper stalls like the Indonesian traders (Surwayan, 2016). Typical local produce usually sold in the market by the Mama-Mama are vegetables, local fruits, taro, cassava, sago, and fish. Indonesian traders are more likely to sell kitchen items, clothes, street foods, as well as providing services such as motorcycle taxi, barber shop, salon, tailor, etc. According to Surwayan (2016), domination of Indonesian settlers has taken up native trader's opportunity in trading activity, and occupied strategic space around the market area.

In Merauke regency, the heavy presence of Indonesian traders in both markets has caused difficulties for indigenous women in finding a proper place to sell their local produce. A study done by the Justice and Peace commission of the Archdiocese of Merauke, which is known as SKP-KAME, in 2011-2012, found some key findings related to the difficulty of Mama-Mama in accessing suitable space and place to put all their goods (SKP-KAME, 2016). In the Mopah 2 market, for instance, Mama-Mama were given stalls located close to the disposal bins at the back of the market. Because of the smelly rubbish, muddy and un-strategic location (far away from the main entrance), buyers seldom visited the Mama-Mama's stalls, which resulted in a reduction in daily earnings. Buyers tended to buy groceries along the main entrance which is much cleaner and reachable. This situation has forced Mama-Mama to move close to the parking area that has more open space to put all of their goods on the ground, protected by sacks or mats. However, the use of the taxi terminal space as a temporary traditional market has raised concerns from the market authority due to cleanness and personal safety issues of the indigenous women vendors.

## **2.2 Market: A Space to Exchange Goods and Culture**

As stated earlier, the market plays a very important role for individuals or groups of people in Papua and Papua Barat, especially among indigenous population.

Besides being a place to exchange goods and generate cash, indigenous people valued market as a place to socialise and exchange news or ideas (UN Women, 2012). In Tahiti, for instance, the market is a meeting place where people from different villages come to share stories or discuss local news (Pollock, 1988). Indigenous traders travel far away from their home village to meet their relatives or friends who live in different village. In a study about the Suva Municipal Market, in Fiji, it was found that despite the market being a place to exchange local commodities, it can also be a site to interact with individuals from different ethno-linguistic groups and to establish social networks (Dewey, 2011). Through her market observation, she often heard Fijian-speaking women traders say that they loved visiting Suva and meeting people from various backgrounds. They also mentioned that through the market they have an opportunity to exchange unfamiliar agriculture products, share their experiences, and obtain recent news and information (Dewey, 2011).

The market is a place where economic transactions and language exchanges reflect the politics of culture and ethnicity among the community. For instance, Cuzco market, which is known as the San Pedro market in Peru, has distinctive identities because through the market, the characteristics of each group of people or ethnicity can easily be identified (Seligmann, 2004). According to Scott (as cited in Seligmann, 1993), the marketplace is also a space where the nationalism of traders is debated, evaluated and contested. Seligmann (1993) found that the social interaction among traders, which continuously occurs in the market, has raised a sense of togetherness because female traders who dominated the Cuzco market are more interested in socializing with their friends at the market than making profit. Although they walk long hours from home and lift heavy local produce under the heat, they rarely complain when their goods are not sold out during the day. Income from the sale of goods is used to obtain family necessities and to pay school fees. Because of their hard work and dedication to their family, most of them have successfully sent their children to university.

## **2.3 Market Women's Issues**

### **2.3.1 Discrimination and marginalisation**

Women are the biggest contributors at the marketplace, and they play a pivotal role in connecting rural producers and urban consumers. According to Seligmann (2001), the presence of women at the market has added to the market's functionality as a place to spread gossip and raise children. In the Pacific, the market is highly feminised because it is dominated by females (Dewey, 2011). Although women's role in the informal economy is crucial, but they often experience discrimination and marginalisation especially in obtaining proper stalls to sell their products. In Suva, Fiji, although the Fijian market women make a greater contribution to Suva's economy, they are being marginalised and discriminated against because of the low status of feminized labor and a lack of government supervision (Dewey and Bolabola, 2014). The large contributions they were making to the informal sector are unrecognised and unvalued. Both rural and urban women traders also contribute to pay tax to the Suva City Council. However, the paid taxes did not guarantee them access to better stalls. They still find it difficult to negotiate their space and place at the market. Despite being unvalued contributors in the informal economic sector, women traders also encounter some difficulties when seeking local assistance. The number of formal organisations who can advocate concerning women trader issues are very limited in Suva. Lack of government intervention has also become a serious concern which is being ignored recently.

In Peru, Seligmann (2004) found that the market women in Cuzco were placed into the lower area of the marketing hierarchy. They work hard to promote their goods and to connect sellers and buyers. However, they experience intimidation and aggressive actions from brokers at the retail level. Other than that, both the market and the female traders often become the central focus of a political platform in presidential election campaigns where the given promises are usually around proper stalls or market building construction. The power dynamic established by various political interests has marginalised and discriminated the female traders (Seligmann, 2004).

Obviously, market women spend most of their time at the market to make a living, but they often feel insecure in their trading due to the lack of public facilities such as toilets, clean water, and a security service. The next section discusses the practical needs of women traders in getting access to a clean and safe marketplace.

### **2.3.2 Lack of public facilities**

The market is essential to sustain the indigenous people's way of living, and women have a dominant presence whether as vendors or buyers (UN Women, 2012). However, the market is becoming increasingly insecure, exploitative and dangerous, especially for women and girls (UN Women, 2012). Limited access to public facilities at the marketplace is a growing issue. Below is a case study from Papua New Guinea which highlights women traders and buyer's issues in Port Moresby.

A study done by UN Women in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, in 2011 identifies access to clean and safe market areas for women and girls is a priority. The market, as a space to enter the informal economy, as well as a space to interact and spread ideas, does not always guarantee the safety of its vendors or buyers, especially for women and girls. Despite being a place to sell local products, the function of the market has shifted as a place for prostitution, gambling, drugs and alcohol (UN Women, 2012). Due to this change of market functions, there has been a greater impact on women compared to men. Violence against women and girls has also occurred in the marketplace. The study found that the market was becoming a space rife with rape and sexual harassment. There is a 'No-Go-Zone' for newcomers and expatriates to dissuade them from the markets and other public places. This terrible situation was caused by weak supervision from related-authorities and law enforcement. The local government has tried to overcome these market issues by providing regulation or restrictions in the marketplace but it has only resulted in an increase in human rights violations, especially for women and girls (UN Women, 2012).

The UN Women Papua New Guinea Representative, Jeffery Buchanan, stated that over 80 percent of vendors in Port Moresby are very hard-working women. They deserve to have a clean, safe and accessible place to make a living (UN Women, 2014). Therefore, the main aim of the Safe Cities programme conducted by UN Women is to create a safe and clean market for Papua New Guineans. In collaboration with the local government, and with participation of women vendors, the Geheru market has had its infrastructure upgraded to include bathrooms and showers, renovated market stalls, and a clean water system (UN Women, 2014). Despite the development of the new infrastructure, a new method for tax collection was also being applied as an attempt to minimise the occurrence of theft and extortion. A market vendor association has also been established and a new market security system has been piloted to overcome sexual violence against women and girls (UN Women, 2014).

### **2.3.3 Rural women traders: limited access to marketplace**

Apart from the lack of government intervention and their unfavourable attitudes towards the indigenous women traders, landscape differences also influence women traders' mobility at the marketplace (Fowler, 2015). Rural women traders may find difficulty negotiating their space, place and identity in urban market spaces compared to urban women traders (Seligmann, 1993). In Peru, rural women traders face challenges in accessing the urban marketplaces due to their limited educational background. Through her qualitative study, Seligmann (1993) found that the Peruvian rural women traders often face fears and anxieties because of insulting words from urban buyers. The massive differences between Peruvian traders and buyers who live in rural and urban areas can be identified through the language or the dialect that they speak (they do not speak Spanish) and the clothes that they wear. Urban buyers are mostly known to have a higher social status, be better educated, are wealthier, and wear fancier clothes, and they often demand more self-recognition (Seligmann, 1993).

Seligmann (1993) points out that the arguments which occur during the trading activities between rural traders and urban buyers shows how the class and educational attainment obtained by urban buyers leads them to seek power over

and have oppressive behaviours towards rural traders. As a part of self-protection, some rural women traders prefer to defend themselves by showing an aggressive attitude. Similar to Peru, rural women in Suva, Fiji, have less formal education compared to their urban counterparts. A study done by Dewey, in 2011, found that only thirty-five percent of Fijian rural women traders have completed the US equivalent of the seventh grade. The rest of the rural traders in Fiji have low levels of educational background and this affects their trading performances. Less experience in marketing leads them to earn less income as compare to urban women traders. Different from Peru, rural women traders in Fiji often feel unsafe when they enter the urban space. Another finding from a study done by Dewey and Bolabola (2014), they found that rural women traders in Fiji usually grow their own produce in their gardens and transport them to the city for sale. They travel long hours from their village to the city using couriers or public transport. Because of the long distance, they often arrive at the market late at night or in the early morning, forcing them to wait outside the market until it opens at 6am. Their efforts to ensure prime market space increase their vulnerability, thus they become susceptible to sexual harassment by intoxicated men as the market is surrounded by many bars and night clubs (Dewey and Bolabola, 2014).

In Madang, Papua New Guinea, rural women play a very important role in generating family income. A qualitative study, conducted by Anderson (2008), found that the majority of the vegetable and fruit vendors are women who come from the rural areas. Besides selling food, rural women sometimes sell traditional hand crafts and clothes. A survey, which was conducted in 2006, found that the women mostly sell betel-nuts or *buai* and peanuts to support their family income (Anderson, 2008). Each woman has a different amount of income based on how many products they display in their stalls. Large groups of products such as betel-nuts, peanuts, mangos, and melons would generate around 50 Kina or 15 USD. Apart from the quantity of products, most women sellers benefit from the short 'value chain' of their local markets. They sell their products directly to the market without any involvement from a middleman. Gibzon and Rozelle (2002) state that poverty in Papua New Guinea is 'primarily rural' and this is caused by a lack of access to markets, services, and transportation. Lack of road access can constrain

women who live far away from the market area in distributing their local produce to the consumers. Rural women traders in Madang often found it difficult to transport their goods from home to the city due to the distance and this distance determines how much money they must spend for transportation.

In terms of accessing traditional land in Fiji, the men or husbands are the only recognised land owners according to the land tenure system (Dewey and Bolabola, 2014). Fijian rural women traders find difficulty accessing their communal land to grow local produce due to cultural influences. A marriage does not guarantee women's rights to assets, especially land ownership. Rural women traders are also excluded from the decision-making process in their community. A study revealed that 85% of indigenous males make decisions, while 95% of indigenous women implement these decisions (Bolabola, 1986). Although rural women are good in raising funds to support their family necessities, this does not necessarily mean that they then gain the right to decide on the use of the funds. Their husbands, as the head of the family, have strong ownership and power over these funds. The same land issues are experienced by rural women traders in Madang, Papua New Guinea. The introduction of large monocultures in Madang has marginalised the local crops and created environmental concerns (Shand and Straatmans, 1974). The traditional land that has been converted into palm-oil plantations threatens the ability of rural women to access goods on the traditional land. This situation has strongly affected rural women's participation in trading activity.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The market is pivotal for women. Although market women gain income to buy food for their family and to send their children to school, they still experience discrimination and subordination because of the patriarchal system which influences their access to land and their involvement in decision making process. Rural women have less access to traditional land to grow their traditional products because their partner holds the power in decision making. The lack of access to

public facilities has exacerbated indigenous women's risk at the market because government efforts to address indigenous women's market issues remains below their expectations. The Jayapura case shows how the domination of a certain group has taken away Mama-Mama's rights to occupy adequate space to display their products. The government, as the power holder, is more closely aligned with Indonesian trader's needs. Indonesian traders have more resources (money) and connections to decision making process than native traders (the Sorong case). In most cases in Papua and Papua Barat, Mama-Mama find difficulty in conveying their issues to the government because of the lack of assistance from local organisations, churches or activists to aid them to increase their capacity in marketing and their self-confidence. Hence, space for participation between citizens and the power holders is still invisible. This makes Mama-Mama tend to remain silent and keep selling their goods in unpleasant conditions.

## **Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

This chapter presents the theoretical framework that underlies this study and details the use of qualitative research methods chosen for the primary data collection. Further, this chapter explains the technical process of the research including the participant's involvement, the interview protocol, and the transcription and coding process.

### **3.1 Theoretical Frameworks**

There are three theoretical frameworks that underlie this study. They are the Women, Culture and Development (WCD) framework, the indigenous framework, and the power cube framework. All will be discussed below.

#### **3.1.1 Women, Culture, and Development (WCD) framework**

The first framework is the Women, Culture, and Development (WCD) framework, which is based upon the Women in Development (WID), the Women and Development (WAD), and the Gender and Development (GAD) discourses. The WCD approach brings together a lot of thoughts and discussions around women's productive and reproductive roles in Third World countries including the patriarchal inequalities present in most societies. Williams (1976, as cited in Chua et al, 2000) states that "culture may be conceptualised not simply as the habits, customs and mores of a particular society, but it refers to structures of feeling" (p.821). The use of culture allows disempowered groups to negotiate their power through their everyday life. Thus, the additional component of culture in the WCD approach explains women's everyday life experiences and struggles through the representation of diverse forms of social agency or organisation (Bahvani et al., 2003). The WCD approach may be best used to produce new knowledge or a better strategy that can be initiated by women (Chua et al., 2000), for women so as to overcome women's issues. For example, the use of the WCD approach in analysing the relationships between women and the forest in Brazil where the women rubber-tappers often experience violence and discrimination in

accessing the forest due to the massive land clearing conducted by multinational companies and local authorities (Bahvani et al, 2003). Therefore, the presence of Xapuri Women's Group, in 1987, was very important in enhancing the local women's capacity and skills to challenge the violence and discrimination against them in accessing the forest. This organisation has united all women rubber-tappers to fight for their rights.

The use of the WCD framework in my study discusses the role played by the native women traders, as market trader and family food provider. Further, the WCD would enable me to explain native women's life experiences in producing traditional knowledge at the market. This framework also draws on the involvement of a local institution in assisting Mama-Mama to fight for their rights, and some of the obstacles faced by Mama-Mama in negotiating their space, place and identity at the market.

### **3.1.2 Indigenous framework**

The second framework is the Indigenous framework. Linda Tuhiwai Smith is the leading authority of this Indigenous methodology with her books entitled *Decolonizing Methodology* (1999) and *Decolonizing Methodology Research and Indigenous People* (2012). Her works discussed three key tenets that are strongly connected to my study. These include the reduction of indigenous knowledge, the loss of traditional land, and the social position of researcher.

#### **a) The reduction of indigenous knowledge**

In the first edition of *Decolonizing Methodology*, Smith (1999) discusses how imperialism influenced the existence of indigenous knowledge systems and threatened indigenous people's territories and cultural practices. Colonisers not only discovered existing native territories and claiming them as their new places, they also extracted raw materials and indigenous knowledge, and distributed it for their own interests without any compensation or recognition to the native people (Smith, 1999). The extraction of indigenous knowledge through scientific research was then reproduced as so called 'new knowledge' which become part of the Western body of knowledge. An example is the shift in indigenous knowledge

in the field of maternity in New Zealand. Naomi Simmonds (2011), examines the application of the Western knowledge system to maternity care which in turn influenced the indigenous cultural order and shifted indigenous people's way of living. Issues about child birth emerged when the state did not allow Māori mothers to deliver their babies at home. Kenney (2009, as cited in Simmonds, 2001) mentions another issue that emerged by the end of World War II when the legislation had centralised childbirth from home to state-owned maternity hospitals. Māori mothers, who were strongly connected to their homes, were forced to deliver their baby in foreign spaces (Simmonds, 2011). The change of the birth space from home to the hospital influenced the Māori cultural order that already existed and was passed through the generations. The application of the Midwives Registration Act in 1904 obliged all traditional midwives to be legally registered (Simmonds, 2011). The traditional midwives were not recognised and qualified, and they were required to undergo training in a Western way. The presence of the hospital and of trained doctors and nurses institutionalised the Māori birthing process (Simmonds, 2011).

In some parts of the central highlands of Papua province, Indonesia, especially in the Lapago and Meepago villages, the native people consume kumara as their traditional food. Kumara is the main staple food of the Papuan community and it represents cultural identity of the native people. Since the launch of Indonesia's goal to be self-sufficient through rice production by Soeharto (former president of Indonesia), the natives turned to consume rice and left behind the tradition of eating kumara (Benar News, 2015). Rice subsidies, known as *raskin*, which provided by the government for poor villagers has spoiled the farming traditions of the native people. One of the villagers, Kilonar, interviewed by Benar News, stated that rice was also strongly promoted by an Indonesian teacher at school, which made the native students encourage their parents to sell kumara and turn to buy rice. They were being told and taught by their teachers that kumara consumption can make native students become stupid (Māori Television, 2015). The indigenous life cycle was changed because of a new understanding about rice consumption by the children. Since then, the consumption of kumara has slightly reduced because of rice availability. The

presence of *raskin* in Papua has created a high amount of dependency by the native people because it means that the locals no longer want to do any gardening. Gardening previously united the community life due to a sense of togetherness and the transference of the knowledge created in the garden (Māori Television, 2015). While doing gardening, adults usually share their ideas and thoughts, and talk about their village and future. The transfer of knowledge between parents and children also occurred in the garden (Māori Television, 2015).

#### **b) The loss of traditional land**

The second tenet from the indigenous methodology framework is about a connection between indigenous people and their native territory. For indigenous people, land contains spirituality and identity as a core part of their life. Stella Tamang, a female native leader from Nepal states that “Indigenous peoples have an intimate connection to the land; the rationale for talking about who they are is tied to the land. They have clearly symbols in their language that connect them to places on their land” (Cultural Survival Voices, 2007 p.11). Apart from spiritual connection, Tamang argues that lands are the places where the native people can get traditional medicines (Cultural Survival Voices, 2007). Therefore, damaging the soil is the same as taking over the indigenous people’s life because the land provides them with sources of food, traditional medicines, firewood, clean water, etc (Selvadurai et al., 2013). In Sarawak, Malaysia, for instance, Selvadurai et al (2013) discusses how development programmes offered by the state government in collaboration with multinational companies have affected the Penan community. Beside the positive impacts obtained from the projects, such as construction of the main road/bridge, children’s education, health care and employment opportunities, the people’s lives are also threatened because of massive deforestation. The Penan natives, who are mostly settled in rural and peripheral sites, were confronted by a development discourse which harmed their lives. The opening of the timber industry in the late 1970s, the cultivation of the rice paddy industry, as well as the introduction of palm oil plantations have denuded all the forests that were their source of subsistence (Selvadurai et al., 2013). The forest, which was a place to gather food, hunt animals and collect traditional medicine and firewood, was instead expanded for industrial use.

Consequently, the animals moved deeper into the jungle, which made the natives spent more hours or days hunting for animals. The sago trees were clear cut and replaced by hill paddy cultivation. The concept of land cultivation is resisted by the Penan natives because they believe that digging into their land should only occur when burying their dead or acting to preserve the biodiversity of the forest (Selvadurai et al., 2013, p.75).

In Brazil, the Amazon rainforest has one of the world's richest varieties of plant life and abundant animal diversity. It is also the main source of water for Brazil's agricultural sector, which has experienced severe damage due to the introduction of soybean plantations. Between 2001-2004, there was massive deforestation to the scale of over 3.6 million hectares of land to create such plantations, resulting in environmental and social problems among the indigenous community (World Information Transfer, 2012). Although Brazil has become the top soybean producing country in the world, the indigenous people are facing major displacement from the natural forest ecosystem. The Awa-Guaja, as one of native peoples who live in the jungle of the Amazon, are completely reliant on the forest, which provides food, medicine, and shelter. The forest also plays a crucial role in the community's spiritual and cultural life (Greenpeace, 2013, p.16). When the companies took over the forest, the indigenous people lost their traditional territories and they had to move to a new area. The increase in global demand for biodiesel has also lead to further disruption of the Amazon forest. The production of soya oil, to meet the international market, required a huge area of farmland, savannah and forest. The rainforest clearing has also contributed to 50 percent of the global warming rate as well as the extermination of the native species from the forest (World Information Transfer, 2012).

The same issues are experienced by the Ojibway community in North America and the Marind tribe in Merauke regency, Papua Province, Indonesia. The Ojibway have been struggling to protect the wild rice area from the development of underground pipes which encompassed their territory (LaDuke, 1993). The construction of pipes has destroyed the rivers and swampy areas of the reservation, threatening the wild rice population. Wild rice is a food of the soul

which has been passed down from the Ojibway's ancestors. Therefore, the Ojibway community values their territory as a sacred place to live that should be protected and passed on to future generations (LaDuke, 1993). Meanwhile, in Merauke regency, Papua province, the Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate (the MIFEE project), which was established in 2001 by Indonesian government, has taken 970,000 hectares of indigenous land for the purposes of investment activities (Tri & Haksoro, 2010). The indigenous land has since been converted into plantation area with over 300,000 hectares for palm oil and around 69,000 hectares for food crops (Tri & Haksoro, 2010). This development has destroyed traditional sago forests which are very sacred and important to the Marind tribe as the native people. Like the Ojibway community, who value the wild rice as their spiritual food, the Marind tribe sees their local food, sago, as their spiritual link with ancestors (Ginting & Pye, 2013).

As discussed earlier, there has been a shift in traditional knowledge because of the Indonesian influence and because of the loss of traditional land taken by massive development projects run by the state government and multinational companies. These have threatened and marginalised the indigenous people. In relation to my study, the application of the capitalist economic system has marginalised rural traders and limited their access to the market space. Further, the shift of the market from a semi-traditional setting to a modern building has also limited native women trader's space to produce traditional knowledge. Meanwhile, the loss of traditional land leads to a smaller range of indigenous products at the market, increasing the demand for rice as a substitute meal thus decreasing Mama-Mama's daily income.

### **c) Social Position of the Researcher**

One important point mentioned by Smith (1999) is associated with the importance of the social position of the researcher when conducting indigenous research. Bonner and Tolhurst (2002, as cited in Unluer, 2012), stated that being both an insider and researcher at the same time gives a greater understanding of the culture being studied. Besides the culture, the researcher also knows how to approach people and understand the government hierarchy including the applied

roles in society. Although being insider-researchers can also lead to some loss of objectivity because of greater familiarity, insider-researchers have a great deal of knowledge which probably will take some time for outsiders to acquire (Smyth & Holian, 2008, as cited in Unluer, 2012). For example, for Daniel Hernandez (2017), his social position as a Tongan insider was critical to his use of indigenous research methodology to explore the Kava drinking ceremonies among the Tongan diaspora who live in Utah, the United States of America. At the beginning of his research, he drew on decolonial research ethics and methods by asking himself the question: ‘why is he doing this research and who are the main targets from this research? (Smith, 2012). As a primary ethnography data collection method, he used a critical dialogue technique, known as *Talanoa*, to gather data and information from participants. As an insider, he has a personal connection to the Tongan people and to the Kava ceremony which connected him to his place of origin.

I acknowledge my position as insider-researcher in this study. First, because I was born and raised in Merauke and I am very familiar to my area. I have also a greater understanding of some of the applied roles at multiple levels in my community including government roles, and indigenous customs and cultural values. Secondly, during my research, I did not find any difficulty in approaching Mama-Mama at the market because of my personal connection to them. Most Mama-Mama in Merauke are still my father’s relatives from the Muyu tribes. Although we speak Bahasa Indonesia as the primary language, my ability to speak our local dialect was pivotal in keeping our conversations on track. Third, my involvement in one of Catholic organisations in Merauke, for about ten years, has boosted my personal commitment to be more active in dealing with native issues in my area. Therefore, I intend to use my current research as a tool to convey the native women trader’s voices to the policy maker’s agendas. I personally found that familiarity concerning the research area, the family relationships, the cultural attachments, and work experiences have contributed to establishing intimate relationships between myself as insider-researcher and Mama-Mama.

### 3.1.3 Power Cube

Alongside the Women Culture and Development (WCD) and the Indigenous frameworks, the Power Cube framework introduced by Gaventa is one important tool that must strongly guide this study. In seeking to elevate indigenous voices to the top levels of government hierarchy, Gaventa's (2006) power cube helps this study by highlighting the relationships between spaces, places, and forms of power in the decision-making process. Gaventa argues that the use of the Power Cube approach helps assess the possibility of transformative action in various political spaces. Further, this framework offers the best reflective tools for practitioners, activists and social workers in understanding different types of power and the best strategies to conquer it. According to Gaventa (2006), power can be held by actors, some might be powerful while others might be relatively powerless. The powerful actors are those who create power and have ability to have control over others. Powerless actors are those who are subordinate and marginalised and the ones who have no voice to speak up. Power has the capability to reach certain goals or outcomes. Giddens (as cited in Stewart, 2001, p.14-15) states that power relates to interactions between institutions and their strategic conduct to accomplish certain outcomes. Staeheli et al (2004 p.6) highlights that power is mostly associated with "control, authority, or the ability to govern or rule". Layder (1985) and Oxaal & Baden (1997) defines structural 'power over' as domination/subordination. It means that structural power can restrict particular groups in accessing certain resources and opportunities.

Gaventa (2006) pointed out a strong relationship between space and power which influences community engagement in the decision-making processes. He stated that there is a space for participation where the citizens and policy makers can come together and listen to one another. In this context, the space for citizens needs to be seen as an opportunity for them to be able to engage and influence decision-making processes in the top level. However, it is not easy for citizens to freely access this space because of the various boundaries or roles created by the policy makers as the power holders. For example, Seligmann (2004) through her market study experience stated that "market space is a critical resource and factor

of organisation for market vendors, and it also served as codes of communication that are meaningful for the native people” (p.27). Her study about the market in Cuzco, Peru, reveals several insights about the market space and the women trader’s social movements. She found that women traders in Cuzco have less power to negotiate their rights because of their low level of educational background, and their lack of resources and opportunities to deliver their issues in appropriate spaces. Dorinne Massey (as cited in Seligmann, 2004) also points out that space is, by its very nature, full of power and symbolism, and it has connections between domination and subordination, and between solidarity and cooperation. Although space and time are different concepts, they are interrelated at multiple levels and have spatial relations which lead to the construction of history, and potentially of politics.

The Power Cube is useful for explaining the ongoing power structure at the market in Merauke regency. This approach explains Mama-Mama’s efforts and challenges in negotiating adequate stalls at the market, and in exploring the market complexities. Furthermore, this approach is useful for analysing how space for negotiation between Mama-Mama and the government can be constructed. Domination by Indonesian traders at the market is also examined using the Power Cube.

### **3.2 Research Questions**

The use of the Women, Culture and Development (WCD), Indigenous and Power Cube frameworks in this study connects to the research questions which underlie the main purpose of this study.

1. How has the increased presence of Indonesian merchants impacted upon the Papuan (Indigenous) women merchants’ sale of traditional goods?
2. How has such changes influenced the ability of Papuan women to negotiate their space?

3. Why are Indonesian merchants more successful as compared to indigenous women merchants in the market?
4. What efforts have been made by the local authorities in addressing the market space issues?

### **3.3 Qualitative Research Method**

This study draws on the qualitative research method as the primary form of data collection in order to obtain an appropriate understanding of the indigenous women trader's life at the market. As stated by Moriarty (2011), the use of the qualitative method provides in-depth understanding of the social world of the community by learning their social lives, experiences, perspectives and histories. In my study, the use of qualitative methods has enabled me to understand the research participant's personal views and feelings based on their life experiences. For instance, Mama-Mama's feelings of anger, anxiety, and disappointment toward related-authorities because the government has neglected Mama-Mama's needs for adequate stalls. Further, through this research method, I obtained Mama-Mama's personal stories about the market changes, in the last four decades, that have limited their space and mobility. Lastly, I have also collected various data and information from each participant based on educational attainment, ethnicity, economic status, and geography.

Data collection was divided into two phases. Phase one involved in-depth interviews, and phase two involved participant observation which discussed below.

#### **3.3.1 In-depth interviews**

In-depth interviews were one of the qualitative methods I used to gather data and information for this research. As stated by Rubin and Rubin (2012), the use of in-depth interviews will extend our intellectual and emotional reach. This method enables the researcher to see various forgotten moments in the community's daily

life, to capture ongoing social processes, and it becomes the best tool for exploring personal or sensitive issues (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). The use of in-depth interviews in my research has enabled me to collect the Mama-Mama's life stories beginning with their very first engagement at the market. Moreover, this method drove me further in exploring the massive changes of the market over the last four decades in the Merauke regency. It started from Pelita market in the 1970s up to the presence of the current markets, Mopah 2 and Wamanggu. I also obtained some personal insights and experiences from Indonesian traders, especially about their interactions and relationships towards indigenous women traders. Importantly, I have captured some stories about Mama-Mama's efforts in negotiating their space at the market, including their silent voices because of neglect from the local government as the power holder.

Originally, I intended to conduct two focus group discussions for indigenous women traders and Indonesian traders as one of my qualitative research techniques. However, because of several safety-related considerations from the Human Ethics Committee, as well as limitations of time, I have chosen to omit the focus group discussions in this study and instead increased the number of interview participants from eight to seventeen people.

### **3.3.2 Participant observation**

Participant observation records what is seen from everyday activity by the researcher standing outside from what is going on, watching it, remembering it, and perhaps thinking about it later (Rubin, 2012). This activity can be applied to a group of people or to organisational events. I conducted direct participant observations related to Mama-Mama's trading activities at Mopah 2 and Wamanggu market. I also included social interactions between native and Indonesian traders and buyers which occurred at the marketplace. Over a period of two weeks, I randomly observed around 30 traders and buyers in both the Mopah 2 and Wamanggu markets. The observations ran during the weekdays and in the weekend, at different times and locations. I set up an observation schedule in both markets and each observation lasted for about 2 hours. I started from

Monday until Sunday at times ranging from 6am to 9am, 10am to 12pm, 13pm to 15pm, and 16pm to 18pm.

The market observations were conducted in the Merauke, Jayapura, and Wamena regencies. Before these observations commenced, I had already explained the purpose of my research to my participants. Each of them also received an information sheet and consent form, and I explained their rights during the research process. As well as standing in a few different spots at the market, I also spent some time involved with the Mama-Mama's trading activity. In Merauke, for instance, I often stayed at Mopah 2 and Wamanggu markets, helping the Mama-Mama in selling their local produce while undertaking the observation study. After each daily period of observation, I wrote some notes about every event that happened in the market and typed them up in my laptop. The notes were taken after I completed the observation in the market in order to avoid suspicions and questions from customers. I have captured many moments by taking photographs (and chose to exclude photographing individuals) to obtain a description of the different market situations such as the market facilities, stalls, and traditional goods.

During my observation, I mapped out the type of goods which are sold by indigenous and Indonesian traders (photo 3.1 and 3.2).



Figure 3.1 Indigenous women trader's type of goods

Source: Veronika Kanem, June 2017



Figure 3.2 Indonesian trader's type of goods

Source: Ross Kebubun, October 2017

I noticed that most of the indigenous women traders sell local produce directly taken from the garden or forest such as kumara, sago, cassava, vegetables, and fruits. Some of them sell home-made foods and traditional handicrafts including Noken, woven mats, and traditional combs made from bamboo. The Indonesian trader's products are kitchen needs such as dried-ingredients, dairy products, vegetables, cooking tools, clothing, food and drinks. There are small number of Indonesian traders who are also jewellery sellers and who sold various types of female accessories made from gold and silver. From the pictures above, we can see two different type of produce and the different ways how both groups display their produce at the market.

### **Market Observation in Jayapura and Wamena regency**

As additional data collection, I did market observations in Jayapura, the capital city of Papua province, and Wamena. In Jayapura, I observed the Sentani market, known as Pasar Baru Sentani, the Hamadi Market, and the Mama-Mama Papua market which is located in the city centre. I also conducted observations in Wamena, in the highlands of Papua province. In Wamena, I visited three traditional markets, Potikelek, Missi, and Jibama markets. The Jayapura and Wamena visits were not actually on my research schedule, but the purpose of these visits was to observe a different market space according to its landscapes, community, and cultural values.

#### **3.3.3 Secondary data collection through media and organizational reports**

As well as undertaking in-depth interviews and participant observations, I also conducted quantitative data collection by drawing on organisational reports and media analysis which dealt with market issues around Papua and Papua Barat province.

I read several organisational reports written by the Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian Keutuhan Ciptaan Fransiskan Papua (SKPKC FP), SOLPAP, and Lembaga Advokasi Peduli Perempuan (eL-AdPPer), which discussed the struggles of Mama-Mama in negotiating their market space in the Jayapura and Merauke regencies. Furthermore, I searched for some additional information and data from social media such as Facebook and YouTube which discussed the Mama-Mama's social movements in the capital city of Jayapura. I have also collected information as secondary data from local newspapers including Cenderawasih Post, Arafura News, and Papua Selatan Post which discussed the Mama-Mama movement in the Merauke regency. Meanwhile, national newspapers such as the Jakarta Post, Kompas and CNN Indonesia also discussed the Mama-Mama Market in Jayapura.

There is a limitation in finding academic sources which discuss the market women in Papua and Papua Barat province. Some market projects conducted by

local NGOs do not have publications. I found it difficult to access some organisational reports or publications due to their lack of a filing system. I mostly obtained verbal information because few local NGO directors that I met preferred to tell stories instead of providing written organisational reports.

## **3.4 Research Process**

### **3.4.1 Selecting the participants**

In the preparation stage, I conducted a meeting with a few representatives from Lembaga Advokasi Peduli Perempuan (eL-AdPPer). eL-AdPPer and SKP-KAME are the only Non-Governmental Organisations in the Merauke regency that have assisted indigenous women traders over the last five years. Through the meeting, I obtained updated information about the market issues and a few recommendations to recruit potential candidates to support my research.

Wednesday afternoon, August 14, 2017, was the first time I observed the Mopah 2 market place. It took about 20 minutes to get there by motor bike, and it was a very quiet and dusty afternoon. Most of the traders were busy drawing water from a closed well and watering the dust in front of their stalls. There were only a few buyers who were busy looking for some produce. When I entered the indigenous women stalls, I met a few indigenous women merchants who were relatives of my father. Starting from the first visit, I then mapped out the market location, talked to both Indonesian and indigenous women traders, and arranged interview schedules with them. In Wamanggu market, I did the same activity as in Mopah 2 market. I started by going to the market, and meeting a few indigenous and Indonesian women traders. Together with them, I arranged the interview schedule. Most of the local women traders preferred to do the interview at the market rather than their house, while some Indonesian women liked to be interviewed in their spare time at home.

### **3.4.2 Interview protocol**

In conducting the interviews, I adjusted each participant schedule depending on their time flexibility. Six participants preferred to be interviewed at home while they were doing housework. Ten participants agreed to be interviewed in between their trading activities at the market, while one of my participants agreed to be interviewed at his college. One time, I interviewed 3 participants at once in the marketplace because they felt more confident in being interviewed together. The duration for each interview was between 45 minutes to 1 hour, but a few interviews went into overtime because of minor interruptions occurring during the interview. For example, while doing the interview at home, there were participants whose toddlers suddenly cried and asked for attention. At the market, most of the interviews were interrupted when the buyers came to bargain or buy goods, or when their relatives passed by asking for taxi costs. The interview used Bahasa Indonesia as the primary language, and most of my interview participants agreed to be audio recorded while they were being interviewed. However, I also took some important notes and highlighted them for my backup. After each interview, I immediately did the transcription in Bahasa Indonesia, and transferred all the audio recorded files onto my laptop.

At the beginning of the interview, each participant was given a detailed explanation about the purpose of my research. I also explained my research topic and simplified each of the interview questions using the local dialects. The questions covered several topics, including (1) the significant changes of the market in the last four decades which influenced indigenous women traders in negotiating their space, place, and identity at the market, (2) the different views of Indonesian and indigenous market women traders as regards to market issues, (3) the government/related-authorities intervention in solving the Mama-Mama's issues in relation with inappropriate stall allocations at the marketplace, and (4) the social interactions between indigenous and Indonesia traders at the market. When talking about the past, I encouraged my participants to reflect back on their trading history in the Merauke regency. Most of them were in a nostalgic atmosphere when they tried to describe their first involvement in trading activities

between the 1970s – 1990s. When my participants found it challenging to answer my questions, especially in relation to government intervention, I did not force them to answer in detail. The form of the interview was semi-structured, and was comprised of a series of open-ended questions and followed with prompts. There were thirteen open ended questions in addition to relevant follow up questions. I also received permission from most of the interviewees to record our conversation. Only a few of them disagreed to be audio recorded during the interview and I managed to take notes for my back up. As an expression of my gratitude, at the end of the interview I bought the Mama-Mama or Indonesian trader's goods such as vegetables, fruits, and home-made foods to bring them home.

### **3.4.3 Research participants**

Within 6 weeks, I interviewed 9 indigenous women traders, 5 Indonesian traders, 1 public lecturer, 1 indigenous woman activist, and 1 local bank staff. It can be seen from table 3.1 that most of my interview participants were native females from the Muyu tribe. Only a small number of them were from other tribes such as the Wamena, Serui, Mandobo, and Asmat. The Indonesian merchants mostly came from Java and Sulawesi (Bugis-Makassar). Although my interview participants came from different ethnicities and backgrounds, the entire interview process used Bahasa Indonesia as the primary language.

I selected my participants based on their trading experience and ethnicity. For example, I recruited some senior traders from both groups who have been involved in trading activities since the presence of Pelita market in the 1970s-1980s. I also included those who started their trading activity from the 1990s until now. At the beginning, I intended only to invite female Indonesian traders to become my interview participants alongside Mama-Mama, but I found out that a few Indonesian male traders were also interested in taking part in my research because of their personal concern towards the market issues.

<b>Name (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Ethnicity/Tribe</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Organization /Market</b>
Don	Male	Papuan-Muyu	Lecturer	STISIPOL Yaleka Maro Private University
Tekla	Female	Papuan-Muyu	Sago and Noken seller	The Mopah 2 market
Petra	Female	Papuan-Muyu	Banana and Fruits seller	The Mopah 2 market
Yul	Female	Papuan-Muyu	Sago and Banana seller	The Mopah 2 market
Anis	Female	Papuan- Mandobo	Sago seller	The Mopah 2 market
Kelly	Female	Papuan-Asmat	Vegetables and fruits seller	The Mopah 2 market
Sumi	Female	Indonesian from Sulawesi	Cake and Coffee seller	The Mopah 2 market
Abdi	Male	Indonesian from Sulawesi	Clothing seller	The Mopah 2 market
Okta	Female	Papuan- Mandobo	Vegetables seller	Wamanggu market

Mina	Female	Papuan-Wamena	Vegetables, fruits and honey seller	Wamanggu market
Tarmi	Female	Indonesian-Java	Vegetables seller	Wamanggu market
Maro	Female	Papuan-Serui	Sago seller	Wamanggu market
Tia	Female	Papuan-Mandobo	Banana seller	Wamanggu market
Ulah	Male	Indonesian-Sulawesi	Chicken seller	Outside Wamanggu market
Putri	Female	Indonesian-Java	Kitchen stuff seller	Wamanggu market
Marice	Female	Papuan-Muyu	Women Activist	eL-AdPPer
Nona	Female	Papuan-Muyu	Bank Staff	Papua Bank, Merauke Branch

Table 3.1 In-depth interview participants

As stated by Rubin and Rubin (2012), credibility is achieved by talking to or interviewing the right person who is best-informed about the research concern. The right person means that the targeted interviewees are knowledgeable or have first-hand experiences. Most of my research participants were market traders. However, there were three non-trader participants amidst my interviews. The reason I recruited a public lecturer from a local college in Merauke and one woman activist into my interviews, was because they were both involved in a previous market study conducted by the SKP-KAME and eL-AdPPer. Besides the involvement of the public lecturer, I interviewed one local bank staff that had

been involved in several assistance projects which focussed on a Mama-Mama capacity development programme.

#### **3.4.4 Transcription and coding**

I replayed each audio file that was recorded, and I typed everything that I heard in Bahasa Indonesia. The interview transcriptions and observation notes were then saved as separate files on my laptop. I have also stored all photographs and audio recorded files onto my laptop, and backed them up to an external hard drive. These files are protected by password that can only be accessed by the researcher.

I have also dated each interview transcript as well as the observation notes, and highlighted some key issues that were repeatedly raised by the participant. During the coding process, I did not use any specific computer programme. I created a table and dated each interview transcription. I also used pseudonyms for my participant's confidentiality, as well as put simple codes to differentiate the location of each participant from the two different markets; Mopah 2 (M2) and Wamanggu (WG). I began my data analysis by using an inductive analysis where all gathered data and information analysed was divided into four different themes. Referring to Robyn and Robyn (2012), the earlier part of the data analysis comes from identification of concepts, themes, events and examples, and then highlighting them in the text. Robyn and Robyn (2012) stated that "Theme includes summary statements, causal explanation and conclusion" (p.194). Themes also explain the participant's feelings about a specific issue that they have experienced, and the main causes behind that problem. In relation to my collected data, I combined all the issues together and performed a short analysis by referring them back into the research questions. I used an open coding system where the data was analysed line by line based on emerging themes.

Themes	Codes
Geography	The market changes since 1970s, the unbalance stall distribution, the temporary market (the Mopah), the semi-modern market design (The Wamanggu Market), inappropriate stall design for Mama-Mama, traditional markets in Jayapura and Wamena (landscape differences)
Economy	Indonesian middleman, rural traders, limited access to transportation to load local produce, Becak and Kios sayur influence, Saving and Loans Cooperative Business (Puskopabri), debt dependency, limited access to local bank (difficulty in requirements)
Social-Cultural	Native women as family provider (support children's education), the connection between Mama-Mama and market (place to generate income, meet people, raise children, share information, build trust), Christianity influence (no trading activity on Sunday), church events and spiritual life.
Politics	The silent voices of Mama-Mama, the change of the Wamanggu market design, the influence of Bupati (Head of regency) in executing the market design, stalls allocation for elite groups (Papua and Non-Papua elite groups), market as political campaign issues, discrimination and marginalisation towards native traders.

Table 3.2 The coding schedule

The table above explains four different themes which are geography, economy, social-cultural, and politics. The geography theme includes data and findings about place and space issues that occurred between the Indonesian and indigenous women traders at the market, while the economic theme covers trading competition at the market, including the saving and loans cooperative business and distribution of local produce from rural to urban areas. The social-cultural theme presents the roles of indigenous women as family providers and their connection to the market. Lastly, the political theme draws on government interventions in dealing with the market's issues, the political complexities, and the Mama-Mama's voices which have never been heard by the related authorities. After using the inductive analysis method, then I continued to use deductive analysis to relate the findings and theories, and bring them together into the discussion chapter. At the end of the discussion, I will provide some thoughtful recommendations as part of an advocacy effort to the related authorities.

### **3.5 Limitation of the Research**

I did not involve indigenous male merchants in my study because they are not permanent traders. Most of the indigenous male merchants sell fresh meat or fish from the forest, which takes a few days or even weeks hunting. Sometimes their presence at the market is invisible because they have no permanent space to sell their produce. They often move from one spot to another, depending on availability of space at the market. Apart from the space issue that they have encountered, their numbers are also not as numerous as the indigenous female merchants. Only a very few native male merchants usually take part in the trading activity at Mopah 2 market. The second limitation is that I did not involve any government representation or any member of the House of Representatives in my research. During my study, I contacted the coordinator of the House of Representatives of Merauke (Ketua DPRD Merauke), Fransiskus Sirfefa, through his Facebook account to set up an informal meeting to discuss market issues. He replied to my first text, and gave me his mobile phone number. Afterwards, he asked me whether the meeting can be held after the Eid Mubarak (The Muslim

Public Holiday). I agreed, and after the holiday, I sent him the second message, but he did not reply to that message until after my departure to New Zealand. Lastly, I noticed that the indigenous women traders play a double role as both traders and housewives. Unfortunately, I did not involve their husbands in my study, which means that there was not any additional data and information related from the men/husband side in my research.

### **3.6 Critical Reflections on the In-depth Interviews and Participant Observation Process**

There are some challenges that I found during my research process. The first is about the language spoken by both groups. The whole process of the interviews was mainly done in Bahasa Indonesia. However, not all participants spoke Bahasa Indonesia fluently. A few Indonesian traders spoke Bahasa Indonesia, but they inserted traditional Javanese words into the conversation. For example, the word *'ndablek'* which means **naughty**, *'duit'* which means **money**, *'mumet'* which means **headache**, *'dodolan'* which means **goods or produce**. I recorded every conversation and transcribed them at home. I also sought help for Javanese translations from my mother because she understood Javanese quite well. The basic language for indigenous women trader interviews was Bahasa Indonesia. Most of the indigenous women traders do not understand formal Bahasa Indonesia, which means I had to convert some of the formal vocabulary into very informal words or terms. I used many Papuan dialects and slang words in my interview, which helped break the tension and establish an interactive atmosphere between the researcher and the interviewee. I also found some indigenous and Indonesian women traders were very enthusiastic to discuss market issues. However, they often repeated their point of view and expanded the conversation into non-related issues outside the focus of the research. I allocated 45 minutes for each of interviews, but most of my interviews ran for over an hour.

Secondly, I found difficulty in setting up the interview schedule due to the Ramadhan and Eid Mubarak public holiday. My research schedule coincided with

Ramadhan where the Muslim community perform fasting. Most of the Indonesian traders are Muslim and they prefer to be interviewed after they break fasting around 6pm. Some of them refused to be interviewed during the time they trade at the market, while I could not meet some of them because they closed their stalls and went home earlier than usual. During the Eid Mubarak public holiday, almost all of the Indonesian merchant's stalls were closed. The public holiday was about a week, and during the holiday I did not do any interviews with any of them. Most of my interviews with the Indonesian traders were conducted after the Eid Mubarak public holiday, which means I had to wait for 3 weeks following my arrival. However, during the public holiday, I interviewed several indigenous women traders who kept selling their local produce during the public holiday. Despite the Islamic public holiday, I found it difficult to interview some of the Mama-Mama who were actively involved in religious events such as the 9 Days of Novena prayer, the First Holy Communion, and Sunday mass service. The initial schedule coincided with these religious events. Therefore, they refused to be interviewed and suggested re-arranging the schedule for the next opportunity.

Thirdly, school graduations or report days were also very important, especially for indigenous women traders who have school children. Several of the Mama-Mama refused my interview invitation because they needed to attend their children's graduation day. I found it difficult to get into contact with Mama-Mama because most of them don't have a mobile phone. When the Mama-Mama did not come to the market, I had to go to their houses to conduct the interviews. Sometimes, it was very difficult to find their addresses because most of the houses in Papua province, especially in Merauke regency, have no numbering system. I spent quite some time locating their houses, and occasionally when I arrived they had already left the house. Therefore, I often went straight to the market, to leave some verbal messages, and came back the next day. Even though this process took a lot of time and energy, I found it quite effective.

Lastly, in conducting the participant observations, I stood at several points in both Wamanggu and Mopah 2 markets. I observed the interaction between the traders and buyers, and the ongoing situations at that time. During my

observation, I often met with some school friends and my father's relatives at the market. When I met them, they questioned me a lot because most of them knew that I am studying in New Zealand, and they wanted to hear some stories from New Zealand. Due to the unplanned reunions, I often missed some important moments in my participant observation.

### **3.7 The Consent Form**

I noticed that both indigenous and Indonesian women traders are not very familiar with papers and documents. At the beginning of my research process, I provided the information sheet, consent form, and interview discussion schedule that already been translated from English to Bahasa Indonesia, and I handed to them before the interview. I also explained each of these forms using very informal words, hoping that they could understand all these documents easily. In relation to the consent form, a few of the indigenous women traders straight away said that they did not want to sign the provided form because of the bond of feeling and trust that had been already created between the researcher and themselves. Meanwhile, most of Indonesian women traders did not want to read the information because they have no time to do that. They asked me to explain everything related to my research then they signed the consent form. Only few of them refused to sign the consent form because they were afraid if they mistakenly said something wrong then that could affect their trading activities. Therefore, I chose to not capture any information that I obtained from participants who had refused to sign the consent form for this study.

## Chapter Four: Research Findings

This chapter presents the research findings gained from in-depth interviews and market observations in the Merauke regency, Papua province. I am going to divide this chapter into two parts, and will break down the findings into four different themes; social-cultural, geography, economy, and politics. The first part covers social-cultural issues and geography and it discusses native women trader's roles at the market and the market changes since 1970s in the Merauke regency. The second part includes economic and political themes and discusses the Mama-Mama challenges at the market space and the government interventions in dealing with the market complexities. This chapter also includes statements from Mama-Mama that have been translated from Bahasa Indonesia to English. I also used pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality.

### 4.1 Social-cultural theme

#### 4.1.1 Indigenous women traders as family providers

Mama-Mama play a very crucial role in their families. Besides being traders, they also provide food for their family. There is a triangular connection existing between Mama-Mama, the garden/forest, and the market. Mama-Mama usually start collecting their goods from the garden/forest and take home and then these produces end up at the marketplace. Besides bringing the local produce for family consumption at home, they also sell the produce at the market. The money from selling produce at the market is mostly used to meet family necessities.

Below is Mama Yul's statement about her main role in maintaining her family. Mama Yul is a young mother of one child from the Muyu tribe who usually buys and sells local produce at Mopah 2 market. The money that she earned is mostly spent on food and transportation.

*I have no garden, but I usually buy local produce from other merchants and re-sell it again. The money that I earned from selling banana, fruits,*

*and sago, I usually spend to feed my family. In the end of the day, I use the money to buy rice, sugar, tea, and some other ingredients for cooking. Sometimes, I spend for transportation costs as well.*

Despite being the main providers of food for their families, most Mama-Mama are actively involved in supporting their children's education. Mama Tekla, for instance, has become the main person that her family always relies on. Since her husband passed away, she works hard to send her children to school.

*Since my husband passed away three years ago, I work independently for my family. All the money from selling local produce is mostly spent for foods, kitchen stuff, and school needs of my children. I have saved some money in a local bank too, but it is not that much. Now, my younger daughter is on her way to Senior High School, and I already have saved up some money to buy her new uniform.*

Meanwhile, Mama Kelly, one of the indigenous women traders from the Asmat tribe, has supported her children to go to school by selling tubers and vegetables from her garden. She then explains:

*The money from selling tubers and vegetables from our garden I used to buy school stuff for my children such as books, pens, and socks. The location of my children's school is also far from home, and they must take public transport to get to school. I usually gave them some money for transport costs and to buy snacks.*

Most Mama-Mama, that I met at the market, argue that they did many things to keep their children at school. Even though they may have a lack of financial support, they worked very hard and seek help from their relatives, because they do not want their children to drop out from school due to financial issues. Mama-Mama said that there would be huge achievement and pride if their children could complete senior high school level and go to university.

Another example from Mama Marice, who refused my initial interview invitation by phone because of her son's graduation day. She requested to set up a new interview schedule for the following week.

*I am very sorry that today I will not be able to be interviewed. I must go to my son's school as today is announcement day. Actually, I am very interested to take part in your research. Could you please reschedule it again for next week?*

From all statements above, it is obvious that most Mama-Mama work very hard to fulfil their family necessities. They also play a very important role in supporting their children's education. Mama-Mama have invested their money, energy, and time to keep their children at school. Therefore, the market is essential for Mama-Mama to generate income to meet all their necessities. To keep Mama-Mama's trading activities running continuously, Mama-Mama who have no garden or limited access to forest usually prefer to buy local produce from rural traders or Indonesian farmers. They contact the farmers, set up an appointment, negotiate prices, and buy the goods in large quantities. Afterwards, they reprocessed the goods, set new prices that include transportation costs and other related-costs such as plastic bags, wrapping paper, and rope. They usually take a very small profit from selling each produce with no more than 3,000 rupiah a day.

#### **4.1.2 The market space as a 'second home' for Mama-Mama**

Mama-Mama valued the market as a place to sustain traditional economies because through the market they could easily distribute their local products to consumers. Mama-Mama's first experiences in the market were varied depending on their personal circumstances. Some of them have been part of the market since they were small, while others only experienced the market after they got married.

Mama Tekla shared a story of her first engagement in the marketplace. She states that the market has now become an integral part her life:

*I knew the market from my mother when I was in primary school in Tanah Merah. When we moved to Merauke, I was in secondary school. I started to follow my mother to sell local produce at Pelita market. At the time, we took the goods from our own garden, but some vegetables and fish were taken freely from the Blorep swamp. Until I got married and*

*had kids, I continued to go to the market. The market had already become part of my life.*

Mama Kelly stated that she only became familiar with the market since she got married. She was born and raised in the Asmat tribe which is different from her husband's cultural background. Her husband comes from the Paniai tribe which has a strong gardening background.

*I started to know the market from 2004 from my husband. He taught me how to grow vegetables and tubers, how to harvest them, and bring them to the market. He also taught me how to offer goods to the buyers because I was just too shy to do that. The market is everything to us because it keeps our life. I have learnt many things from the market, and I have many friends at the market.*

Despite being a place to sell and buy local products, the market is also used as a meeting place to exchange ideas and to socialize. Most of the people who want to meet their relatives who live in other villages can easily meet them in the market. People can easily hear updated news at the market. Mama Okta, who actively sells traditional goods at Wamanggu market emphasises that the marketplace is a good space to spread information.

*If I received any very important news or information, I usually ask Mama-Mama to gather at the market. After I delivered the information, it is up to them whether they want to follow up the information or not. The last meeting was held here, at Wamanggu market. It was news about an opportunity to access loans from Papua Bank. Some Mama-Mama already have followed up the information, but some of them did not really care.*

This finding reveals that Mama-Mama value the market as a place to make money to support family needs, as well as a place where moral and cultural values are constantly constructed. Many things happen at the market such as raising children, sharing stories, making networks, building trust and self-confidence, etc.

These life events have created a sense of belonging which has deepened the Mama-Mama relationships at the marketplace.

#### **4.1.3 Indigenous women, the market and religious life**

The majority of Indigenous women traders are Catholic and they believe that hard work without prayer means nothing. Mama-Mama usually go to church on Sunday mornings and start their trading activities in the afternoon. A few Mama-Mama also took part in several church events such as the Novena prayer, the Rosary prayer, Holy Sacrament Adoration, Baptism, and First Eucharist.

When I went to Mopah 2 market to set up an interview appointment, Mama Tekla confirmed that she will not come to the afternoon market because of a novena prayer that she wanted to join in her parish.

*I will not go to the market starting from tomorrow afternoon and for the nine days ahead. There is a nine-days novena prayer in St. Maria Kelapa Lima Parish, and I am going to attend it. In the morning, I might go to the market just to bring the goods and leave them with a friend of mine. She will help me to sell the goods, and I will give her some bonus if my goods are sold out. If you wanted to come for the interview, you could come to my house in the morning around 9am.*

Mama Marice confirmed my interview appointment by phone. She asked to reschedule the interview because of the preparation for her son's first holy communion at church.

*I am very sorry as I am not available for an interview started from now (Friday) until Sunday. My son is preparing his first reception of the Eucharist sacrament and I must be there because my husband is working in Asiki. You can call me to set up a new interview appointment on Monday afternoon, or I might give you a call after this event.*

Further, Mama Okta, who sells vegetables and fruits at Wamanggu market emphasizes that:

*On Sunday, most Mama-Mama will not come to the market because they usually go to church. A few of them might come to the market in the late afternoon. If you come here (Wamanggu market) on Sunday, you would find many empty stalls, except Indonesian traders who keep selling their goods on Sunday.*

The finding reveals that there is a strong connection between Christianity and indigenous women traders at the marketplace in Papua. Unlike the regulated markets of Jayapura and Wamena, indigenous women traders in Merauke have regulated themselves and do not do any trading activity on Sundays because they believe that God has already given six days to work, and a day to thank Him. They believe that without God's involvement, they would face many difficulties in their trading activities or family. The market participation in Merauke regency is constructed by religious commitments among the market traders.

## **4.2 Geography Theme**

In the last four decades, market life in the Merauke regency has changed because of the rapid increase of Indonesian traders over the years. The rise of the Indonesian traders effected the use of space and place in the market, the increase in trading competition, and the reduction of moral values.

### **4.2.1 Domination of Indonesian traders; indigenous trader's place, space, and identity challenges**

Pelita market was established around the 1970s and existed until 1980s. It was a permanent market building built by the local government of Merauke, and the design of the stalls were based on a trader's type of goods. Most traders who sold goods came from the indigenous people of the Muyu and Mandobo tribe. Some non-indigenous traders came from Java, Bugis, Makassar, Buton, Maluku, and China. The dynamic of development and socio-cultural transformation in Papua province have influenced indigenous women merchants' need to negotiate space, place, and identity. While the Pelita Market existed, moral and cultural values

were highly respected among the traders. It was clearly seen that non-indigenous traders did not dare grab stalls, and always negotiated their needs of space with indigenous traders.

Mama Marice, one of indigenous traders who experienced the Pelita market explained that a friendly atmosphere occurred at Pelita market. Both group of traders (Indigenous and Indonesian) respect one another, and traders used to obey some rules set up by the government such as paying tax regularly, occupying provided stalls according to type of goods, following car park arrangements, etc. Different from Mama Marice, Mama Tekla, who used to be involved in Pelita market since she was in secondary school, highlights that the change at the market affected her daily income.

*In Pelita market, there were not many Indonesian traders who sell vegetables and fruits. They usually sell foods, clothes, kitchen tools, and rice. It was easy for us to make money because we were so dominant at that time. Now is different. There are so many Indonesian traders in the market, and we have no space to move around.*

Since the Ampera market fire accident in 2003, most traders were relocated to a temporary marketplace in the Mopah area. At first, the Mopah market was built with wooden walls, and zinc and tarpaulin as its roof. When this market started to operate, there were already disorganized stalls which caused conflicts between indigenous and Indonesian traders.

One of the Papuan lecturers, Don, that I interviewed, states that ever since the market moved from Ampera to Mopah, several problems have occurred in relation to the stall's distribution and ownership. He says:

*There was a case that occurred in the Mopah I market. Mama-Mama from Mandobo tribe complained that their stalls were taken over by Indonesian traders. The Mama-Mama, who live in Tambat village, did not come every day to the market because they depended on their harvest time and transportation costs. They often leave their stalls empty but they were officially registered as the stall's owner.*

*There was a big fight between Mama-Mama and Dispenda's staff. I saw that the police were around the market too. The main problem was that Dispenda handed over the Mama-Mama's stalls to Indonesian traders without explanation. The Mama-Mama were so angry and damaged their stalls.*

The First Mopah market was moved to a new location after an accidental fire in the late 2000s. The Mopah 2 market was built as a temporary market while waiting for the finalization of the development of Wamanggu market. At the Second Mopah market, Mama-Mama still experienced inequality in accessing market space. Most of them were given stalls in unstrategic locations where they were close to disposal bins and drainage. Their stalls were located at the back, while Indonesian traders occupied the front stalls close to the main entrance and parking area. As a result, most of the Mama-Mama left their stalls and moved in to the main entrance. They have no stalls, and instead put all their goods on the ground covered by sacks. Mama Marice argued that Mama-Mama were deliberately forced to occupy an unstrategic market space:

*The same problem since the first Mopah moved to the second Mopah is about stalls distribution. It is not equal because Mama-Mama mostly are given stalls in the back, close to the disposal bin and drainage. Buyers were lazy to walk through our stalls because it was too far from the main entrance, dirty, and too smelly because of rotting garbage. This is unfair for us.*

When Wamanggu market officially opened in 2014, many traders did not get a place to sell their goods because the market had limited space and could not accommodate all the traders in Merauke. As a result, most traders kept selling their goods in the Mopah 2 market, while some of the native merchants tended to sell their goods along the road. The shift in marketplace has affected people's attitude in negotiating space and place at the market. Mama Okta informed me that some people are being rude to each other because of their high interest in

getting access to market space. People were being arrogant and less respectful to one another because of stalls.

*We had a serious problem before between indigenous and Indonesian traders. They were fighting because the Indonesian traders occupied one of the Mama's space without permission. The Mama was angry and took her machete out for fighting*

She then continues telling her experience about disrespectful behavior from the market authority:

*I also had a very strong argument a few months ago with the head of the market. He is Indonesian man, born in Merauke. He made a line in the front of my stalls because he thought that I put too many goods near the main corridor. He said to me 'never ever cross this line', and I answered him 'stop making that line otherwise I will step on your hand'. He finally went off in silence.*

The need for market space makes most Indonesian traders, especially those who come from transmigration areas, no longer willing to obey the applied rules in the marketplace. Tarmi, one of the Indonesian women merchants from the Java tribe that I interviewed, said she often disobeys the applied rules at Wamanggu market because she has no space to display her goods.

*I have no space to sell goods here. Me, and some friends, usually sell our goods exactly under the market's stairs. We know that this is wrong, but we do not care. Sometimes, Satpol PP rebuke us and told us to leave. We just say sorry, and leave, but tomorrow we will do it again. If we saw Satpol PP coming, we would quickly organize our goods and go. We have no choice, we have no space, that is why we often disobey the rules.*

All the statements above describe that the market changes in the last four decades in Merauke has affected Mama-Mama's role in distributing local produce at the market. The Indonesian traders are dominant as they have occupied most of the market spaces and threatened Mama-Mama's daily earnings. This condition leads to disrespectful attitudes among both groups.

#### **4.2.2 The Ampera market: the most well-remembered marketplace**

Most of the participants that I interviewed said that they were impressed with the management of Ampera market. Ampera market was built to be a permanent structure by the local government around the 1980's and it operated until 2003. This market had well-organized stalls according to the type of goods. The native traders occupied a particular-space based on their quantity of local produce.

Mama Tekla, who experienced the Pelita market before and then moved to Ampera, states that the Ampera market had mapped out some spaces for indigenous merchants.

*In my opinion, the Ampera market was the most well-organised market. The Mama-Mama from different suburbs had their open stalls, and they were given wood boxes to store their goods in the market. If their goods were not sold out, they could keep them in that box, and lock it. Otherwise it would be so heavy to carry them back home.*

Mama Marice, has the same impression towards that market.

*Ampera market had very organized stalls which could help customers in finding particular goods. I still remember how they divided the market into several blocks. If I wanted to buy meat or fish, for example, I knew where I could find them.*

Sumi is an Indonesian women merchant who experienced selling foods and drinks in Ampera market. She emphasized that Ampera market used to have very organized stalls and could accommodate all traders.

*I liked Ampera market because it was the only market in the city. All traders and buyers were there, and it was easy to earn money. I think, the management of the marketplace was good as compared to Mopah and Wamanggu market.*

Apart from its organised stalls, Mama Tekla states that Mr. John Gluba, the previous Bupati, gave a lot of attention to the marketplace. When the

accidental fire occurred, he met all of the traders and set up a plan to relocate all traders to Mopah area.

*After the fire accident, we had a meeting with Bupati John Gluba. He gave a lot of attention to all the traders. He was a good Bupati as he quickly responded to the trader's difficulty. Now, our leader does not care too much with our difficulty. He only came and gave a lot of promises before the Bupati election. After the election, he forgot his promises. We still struggle in negotiating our space at the market, but he does not care of that.*

Mama-Mama statements above explain that the change of Bupati from Gluba Gebze to the current Bupati has influenced the regional policy which related to the market management. In managing the Ampera market, Gluba Gebze's leadership role was well-recognized and his sensitive attitude to the needs of Mama-Mama was well-remembered. The role of Bupati, as the main leader in the region, is pivotal in dealing with the market complexities as well as meeting the needs of the indigenous people.

#### **4.2.3 The Wamanggu market; unexpected semi-mall market**

Since the inauguration of the Wamanggu market in 2014, the local government of the Merauke regency has rearranged the distribution of stalls in the new market. The increase of both indigenous and Indonesian traders has affected the need to have more space in the new market. A lottery increasingly become the government's main method to overcome the problems around the distribution of stalls. Stall allocations for indigenous traders in Wamanggu market number 515 stalls, while there is a total of 721 indigenous merchants in Merauke. Meanwhile, there are 636 stalls allocated for Indonesian merchants and 28 for an elite group (Katayu, 2014). Nevertheless, the Wamanggu market still cannot accommodate all traders from the second Mopah market. The development of stalls was not appropriate to the needs of indigenous merchants. Mama Tekla is one of the indigenous women merchants who did not get stall at Wamanggu market.

*I took a lottery but it was a blank paper, no number in it. It means that I did not succeed to get a stall in Wamanggu market. I do not dare to demand for a stall to the government. Some of Mama-Mama they were lucky with the lottery, but most of them were just like me.*

She then argues how the development of stalls does not meet indigenous trader's expectations.

*I heard Mama-Mama say that they provide stalls and they are too small for them. The plots just limited their space to put goods and to move around. They were trapped and look like kids who are playing 'cooking games' ... (laugh)*

Mama Okta, one of the indigenous merchants who got a stall at Wamanggu market, has complained how the stall has limited her trading activity.

*It does not matter for us if we share market space with Indonesian traders. But the development of Wamanggu market is just not in our expectation, especially space for Mama-Mama. We do not need concrete stalls like this, just give us open space then we will organize our goods. This stall was just wasted, it was not even two meters long. That is why some Mama-Mama do not want to use their stalls, and tend to rent it out to other people.*

The main issues among the indigenous merchants were around the market building not considering the community's needs. Mama-Mama were expecting an open space to put out their goods, but only received a space about 1.5 meters long. Mama Marice stated how space is a big matter for her to organize her local produce.

*The local government has developed the market but they did not consider the practical needs of indigenous traders. We wanted an open space so that we could freely organize our goods. Our type of goods are different from them (Indonesian traders). We cannot pile up the goods, but we need to tidily organize them to attract customers. That is why we need more space.*

Based on Mama-Mama statements above, I argue that the development of Wamanggu market's new building in Merauke was far from the community's expectation. The construction of concrete stalls was too small and they could not accommodate Mama-Mama's produces. As a semi-mall market building, the Wamanggu market has only benefited Indonesian traders and marginalised Mama-Mama.

#### **4.2.4 Indigenous women merchants in Jayapura and Wamena; the development of the market based on local culture**

Jayapura is more vibrant and well-developed as compared to other regencies around Papua and West Papua provinces. Besides being a center of business, the circulation of goods and traditional products from other areas, including Sarmi regency and Kerom, is centralized in Jayapura. There are several state markets developed around the Jayapura and Sentani area such as Inpres Tanjung Ria Market, Mama-Mama Market, Hamadi Market, Youtefa Market, and Sentani Market. Meanwhile, many individual or group stalls are spread around Jayapura which display local produce from garden, handcrafts, and home-made traditional foods.

During my research process, I visited Jayapura and observed the Sentani Market, the Hamadi Market, and the Mama-Mama Market. I found that indigenous women traders are also struggling to negotiate their space at the market place. Although the presence of Indonesian traders in Jayapura slightly dominated the indigenous traders, the stall arrangement in most of the markets seemed very well-organized. The stalls were arranged based on the type of goods, where there is a separation between dried and fresh produce. For instance, dry products contained clothing items, kitchen tools, and dried ingredients, while fresh produce includes vegetables, fruits, tubers, meat, and fish. In the Sentani market, I noticed that Mama-Mama dominated the ground floor, while Indonesian traders occupied the second floor, and some of them occupied stalls which are located at the back part of the market. I talked to several indigenous merchants that I met at the market. Most of them said that they were satisfied with the development of the new market building which applied the local culture (Sentani

culture). There are four new market buildings built, and each building is connected with stairs which are placed in the second floor. The ground floor is an open space area which allocated only for Mama-Mama, and the second floor has closed stalls that provide clothing and kitchen stuff items sold by Indonesian traders.

I found the same situation in Wamena where most of the markets are classified according to the type of goods and the local's needs. The Jibama market, for instance, were mostly dominated by indigenous traders. Although the Mama-Mama's stalls are placed at the back of the market, these stalls are well-organized based on type of produce with a stall only for fruits and vegetables, betel nuts, meat and fish, souvenirs, firewood, and pets. The Indonesian traders who sell clothing items were placed at the edge of the market.

In conclusion, the Jayapura and Wamena observations provide a big picture that suggests that different landscapes and cultural values also contribute to the trading activity. The development of market buildings in Jayapura and Wamena has considered the need of space for Mama-Mama according to their type of products, while the stalls arrangement has greatly simplify the trading process.

## **4.3 Economic Theme**

### **4.3.1. The power of Indonesian middlemen towards indigenous merchants**

The domination of Indonesian traders, especially from the Java tribe and the BBM's (Bugis tribe, Buton tribe, Makassar tribe) has contributed significantly in the transformation of the indigenous economy. Massive regional developments from the city to local villages does not seem to have benefited the local people. For example, the development of infrastructure such as bridges and roads which have connected the local villages and towns is mostly accessed by the Java and BBM tribes because most indigenous people do not have private vehicles and

have limited access to public transportation because of its high cost. Indigenous farmers find it difficult to distribute their local produce from village to town or city. Due to these difficulties in transporting goods to market, many indigenous farmers prefer to sell their produce to Indonesian middleman at low prices.

Don, a Papuan lecturer that I interviewed, emphasizes that the main problem faced by indigenous merchants who live outside of the city center is the high of costs of transportation.

*The main obstacle for indigenous merchants, who live in the villages, is related to transportation. They find it hard to transport their local produce to the city because of the transport cost which is higher than the sales of goods. This situation has forcing them to sell their goods to Indonesian middleman.*

For example, Mama Okta, who lives in Sota village, the border area between Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, finds it difficult to load her goods from the village to city. She stated that most of her money goes to cover the costs of transportation.

*I usually spend 75,000 to 80,000 rupiah just for one way transportation from Sota to Merauke. Normally, it only costs 25,000 rupiah per person, but if you bring a lot of goods with you then you have to pay more. Most of our money goes to transportation costs. It is so hard especially for those who have no family in Merauke because they must come and return in the same day. Sometimes, they must reduce the price of goods in the late afternoon so their goods will be sold out to the customers, and go back to the village without the cost for left over goods.*

Mama Okta then explains that although there are not many buyers around the Sota village, most of the indigenous women merchants tend to sell their goods close to the border area or on the main road. They are always hoping for tourists who visit the border, or people who pass by the road, to buy their goods. In Tambat and Sarmayam villages, most indigenous people tend to sell their goods to Indonesian middlemen.

*In Tambat and Sarmayam villages, our people usually sell their local produce to an Indonesian middleman and they make little money from it. The middleman usually comes directly to the village and buy their goods. I cannot blame them or say that they are stupid because I know that they have no choice.*

There have been massive changes in public transport management in the last four decades in Merauke regency. According to Mama Marice, Pelita Market, which operated around 1970s-1980s, used to be a very good example in accommodating indigenous women traders who live in the suburbs area. A local government agency called DAMRI (Djawatan Angkutan Motor Republik Indonesia) used to be the only public transport provided by the local government who regularly served suburban traders. The bus usually operated in the early morning to pick up the Mama-Mama including their goods, and took them to the market. At certain times in the evening, the bus would come to the market to pick them up and bring them back to the suburbs. Mama Marice says that:

*I remembered there was a round-trip DAMRI operated in the morning and late afternoon from suburb to the market. The DAMRI picked up the Mama-Mama including their local produce from Kelapa Lima and Kuda Mati. In the late afternoon, the DAMRI will pick them up and take them back to the suburb. I wonder why the DAMRI now only accommodate the needs of school' children in the city. They no longer provide service for us who live in the suburbs?*

Since DAMRI no longer provides services for indigenous people who live in the suburbs, some indigenous women traders tend to walk to the market or take other forms of public transport which costs more than DAMRI. Some of them often ask their relatives who have motorbikes to help them bring their goods to the market by paying for the cost of the gas. Transportation is a big deal to most indigenous women traders because most of them have no private vehicles to support their trading activities. As consequence, they chose the easiest way to sell their local produce to the Indonesian middleman who frequently visits their village. From the regular transaction with Indonesian middlemen, indigenous farmers can only earn

a little money, while the middleman gains a lot of advantages and profit by reselling rural produce at the city in higher prices.

#### **4.3.2. The presence of 'becak' and 'kios sayur' in the Merauke regency**

Apart from the transportation issues above, Mama-Mama also face difficulty in circulating their local products. The Mama-Mama in both the Mopah 2 and the Wamanggu market are facing direct competition because the presence of *becak* (motor cabs) has lessened Mama-Mama's opportunities to trade. The presence of *becak* has fulfilled the kitchen demands of the people because it provides variety of ingredients, vegetables, fruits, fish, meat, and home-made foods. *Becak* have spread around the city center and suburban areas. Apart from *Becak*, *kios sayur* (small vegetable shops), which basically only used to sell groceries and toiletries, now has expanded into selling a variety of vegetables, fruits, and kitchen needs. The presence of *kios sayur* creates the possibility for locals to buy fresh produce outside the market. *Kios sayur* are distributed in different areas around the city center and suburbs, and they are usually open in the early morning until late evening.

Mama Petra, one of the indigenous women merchants at the Mopah 2 Market, who sells bananas and sago, explains that she earned less money because the market nowadays has fewer buyers and is too quiet.

*When I was in Ampera market, I earned good money because many buyers were around the market. Now, with the presence of becak and kios sayur at home, we earned less, even nothing, within a day. If the market were crowded and many people bought my goods, I would earn 100,000 rupiah, but if it is a quiet day then I would just earned around 50,000 rupiah. The money that I earn is mostly spent to rebuy bananas and sago for selling.*

Indigenous women traders are not the only group who feel the significant changes from the presence of *becak* and *kios sayur* in Merauke regency. Tarmi, one of the Indonesian merchants from the Java tribe who sells vegetables states the same issues as Mama Petra.

*Becak usually stop in the front of the house, offering the same goods with very affordable prices. If the goods at becak or kios are only different by 1000 or 2000 rupiah, it would make people choose to buy goods at becak or kios sayur than go to the market. It's a lot easier especially for those who live far away from the central market.*

The presence of the *becak* and *kios sayur* in Merauke affects the daily income of both Indonesian and Indigenous women traders. The presence of *becak* and *kios sayur* allow people to have easy access of goods from their home. This situation dissuades people from making the trip to go to the market and has impacted on the Mama-Mama's daily earnings.

#### **4.3.3 The local bank: Mama-Mama limited access to loans**

The Papua Bank, as a local bank in the Merauke regency, has already set up loans to support indigenous women traders to develop their trading activity. In the last five years, Papua Bank have assisted indigenous women traders in several places in rural and urban areas. The local bank also provides loans for Indonesian traders which are slightly different from indigenous merchants. The differences in the loans were determined based on the type of goods, the basic needs, and the daily income. It means that Mama-Mama can only access very small loans from the local bank.

I interviewed Nona, she is a native woman who works for a local bank which belongs to the Papua government in Merauke. She used to be involved in several projects set up by the bank which deal with indigenous women traders.

*Papua Bank in Merauke has a program to give credit or virtual capital to the indigenous women who wanted to start their business at the market, at the home, or in the village. We also introduce the bank itself including how to access the loans, start a new business and what kind of requirements that might be needed. The aim of this program is to facilitate Mama-Mama's new businesses, and slowly reduce their dependency towards saving and loans cooperative business.*

According to her, the bank also provides loans to Indonesian merchants but the amount is different to indigenous merchants. The maximum loan for a Mama-Mama is 5,000,000 rupiah, while the minimum is 1,000,000 rupiah.

*Mama-Mama's type of goods are different to Indonesian merchants.*

*They mostly sell vegetables, fruits, fish and meat. We usually gave them no more than 5,000,000 rupiah and no less than 1,000,000 rupiah.*

*Before we give them loans, we do a survey to obtain basic information about their type of goods, their needs for doing trading activities, and their daily earnings. If we give them too much of a loan and their daily earnings were not stable, it would become another burden for them.*

*Indonesian traders usually accessed big amounts of money because they mostly sell clothes or kitchen stuff.*

There is good opportunities for Mama-Mama from the Mopah 2 market and the Wamanggu market to access the loans. However, the need to fill out the paperwork requirements has limited Mama-Mama's access to the saving and loans program set up by the bank. Apart from the paperwork requirements, the duration of time to access the money is usually longer than they desire. It can take two weeks or more to get the loans while the Mama-Mama cannot delay their need to buy goods. This situation pushes them to instead join the savings and loans cooperative businesses which has much simpler requirements than the local bank.

#### **4.3.4 The savings and loans cooperative business; creates debt dependency for Mama-Mama.**

There are several savings and loans cooperative businesses that have emerged in Merauke regency around the 2000s. The savings and loans businesses provide a quick and easy service to fill the trader's basic needs. In the last few years, the presence of these business has created a high amount of dependency especially for Mama-Mama who have very low venture capital. Struggling to sustain their trading activity, the use of this service is to fill Mama-Mama's urgent needs at home.

Mama Yul, from the Mopah 2 market, for instance, acknowledged that the savings and loans cooperative businesses provides a very simple and fast service for Mama-Mama. In only a few hours, she could receive the money that she had proposed.

*One thing that makes me often borrow money from the savings and loans cooperative is because they process our needs very fast. For example, if I suddenly need some money to refill my goods or to bring my children to the health center, this cooperative would process it in a few hours. The person who is in charge is already around the market so there is no need for us to go out from the market. Sometimes, I just need to phone them and lay my request. They provide easy service for me.*

Mama Yul, also points out that she had to borrow money from the savings and loans cooperative because she has no access to borrowing money from the local bank. She argues that information from the local bank about the savings and loans programme was not well known to all Mama-Mama who are in need.

*I personally did not receive any information about the savings and loans programme offered by Papua Bank. It seems like only certain traders received the information and they did not pass it to others. I heard that a few Mama-Mama already received loans from the bank while some of them did not know anything about this opportunity. Then I decided to borrow money from Puskopabri to buy goods for sale. Although the loan interest is a bit high, but I keep borrowing the money from this cooperative.*

According to Mama Yul, the cooperative business has set up lending rules that each Mama-Mama only can access 500,000 rupiah. When Mama-Mama want to access 500,000 rupiah, the cooperative business would pay out 460,000 rupiah because of administration fees. Afterwards, the weekly payment that Mama-Mama are supposed to transfer is 50,000 rupiah and it needs to be paid back 12 times.

*I do not have any choices, only this cooperative can fill my urgent needs. If during a week my goods were not sold out and I have no money to pay them, I would let them know. I cannot run or disappear from them. They mostly understand and will give us some time.*

As we can see from several statements above, the cooperative businesses have created a continuous debt cycle, and Mama-Mama are entangled with these businesses. These businesses have made a lot of profit by gaining the loan's interest money from Mama-Mama. Meanwhile, Mama-Mama are trapped because of their basic needs to buy goods and to support their family at home. It seems like the Mama-Mama's routine in trading activities is only to pay debts. They cannot even save up some money for their future.

## **4.4 Political Theme**

### **4.4.1. The silent voices of Mama-Mama**

The need for a rearrangement of the stalls at the marketplace and the need for regulations that align with indigenous women traders have often been proposed by Mama-Mama to the local government. With help from a local NGO and church institutions, between 2011 and 2014, the Mama-Mama have conveyed their desires to have proper stalls and a clean market space.

Mama Okta used to be involved in a social campaign organised by a local church institution known as SKP-KAME. It was a moment when the Mama-Mama fight for their market issues reached the House of Representatives of Merauke.

*We had been trying to speak up with a help from SKP and Stisipol at that time. We went to the House of Representative and delivered our concerns. We were waiting and waiting for their responses. Nothing happens until now. It so quiet.*

Mama Okta, then, continues her story telling of when she met Mr. Fredy Gebze, the current Bupati of Merauke regency, who did his grocery shopping at Wamunggu market.

*I met him one time here when he did some shopping. I talked to him directly about our concerns. I mentioned several points about the market space including problems about our stalls and market management. I said to him please do not only pay attention to market retribution, but also consider our needs. We need to rearrange the market operational time, and reinforce the market rules. Indonesian traders were being ignorant and created their own schedule. They started the market at 2am which was supposed to start at 6am. This is not fair for us who always come to the market around 9am. When I spoke up, the Bupati only smiled....and I was mad at him. I continued 'why are you smiling, this is a serious problem faced by Mama-Mama and I really mean it'. He did not say anything and went off.*

Meanwhile, Mama Yul, at Mopah 2 Market, states that she and other indigenous women traders chose to be silent and to keep doing their trading activity.

*We chose to keep silent because we do not dare speak up. We usually only complain and talk between us. It always happens repeatedly that before legislative or Bupati elections, they will visit the market regularly. They usually come and pretend to buy our goods, chew betel nuts, laugh, and attract us by giving some money.*

Mama Yul, then, continues her statements:

*In the last Bupati election period, he (Fredy Gebze) came to the market and promised to rebuild some parts of the market over there (finger pointed), that was why we chose him. Now when he is chosen, he never come to the Mopah 2 market. It almost two years and nothing has happened here. Nothing has changed at the market, and we only keep silent and do what we can do.*

The problems faced by indigenous women traders at the market place are becoming more complex, and the market is always used as an arena for political campaigns. Although Mama-Mama have tried to speak up for their rights, it has been difficult for their voices to penetrate the government bureaucracy. Due to their low educational backgrounds, Mama-Mama have less courage to fight for better stalls at the marketplace. As a result, their voices are drowned and swallowed by policy makers who are not aligned to the needs of indigenous people. While Mama-Mama have been given a lot of promises during the election periods, there has been no real implementation conducted after the election party. Some of them managed to remain silent and keep selling their goods to continue their life. Mama-Mama say that they are disappointed with the current government as it is not serious in resolving the market issues. They said that the market is a place to feed Merauke's citizens, and a place to sustain indigenous people's lives. Therefore, the market should not be exploited by a certain group for their own interests.

#### **4.4.2 The politics of Wamanggu market building design.**

The Wamanggu market is known as the only modern market in Merauke regency. The market was built in the ashes of the previous Ampera market. It was expected that the new market would accommodate all of the Ampera fire's victims. However, the development of the market seems to be different from the main building design because it could not accommodate all traders especially the Ampera fire's victim traders.

Mama Marice, who is also a woman activist in Merauke, states that she knew how the previous Bupati, Mr. John Gluba, firmly defended the Wamanggu market building design. She and her husband attended a meeting organized by the local government in Noken Sai in which there was a discussion about the Wamanggu market building design.

*I remember that day, only me, my husband and Mr. John Gluba were the native people in the meeting room. The rest were Indonesian traders who actively argued against the building design of Wamanggu market. At that*

*time, Mr. Gluba strongly emphasized that there will be no worship space inside the market. It will be a market building only. Unfortunately, when his term was over and his successor no longer paid attention to the market issue, the building design was immediately removed and changed. As you can see, there is a mosque now inside the market.*

Meanwhile, Mama Tekla tried to recall her personal experience with the former Bupati of Merauke regency, Mr. John Gluba Gebze. She says that although Mr. John Gluba is no longer a Bupati, he has a special concern for Mama-Mama.

*He is really a good leader. He always wanted to hear us, and he will fight for it. He has a big heart for Mama-Mama and always encourages children to go to school. He is not like other Bupati., Because of his concern for the market issues, I remember one time when we visited his house, he suggested for us to directly talk to the current Bupati about the need of a traditional market to accommodate all indigenous traders. He said that it is better for Mama-Mama to have their own market (Pasar Mama-Mama).*

Apart from the complexities of leadership and different personalities of the Bupati, there is also an element of politics behind the distribution of stalls in Wamanggu market. Don, the Papuan lecturer that I interviewed, stated that there are 28 stalls which are allocated for both Papuan and Indonesian elite groups.

*I think because of the local empowerment discourse in Merauke regency, some Papuan elites have been allocated stalls at Wamanggu market from the local government. The problem is that the stalls are not only allocated for Papuan elites, but for some Indonesian elites as well. They make a lot of profits from that stalls because they rent them out to other traders. Why do not they allocate these stalls to support indigenous merchants?*

The domination of a certain group at the marketplace leads to power and control over the indigenous women traders. Meanwhile, each regional leader or Bupati has a different vision and mission during their leadership period.

Moreover, a few statements above show that each Bupati has a different personality and concern in dealing with indigenous women trader's needs. When a new leader is elected, with a new system of bureaucracy, the implementation also changes. Although the local government plays a crucial role in determining the fate of the Mama-Mama, less government attention has been given to overcoming the market's complexities in Merauke.

## **Chapter Five: Mama-Mama, Market Complexities, and Cultural Identity**

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section discusses the native women trader's roles and challenges in distributing traditional produce at the market. The second section presents the market complexities in Merauke including the local government interventions and the local institutional roles in dealing with the market complexities.

### **Section 1**

#### **5.1 Mama-Mama's Double Roles: As a Trader and Family Food Provider**

Women are the leading actors of the informal economy because they connect rural producers and urban consumers (UN Women, 2012). They are the biggest contributors at the marketplace (Dewey, 2011), and work very hard as family food providers. As stated by Synder (1990 14), the main role of women is as 'the key to ending hunger'. Women work very hard to distribute goods at the market, and they are also responsible in maintaining and strengthening their families (Anderson, 2008). Besides being market traders, women have an additional role in performing the domestic tasks and mothering role at home (Wanggai, 2007). Women provide food, clean water and fire wood, as well as taking care of their children and husbands at home. Market women also give priority to their children's education (Anderson, 2008).

Some Mama-Mama that I interviewed lived on their own. A few of them said that their husbands had already passed away many years ago, and some of them said that their partner had left them with the children. Nevertheless, they work very hard to sustain their basic needs at home as well as to keep their children at school. Referring to my research findings on chapter four, Mama Tekla and Mama Kelly are two amazing women who work very hard for their families.

Mama Tekla become the family breadwinner after her husband passed away. She weaves Noken (traditional bags) and sells them at the market. The money that she earns from the sale of Noken is mostly used for her children's school fees. The same is for Mama Kelly, who regularly makes money from the sale of vegetables and fruits. She spent most of the money to buy her children school equipment such as shoes, books, pens, and uniforms. She also spent some money on school fees, snacks, and transportation costs. Both Mama Tekla and Mama Kelly work very hard to sustain their family's necessities. As well as earning money to buy food for their families, they have also prioritised their children's education. I personally experienced Mama Marice refusing my invitation for an interview because of her son's graduation day. Her husband was away for work and she was responsible for attending her son's special event. She then asked me to reschedule the interview for the weekend. Because of the families' basic needs and the children's education, there is a strong connection between Mama-Mama and the market. The market plays a very pivotal role in distributing local products, maintaining families' basic needs and strengthening local knowledge. The next section discusses the women's greater contribution in reproducing traditional knowledge which always occurs at the marketplace.

## **5.2 Mama-Mama and the Market: Space to Socialise and Reproduce Traditional Knowledge**

The market is not merely a place to sell or buy goods, but it has multiple functions and meanings for the local people. Pollock (1988) stated that the market is not only a place to make a lot of profit, but the market is a place to meet family or relatives who live in different villages to share news or discuss ideas. Like Pollack, Wanggai (2007) also emphasizes the market's function as the best place to meet relatives who come from villages that have limited access to transportation and communication.

Wanggai (2007) stated that for native women, the market is a place to share food, news, jokes, and to care for each other's children. This is the same for

Seligmann (2001) who highlighted the market as a place to raise children and spread gossip. According to Seligmann (2001), the social interaction which continuously occurred in the market space fosters a sense of unity. Although market women walk long hours from home and lift heavy local produce under the heat, they rarely complain when their goods are not sold, because they are more interested in socialising with their friends and relatives at the market than making profits (Seligmann, 1993). In Merauke, the market is the space for Mama-Mama to raise children and transfer knowledge. Mama-Mama with babies usually put their babies inside the Noken (traditional bag) while displaying their goods on the stalls. Mama Marice, one of my participants, stated that she grew up at the market, and inherited from her mother the skill for selling native products. After school, she always helped her mother at the market. Those who have school children, transfer knowledge about life and cultural values as well as doing school tasks at the marketplace. The market has also connected her to many people from various backgrounds. She says:

*I grew up at the market, and mom had taught me many things about the market including how to sell our local produce. We (native traders) like to wash our goods to make them look clean. After that, we set up our produce nicely on the ground to attract buyers. We cannot leave our goods dirty or covered by earth because buyers will not be interested to buy them.*

According to Mama Marice's story and her life experiences, and based on my observations and personal view as an insider, I argue that Mama-Mama are the biggest contributors in maintaining and reproducing traditional knowledge. The reason that underlies my argument is that Mama-Mama always distribute traditional products from the garden and forest to the market and its consumers. For example, sago flour is extracted from the sago tree which grows wild in the family garden or natural forest. Mama-Mama bought the sago from rural traders, and transported them a long way to the market. As well as being widely consumed as one of the traditional foods in Papua and Papua Barat, sago is a sacred food that

represents the Marind's tribe totems. By doing this, Mama-Mama have connected us to our traditional food and to the land and forest.

### **5.3 Rural Women Traders: Culture and Limitations**

Anderson (2008), through his study in Papua New Guinea, finds that the majority of vegetables and fruits sellers are women from rural areas. They not only sell fresh products from their garden, but they also sell traditional hand crafts and clothes (Anderson, 2008). In terms of accessing market space, Seligmann (1993) argues that rural women traders often experienced fear and anxiety when meeting urban buyers because of their low educational backgrounds. Within the context of rural sellers, Dewey and Bolabola (2014) found that rural women traders often feel unsafe when they enter urban space because of the arrival time from the village to the city is in the early morning and there is a lack of security services. Even though rural women make the biggest contribution in providing family necessities, they have no right to make decisions in their community (Dewey and Bolabola, 1986). Most rural women do not have access to traditional land because of the land tenure system that applies in their society (Dewey and Bolabola, 2014).

The biggest issue faced by rural women in Merauke is lack of access to transportation to load their produce from the family garden to the market. Gibzon and Rozelle (2002) state that rural poverty is largely caused by a lack of access to markets, services, and transportation. The lack of transportation and access to roads reduces the distribution of local produce. Lack of transportation has resulted in building high dependency of rural traders towards Indonesian middlemen. The Papuan lecturer, Don, that I interviewed, is concerned about the domination of Indonesian middlemen in extracting rural products. He says that the Indonesian middlemen have taken a lot of advantages from paying rural producers very low prices that cause the reduction of the rural trader's daily earnings.

*The main obstacle for indigenous merchants who live in the villages is related to transportation. They find it hard to transport their local*

*produce to the city because of the transport cost which is higher than the sales of goods. This situation is forcing them to sell their goods to most of Indonesian middlemen.*

The presence of Indonesian middlemen in local villages reduces the transportation costs that have burdened rural women traders in distributing their products. As well as the reduction of transportation costs, rural women can also save more time and energy because of the long distance between village and the market. However, lack of access to rural transportation also limits rural women's mobility to the market and this results in the lack of social interaction. Referring to the above literature that discusses the market function as a space to interact and spread news (Pollock 1988, Wanggai 2007, and Seligmann 1993), the lack of social interaction also limits rural women's access to adequate information and can decrease the sense of togetherness and friendship.

Smith (1999) states that one of the impacts of imperialism is a reduction of traditional knowledge. This is because of the application and spread of Western systems. In this context, rural traders are trapped by the capitalist economic system, where the presence of Indonesian middlemen in most of local villages in Merauke, only benefits them and not the rural women traders. Furthermore, the shift of rural distributors from native female traders to Indonesian middlemen has reduced the existence of traditional values and disconnected rural women from maintaining their cultural identity. For example, local products such as sago, betel nuts, various tubers, local fruits and vegetables as well as fresh water fish and meat are traditionally sold by Mama-Mama but are now increasingly being sold by Indonesian traders.

Besides the lack of access to transportation, and the domination of Indonesian middlemen in rural areas, the presence of *becak*, *kios sayur* and savings and loans cooperative businesses also limits and marginalizes native trader's opportunity at the market. The next section discusses some obstacles encountered by Mama-Mama in their trading activity at the market.

## 5.4 Domination of Becak, Kios Sayur, and Saving and Loans Cooperative Business towards Mama-Mama.

*Becak*, or motor cab, is increasing used by Indonesian farmers or traders to distribute their products to consumers. One *becak* usually carries various kitchen needs including fruits and vegetables, ingredients, fish and meat, home-made foods, etc. The way of operating of the *becak* is to sell products from house to house around the suburban areas. Alongside the spread of *becak* around the town, *kios sayur* or small vegetable shops started to emerge in the last five years in the Merauke regency. The normal *kios* basically used to sell only toiletries, cigarettes, snacks, and children's toys. Now, it has been expanded to selling a variety of vegetables, fruits, dairy products, and fresh ingredients.



Figure 5.1: Becak or motor cab with various produces (side view)

Figure 5.2: Becak with various produces (back view)

Source: Veronika Kanem, July 2017

The presence of the *becak* and the *kios sayur* has also negatively affected the daily income of Mama-Mama because people no longer want to go to the market to do grocery shopping. *Becak* is more convenient for those who are busy working or who live far away from town. *Kios sayur* operates near residential

areas in very strategic and reachable locations. Although the price of goods sold in *becak* and *kios sayur* is higher than the normal price at the market, most people prefer to do shopping at *becak or kios sayur* because they often consider the distance between home and market as well as the transportation cost.

### **The Savings and Loans Cooperative Business**

Alongside the presence of *becak* and *kios sayur*, Mama-Mama are trapped by savings and loans cooperative businesses which provide small loans to Mama-Mama with a very simple requirement as compared to the local bank (Bank Papua). These private businesses have directly approached Mama-Mama at the market and provide speedy services within few hours. Although the savings and loans cooperatives provide a very good service for Mama-Mama, they take a lot of interest from Mama-Mama as well. Besides taking a lot of loan interest from Mama-Mama, this service has created levels of unsustainable debt and high dependency. Because of the basic needs of their families and limited access to the local bank because of bank paperwork requirements, Mama-Mama are trapped with this business and have limited chance to save money.

It clearly seen that the domination of Indonesian traders and businessman and the capitalist system has transformed the traditional market, a place that once provided subsistence and community, to an individualist system, by default or design, that has impoverished the lives of Mama-Mama. Within the the analysis of power and domination, Oxaal & Baden (1997) define 'power over' as domination or subordination. Power over can restrict a group of people in accessing certain resources and opportunities (Layder, 1985). In this context, I argue that the domination of Indonesian traders at the market has marginalized Mama-Mama, relegating them to the margins of the system for which they used to be at the center. There are three reasons to support my arguments. The first is limited access to information because of educational attainment. I refer to Dewey's (2011) market study in Fiji where she found that educational backgrounds of rural women traders are strongly connected to their skills and trading performances (Dewey, 2011). For instance, limited access to information due to their low levels of educational attainment cause rural women to rarely be

involved in decision making process in their family and community. A man/husband is the one who controls family property and makes decisions towards land usage in their family. This condition limits women's access to grow their own produce at the family garden which then affects the availability of goods at the market. Meanwhile, Seligmann (1993) states, that educational attainment have an affect on the women trader's self-confidence and their trading attitudes. According to Seligmann, urban traders who have better access to information and technology are more confident in managing their trading activity at the market.

I noticed that low levels of educational background have affected Mama-Mama's access to information. Limited access to information influences their capacity in the newly formed capitalistic marketing business environment. Conversely, Indonesian traders, who mostly come from capitalist backgrounds, have ability and good skills in marketing strategies which helps them to more easily make profits.

Secondly, Indonesian traders have good access to transportation. As stated by Gibzon and Rozelle (2002), transportation and road access are key in distributing rural products. Lack of rural transportation and poor road systems may affect the distribution of rural produce from village to the market. I noticed that the biggest challenge faced by Mama-Mama, who live in rural and urban areas, is that they have no private vehicles to load and distribute their goods. This is compared to Indonesian farmers and traders, who are mostly equipped with their own vehicles, such as motorbike, car, or truck. Motorbikes are often designed to become *becak*, which is one type of private vehicle that is commonly used by Indonesian traders to sell various products to their customers. In the early morning, they usually fill the *becak* with various goods that they bought from the market, and start to sell the goods from house to house. It is obvious that non-Papuan traders have high mobility in circulating their products because they have their own vehicles, while Mama-Mama only depend on the buyers who visit the market and buy their produce.

Lastly, the lack of financial resources and the limited access to loans lead to decreased earnings of indigenous sellers. Mama-Mama are categorized as a low-income class who lack financial resources to support their trading activities. They have less opportunity to apply for loans from the local bank due to the difficulties in the bank's requirements. One of the bank's requirements is a family certificate authorized by district office. Some of the Mama-Mama interviewed state that they could not meet the bank's requirements because their partners had passed away and they had yet to update their family status from married to widow. The change of family status usually requires them to officially update their status at the nearest district office, for which they lack transportation. Unfortunately, the renewal process of the family certificate usually takes longer because of convoluted bureaucracy. Due to this condition, Mama-Mama prefer to keep selling their goods at the market than to travel to the district office. As consequence, some Mama-Mama cannot fulfill the bank's requirements to access certain loans to expand their trading activity. They tend to seek financial support from the saving and loan cooperative business, which they feel is less complicated and faster than the local bank.

The next section discusses how public facilities operate at the market in supporting Mama-Mama trading activity.

## **5.5 Public Facilities at the Market**

As stated by Moser (1989), men and women may have different needs and requirements because of the different roles that they play that are already socially constructed in society. Practical needs include women's basic needs for housing and basic services such as healthcare facilities, transportation services, clean water supplies, foods and these are required by all family members, particularly children. In discussing women's practical needs at the marketplace, public facilities must include access to toilets, security services, and clean water. These are the most important services in supporting merchant women trading activities. As Mama Yul states, the need for clean public toilets for Mama-Mama at Mopah

2 is crucial because Mama-Mama have to pay a certain amount of money if they wanted to use the public toilet at the market.

*We spend our money if we used the toilet. Well...it depends...Once we used the toilet for pee, we just paid 1000 rupiah, but then we must pay 2000 rupiah for poo. Yeah...can you imagine if we went to the toilet 5 times a day for pee? We spent our money just only for the toilet, while nobody is interested to buy our goods.*

Another issue raised by Mama-Mama at Mopah 2 market is the lack of security services. Since the inauguration of the Wamanggu market, the electricity was disconnected at Mopah 2, and the security service has been centralized at the new market, the Wamanggu market. Mama-Mama state that they often lose their goods at the market. Mama Petra says:

*It's always dark at night...no electricity and there is not any security service anymore. One time, I lost one sack of sago flour which had just arrived from the village. I put it there...(finger pointed) and I had not had the chance to clean up the sago flour. Damn...somebody took it while I was busy packing up my stuff. I do not know how to raise this issue because there is not any security service in this market anymore. Yeah... we called this market a wild market because of its lack supervision and intervention from the market authorities.*

From my observation, it is obvious that most traders in Merauke are women, including native and non-native women traders. Therefore, women traders deserve to have clean and safe markets because most of their time is spent at the market. Referring to a market study done by UN Women in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, in 2011, clean and safe market spaces are compulsory for women and girls. In Port Moresby, women traders need a clean water system to wash their produce, and they also need separate public toilets to avoid the occurrence of being sexually harassed by male traders and visitors (UN Women, 2012). Mama Petra's story, above, points out that without the support of public facilities at the market, Mama-Mama's trading performance is affected, and their

daily earnings are reduced. Therefore, public facilities are identified as practical needs for Mama-Mama and must be a priority for market related-authorities.

Alongside these challenges faced by Mama-Mama, Mama-Mama still have fears and anxieties due to the limitation of adequate market space. The next section presents how the change of the market building in Merauke, in the last four decades, have impacted on Mama-Mama trading activities including the decline of traditional knowledge.

## Section 2

### 5.6 A Brief History of Market Changes in Merauke

Several traders, that I interviewed, state that massive changes have occurred in the last four decades in Merauke regency. The Pelita market, established around the 1970s, had brought many positives memories in the lives of Mama-Mama. The market used to be traditionally dominated by native traders where they freely sold traditional goods in the open stalls provided by the market authority. The market management was very good and all traders obeyed the rules established by the market authorities. Meanwhile, Indonesian traders used to occupy stalls which were designed especially for selling processed foods, clothes, dried ingredients, and kitchen utensils. Both groups carried out their trading activities without any tension or feelings of dominating each other. Mama Tekla remembers:

*There were not too many Indonesian traders at Pelita market, and we had no problem about stalls. Everything was fine, and people were respectful to each other.*

When the Pelita market was knocked down around 1980s-1990s, the market then moved to the Ampera market, in Paulus Nafi Street. The Ampera market operated until the early 2000s and moved to the Mopah area in 2004 after a fire that destroyed it. A few Mama-Mama and Indonesian traders, that I interviewed, say that the Ampera market had very good management of the stalls. Stalls were separated based on type of goods. Mama-Mama also were allocated

their own stalls in one separate main building. Mama Marice who used to help her mother sell their garden produce at the Ampera market says that:

*I grew up at the market because most of my time was spent at the market helping my mother sell local produce from our garden. I still remember that the Ampera market had very well-organized stalls which made it easier for people to shop. Oh yahh...and...a few senior Indonesian traders from the Ampera market they knew me, yes...they still remember my name.*

After the fire accident, all traders from Ampera market were relocated to a temporary market located in the Mopah area, just a few kilometers away from the airport area. When the traders moved into the new location at the Mopah market, the seizing of stalls started to happen between Indonesian and native traders, especially those who come from rural areas. Two years later, the market also experienced another accidental fire and moved a few meters further from the previous area. In 2014, the Wamanggu market was built and inaugurated as the new central market in Merauke. Unfortunately, the development of a new market building was far from the community's expectations because it was built in semi-modern model and could not accommodate all traders from the Mopah 2 market. Don, the Papuan lecturer remembers:

*When the market moved from Ampera to Mopah, space issues at the market started to be raised especially for native traders who come from rural areas. One day, Mama-Mama from Tambat and Sarmayam village were angry and have a fight with Indonesian traders because their stalls were taken over by Indonesian traders without permission. The market authority and cops were there as well. The problem found was that because Mama-Mama were not doing trading activity everyday...hmmmm maybe once or twice a week, so the market authority had taken back their stalls and given them to Indonesian traders who still needed stalls.*

Don states that the move of traders from the Ampera market to temporary market at the Mopah area caused the start of market problems in Merauke. At the temporary market space, native traders were expecting to be given a better space to display their goods, but most of them were given stalls close to the waste disposal area located at the back of the market, which decreased their daily earnings. When the Wamanggu market was inaugurated in 2014, all the traders were hoping for a better space so they could move and start a new life at the new market. However, the development of new market building did not solve the market space's issues because the stalls were not enough to accommodate all traders from Mopah 2 market. Based on my interviews and market observations, the development of the stalls for native traders were far from Mama-Mama's expectations because they wanted to have open stalls instead of concrete stalls which is less than two meters long. Concrete stalls could not accommodate all Mama-Mama's products.

The next section discusses the Wamanggu market building and some challenges faced by Mama-Mama. In particular, it discusses the limitations of the stalls at Wamanggu market.

### **5.7 The New Design of Wamanggu Market: Limited Space for Mama-Mama**

In 2014, the Wamanggu market, as the new market, had been inaugurated by the local government. Unfortunately, there were some problems raised by Mama-Mama due to the development of the Wamanggu market. First, the market building was built permanently in a semi-mall design and had limited capacity to accommodate all traders from Mopah 2 market. Stalls provided for Mama-Mama were only 515, while Indonesia traders were allocated 636 stalls (Katayu, 2014). Unfortunately, the stalls could not accommodate the Mama-Mama's traditional ways of selling and conducting business. It caused some Mama-Mama to move to the main corridor to display their produces.

Most of Mama-Mama who obtained concrete stalls at Wamanggu market did not want to display their produce at these stalls. They moved and displayed their produce along the main corridor which they considered wider and more strategic.



Figure 5.3 The concrete stalls at Wamanggu market

Source: Veronika Kanem, July 2017

Based on my observations in Jayapura and Wamena, I argue that there is big difference between the market buildings in Jayapura, Wamena, and Merauke. The development of the market buildings in Jayapura and Wamena take into account local values because they provide open stalls that can accommodate Mama-Mama's produce in large quantities. In the new market at Sentani, Jayapura, for example, Mama-Mama freely displayed their local produce in the open stalls on the ground floor, while the Indonesian traders occupied stalls at the second floor. The same is true for Mama-Mama at Jibama market, in Wamena, who also occupy the ground floor as the main area to trade. I argue that from the three different regencies (Jayapura, Wamena, and Merauke), there is a big difference in the spread of the Indonesian population. The majority of Wamena and Jayapura's populations are native Papuans, while the Merauke population has been dominated by Indonesians. According to the 2010 Indonesian Population

Census, the total population of the Merauke regency was 195,716, but only around 73,000 were indigenous people. The dominance of the Indonesian system, in Merauke, has influenced the market design which disadvantages the native traders. Wamanggu market was built in a semi modern building which has ignored the local values.

Linda Smith's (1999) discussion about imperialism explains that one impact of imperialism is a reduction of indigenous knowledge and cultural practices because of the influence of the Western systems. In relation to the change for Mama-Mama's space from open stalls to concrete stalls, this does not consider Mama-Mama's ways of selling and the types of produce they sell which often requires a spacious area that differs from Indonesian traders. As stated by Surwayan (2016), different types of goods between indigenous and Indonesian traders determine how much space is needed to display goods at the market. The need for space between Mama-Mama and the Indonesian traders at the market differs because Mama-Mama tend to display all their local produce in-order to be seen by prospective buyers. The local produce need to be beautifully arranged to attract buyers, and priced according to the amount of goods. Fruits and vegetables are sold by the heap and one heap consists of a certain number of fruits/vegetables/fresh ingredients. On the contrary, Indonesian products require different space. The way Indonesian traders display their goods are different from the native traders. For example, kitchen tools, clothes, and women accessories require different space than vegetables, dried ingredients, rice, dried meat/fish and other kitchen supplies. For dried ingredients and rice, they simply hoard them up in the sacks or plastic bags and its priced according to kilograms.

As the power holder, local government of the Merauke regency had been trying to overcome the Wamanggu market complexities. Unfortunately, their interventions did not aligned well with the needs of Mama-Mama. The next section discusses local government attempts in dealing with the market issues in Merauke.

## **5.8 The Market Complexities in Papua, the Government Intervention and Special Autonomy Regulation (Otsus)**

Don, a Papuan lecturer, stated that the local government has less accurate data or trader's track records especially for those who became the Ampera market's fire victims. Lack of data and information has caused a difficulty for the market authority in their decisions to distribute concrete stalls at Wamanggu market. Therefore, the market authority used a lottery as an attempt to facilitate the distribution of stalls for all traders from the Mopah 2 market. However, the use of the lottery was ineffective and created a lot of tensions between Mama-Mama and the Indonesian traders. There were suspicions by Mama-Mama towards the Indonesian traders because most of the Indonesian traders succeeded in the lottery, and they obtained very strategic stalls located near to the main entrance. A few Mama-Mama that I interviewed thought that there was ongoing 'under the table money' between the government and the Indonesian traders in negotiating stalls at the market.

Mama Okta commented about this saying:

*Look at that Indonesian lady... (finger pointed)...yes...she has two stalls. I do not know where she comes from. She is just suddenly there and occupied two stalls immediately.*

These circumstances also indicate that there is an increasing gap between Mama-Mama and the local government that is observed through the negotiation of suitable market spaces and locations. The same situation is experienced by Mama-Mama at Remu market in the Sorong regency, where the local government was more favourable to Indonesian than indigenous traders because of their ability to pay taxes regularly (Boari, 2014). The higher the income traders made, the more tax they paid to the government (Boari, 2014).

Staeheli & Kaufman (2004) stated that power is mostly associated with control, authority, or the ability to govern or rule. Power has the capability to reach certain goals or outcomes, and it relates to interactions in a dual sense: "as involved institutionally in processes of interaction, and used to accomplish

outcomes in strategic conduct” (Giddens, 1976 pp.88). In analysing the power structure in the Merauke regency, the market authority (the local government) is the power holder and it plays an important role in the decision-making process. As a power holder, the government has the ability to govern and to solve the market complexities. Meanwhile, Mama-Mama are categorised as a powerless group who are being marginalized and subordinated in the society. They have less voice to fight for their rights.

In understanding the dynamics of power and the changing configuration of power at the marketplace in Merauke, Gaventa (2006) emphasized there is a strong connection between spaces, places, and forms of power which contribute significantly in the decision-making process. Compared to the native traders, the Indonesian traders have more power because of their ability to pay tax regularly. Further, they also have good access to information, and the opportunity to directly negotiate their spaces with the market authorities. Importantly, Indonesian traders are brave enough to raise their concerns, thoughts, and ideas to the government’s agendas, because of family and other special connections with certain actors at the government level. On the contrary, Mama-Mama have no power to speak up for their rights. As the most powerless group, they remain silent, and keep selling their produce for their family’s survival. As the power holder, the local government of Merauke regency was expected to be aligned with the needs of Mama-Mama.

## **5.9 The Market as a Political Campaign Arena**

Besides being a meeting place and a place to share news, market space in Merauke is often used as a political campaign arena by certain candidates. During the election period, these candidates often visited Mama-Mama and the Indonesian traders at the market. They usually started by introducing their political party’s visions and policies, and giving many promises to all of the traders. Mama Okta from Wamanggu market argued that during the election period, the head of the regency, the Bupati, had regularly visited Mama-Mama at

the market. He came and gave political promises to solve the market problems if he was elected. Unfortunately, when he won the election, he did not come to visit Mama-Mama, and forgot his promises.

I personally argue that the market issues in Merauke have never been properly resolved, but it always becomes an annual issue used by certain candidates in their political campaigns to gain public sympathy. The same situation also experienced by native women traders at Cuzco market in Peru. Seligmann (2004) found that both the market and the female traders often become the central focus of a political platform in presidential election campaigns where they are given promises usually around proper stalls or market building construction. Various political interests from certain candidates have marginalized and discriminated against Mama-Mama. After winning the election, they would rarely come to the market. Mama-Mama that I interviewed, state that they needed a leader who is willing to fight for indigenous people's rights in Merauke including for their traditional lands and their cultural practices. John Gluba Gebze, the former Bupati of Merauke, was always considered the best Bupati for Mama-Mama as he used to pay more attention to the needs of Mama-Mama and the market place.

### **5.10 The Intervention of Local NGO in Dealing with Market Complexities**

The presence of a few local institutions in Merauke concerned about the Mama-Mama's problems at the marketplace have encouraged Mama-Mama to keep fighting for their rights. SKP-KAME, one of Catholic organisations in Merauke, have assisted Mama-Mama since 2010. SKP-KAME has done qualitative data collection and assisted Mama-Mama from Mopah 2 market to convey their problems to Kantor DPRD in 2011. At that time, the problems conveyed and discussed at Kantor DPRD were about un-strategic stalls given by the market authority which were close to the disposal bins located at the back of the market (SKP-KAME, 2012). Because of the smelly rubbish and the location of the stalls

(far away from the main entrance) clients seldom visited the Mama-Mama's stalls, and this resulted in a reduction of daily earnings. Most clients preferred to buy local produce from along the main entrance which was cleaner and easier to reach. This situation caused the Mama-Mama to move close to the taxi terminal, which has more open space. They put all their goods on the ground, protected by sacks or mats. However, the use of the taxi terminal space, as a temporary traditional market, has raised concerns from local NGOs and few native women activists due to cleanliness and personal safety issues of the indigenous women traders (SKP-KAME, 2012).

In 2014, a market study conducted by SKP-KAME in collaboration with Lembaga Advokasi Peduli Perempuan (eL-AdPPer), Yayasan Satunama Yogyakarta, and Stisipol Yaleka Maro Merauke found that the government intervention was not totally aligned to the needs of Mama-Mama. The study also discovered that there was no follow up from Mama-Mama's first meeting in 2011 until they faced another problem related to the distribution of stalls at Wamanggu market. Therefore, with the assistance of SKP-KAME, eL-AdPPer, Yayasan Satunama Yogyakarta, and Stisipol Yaleka Maro Merauke, Mama-Mama confidently re-convey their issues to Kantor DPRD Merauke in 2014. The main topics discussed concerned the limited access to stalls at Wamanggu market that could not accommodate all traders from Mopah 2 market and the construction of concrete stalls which did not consider Mama-Mama's type of produce.

After several meetings with the member of the House of Representatives, Mama-Mama were promised that their problems will be addressed in higher levels of government. However, there have not been any major results from that meeting as Mama-Mama are still waiting for the member of the House of Representatives, who is responsible for market issues, to relay their concerns to the relevant authorities (Kebubun, personal communication, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017).

*In 2014...yes...that was the last time we went to Kantor DPRD to ask for our rights. They promised us to follow up our needs, but then we did not hear any good news until now (Mama Tekla)*

Mama Tekla's statement above, explains that since the last meeting in Kantor DPRD in Merauke in 2014, they did not hear any news about their conveyed messages to the government. Until the time this interview was conducted, there has not been any follow up from the member of the House of Representatives.

Remembering back to the Jayapura market story, which is discussed in chapter two, Mama-Mama have successfully negotiated their space, place and identity in Jayapura. Through the assistance of SOLPAP, Mama-Mama confidently conveyed their desires to the city council and to the provincial government. It is clearly seen that SOLPAP has played a very important role in advocating and mediating Mama-Mama's issues because this organisation consists of many people who come from various backgrounds including lawyers, activists, university students, church leaders, etc. Because of the Mama-Mama's life experiences, struggles and support from SOLPAP, their voices finally penetrated the government's agenda.

Bahvani et al (2003), in the discussion about Women Culture and Development (WCD), states that women's everyday life experiences and struggles can be well-accommodated through the support of social agencies or institutions. The presence of social institutions can increase women's capacity through various trainings and courses, as well as to boost women's self-confidence. In this context, culture can be described as women's life experiences. The life experiences then enable women to unite and establish their own strategy to against subordination (Chua et al, 2000). From the Jayapura experiences, I personally think that the presence of SKP-KAME and eL-AdPPer, in Merauke, have united and strengthened the indigenous people, particularly the native women and children. As a local institution that belongs to the Catholic church, one of SKP-KAME's missions is to fight against injustice and discrimination, while eL-AdPPer's mission is to assist and empower native women in Merauke's archdiocese. Therefore, SKP-KAME and eL-AdPPer are committed to assist Mama-Mama in conveying their desires based on Mama-Mama's daily experiences. Besides assisting Mama-Mama to convey their desires about market

space, these two organisations have also conducted various trainings and courses to boost Mama-Mama's skills and capacity in marketing.

## **5.11 Conclusion**

In the last four decades, there have been major changes occurring at the market place in Merauke regency. The increasing Indonesian population through the transmigration programme that began in the 1970s now exceeds the number of the native people. The influence of Indonesian ways of knowing has reduced the existence of traditional knowledge. Furthermore, the presence of the MIFEE project in several local villages has led to the shrinking of the sago supplies which has negatively affected Mama-Mama's daily earnings. The market that served multiple functions for native people has been transformed to a place to compete and make profits. The shift in the market's function, due to over representation of Indonesian traders, has dominated the native people' space and seized their trading opportunities.

Mama-Mama, as the leading actors in informal economy, in Merauke, have become the main victims of development. Although the new market building was inaugurated by the local government, Mama-Mama were excluded and marginalised because of the government's intervention do not fully align with their needs. As a marginalised group, Mama-Mama have less power to speak up to the government for their rights because of their low levels of educational backgrounds. Although they were not satisfied and were unhappy with the government decisions, they tend to remind silent and keep selling their produce at the market. To date, there has not been any space created for Mama-Mama to fully engage in decision making process. Therefore, the presence of several local NGO institutions in Merauke keep motivating Mama-Mama to confidently convey their issues to the top level of the government hierarchy. These local institutions not only assisted Mama-Mama in conveying their problems to the House of Representatives, but they were also responsible for building up Mama-Mama's capacity and skills in marketing.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **6.1 Conclusion**

Mama-Mama play a pivotal role in distributing local produce from family garden and forest to the consumer as well as supplying food for their families. Besides these two important roles, Mama-Mama are also involved in maintaining and strengthening the existence of traditional knowledge. Mama-Mama have a strong connection to the market. They value the market as a space to exchange traditional goods and generate income, raise children, socialize with people and share information. Traditionally, the market has been used as a space to build Mama-Mama's self-confidence as well as improve their sense of unity through the Noken making process which often takes place at the market space.

Since the 1970s, the presence of Indonesian settlers, through transmigration programme conducted by the state government of Indonesia, brought massive changes to the lives of the native people in Merauke. The introduction of Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate (MIFEE) project in 2010 by the state government of Indonesia has reduced the production of sago flour. Deforestation, which has occurred in several local villages, has damaged the traditional sago forest (Ginting & Pye, 2013). Sago, which represents the Marind tribe's totem/ancestor (Ginting & Pye, 2013), as well as becoming native people traditional food, was diminished in circulation at the market. Nowadays, Mama-Mama, as the main sago distributor, face difficulties in distributing sago to the consumers, because people tend to buy rice as a substitution meal which is more easily managed and affordable than sago. This condition leads to dissolution of the process in transferring local knowledge.

In addition to the MIFEE programme, the presence of Indonesian settlers in Merauke regency has dominated the market space. The development of a new market building was constructed in ways that did not accommodate Mama-Mama's style of trade. The concrete stalls provided by the government were too small and this limited Mama-Mama's space in displaying their produce. Increased trading competition between Mama-Mama and Indonesian traders also adds

another limitation. Due to lack of financial resources, lack of access to loans and low levels of education, Mama-Mama were trapped into the capitalist system through the presence of savings and loans cooperative business at the market. This situation has marginalised Mama-Mama as the native traders.

The lack of government intervention in dealing with the market complexities, including its unfavourable attitude towards the native traders, contributes to their marginalisation. As a marginalised group with decreased power, Mama-Mama found it hard to independently negotiate their problems to the market authorities. Although several local institutions have been trying to assist Mama-Mama to speak up for their rights, still Mama-Mama's voices have not been heard and lost due to interest of certain political elite groups.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) which established in September 2007, emphasized the rights of indigenous people in maintaining and strengthening their own institutions, cultures, and traditions. For example, article 31 (1) stated that *'indigenous people have (their) right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestation of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expression'*. The article 31 (1) above explains that the UNDRIP legally protects the rights of indigenous people in protecting and preserving their territory, people, and cultural practices without any form of discrimination.

Based on UNDRIP and previous studies done by SKP-KAME, eL-AdPPER, and other local and national NGOs who are concerned about Mama-

Mama's issues at the market, and according to my recent market study in Merauke regency, I propose the following recommendations:

**a. Developing trader's data base**

As cited in Maritz (2003 pp.76), Lessing & Scheepers (2001) state that "...the management of information as a resource of an enterprise by applying sound management principles, including planning, organising, development of and control over data and information, integrating people, hardware, software and systems, converting data into information, and utilising the information ethically in decision-making for goal achievement". The statement above explains that the management of data is very important in providing accurate information to achieve certain goals. Therefore, it is very important to create a data base for traders in Merauke regency based on their ethnicity, gender, trading status, and geography (landscape). A trader's data base would provide accurate data and information on the traders that could help related authorities in identifying trader's basic needs or analysing market's issues for a better solution. Further, a trader's data base could also facilitate other stakeholders who are concerned about the market issues to also provide relevant data and information to support the advocacy process.

- Ethnicity

I would argue that the separation of trader's data according to ethnicity is pivotal for development purposes in Papua, especially in Merauke regency. The disaggregated data and information according to trader's ethnicity is named as one of the internal attempts in minimising social conflicts between the native and Indonesian traders at the market. For instance, it is important to gather quantitative data which shows how many native and Indonesian traders have been occupying strategic stalls inside the market building, or how many native and Indonesian traders still trade outside, or on the ground, because of difficulties in obtaining adequate space inside the market building. The data will also provide information about how many native traders have received various training and local assistance as a part of capacity building programmes delivered by local

government or Non-Governmental Organisations, or how many native traders have already been involved in savings and loans cooperative programme organised by the Papua Bank.

- Gender: Male and Female

The separation of the trader's data according to gender would be very important in identifying how many male and female traders are actively involved in trading activities in Merauke regency. The involvement of both genders in trading activities at the market would also differentiate the needs of public facilities between male and female traders at the market. For instance, it would help understand better the needs for separate toilets, for a security service, for clean water, for a breastfeeding room, and for disposal bins for female traders at the market. This data would be very useful for the government in managing the development of infrastructure which is responsive to the gender needs.

- Landscape: rural and urban

It is important to have trader's data and information based on the area where the traders come from so as to understand the trader's mobility from village to the marketplace (city). Traders who live in rural areas might find difficulty commuting every day to the city due to limited access to public transport. The public transport cost might also be very expensive, and probably could not 100% guarantee their safety. This data might be of benefit to the local government in terms of the improvement of rural transport system or in providing boxes or containers for rural traders to store their merchandise.

To sum up, the separation of trader's data according to four categories above would contribute significantly to the government development planning programme. Furthermore, the collected data would facilitate other parties such as university students, researchers, NGOs, church institutions, activists and customary leaders, who might seek accurate data and information about the market. The data would also be expected to be updated every year.

## **b. Protecting indigenous women trader's space and traditional products**

Referring to Smith (2012), one of indigenous projects that currently needs to be pursued by indigenous researchers is a 'protecting' project which includes the protection of native territory and cultural practices (Smith, 2012). Firstly, protection of the native traders and their local products is a serious step that needs to be taken by local government as a part of preserving Papuan's cultural identity. For example, protection is needed of native products including sago, betel nuts, taro, sweet potatoes, banana, and various type of fruits, vegetables and the Noken, traditional bag. These traditional products can only be sold by Mama-Mama in a certain space and place. Therefore, local regulations, based on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), are crucial to minimize the reduction of the cultural values of Mama-Mama. The regulations could be formulated jointly by customary leaders, church leaders and the local government of Merauke regency, and then be officially approved and legalised by the local government. After the endorsement process, the regulation would need to be socialized to the wider society.

Secondly, based on the Mama-Mama's complains about the development of Wamanggu market, which was far from their expectations, I personally think that Mama-Mama need to have their own space so they can easily manage their local products without the intervention of Indonesian traders. This would be a lesson learnt from the development of the Wamanggu market which is permanently built in a semi-mall shape. This building could not accommodate all of Ampera's fire victim traders who temporarily trade at the Mopah 2 market. Furthermore, the development of concrete stalls for native traders at Wamanggu was less than 2 meters long, while Mama-Mama expected open stalls to easily display their traditional products. Referring to successful market story from Jayapura, the capital city of Papua province, I believe that development of a new traditional market in Merauke would be a best solution to overcome these issues. Alongside that, the development of a traditional market also would give opportunities to native traders to be more independent in managing their own space and products based on the local values. Therefore, a new market design

should consider the needs of Mama-Mama in order to preserve the existence of indigenous knowledge.

### **c. Women and empowerment programme**

Referring to building up women, Moser (1989) discusses a women's empowerment approach as one of the policy approaches supported by most of the women's organisations. Despite acknowledging inequalities between men and women, and women's subordinate position in family, this approach highlights women's oppression because of racial, ethnicity, class, colonial history, and economic background (Moser, 1989). This approach also pointed out the relation between power and development, and it emphasized the importance of women to build their own power against the domination of men's power, and to increase their self-reliance and internal strength (Moser, 1989). Rowlands (1995) stated that empowerment is a bottom-up process without the intervention of power holders in the top levels. Women's empowerment is not merely a way to open women access to decision making, but it's a process to improve women's capacities so that they can occupy the decision-making space (Rowlands, 1995). This approach is one of the best policy approaches which could continuously assist women in boosting their capacity and leadership skills.

In relation to boosting Mama-Mama's capacity, an empowerment programme for Mama-Mama need to be considered by the market authorities. The empowerment programme can be conducted through various trainings, courses, and personal assistance to boost Mama-Mama's skills and capacity in marketing, so they can positively compete with Indonesian traders. For example, Mama-Mama need to know how to manage their income, to serve and communicate with buyers, and to display their goods to attract buyers.

I believe that Mama-Mama who have better skills might be able to compete with other traders, especially Indonesian traders, and they could easily boost their daily income. Good skills and capacity would also enable Mama-Mama to break their dependency on the of savings and loans cooperative businesses at the market. As the leading actor of change, Mama-Mama must be

well-equipped by increasing their ability to speak firmly and confidently for their rights based on their daily experiences. If Mama-Mama were empowered, skilled, and confident, they would be united and able to penetrate the policy maker's space and intervene in the development planning process.

**d. The needs of savings and loans cooperative for Mama-Mama**

In term of minimising the native women's high dependency towards saving and loans cooperative business in Merauke, I think that Mama-Mama should have their own Savings and Loans Cooperative with very low interest rate. This cooperative includes giving loans to Mama-Mama to start their own business or providing loans for Mama-Mama's urgent needs such as family needs, children's school fees, foods, etc. By establishing this service, Mama-Mama will not face many of the difficulties in preparing papers or requirements that sometimes inhibit their mobility in accessing loans. Through their own cooperative service, Mama-Mama could also save and withdraw their money anytime.

**e. Rural transport system**

Chambers (1983), as cited in Ellis & Hine (1998), finds that the poor public transport system leads to the isolation of certain areas. Isolation limits a community's mobility in accessing their basic needs, while poor accessibility slows down the spread of new technology and information. Further, the isolation leads to an increase in production costs as well as it limits community access to education and health facilities (Ellis & Hine, 1997). In relation to rural native women traders, the main problem faced by them is a difficulty in loading their traditional goods from home to the market because of limited access on transportation. They must consider the long distance between the village to the town and the transportation costs which exceeds their daily earnings. This situation causes them to sell their goods to the Indonesian-middlemen in low prices.

Due to this condition, the government of Merauke regency should critically realise that the lack of transportation would not bring any prosperity to

the rural community. Therefore, the improvement to the rural transport system, as well as to the roads and bridges to support rural native traders might be necessary. By doing this, the rural women traders would have less difficulty in distributing their products, it would be easier to interact with other traders, and have better access to information.

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# **Appendix One: Information Sheet for Interview**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO**

**FACULTY OF ART AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**

## **Indigenous merchant women in the negotiation of space, place, and identity in the Merauke regency, Papua Province, Indonesia.**

I am a master's student majoring in Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Waikato, and I am conducting this research as part of my thesis requirements. The aim of my research is to explore the different insights between Indonesian and indigenous women merchants in negotiating the use of space, place, and distribution of their traditional goods in the Merauke regency. I am interested in knowing the different views of Indonesian and Indigenous market women as regards to market issues, and I would like to learn how social interactions occur among both groups.

There will be one activity involved in this research, and you are invited to participate in it.

### **In depth Interviews**

The interviews will be around 45 minutes to one hour, and will be conducted in the participant's house if that is her preference. During this interview, participants will be given a lot of time to share their personal experiences, ideas, and thoughts about the use of space in the market, and they will be guided by several topic questions.

### **Participant's rights**

#### **If you participate in this research, you have the right to**

- Refuse to answer any question(s)
- Withdraw from the research for any reason three weeks after the completion of the interview.

- Decline to be audio recorded or request to turn off the recorder at any time
- Ask any questions or seek clarification about the research at any time during your participation
- View a copy of the transcript of your interview and request that any information you have provided be amended or removed from the data.

### **Confidentiality**

I will protect the confidentiality of all participants by using pseudonyms in place of real names in any reports or publications based on this research. Research documents such as audio recorded files and other printed documents will be kept securely by the researcher in a locked cabinet when not in use. A password will be used to secure the laptop or computer on which potentially identifying materials, transcripts or photos are stored electronically, and this data will only be accessible by the researcher.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, email [fass-ethics@waikato.co.nz](mailto:fass-ethics@waikato.co.nz), postal address, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Te Kura Kete Aronui, University of Waikato, The Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240.

### **Veronika Triariyani Kanem**

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## **Appendix Two – Consent form (Individual Interview)**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO**  
**FACULTY OF ART AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**

**Description of Project:** The aim of my research is to discuss the different insights of Indonesian and indigenous women merchants in negotiating the use of space, place, and distribution of their traditional goods in the Merauke regency. I am interested in knowing the different views of Indonesian and Indigenous market women regarding to market issues, and I would like to learn how social interactions occur among both groups.

**I have read the information sheet and understand that**

- I can refuse to answer any question(s)
- I can withdraw from the research for any reason up to three weeks after the completion of an interview.
- I have right to decline to be audio recorded or request to turn off the recorder at any time
- I can ask any questions or seek clarification about the research any time during my participation
- I have the right to review a copy of the transcript of my interview, and request that any information that I have provided be amended or removed from the data.

I consent to our conversation being audio-recorded YES / NO (please circle)

I (your name) ..... agree to take part in this research and acknowledge receipt of a copy of this consent form and the research project information sheet.

----- (to be signed and dated by participant)

----- (to be signed and dated by Veronika T Kanem)

## **Appendix Three: Participant Observation' Handout**

### **Indigenous merchant women in the negotiation of space, place, and identity in the Merauke regency, Papua Province, Indonesia.**

I am a master's student majoring in Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Waikato, and I am conducting this research as part of my thesis requirements. The aim of my research is to explore the different insights of Indonesian and indigenous women merchants in negotiating their use of space, place, and the distribution of their traditional and other goods in the Merauke regency. I am interested in knowing the different views of Indonesian and Indigenous market women as regards to market issues, and I would like to learn how social interactions occur among both groups. As a part of my research, I will conduct participant observation in the Mopah and Wamanggu Markets in Merauke regency.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science, The University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. Any further questions related to this activity can be clarified by emailing me at [try\\_skpkam@yahoo.co.id](mailto:try_skpkam@yahoo.co.id), or phoning +62 813 440 39 023 or +64 220 180 624.

Kind Regards

**Veronika Triariyani Kanem**

Master Candidate in Women's and Gender Studies at The University of Waikato

## **Appendix Four: Semi – Structured Interview Schedule**

Below are some of the topics that will guide the whole process of the interview. The given topics could be expanded based on how the interviewee responds to the questions and their activeness in the interview process.

1. How long have you been a trader?

Prompts:

Where do you usually sell your goods?

What kind of products do you usually sell at the market?

2. How do you shift your local products from home to market?

Prompts:

Are there any problems related to access to transportation?

What about transportation costs and services?

How do the women merchants who stay in the suburbs manage to get to the market to sell their products?

3. Has the market changed in the last 10 years? If yes, could you explain in what ways?

Prompts:

What are the most significant changes that you have observed so far?

Have these changes affected your trading activity?

4. How many tribes or groups of people in the market regularly sell goods?

Prompts:

How has the pattern of traders changed overtime?

Are some groups represented more than others? Which ones?

Why do you think it is like this?

Has the fact that there are more from this group in the market influenced the trading activity? In what ways?

5. What do you think about the management of the market in terms of distributing stalls to all merchants? Do you think it is difficult for you to get proper stalls in the market? Why or why not?

Prompts:

Are there any differences between indigenous and Indonesian merchant women in the distribution of stalls?

If yes, what are the differences? Could you explain your response more?

How important are stalls or proper places for indigenous merchant women to sell their local products?

6. How has the distribution of local products been in the market recently?

Prompts:

Has the domination of a certain group also impacted the distribution of traditional goods in the market?

What kinds of traditional goods have decreased recently in the market? Why do you think that is?

Has the decrease of local products impacted your income?

7. How much money can you make per day in selling traditional goods? Is that more, or less than you made last year? Five years ago?

Prompts:

Do you think this is enough to meet your daily needs?

Why do you think you earned less/more as compared to previous years?

8. What do you think about the public facilities provided in the market, such as toilets, parking areas, disposal bins, prayer rooms, etc?

Prompts:

Are there any problems related to the public facilities?

If yes, what kind of issues often arise?

9. Do you think that the market is safe and comfortable for all women merchants?

Prompts:

If yes, what kind of support or facilities are being provided by the government to create safety in the market?

If no, what kind of problems are often faced by women traders in the market?

10. Tell me about your access to loans or any training you have had to improve your skills on entrepreneurship?

Prompts:

How often do you get access to loans?

Are there any difficulties in accessing loans?

How often do you attend training to improve your knowledge and ability relating to entrepreneurship?

Who provides regular training or loans for all traders in the market?

11. What does the relationship between Indonesian and Indigenous women merchants look like?

Prompts:

Are there any specific issues that create tension between these two groups?

12. What is your view of indigenous and Indonesian women merchants' social relationship in the market?

Prompts:

What makes them different from each other? Has there been any conflict between these groups?

What do you believe to be the main cause of social conflict between these two groups? Can you explain this further?

13. What is the response from the local government to indigenous women traders' difficulties in negotiating space, place and the distribution of local products?