

**CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (CIVIC EDUCATION) IN THE ERA OF
DEMOCRATIZATION**

Agustian Ramadhona

Islamic Communication and Broadcasting, STAI UISU Pematangsiantar

Jl. Asahan, Km. 4.5, Siantar City

Email: agustianramadhona67@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses about the linkage of democracy and civic education. Civic education is a vehicle to sustain and develop democracy. It is important to create democratic citizens and to support democracy. In response to the process of democracy in Indonesia, civic education should be reformed in order to prepare students to be good citizens. Effective civic education for democratic citizenship treats three basic components; knowledge of citizenship and government in democracy, cognitive skills of democratic citizenship, disposition and development characteristics of democratic citizenship.

Keyword: *Democratization; civic education.*



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INTRODUCTION

In line with the progress of the reform movement in the last few years, Indonesia has experienced rapid changes in various aspects of social, political, economic and cultural life. Changes in the political field show that Indonesia has experienced a process of democratization, namely the change from a non-democratic political system to a democratic political system. The process of democratization that is currently taking place in Indonesia is in line with the democratization movements that are taking place in various parts of the continent which according to Huntington (1995) is currently undergoing a third wave of democratization. (Huntington, 1995). This democratization process began with the fall of Marcello Caetano, Portugal's authoritarian government in 1974 which was then followed by the democratization movement in several European, Latin American, Asian, African and Eastern European countries as well as the Soviet Union which adhered to communism.

According to O. Donnel and Schimetter the democratic process that occurs in various countries through several stages: (1) The transitional stage is marked by the replacement of the authoritarian regime with a new democratic government and followed by the ratification of political institutions and new political rules under democracy umbrella; (2) The liberalization stage is the process of making political rights effective which protects individuals and social groups from arbitrary actions that carried out by the state or a third party; (3) The installation stage is to build a political structure and culture so that the

democratic political system can function properly; (4) The consolidation stage is the consolidation and maintenance of a democratic political system (Rafni, 2002).

If one looks closely, the democratic process that is currently taking place in Indonesia has succeeded in going through the transitional stage and the liberalization stage. The transitional stage is marked by the change of authoritarian government to a democratic regime. Since the emergence of the reform movement, Indonesia has experienced a change of government three times, from President Suharto to Habibie as a transitional government. From President Habibie to Abdurrahman Wahid who was democratically elected, followed by Megawati to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The liberalization stage was marked by the granting of political freedoms to the people such as freedom of expression individually or in groups, freedom to establish political parties, freedom of the press, release of political prisoners, increased guarantees of human rights through the Constitution, laws and human rights courts, the implementation of the 1999 elections which were relatively democratic, and the implementation of regional autonomy, and so on (Rafni, 2002).

But the challenges that will be faced by the Indonesian nation during the installation and consolidation stages are quite tough, because until now Indonesia does not yet have an education system that supports the democratization process. The process of democratization that the Indonesian nation is currently experiencing has not been supported by an educational process to prepare democratic citizens. In fact, democracy cannot be implemented naturally without the support of the educational process to prepare students to become democratic citizens to uphold and develop democracy. John J. Patrick, a civic education expert from the United States said, to develop and maintain democracy schools must educate young citizens *to* understand and practice democratic principles (Bahmuller & Patrick, 1999).

Starting from the points of view above, the researcher is interested in an in-depth discussion of the concept of civic education *to* prepare democratic citizens to face the era of democratization in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research used in this study is a literature study. The literature study method is a series of activities related to methods of collecting library data, reading and taking notes, and managing research materials. In this case, the researcher collects data based on literature data that meets the criteria or is in accordance with the concept under study. The data is in the form of the concept being studied, then analyzed in depth to then draw conclusions.

In general, the systematic steps taken are contained in the following figure:

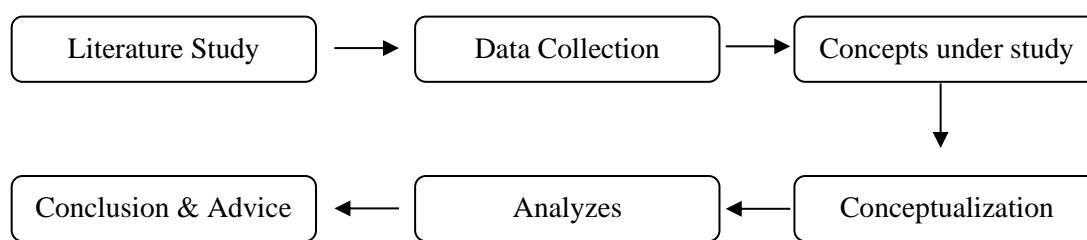


Figure 1. Figure Research Flow

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Today democracy has become a global issue. Since the mid-1970s the world has experienced a very rapid process of democratization. Within a few years, many countries on various continents experienced a change from a non-democratic political system to a democratic system. Huntington (1995) describes this phenomenon with the occurrence of the third wave of democratization. While the first wave of democratization occurred from 1828 to 1926, then experienced reverse wave I from 1922 to 1942. The second wave of democratization occurred from 1943 to 1962 and experienced reverse wave II from 1958 to 1975. The third wave of democratization occurred from 1974 (Huntington, 1995).

The third wave of democratization initially occurred in Southern Europe when Portugal underwent a military coup in 1974 which brought down the authoritarian government of Marcello Caetano. In the same year the democracy movement moved to Greece and continued to Spain in 1978. In the late 1970s and early 1980s democratic movements emerged in Latin America such as Ecuador in 1977, Peru in 1978, Bolivia in 1982, Argentina in 1983, Uruguay in 1984 and Brazil had already experienced the process of democratization in 1974. Democratic movements also hit Asian countries such as India in 1977, Turkey in 1983, the Philippines in 1986, South Korea in 1987, Taiwan and Pakistan in 1988. Although somewhat late Indonesia started the democratic process in 1998 (Centre for Indonesian Civic Education, 2000).

In the 1980s the democratic movement also swept through communist countries as happened to Hungary in 1988, the Soviet Union, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Romania in 1989. Within 15 years since the fall of the authoritarian government in Portugal in 1974 around 30 countries in Europe, Asia, and Latin America experienced a process of democracy. So the democracy movement has experienced very rapid development towards the end of the 21st century.

The theory of democracy also experienced significant developments. Prior to 1970 the theory of democracy emphasized the substantive aspects so that they were normative. The

theory of substantive democracy which is considered a classic emphasizes more the meaning of democracy as a form of government that originates from *the will of the people* and aims for the common good (Huntington, 1995). Abraham Lincoln is famous for his words "*democracy is government of the people, by the people and for the people*" (Cholisin, 2000) reveals that democracy is government of the people, by the people and for the people. The theory of substantive democracy contains weaknesses because it is difficult to measure the implementation of democracy empirically. Therefore, since 1970, the theory of democracy has emerged which emphasizes empirical procedural aspects.

The next problem is how is the concept of effective *civic education* to prepare these democratic citizens? Patrick (Bahmuller & Patrick, 1999) put forward the substantive concepts of democracy as the foundation of citizenship education including the following things (1) Democracy (minimum); (2) Constitutionalism; (3) Citizen rights; (4) Citizenship (5) Civil Society; (6) Market Economy; (7) Continuing tensions in constitutional (liberal) democracy. Patrick further argued that effective education to prepare democratic citizens includes 4 basic components as follows:

1. Knowledge of citizenship and democratic government. Through this first component, the concepts and implementation of democracy are taught which includes the concept of democracy (at a minimum), constitutionalism, citizen's rights, citizenship, civil society (civil society) and market economy,
2. Democratic citizen cognitive skills (cognitive skills) aimed at empowering citizens to have the ability to identify, describe, explain information and ideas related to public issues and determine and defend decisions on these issues.
3. Democratic citizen participatory skills are meant to be able to empower citizens to be able to influence public policies and decisions and have responsibility towards their representatives in government. The combination of cognitive skills and participatory skills can be used as a means for citizens to participate effectively to promote public and personal interests and defend their rights. The development of cognitive and participatory skills requires students to learn intellectually both inside and outside the classroom.
4. The virtues and dispositions of democratic citizens are related to the virtues and dispositions of democracy. This component shows the nature or character needed to support and develop democracy.

Basically civic education (*civic education*) aims to prepare democratic citizens to support and develop democratic life. But in its implementation it is often piggybacked by

certain political interests. According to Cholisin (2000) civic education in Indonesia in the past was more oriented to the interests of the government than the interests of the citizens. Because of that the concept and material of civics education is very thick with the nuances of indoctrination, hegemony, legitimacy and political mobilization. As a result, civic education that is being developed is more oriented to the interests of the authorities to maintain the status *quo* rather than developing a critical attitude of citizens, so that the scientific weight of civics education is very weak. It is not surprising that the attitudes and culture of citizen democracy are underdeveloped.

A similar opinion was expressed by Wahab (2000) who identified several weaknesses in civic education in the past, especially during the New Order. The interests of the state and government greatly influence the concept and curriculum of citizenship education. Certain topics such as loyalty, order, national security are emphasized while other topics such as human rights, political democracy, economic democracy, government responsibility to society, freedom of speech and so on do not receive proportional attention. The concept of citizenship education as state political education should not be questioned, so that its implementation is one-way and monologue with the aim of being more oriented to the interests of those in power. In other words, civics education is less able to prepare a democratic younger generation to support and develop a democratic political system.

The emergence of the reform movement that leads to the process of democratization in Indonesia provides an opportunity to formulate and develop a scientifically oriented civics education concept and curriculum to prepare democratic citizens to face the era of democratization. The national survey conducted by the Center for Indonesian Civic Education in collaboration with USIS in 2000 recommended the preparation and development of citizenship education according to the new paradigm as follows (Center for Curriculum of the Ministry of National Education, 2001):

1. The civic education curriculum must be based on a scientific approach.
2. The role of civic education must be able to empower the people and equip them with the abilities and characteristics as good citizens.
3. The civics education teaching method must be able to develop students' abilities to think critically, make decisions and create a dialogic atmosphere among students.
4. The civics education curriculum must be able to strengthen the values of democratic citizens. Therefore teachers need to be given complete and comprehensive training to overcome indoctrination.

5. Citizenship education must play an important role in developing the Nation and Character Building and be able to create a democratic society (*Civil Society*).

The Ministry of National Education's Balitbang curriculum center (Ministry of National Education, 2002) is currently compiling and developing a new Citizenship competency-based curriculum in response to changes in Indonesian society which is undergoing a process of democratization. The function of the Citizenship subject is as a vehicle for forming intelligent, skilled and characterized citizens who are loyal to the Indonesian nation and state by reflecting on themselves in the habit of thinking and acting in accordance with the mandate of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution to realize this function. competency, namely:

1. Think critically, rationally and creatively in dealing with citizenship issues.
2. Participate in a quality and responsible manner, and act intelligently in community, national and state activities.
3. Develop positively and democratically to shape themselves based on the characteristics of the Indonesian people so that they can live together with other nations.
4. Interact with other nations in the world arena directly or indirectly by utilizing information and communication technology

In relation to the functions and objectives of civic education, the scientific material for civic education includes three components, namely; *civic* knowledge, *civic* skills, and *civic dispositions*.

Citizens who understand and master *civic* knowledge and *civic disposition* will become citizens who have *confidence*. Citizens who understand and master *civic* knowledge and *civic* skills will become competent. Citizens who have *civic skills* and *civic disposition* will become citizens who have a strong commitment. Meanwhile, citizens who understand and master *civic* knowledge, have *civic skills*, and have *civic disposition* will give birth to *intelligent* citizens who have knowledge, skills, and character or personality.

In relation to these objectives the competencies to be realized through the Citizenship subject are divided into three groups, namely:

1. Ability to master *civic* knowledge which includes:
 - a. understand the goals of government and the basic principles of the constitution of the government of the Republic of Indonesia.
 - b. know the structure, functions and duties of local and national government and how citizen involvement forms public policy.

- c. know the relationship between the state and nation of Indonesia with other countries and nations as well as world and/or international issues.
2. Competence to have citizenship skills.
 - a. take or determine the right decision through the process of problem solving and inquiry.
 - b. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a particular issue.
 - c. Determine or take a stand in order to achieve a certain position.
 - d. Defending or defending a position by presenting critical, logical and rational arguments.
 - e. Presenting important information to the general public.
 - f. Build coalitions, compromise, negotiate, and consensus.
3. Competence to live and develop civic character.
 - a. Empowering oneself as an independent, active, critical, well-informed, and responsible citizen to participate effectively and efficiently in various community, political and government activities at all levels (regional and national).
 - b. Understand how citizens carry out roles, rights and personal responsibilities to participate in community life at all levels (regional and national).
 - c. Understanding, living, and applying the values of ethics, democracy, human rights, and nationalism in the life of society, nation and state.

CONCLUSION

Based on the previous description, it can be concluded that civics education occupies a strategic place to prepare the younger generation to become democratic citizens. The process of democratization that is currently happening in Indonesia needs to be seriously addressed through the concept and implementation of a functional civic education curriculum to prepare ideal citizens to support and secure the ongoing democratic process. Success in compiling and developing a civic education concept and curriculum that is in accordance with the new paradigm will affect the continuity and success of the democratization process in Indonesia.

The competency-based curriculum currently being designed by the Ministry of National Education's Balitbang Curriculum Center provides a basic reference as curriculum standards at the national level, so that the ability to develop syllabus and teaching materials at the provincial level will determine the success of curriculum implementation. Therefore,

tertiary institutions as LPTKs and education managers at the provincial and city or district levels need synergistic cooperation to develop them continuously.

At the implementation stage, civics education teachers are required to always be responsive to various changes and curriculum updates so that they can equip themselves with the various knowledge, abilities and skills needed to carry out civics education in schools.

SUGGESTION

Based on the results and conclusions above, suggestions for further research can be made. Further research development can be further deepened through the case study method. Or through quantitative research, namely investigating civic education in certain cases.

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