

# The Role of Civil Society in Democracy in Indonesia Post 1998 Reform

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**Abstract:** *This study aims to answer the role of civil society in democratization in Indonesia after the 1998 reformation. Democracy in Indonesia is still at an elite level, only limited to freedom in the political aspect, and has not yet touched on the economic aspect which is a strengthening of democracy. Weakening in the economic aspect will have an impact on all aspects of people's lives, with weak resources it will not provide support for democracy. Barriers to democracy associated with inability of the ruling regime to implement good and clean governance, transparency and accountability are priorities as a democratic country. That the future of democracy in Indonesia is unlikely to make significant progress, the post-democracy model will remain in line with Indonesian political life. Although democracy Indonesia will not lead to an authoritarian model of government, it will not lead to a truly democratic form of government. Indonesia is a multicultural country based on multi-ethnicity, multilingualism, multi-religion and multi-culture. If this reality cannot be managed and implemented properly, it will cause a commotion that can endanger unity and integrity, in fact there will be separate. The conflicts that have occurred in the community so far are due to the lack of involvement and participation of civil society in decision-making on governance. If the Indonesian nation is able to manage these differences and obstacles well, it will become a great asset and strength in realizing true democracy, namely a strong country, prosperous and prosperous society, safe and peaceful in diversity. The ongoing democratization in Indonesia does not override the noble norms and values which form the basis of the nation, state and society, which always prioritize ethics, politeness, diversity and deliberation, contained in Pancasila which is the basis of the Republic of Indonesia, Pancasila is 'way of live' in the life of the Indonesian people.*

**Keyword:** Civil Society, Democratization, Reform

## 1. Introduction

Discussing democratization is the main theme and issue of world change at this time, in which there are various interrelated issues regarding freedom such as civil society rights, community rights in diversity and diversity, values and sustainability approaches. culture. In principle, democracy is a political concept, but democracy will be practice from the perspective and understanding of the economic, social and cultural system. Therefore, the concept of democracy is not only intended for one aspect, but will be universally applicable according to where the environment was locate. [6, 1].

Democracy has undergone development since the empirical definition.[20] Are stated The academic debate around democratization gave birth to different definitions of concepts in the academic field. Various studies on democracy in political and social science being carried from different points of view. Democracy does not have a definite level mark in its measurement because it requires understanding both in the layman and even in the academic sphere. Democracy is a political system which shows that in doing so for the public interest it was determine based on the principles of participation, equality and freedom of expression, individual rights and the right to voice opinions [10, 22].

Democracy is not a new concept in academic literature, as has discussed for more than 200 years [12]. According to [4], the struggle for democratization began before the invention of the mechanical printing press by Johann Gutenberg in 1450 because for several centuries,

philosophers and intellectuals had struggled for democratization. The concept of democratization by British scholars such as John Milton and John Locke, even before the American press began to fight for further freedom and before the drafting of the Bill of Rights in the United States in 1700. [4, 13].

However, until now the idea of democratization is still on the agenda of debate around the world, from various nations with various religious, civilization and historical backgrounds. Generally, they admit that democracy is something new and must realized in the life of society and the state, even in the current era of globalization, democracy has considered as a global norm [11]. It is almost impossible to reject democracy today because democracy has become the spirit and development of the times.

The concept of democracy initially developed in Greek thought, then gave an impression to the government systems in Europe, America, Africa and including Indonesia. Democracy is a necessity now today because it considered as the best system of government compared to other government systems, such as autocracy and oligarchy [11]. Democracy is the granting of the right to freedom from the state to citizens (civil). Likewise, economic development which should democratic can in line with development progress. This of course can happen if democracy can prevent access and ownership of wealth only to certain elites, while economic failure or success related to the system and rules applied [7].

If the matter of economic development can go hand in hand with democracy, feelings can prevented, equitable economic

Volume 10 Issue 4, April 2021

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progress does not depend only on certain groups and elites, the democracy gives hope for the growth of a new civilized society that has rights to freedom of expression, opinion, politics where people expect an economic climate that is conducive, just, prosperous and equal. In order to face challenges in bringing this hope into reality, cooperation need between community groups and political elites so that the culture of democracy may develop in a better direction [19].

Another hope in making Indonesia's democratic transition reasonable is for the civil society movement to reduce political polarization and create a culture of diversity and tolerance. In this case the democratic transition always begins with the fall of an autocratic empire, while the period and period of transition depend on the efforts of the new democratic regime to solve traditional problems. [17].

One of the most fundamental problems faced by countries undergoing a democratic transition is the inability to form a culture of good and clean government, such as Malaysia, Myanmar and Middle Eastern countries, namely the management system. accountable and responsible government. As a result, the trust and support of the community will decrease so that the legitimacy of democracy will be weak. Without strong legitimacy, the new democratic regime will lose its power and influence. [14, 15].

Initially reforms in Indonesia provided fresh air to democratization of the growth of new societies that have freedom of opinion, association, assembly, politics where people expect a conducive economic climate and freedom from the constraints of an autocratic government system. However, democracy is still limited to freedom in politics, while the economic sector is still lagging behind, so there is an imbalance in social life. Because between the political and economic sides of two different currencies, economic problems must serious concern in order to strengthen democracy and trust in state administration. [7].

### 1.1 Statement of Problem

The phenomenon of issues surrounding democracy is a major issue in world civilization, there are various problems in it such as freedom of civil society rights, freedom of mass media, human rights, multiculturalism and the value of cultural preservation. The concept of democracy does not only apply to political aspects, but democracy can practiced from the perspective and understanding of the economic, social and cultural system. Can apply universally according to where the environment is located. (6, 1).

The demand for democratization in Indonesia is a result of the reforms that took place in 1998, that democracy in all aspects is imperative and cannot be postponed anymore, with a democratization system is the right choice and gives hope for the growth of a new civilization that has freedom of expression and association. , gathering, politics where people expect a conducive economic climate and freedom from the constraints of an autocratic government system.

With the democratization system at first it got a breath of fresh air, and became hope for the people, but the most fundamental problem arising for a country that is moving towards a democratic transition is the inability to form a culture of good and clean government. As a result, trust and support from the people will decrease so that the legitimacy of democracy will become weak. Without strong legitimacy, the new democratic regime will lose its power and influence. [16, 17].

Apart from that democracy is still limited to freedom at the elite level in politics, while the economic sector is still lagging behind, so there is an imbalance in social life. In order to face challenges in bringing this hope into reality, cooperation between community groups and political elites needed so that the culture of democracy can develop in a better direction, it can assumed that is in the civil society movement to reduce political polarization and create a culture of diversity and a culture of tolerance. [21].

### 1.2 Research Objectives

Seeing this phenomenon, the authors interested in conducting a study to answer the Role of Civil Society in Democracy in Indonesia Post-Reformation in 1998. Based on the description behind this research, formulation of the problems in this study are: (a) How is the Role of Civil Society in Democracy in Indonesia Post-Reformation 1998 ?. (b) Knowing the factors that hinder the Role of Civil Society in Democracy in Post-1998 Reform Indonesia?.

This means that the content of the role of civil society in post-reform democratization that occurs in Indonesia is that it is still in the transition stage of democracy, several aspects that allow democracy to implemented in environmental aspects, including political, economic, security, sociocultural and geographic systems. Democracy has not been successful if it is because to move to a democratic system from an autocratic system requires joint consensus, shared responsibility, and civil society movements to reduce political polarization and create a culture of diversity and tolerance

## 2. Literature Review

In the study presented 2 approaches to democracy theory to dissect this research, namely:

### 2.1 Huntington Theory

According to [9,15] formulated the results of his investigation regarding possibility of implementing a democratic system in a third world country. After the many democratic states that have collapsed in third world countries, Huntington distinguishes democratic development from two points of view, namely:

- Pre-democracy necessary for democratic development;
- The political process necessary for democratic development.

To lead to a democratic process, a country needs several factors other than economic prosperity and wealth equality,

such as social structure factors, external environment and cultural context, as explained, namely:

First, the more prosperous a country is from an economic point of view, the more likely it is to become a democratic country. It can be said that if a group in society has a prosperous standard of living, then that community group will become a society that understands more about democratic practices.

Second, if there is a social structure that is articulate and widely spread evenly and there are various groups that are relatively autonomous (businessmen, professional, religious, ethnic groups), then these groups will encourage emergence of the principles needed to control state power and develop basic infrastructure needed for enrichment of democratic practice. If the opposite is true, society tends to be dominated by a centralized or authoritarian model of power.

Third, democracy is more a result of the diffusion process than a result of development. Influence of international environments such as Britain and America, which undertake efforts to influence the political process in other countries, indirectly provides models for a strong democratic state.

Fourth, Huntington examined the relationship between religion and political culture, the result being that Protestantism has a high correlation with democracy; while Islam, Confucianism and Buddhism are more inclined towards authoritarian features of government. [9].

Rather than the pre-requisite component outline clearly shows that democracy applies the results of assimilation from various aspects, including the field of mass media. Therefore, to implement it in a group, the democratization process will manifest itself in three models, namely:

- 1) Linear model - democracy that emerges from civil rights, then develops into political rights and then develops into statutory capacity which eventually develops the right to vote;
- 2) The cycle model - a model that shows the regular replacement of democratic emergencies and the end of arbitrary power. The elites of society who hold the key to political decision making use the power of the military to continue to make general choices but without a change of leadership. The form of government in this model has a pattern that is always changing between civilian and military rulers;
- 3) Dialectical Model - an increasingly quality elite and comparison society urges its political interests to accompany and share the power of an authoritarian empire, so as to foster radical change.

Based on the three models, [9] considers there is the best process for democratic development. Democracy tends to be the result of gradual and gradual struggle and change, and requires a union of common will because it cannot be born democratic from a violence or a revolution. If democracy which achieved by means of violence and revolution is an agenda that forced and tends to be in the interests of momentary power, it only wants a change in power and a certain agenda, whether it is the agenda of Western countries or just demands from elites who have their interests. alone.

After the revolution is victorious, the people of a country will plunged into conflicts and splits that between ethnic and democratic elites and groups such as the prevailing in the Middle East. [15].

Democracy exists and develops in a country if it strengthened by civil society, including free and open mass media. The right of civil society to obtain freedom should promote democratic practice by stimulating the interests of citizens' rights through the dissemination of intelligent and critical edicts in line with the role of civil society activism. The principle of accountability for civil society and the mass media also seeks to prevent this common space from being transformed into a market. This is because if the public space equated with the market, then there will be no public space that trusted. At best in a democratic system, civil society and the mass media should play a role as market place ideas, namely as a place to channel aspirations for citizens so that they can channel ideas and ideas freely.

## 2.1 Habermas Theory

According to [8,15] The theory of universal pragmatic and societal transformation This theory believes that a democratic society is free from domination of any interests and that every individual has a clear opportunity to take part in decision-making. A lay room that is separate from personal interests, requires free communication and a seriousness to make the desired state together. The public and the private sector should be balanced and the public sector must be strong enough to provide a climate to express ideas and opinions freely. In this connection, Habermas assesses communication as something important for liberation of ideas because communication is a common space as a tool to fulfill the interests of this liberation.

According to [8] the public space is a space where citizens can negotiate their mutual relations so that it is an institutional arena to interact in different matters. This arena is conceptually different from the state, that is, a place for expenditure and distribution. Therefore, communication competence needed to take an active part in making decisions. Competence includes: knowledge, thorough blasphemy to make goals, and courage to express opinions. Habermas describes three types of 'acts of blasphemy', namely:

- 1) Constantive: Reality designed to state a proposition as truth (validity of a statement of truth);
- 2) Regulative: They are designed as rules for smooth negotiation in influencing one's relationship with other people or other groups, based on validity and not outside the topic and purpose of the conversation;
- 3) Avowal: Recognition is designed to reveal the inner state of the audience to perceive something about someone (sincere and honest validity).

Habermas believes that freedom of speech, communication is necessary to create a productive and normal interaction and to allow for higher stages of discourse (systematic blasphemy that uses a special attraction to prove the validity of reality). The situation of discussion and blasphemy in society should be exemplified, namely:

- 1) A suitable speaking situation involves freedom of speech, there should be no restraints on what is to be expressed.
- 2) All individuals need to have equal access to conversation. All conversations must have validity in common.
- 3) Ethics and norms of society in freedom of speech are not intended for an individual or to one side only, but ethics and values of decency must be upheld and applied to all groups in society.

### 3. Research Methods

Based on the paradigm of social behavior in this investigative approach, in this investigation the investigator uses a qualitative approach. The reason the investigator uses the method of this investigation is a process of obtaining information giving information by induction by prioritizing the interpretive process of meaning used as the main data. So the qualitative approach meant by the investigator is an interpretive process of the data obtained from the informants in this investigation, namely carrying out an interpretive series of the role of civil society in democracy in post-reform Indonesia.

In this investigation, the investigator agrees with [2] that there are three methods of qualitative investigation, namely; Grounded theory, ethnography and narrative. Based on the qualitative characteristics above, the investigator uses a narrative method. According to [2] the method of narrative is to explore individual stories telling people's lives. That the investigations is carried out by investigators to explore the announcement giver, to answer the role of civil society in democracy in Indonesia. The research data was taken through interviews with informants who understand the object of this investigation problem.

### 4. Discussion

Indonesia is a democracy, while the post secularism era is a new challenge in implementation of Indonesian democracy. Strengthening civil society and democracy in Indonesia is part of the reform mandate. Therefore democracy is one of the main things in implementation of politics in Indonesia. As an effort to contribute to strengthening democracy, implementation of democracy in all aspects cannot be postponed any longer because apart from mandate, a democratic system is the right choice in the constitutional system when compared to other systems.

#### 4.1 Concept of Civil Society

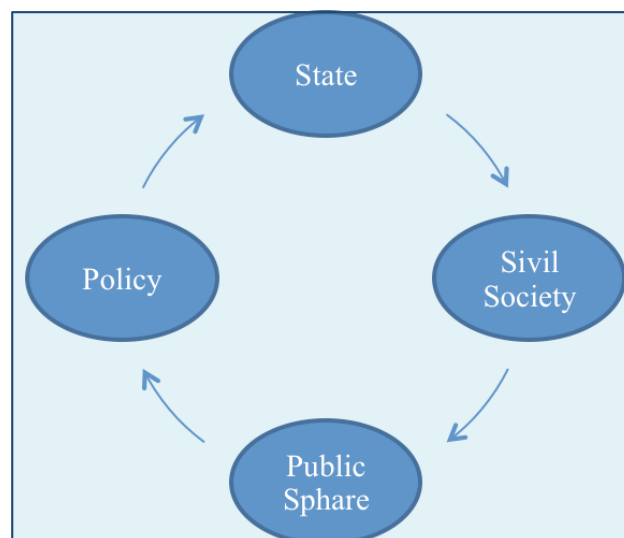
The concept of civil society is not translated only in a narrow sense, but must in a broad sense. Civil society is people who have a view and concern for the problems that arise in the midst of people's lives, and are sensitive to the problems of the nation. The discussion about civil society is an issue that needs to be understood, because it includes talking about democracy, human rights and globalization, there is also about reforms taking place in Indonesia. Recently, Indonesia is considered by some countries to have succeeded in laying the foundation for a democratic system. It is not an exaggeration to consider this assumption if we

judge the success of holding direct elections with so much public participation.

Likewise with freedom of expression, the mass media thrive without any intervention to news criticizing the government. Government policies are free to be judged and blamed if there are irregularities and fraud committed by state officials, Indonesian democracy is in a very advanced world of freedom, various civil society organizations provide appreciation and support for the ongoing democratization developments in the post-reform homeland. Civil society is an area where it has many social movements and professional organizations that struggle to shape themselves through social movements that move in rooms anywhere in order to uphold and fight for interests [21].

Emergence of this civil society movement is marked by a change in the political atmosphere. In the New Order era where position of the state tended to be powerful by limiting every movement and expression of civilians, the strong hegemony of the ruling group against civil society, the practice of corruption, collusion and nepotism by enriching and prioritizing the interests of groups close to power, this has become a sight usually displayed by autocratic governments.

As a consequence of developments in the post-reform era where there has been a very significant shift in government governance, state authority is no longer dominant but becomes a part of civil society. As the pattern of civil society relations. Picture 1. below this:



Picture 1: Civil Society Relations

Civil society has an important role in the consolidation of democracy in the reform era. The existence of civil society becomes the "spirit" of the implementation of democracy. Civil society as an arena for organized social life and provides opportunities for society to be involved in influencing public policies. The role of civil society is important in democracy for a pluralistic process of formulating goodness, involvement of civil society is a necessity for every democratic country as an effort to deepen democracy. [5].



Empirically, civil society in Indonesia has shown and contributed significantly to the progress of democracy in Indonesia, at least 4 roles have been felt so far, namely:

- 1) Participatory, which is involvement in conveying aspirations both ideas and ideas towards state policies, through official institutions such as the executive, legislative and judiciary,
- 2) Empowerment, empowering or mobilizing civil society, in order to educate and literate, namely as an entity that is able to advance itself, is free from intervention and has a critical attitude towards political life,
- 3) Advocacy, in providing legal aid for the rights of marginalized and disadvantaged civilians,
- 4) Social Control, which is to supervise accountability, transparent state administration in an effort to achieve good and clean governance.

In realizing good and clean governance, presence of civil society is an inseparable part of other elements of state administration, such as presence of anti-corruptions institution, namely the Corruption Eradication Commission. The Corruption Eradication Commission which is formed based on Law Number 30 of 2002 was given the mandate to eradicate corruption professionally, intensively and continuously, in carrying out its duties and authorities free from pressure from any power.

In the aspect of Openness of Public Information, which provides a mandate on the public's right to obtain information protected by law, guarantees the rights of the public to able to access information and to know. If we look closely at all forms of activities of this institution, it shows that involvement of civil society in state administration has been accommodated, presence of non-governmental institutions is a form of representation from civil society. Ideally, civil society movements work together in mutually reinforcing and supportive relationships to identify existing problems and seek innovative solutions.

#### 4.2 Democracy in Indonesia

The concept of democracy always places the people in a very strategic position in the constitutional system, although at the level of implementation there are differences between one country and another. The concept of democracy in developing countries is still in an order of transition from an autocratic system to a democratic system. The most important idea in a democratic system is that the inhabitants of a region must have the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding issues that directly affect their lives and for which they are able to make decisions.

Democracy as a concept that will never be possible to fully and substantially understand, because the concept of democracy is very universal and broad in scope, does not just talk about political systems, and implementation of general elections, but in democracy itself contains a lot of understandings and perspectives. continues to debated. Therefore to measure and provide assessment of democracy will be difficult because it does not have clear boundaries and parameters to describe it, because many things become.

The collapse of the New Order regime after 32 years in power with an autocratic system, brought the Indonesian nation to a democratic system. A government without adequate constitutional oversight, resulting in autocratic leaders. These events marked important times of transition in the history of the Indonesian nation, as well as being an important point of social, political, economic and cultural change in Indonesia for a better future. With the fall of the New Order government under President Soeharto, it became the moment and point of departure for reforming the governance system of state administration.

The reforms that occurred were aimed at creating hopes for a new democratic life order, which was free from pressure and threats of power, existence of freedom of association, gathering to convey ideas, ideas which are part of fundamental human rights. The public's hope that the dream of reform to provide a better novelty will bring the Indonesian nation to the same level as developed countries, which previously implemented a democratic system.

In its implementation, democracy in Indonesia for 22 years after the 1998 reformation experienced ups and downs, although at the procedural level it went well, but at a substantial level it still did not satisfy public expectations. The problem of manifesting a democratization orientation in the post-reform era does not stop at theoretical issues, but there are several other fundamental empirical things that must used as important considerations. Especially among the lower class people who are still plagued by poverty, lack of education and health aspects. This is an important component of reform which is mandatory for changes that are better and beneficial for the people, especially in realizing the aspirations of the state to create a prosperous, just and prosperous society.

Is it true that the imagined novelty can a more operational and alternative? The fact that the journey of a country, a nation to arrive at a democratic stage is very different from one country to another, that in its democratic implementation it cannot be generalized, the conditions that cause a variety, ranging from the readiness of the people to accept change, the desire or consensus as a common ground , the capacity of the elites in accommodating and carrying out public aspirations, to how to create synergy among all elements of pro-democracy and counter-democracy society.

In the process of democratization in Indonesia, it takes humility from the elites or the ruling regime to respect citizen participation and contestant in public spaces as a democratic process and goal. Because democracy will not just emerge without mutual understanding and will, not only at the elite level but also at the grassroots level. If democracy was enforced, there will be consequences that can lead to new and prolonged conflicts, degradation in the state, so that the main objective of democracy will turn into a field of division.

Originally, the democratization process in Indonesia must respect norms and noble values that must not be set aside, ancestral norms and values must become the foundation in the state administration, existence of deliberation and consensus, existence of ethics in the political, economic,

social and cultural fields, as included in foundation of the Republic of Indonesia, namely Pancasila. Pancasila is a "way of life" in the life of the nation, state and society. Democracy without goals will experience incoherence, democracy without a foundation will be easily fragile.

## 5. Conclusion

Conclusion of the opinion, investigation is that the future of democracy in Indonesia does not appear to have made significant progress, the post-democracy model will still survive in line with Indonesian political life. Although democratization of Indonesia will not lead to an authoritarian model of government, it will not lead to a truly democratic form of government. Democracy is still in an elite level, only limited to freedom in the political aspect, and has not yet touched on the economic aspect which serves as a strengthening of democracy. Weakening in the economic aspect will have an impact on all aspects of people's life, with weak resources it will not provide support for democracy, it will weaken democracy. Barriers to democracy associated with inability of the ruling regime to implement good and clean governance, which promote transparency and accountability.

Indonesia is a multicultural country based on multi-ethnicity, multilingualism, multi-religion and multi-culture. If this reality cannot be managed and implemented properly, it will cause a commotion that can endanger unity and integrity, in fact there will division or chaos. The conflicts that have occurred in the community so far are due to the lack of involvement and participation of civil society in decision-making on governance. If the Indonesian nation is able to manage these differences and obstacles well, it will become a great asset and strength in realizing true democracy, namely a strong country, prosperous and prosperous society, safe and peaceful in diversity.

In addition, the ongoing democratization process in Indonesia does not rule out the norms and noble values that are the basis for the nation, state and society, which always prioritizes ethics, politeness, diversity and deliberation, contained in Pancasila which is the basis of the Republic of Indonesia. Pancasila is a "way of life" in the life of the Indonesian nation.

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