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Representation and Equality: Basic Education Democracy in Minangkabau

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Abstract: Social life of a village in Minangkabau is built on a tradition of democracy and mutual agreement. This study aims to explain and elaborate on the values contained in the legend and tradition as the basis of democratic education in Minangkabau. Furthermore, it also describes the potential and contribution of the custom that support the understanding of democracy and democratization process that includes: Representativeness, Sakato consensus (Sakato, an institution that accommodates the aspirations of the people), decision-making, basic freedoms and individual engagement in decision-making, and the equality of voting rights in the deliberations. This study used a qualitative approach, comprehensive interviews and documentation as data collection. The data source is the prince, traditional leaders, Nagari custom, traditional Alam Minangkabau, Bundo Kanduang, religious leaders and society. Data analyzed refers to the analysis of qualitative data presented by Alwasilah (2002). The results showed that the global concept of democracy can be united with the democracy education system brought by traditional communities. That is, people's understanding of democracy education not only refers to the idea of West democracy. However, the custom values of society can be used as the basis democratic education for Minangkabau society of the present and future. The result also shows that the Minangkabau community has first implemented democracy based on traditional values long before Western democracy applied in Indonesia, especially in Minangkabau.

Keywords : Values, democratic education, traditional proverb, villages

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INTRODUCTION

The discussions on democracy, meaning and value, are still increasingly debated to this day. Even though, the idea of democracy was used as a universal rule. But the shape and characteristics of

democracy itself is often questioned its existence. For a long time the idea and form of democracy has been directly adopted from the West, then it is developed trough to local needs. Today, the republican democracy, especially

from the US and British, is used as prime example of world democracy.

The design of democracy can also be observed from the example of the oldest democracies, such as Iceland, from the custom leaders that are recognized as Althing. Furthermore, democracy used by Native Americans, known as the Six Nations or Iroquois, is the oldest form of democratic engagement in the world and it is said to be a major contributor to the shape of democracy in the United States. This is reinforced by the democratic debate of the oldest kingdom applied in Kalinga, South India in 300 BC, (Abdul Hadi Harman Shah, Abdul Samad Hadi, K. Sharudin: 2010). The values contained in the indigenous Minangkabau customs known around the fourth century that carry basic education of democracy in Minangkabau. This is another example of the world democratic community.

What appears as a problem is whether the basic characteristics that makes a society to be democratic?. One of these characteristics is the involvement of community members in the process of formulating and making decisions.

The greater involvement of community members in the decision-making process is, the higher tendency of society in a democracy, and the less involvement of community members in decision-making, it can be said that democracy in society is low. However, the way the people involved can be seen in various forms such as: the electoral process both state elections (president), local government (regent / mayor) and legislative elections, it is a form of engagement that characterizes democracy. Since the early days of the Romans, those who vote are those who are seen as citizens. However,

Roman citizens themselves are

included in the election is a certain people only, for example the rich and influential, while women and foreigners do not have the right to vote and its democratic processes is often limited, (Abdul Hadi Harman Shah, Abdul Samad Hadi, Sharudin K.: 2010).

In the united state, although democracy has been started since the beginning of 1774, but in practice is affective after the 1960s. United States take more or less 200 years after choosing democracy to provide opportunities for women to participate and it requires more time to be involved in decision making of society, (Abdul Hadi Harman Shah, Abdul Samad Hadi, Sharudin K.: 2010). If it is asked, how long the democratization process would also work well in Indonesia, especially in Minangkabau, it will provide various answers. Depend on the definitions and expectations of democracy chosen. Democratic education inherited based on traditional values is known as the *bajanjang naiak batanggo turun* norm. it is interpreted as a procedure that must be implemented in a democracy in Minangkabau. (Interview with traditional figures: 2011). This norm is applied in village government, in which the role of *ninik Mamak*, scholars, and intellectuals as *limbago* concentrated in districts that decide and determine the direction of Minangkabau government. Customary proverb in Tambo, said:

*Kok laweh pambidang langik
Kok kaciak saganggam tangan
Alam barajo, luhak bapanghulu
Kok sawah balupak, kok durian
baruang*

It means that the existence of the limits of autonomy in Minangkabau culture, especially in the village unit. Genealogic and territorial unity in the village consists of principles of deliberation, pluralism, empowerment,

independence and togetherness which is a symbol of socio-cultural (Mochtar Naim: 1990), this is the village rule in Minangkabau government which will encourage the growth of democratic education.

Formally, the democratic system in Minangkabau is differentiated with Indonesian democratic system. This also led to the unaccomplished democratic process in Minangkabau, but democracy has long been accepted and used by the Minangkabau community, (an interview with the prince: 2011). Some other reasons why the democracy is different, because the idea of Indonesian democracy adopted need to be socialized to the society. For example, the principles and laws drawn from countries that once colonized or which has become a major world power. It may result in the resemblance of democracy system in order to avoid the social judgment.

In the process of developing country development trying to reach the stage of developed countries including the modernization process, not only economic and physical infrastructure should emulate developed countries, but also social infrastructure and basic values of the state itself must be equal or balanced. The process of democratization is an avenue of country progress.

This modernization process movement has been widely questioned, such as the Latin America, Africa, and even Asia have also shown how their development process is different from what was passed by the developed countries today, (Abdul Hadi Harman Shah, Abdul Samad Hadi , K. Sharudin: 2010). This case Includes the basic concept of democracy that were negotiated its implication based on the

circumstances and customs. The government formed by the people and for the people should not adopt the same meaning throughout the world, and local customs strive to deepen the meaning of democracy itself.

METHOD

This is a field research, it aims to investigate the customs values as a basis for democratic education in Minangkabau, which include: representation, *sakato samufakat*, decision making, basic freedoms and the involvement of people in decision-making, the equality of voting rights in the deliberations. The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach.

The research data was collected from the prince, traditional leaders, *cadiak pandai*, Institute of Minangkabau customs, Bundo Kanduang, royal party, nagari customs, religious and community leaders. By using snowball sampling techniques, the informants consist of 11 people. Aside from informants, the research data is also gathered from documents relating to the traditional values as the basis of democratic education in Minangkabau.

Accordingly, this study used multiple data collection techniques, ie: documentation, and in-depth interviews. Documentation techniques are done in order to find the data of policies, regulations, decisions and agreements presented in the written form. In-depth interviews conducted directly and open. This technique is done in order to obtain data relating to the legend and traditional values as a basis of democratic education in Minangkabau, which include: representation, *sakato samufakat*, decision making, basic freedoms and the

involvement in decision-making, and equality voting rights in the deliberations. In-depth interviews conducted in formal and informal situations. This technique is applied to obtain additional information.

Data analysis refers to the steps of analysis proposed by Alwasilah (2002), the qualitative data were analyzed with the following steps: (1) the written memo model at the time of the study, (2) coding of data, (3) explore the topic and category, (4) discuss the data, and (5) draw conclusions. To test the validity of the data, the researcher use triangulation techniques and discussions with peers, as expressed by Moleong (1995).

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Traditions Potential Contribution towards Understanding of Democratic Education

What can be donated by the local culture and customs to the understanding of democratic education? This issue arises as a basis for answering local cultural role in the efforts towards the establishment of an understanding of sustainable development that is the basis of development of society today.

Each customs and understanding of local communities has unique characteristics that can contribute to the development of society. Based on this issue, the authors select the legend and traditional values as a basis for democracy education studied. Traditional values give a different viewpoint of a democratic education system used in

Minangkabau society.

The concept of democracy itself is being debated due to the unconformity impact to the world community. The democratic process following the reform in Indonesia is assumed as something cruel and harsh, it is different from the local traditional culture that are usually more subtle and polite. What are the essence of democracy that leads to anarchy and the destruction of the existing structure of society? This paper explains the process of democratization that includes the representation of society elements in Minangkabau customs, *sakato samufakat* as basic education of democracy in decision-making, equality of voting rights in the deliberations, and basic education regarding to democratic freedoms and individual involvement.

This is the basis of democracy containing in the custom education in Minangkabau. It is believed that its characteristics is more civilized according to local custom due to the support by the local value structure as its customary that do not reflect the violent and anarchic. Customary also indicated THAT globally the concept of democracy can be guided and deepened through research on democratic education system brought by traditional communities, such as indigenous Iroquois communities in the Americas, and Huraian this paper, traditional values as the basis of democratic education community.

Custom also hinted that the concept of global democracy can be guided and deepened through research on democratic education system adopted by traditional communities, such as Iroquois community's customs in the Americas, this paper, local traditional values. The customs as the basis of democracy in Minangkabau must be

structured in order to provide relevant information related to the idea of democracy itself.

The Understanding of Democratic Education in Minangkabau

The meaning of democracy itself is varied. It not only can be learned as the common ground and freedom, but also as equal rights and the freedom of the individual. Customs are basically seen as old structures which bind the individual and leads to social marginalization for some groups of community members. This raises the question of what can be donated by traditional minded customs; otherwise, democracy is often regarded as a description of rationality and modernity. The implication is that customs cannot be used to establish a democratic education.

At the same time, traditional ways of society life is often questioned. The change of government rules in Africans as appearing in Kano, Nigeria. For example, looking for the local understanding of what is acceptable as a democracy. It is what happened in Indonesia in particular Minangkabau today. The transition from traditional to modern ideas often waives the customary attempts to express the idea of democratic education from the view of local traditional communities.

Democratic education in minangkabau is an egalitarian society democracy, the society recognize and put themselves and others at the level of parallel and equal. That alignment and equality enable to create a wise decision, either in small groups or larger groups. Decisions made with deliberation, Rational, deliberation means coming from below (bottom up).

In the ranking of villages, at least there are four tribes. Each tribe is led by a (leader). In performing its duties, he helped by *urang nan pangulu ampek jinih*, which consists of *penghulu*, *malin* (scholars and implementers of worship), *manti* (administrator / profesional), and *dubalang* (security enforcement). Interview with Mochtar Naim: 2011). In the conference of the leaders in villages, every decision cannot be taken if all the elements of a representative has not present yet in the deliberation. Proverb customary in the legend, said:

*Duduak surang basampik-sampik,
Duduak basamo balapang-lapang.
Indak ado karuah nan indak ka
janiah
Indak ado kusuik nan indak
kasalasai*

Democracy prevailing in Minangkabau society, institutionalized through *rapek* institutions (conference). Conference implemented based on the level of the problems in society, such as villages conference / tribe conference / clan conference. Village conference is the highest institution and the only government institution in the ranking of villages, (interview with the Chairman LKAAM, 2010). Village conference also serves as the agency that accommodates variety of interests and conflicts arising in society. In resolving problems arising in society, not all the problems have to be solved into the level of the village conference. There is a kind of delegation of authority to the institutions of village conference. The problems that arise in *sakaum* or *samande* is the responsibility of *tungganai* (the head).

If problems involve non *samande* elements, such as between the *saparuik* or *sapayuang*. it becomes the

responsibility of *payuang* leader or the prince of the tribe. This is the appearance of democratic education in Minangkabau. A democratic conference, (interview with Indigenous People: 2011). Precisely, democracy in Minangkabau first rests on the strength of meetings conducted by various leaders of the tribe / clan that exist in the village. Democracy in Minangkabau known as traditional proverb:

*Pangulu barajo ka mufakat,
Mufakat barajo ka nan bana.*

Nan bana is pareso (rational), *Raso* (emotion), and after embracing Islam of the Book of Allah (spiritual). The synergy of the three human potentials intelligence that then it can be believed as *banaBadiri sandirinyo*, (interviews with religious leaders: 2011).

It is must be remembered is that the customary principle of value, as well as its implementation. Such as religion, and other beliefs, the activities of custom should not relate to the same principles and customs value itself. there are many differences between principles and society accomplishments. When society did an oversight, customs cannot be blamed. Assessment of a custom or belief is the understanding of the principle itself.

Representation Principle in the Education of Democracy in Minangkabau

Custom has a variety of properties helped to build the understanding democracy. The most important and most often expressed is the nature of the representation of the indigenous community itself. Democratic Education prevailing in Minangkabau society implemented through conference. Conference is a discussion-forum that works to seek consensus, formulate and define the various issues relating to the

social life of village communities. Conference participants are representative of a collection society representing *samande, sajurai, saparuik, sasuku, sapayuang, sakampuang and saparinduan*, (Mockhtar Naim: 1990).

This is the education of democracy in Minangkabau; a form of democracy. In fact, democracy in Minangkabau first relies on the strength of conferences conducted by various tribal leaders / people in villages. No basic policies or decisions that may be made without first negotiated through conference. Traditional proverb says,

*Bulek anak buah manjadi bapak
Bulek bapak manjadi Limbago
Bulek limbago menjadi
penghulu/Undang
Bulek Penghulu/Undang menjadi rajo
Sakali aia pasang sakali tapian
barubah,
Sakali rajo mangkat sakali adat
baraliah*

Village conference is the highest level in solving various problems, (interview with the leader: 2011). Village conference also serves as an institution that accommodates a variety of interests and conflicts that arise in society. It implemented based on the level of the problems in society, such as villages / jorong / tribe / clan / paruik.

Proverb in Tambo (1987), states:

*Bajanjang naiak batanggo turun
Naiak dari janjang nan di bawah
Turun dari tango nan di ateh
Titiak dari langik, tabasuik dari
bumi*

It means that not all the problems should be solved in the level of village conference. There is a kind of authorization to the level below the village. For example, if problems arise in the level

of sakaum or samande, it is the responsible of *tungganai*. If the case involved non *samande* such as *saparuik* or *sapayuang*, the prince of the tribe *payuang* is responsible for the case, (interview with the head of KAN: 2011). Every prince has its own autonomy. The master of the prince should not interlope the authority of the prince. If there is a dispute of a *payuang*, other *payuang* prince merely heard, because it is a case of internal dispute of the *payuang*.

The Principle of Sakato Samufakat in Democratic Education in Decision Making

Decision-making mechanism in Minangkabau custom must be based on *sakato samufakat*. *Sakato* means that the same views on a case that is being handled, so the decision should be taken directly and instantly. When the differences appear, the decision cannot be determined. Each member of the meeting seeks for the logical solution base on *Alua jo patuik* (groove and deserve). After considering the public benefits base on *Alua jo patuik*, the members decide the results of the conference that relevant to the case, traditional proverb said:

*Bulek aia ka pambuluah
Bulek kato ka mufakat
Ka gunuang samo mandaki
Ka lurah samo manurun*

Whole proverb reveals the characteristic of democratic education, the approval of public members who are ruled, if it is still debated, the conference may be denied to reforest the atmosphere and members.

Not only approval, each decision was carried out between the government

and the society, traditional proverb says:

*Tumbuah bak padi digaro
Tumbuah bak bijo disiang
Elok dipakai buruak dibuang
Elok dipakai jo mufakat
Buruak dibuang jo rundingan*

A part from above proverb is an agreement that has been negotiated and still can be revised by age and purposes, this is in line with the traditional proverb following:

*Dicari kato nan sabuah, dicari
rundiang nan saiyo,
Dibulekkan aia ka pambuluah,
dibulekkan kato ka muafakat
Bulek lah buliah digolongkan, picak
lah buliah dilayangkan*

Principles of Democratic Education: Freedom and Individuals Involvement in Decision-Making.

Traditional rule concept of a conference is the core of discussion by involving themselves in various ways in making the decision, everyday lives' case, the division of the property, and the selection of leaders, traditional proverb says:

*Putuih rundiang dek sakato
Rancak rundiang disepakati
Di laihia sama nyato
Di batin samo diliek
Talatak sesuatu di tampeknyo
Di dalam cupak dan gantang*

Custom does not only state that the leader should be chosen, but also educates people and the public about how a leader should be chosen. It also outlines the responsibility of the leaders and society. Every law and custom is measured its validity of religious values

as universal values that connects local needs with global demands, as an expression of the following proverb:

*Patitih pamainan andai,
Gurindam pamainan kato,
Jadi pemimpin kalau indak pandai,
Rusak kampuang binaso nagari.*

The implementation of democracy in the developing society and former colonial countries is often disregarded the principle of communication between each member. Minangkabau custom adapts the differences in member communities and provides a different place and role in everyday life and in the decision making process and everything is placed according to ability, traditional proverb:

*Nan buto pahambuih lasuang,
Nan tuli palapeh badia
Nan lumpuah panghuni rumah,
Nan kuek pambawo baban,
Nan binguang disuruah-suruah
Nan cadiak ajak barundiang*

Western democracy places the individual as the principles of democracy. The government from society to society, an individual is emphasis such as he has no community. Minangkabau custom covers the interests of individual and community together it also balances between both. Public interest or the public is always juxtaposed with the needs and individual interest as expressed by the following traditional proverb:

*Gadang dek di ambak, tinggi dek di anjuang
Barek samo dipikua, ringan samo dijinjiang,
Jikok hanyut dipinteh, tabanam disilami,
Talantang samo makan angin;
tatungkuik samo makan tanah,
Tarapuang samo hanyuik, tarandam samo basah.*

The Equality of Voting Rights in a Conference as Principle of Democratic Education

In the traditional Minangkabau voting, *bundo kanduang* in deliberation have the same rights as men. According to the Minangkabau tradition, all the activities in the environment depend on the approval of women. Minangkabau tradition has carried out long before the world emancipation introduced. Minangkabau has put women to a place that equal with men, (interview with *bundo Kanduang*: 2011).

Every decision that has been obtained in a meeting with the men cannot be implemented before the women agreed. Equality between women and men in Minangkabau shows in the wedding ceremony. Wedding ceremony cannot be held before the approval of women (*bundo Kanduang*), (interview with chairman of *Bundo Kanduang*. 2011). In establishing of *pasuko* (prince) election, the decision cannot be taken before the *paruik* agree. It is also adapted to the use of inheritance. In accordance with its function, inheritance is used for the common interest such as pawn and grants. It cannot be carried out before approval of the women.

The equality between women and men regarding to voting rights in the deliberations is one of the characteristics of the most important democratic education discussed nowadays. Minangkabau has introduced it long time ago, (an interview with the chairman LKAAM: 2011). The voting right between men and women is often expressed in every life of minangkabau society, traditional proverb says that:

*Elok nagari dek penghulu
Elok tapian dek nan mudo
Elok musajik dek tuanku*

Elok rumah dek bundo kanduang

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tradition will never last and always alive not decayed because of rain. However, it should be able to contribute not only to the previous Minangkabau society, but also contemporary and future Minangkabau society. Minangkabau tradition must be examined and presented to the case solution today, including the legacy and daily life problem faced by Minangkabau society. Comparing the traditional and modern, local tradition and universal value system is a tough case. This relates to what is accepted by the public at that time, the source is either derived from local tradition or universal. However, every society should not be embarrassed by its own traditions and also undue something new beyond what has been already owned. Democratic education is not merely the value of freedom and a way of live, but it also became a symbol for something that is normal in human life today. However, the shape and its various details depend on the community itself. The community that has no other principles needs to adopt from the idea of global democracy brought from the West. For people who have traditions. Democratic education can be observed from the perspective of their tradition that has been practiced for a long time. Western democracy should not be used permanently because its principle should be socialized. In some cases, the traditional value has educated the society of universal meaning of democracy long time ago.

Finally, the following proverb states;

*Kita nan bukan cadiak pandai
Ilmu di Tuhan tersimpan
Kok senteng mintak dibilai
Tandonya kito saundiko*

*Seni budaya Tanah Air
Larut di zaman penjajahan
Kinilah jadi buah fikir
Sedang dalam penggalan*

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