



Management of Strengthening Democracy Education in the Profile of Pancasila Students (An Analysis of Student Involvement in Five Major Demonstrations in Indonesia Over the Last Decade)

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Abstract: This study examines the relationship between democracy education management in schools or universities and student political participation in demonstrations. Focusing on five major demonstrations in Indonesia over the past decade, it explores how democracy education shapes students' political awareness and involvement in social actions, while also contributing to the development of Pancasila Student profiles. The research uses a literature review method to delve into issues surrounding democracy education and the Pancasila Student profile. Empirical data was gathered from media reports, particularly Kompas daily, which has extensively documented student demonstrations in Indonesia. The findings suggest that democracy education management in educational institutions significantly influences student political participation in national and societal life, as envisioned in the Pancasila Student profile.

Keywords: democracy education, Pancasila student profile, demonstrations.

Introduction

Indonesia, as a democratic country, highly values public participation in the implementation of its governmental system (Mujani, 2021). Democracy is one of the fundamental aspects that form the foundation of the Republic of Indonesia, as enshrined in the national constitution, the 1945 Constitution. Public participation in public policy and political mechanisms is a concrete manifestation of democracy and serves as the lifeblood of Indonesia's national existence.

Over the course of 79 years of independence, Indonesia has experienced various social, political, and economic upheavals that have shaped its democratic practices. Since 1945, Indonesia has adopted several governmental systems, including presidential, quasi-parliamentary, and parliamentary systems, all of which have influenced the nation's democratic framework (Power and Warburton, 2020). Similarly, societal participation in national life has continuously evolved (Putra and Hijri, 2022). One such evolving phenomenon is student demonstrations, which have shifted in response to the social and political dynamics of each period.

This paper specifically focuses on five major student demonstrations over the past decade. First, the student demonstration against the Criminal Code Bill (RUU KUHP) becoming law and the revision of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) Law on September 19, 2019 (Kompas, 2019). Second, the student protest against the Omnibus Law on Job Creation on October 6, 2020 (Kompas, 2020). Third, the student demonstration rejecting the proposal to extend the presidential term to three periods on April 11, 2022 (Kompas, 2022). Fourth, the student protest against the



Omnibus Law on Job Creation on March 30, 2023 (Kompas, 2023). Fifth, the student demonstration against the revision of the Regional Election Law on August 22, 2024 (Kompas, 2024). These five demonstrations highlight the critical role of students in safeguarding democracy and serving as a vocal opposition to government policies perceived to be less aligned with the public's interests.

The involvement of students in the major demonstrations mentioned above has complex and multifaceted dimensions. On one hand, demonstrations serve as a platform for students to voice their opinions and express dissatisfaction with government policies perceived as detrimental to society (Saud and Margono, 2021). Students often represent a bold, critical voice in advocating for their rights and the interests of the people. Through demonstrations, they aim to influence public policy and ensure that government decisions remain aligned with the needs of the public. They become drivers in demanding transparency, social justice, and the eradication of corruption (Hiariej and Stokke, 2022).

However, on the other hand, demonstrations also present challenges concerning security and public order. One of the risks frequently associated with protests is violence and property damage, which can occur when demonstrations become uncontrollable (Strassler, 2020). Such violent acts not only cause material harm but can also damage the image of the student movement itself. Additionally, disregard for laws and regulations becomes a problem, especially when demonstrators violate assembly permits or engage in anarchic actions (Putra and Hijri, 2022). This can cause discomfort to the public and trigger repressive actions from authorities.

Given this reality, it is important to conduct an in-depth analysis of student involvement in major demonstrations, particularly over the past decade, to better understand the relationship between democracy education and political participation. This analysis will reveal how democracy education in educational institutions can influence student involvement in demonstrations and how these experiences contribute to the development of the Pancasila Student profile.

One key aspect of this analysis is evaluating the effectiveness of democracy education management. Democracy education management encompasses various strategies and approaches implemented in the learning process to ensure that students not only understand democratic concepts but also apply them in their daily lives (Gruessner, 2023). In this regard, it is essential to assess whether the approaches employed thus far have been effective in shaping students' political attitudes and how they contribute to their participation in democracy.

Moreover, this analysis will identify the challenges and opportunities in managing democracy education. Challenges may include a lack of practical engagement in democratic experiences, limited understanding of political processes, or difficulty balancing academic activities with political involvement (Devi, 2021). On the other hand, opportunities may include the development of curricula that are more responsive to contemporary issues, increased participation in simulations of political processes, and enhanced support for extracurricular activities related to democracy (Gruessner, 2023).

Method

This study employs a literature review aimed at deeply exploring issues related to democracy education and the Pancasila Student profile. The data sources include relevant literature and documents, such as books, journal articles, and educational regulations pertaining to the topic. In the next phase, the researcher examines the



phenomenon of student demonstrations over the past decade. Empirical data is drawn from reports published in mass media, particularly *Kompas* daily, which has accurately documented various student demonstrations in Indonesia. The analysis of these demonstration cases is conducted by identifying patterns, objectives, and key issues raised by students in the protests. The method of analysis used is content analysis to understand the discourse that has developed in the media related to these actions. The focus of the analysis is directed towards the relationship between the management of democracy education in schools or universities and student political participation in demonstrations. The results of the analysis are expected to provide insight into the role of democracy education management in shaping political awareness and student participation in social actions. Thus, this research contributes to understanding the dynamics of the student movement and its implications for the development of democracy in Indonesia, while also shaping the character of the Pancasila Student profile.

Results and Discussion

Results

Five Major Student Demonstrations in the Last Decade

This section presents the findings of the researcher on five major student demonstrations over the past decade, as reported by *Kompas* daily. This data serves as an empirical source for analyzing the relationship between the management of democracy education in schools or universities and student political participation in demonstrations. The results of this analysis are expected to provide insight into the role of democracy education management in shaping political awareness and student participation in social actions.

The first demonstration was the student protest against the Criminal Code Bill (RUU KUHP) becoming law and the revision of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) Law on September 19, 2019. These demonstrations occurred in various cities, such as Jakarta, Yogyakarta, and Malang. The protesters voiced three main demands during this demonstration: (1) Urging a delay and reconsideration of the problematic articles in the Criminal Code Bill; (2) Rejecting the government's and Parliament's revision of the KPK Law and any efforts to weaken anti-corruption measures in Indonesia; and (3) Opposing problematic articles in the Manpower Bill that did not favor workers (*Kompas*, September 20, 2019).

The second demonstration involved students protesting against the Job Creation Bill (RUU Cipta Kerja) on October 6, 2020. This demonstration was carried out by various universities in several major cities in Indonesia, including Semarang, Bandung, Banten, Surabaya, Makassar, Bekasi, Jakarta, Yogyakarta, and Malang. The event was marked by clashes between students and police, with instances of burning tires, damaging police vehicles, and demolishing government office gates. To disperse the crowd, the police used tear gas, water cannons, and other measures. There were three fundamental issues criticized in the Job Creation Bill: (1) Centralization issues resembling the New Order era, as the bill contains nearly 400 articles that transfer authority to the President through presidential regulations. (2) The Job Creation Law is considered anti-environment, as it includes articles that disregard the spirit of environmental protection, particularly regarding risk-based approaches and increasingly



limited public participation. (3) Issues related to agricultural liberalization, as the regulations provide no protection for farmers or domestic resources (Kompas, October 6, 2020).

The third demonstration was against extending the presidential term to three periods on April 11, 2022. This protest also took place in eight cities in Indonesia, including Jakarta, Makassar, Bangkalan (Madura), Palopo (South Sulawesi), Padang (West Sumatra), Bekasi, Kendari (Southeast Sulawesi), and Blitar. In addition to opposing the three-period presidency, students also protested against rising cooking oil prices and increases in fuel prices (BBM). The demonstration ended in chaos, marked by students throwing stones and the police using water cannons and tear gas to disperse the crowd (Kompas, January 11, 2022).

The fourth demonstration occurred on March 30, 2023, where students protested against the Job Creation Bill in Jakarta, led by the Chairman of the Student Alliance (BEM) of the University of Indonesia, Melki Sedek Huang. The students argued that the Job Creation Law predominantly harms workers. Five main points of concern were highlighted regarding this law: (1) The contract work system is not limited, allowing workers to be contracted for short periods without a clear timeframe, resulting in lost opportunities for permanent employment. (2) The outsourcing practice is expanding, as the Job Creation Law does not set criteria for jobs that can be outsourced. (3) Exploitative working hours, where the maximum limit for overtime has changed from 3 hours per day and 14 hours per week to 4 hours per day and 18 hours per week. This not only affects workers' health but also results in disproportionate overtime pay. (4) Reduced rights to leave and rest, as workers are granted rest only once a week. (5) Workers are vulnerable to termination (PHK), for instance, in cases of accidents, and their severance rights have been removed under the Job Creation Law (Kompas, March 30, 2023).

The fifth demonstration took place on August 22, 2024, where students protested against the revision of the Regional Election Law (UU Pilkada). Thousands of students in Jakarta, Semarang, Bogor, Surabaya, Malang, and Ambon staged simultaneous protests to oppose the revision of the Regional Election Law, which annulled the Constitutional Court's ruling regarding age limits and thresholds for regional leaders participating in elections. The bill is seen as paving the way for President Jokowi's youngest son, Kaesang Pangarep, to register as a candidate for the regional elections before turning 30. In Jakarta, demonstrators succeeded in breaching the gate of the House of Representatives (DPR) to meet with its leaders, while in other cities, the protests ended in clashes between police and students (Kompas, August 23, 2024).

Positive and Negative Impacts of Student Demonstrations

a. Positive Impacts

First, the development of analytical and critical thinking skills. Demonstrations have a positive impact on the development of students' analytical and critical thinking skills. When involved in demonstrations, students are confronted with various complex social, political, and policy issues (Jiwandono and Oktaviyanti, 2020). To effectively voice their opinions, students must conduct an in-depth analysis of these issues, understand the background, impacts, and seek relevant solutions. This process



encourages students to think critically, not only passively receiving information but also evaluating and questioning existing policies (Iqbal et al., 2022).

Second, the increase in social awareness. Demonstrations positively impact the increase in social awareness among students. By participating in demonstrations, students become more sensitive to social, political, and economic issues affecting the wider community (Nugraha and Nurkomala, 2023). They are not only fighting for their interests but also for the greater good, including the interests of marginalized or disadvantaged groups. Through direct involvement in social actions, students learn to understand the injustices that occur and how government policies can affect people's lives (Iye et al., 2020). This experience encourages students to be more concerned about their social environment and actively seek solutions. Demonstrations also provide opportunities for students to interact with various segments of society, broadening their understanding of different social realities (Nugraha and Nurkomala, 2023).

Third, the increase in political engagement. Demonstrations have a significant positive impact on increasing students' political engagement. Through participation in demonstrations, students learn about the political process and effective ways to voice their opinions (Ariesta and Rahmawati, 2022). Students become more aware of the political issues affecting society as a whole, especially regarding their political rights and how they can use those rights to influence public policy. This involvement in turn encourages students to actively participate in political discussions, both on and off campus (Ghofur et al., 2021).

b. Negative Impacts

First, violence and property damage. When demonstrations are not well-managed, there is a risk of increased violence both among demonstrators and with security forces (Ghofur et al., 2021). This violence can lead to injuries to participants or third parties not involved, creating an atmosphere of insecurity in society. Property damage, such as vandalism against buildings or vehicles, often occurs during heated actions, resulting in significant financial losses for the owners (Ariesta and Rahmawati, 2022). Furthermore, property damage can tarnish the image of the demonstration movement itself, shifting the focus away from the main issues raised. Experiences of violence and destruction can also create broader social tensions, undermining relationships between community groups and government authorities.

Second, the use of offensive language and defamation. One of the negative aspects that often occurs in student demonstrations is the use of offensive language and defamation (Ghofur et al., 2021). The use of harsh language in speeches or banners during demonstrations can damage the image of the movement and distract from the important issues raised (Gruessner, 2023). Such language not only reflects a lack of ethics in communication but can also exacerbate tensions between demonstrators and those with differing views. Additionally, acts of defamation, such as personally attacking individuals or institutions, can undermine the intentions and goals of the demonstrations (Bloom, 2024).

Third, disregard for laws and regulations. When demonstrators violate laws, such as failing to comply with permits or engaging in anarchic actions, they create conditions that can worsen the situation (Mietzner, 2020). These legal violations often lead to repressive actions from security forces, such as arrests or the use of force, which can escalate tensions and conflicts. Disregarding regulations can also negatively impact the



image of the demonstration movement, diverting attention from the main issues and reducing public support (Gruessner, 2023). Illegal actions, such as vandalism or destruction, create material losses and damage relationships between demonstrators and the general public.

Discussion

Integration of Democracy Education in the Merdeka Curriculum

Democracy education is a vital foundation for shaping a nation's character that possesses critical, caring, and actively participatory attitudes in social and political life. In the context of Indonesia, democracy education is crucial to support the formation of the Pancasila Student Profile, which emphasizes six main dimensions: faith and devotion to God Almighty, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical thinking, and creativity (Nurdyansah, 2022). In the Merdeka Curriculum, the integration of democracy education should be positioned as an inseparable part of efforts to produce a young generation prepared to face global challenges while remaining steadfast to the values of Pancasila.

Democracy not only teaches about formal mechanisms such as elections but also fosters democratic values such as respect for human rights, equality, and justice. The Pancasila Student Profile, with its emphasis on diversity, mutual cooperation, and critical thinking, is actually very much aligned with the objectives of democracy education (Nurhuda et al., 2023). An ideal Pancasila student is expected to think critically about the social and political situations they encounter, participate actively in decision-making processes, and appreciate diverse perspectives.

In the Merdeka Curriculum, the strengthening of democracy education can be realized through the development of critical and independent thinking skills, which are one of the main pillars. This curriculum provides greater freedom for students to explore knowledge more deeply through project-based approaches and contextual learning (Sabon et al., 2022). With this method, students are not only equipped with theoretical knowledge about democracy but are also invited to understand and experience democracy in everyday life, such as through class discussions, debates, and participation in social activities outside of school.

Democracy education within the Merdeka Curriculum can be integrated into various subjects, especially Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn) (Dhayinta et al., 2024). However, its integration should not be limited to the PPKn subject alone. Democracy education needs to be part of every aspect of school life so that democratic values can be well internalized by students.

First, project-based learning. The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes project-based learning, where students are invited to solve real problems faced by society (Dewi, 2022). In the context of democracy education, students can be given projects that involve social and political issues such as elections, public policy, or human rights. For example, students could organize an election simulation at school or design a public awareness campaign related to specific issues, which will train them to think critically, engage in healthy debate, and develop a sense of responsibility towards the community.

Second, critical and reflective learning. Democracy education should involve critical and reflective learning. In the Merdeka Curriculum, students are expected to develop critical reasoning skills, one of the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile (Rizki and Fahkrunisa, 2022). This means that students need to be guided to analyze



social and political events critically, for example by examining news or discussing government policies. They should also be encouraged to reflect on their roles as citizens in a democracy, including understanding their rights and responsibilities as part of a larger community.

Third, involvement in extracurricular activities. The Merdeka Curriculum also provides more room for the development of extracurricular activities as part of character building. Here, democracy education can be strengthened through activities such as debates, student organizations, or discussion forums (Saud and Margono, 2021). By engaging in these activities, students not only learn about the theory of democracy but also practice it directly in their daily lives. They learn about leadership, making collective decisions, and appreciating differing opinions within a group (Indrawan et al., 2020).

Fourth, the role of teachers as facilitators of democracy. Teachers in the Merdeka Curriculum play a very important role as facilitators. They are no longer the sole source of knowledge but act more as guides who help students discover their own knowledge (Marwanto, 2021). In the context of democracy education, teachers must be able to create a democratic classroom atmosphere where every student feels safe to express their opinions, appreciate differences, and actively engage in class discussions. Teachers should also encourage students to participate in activities related to democratic life, both in school and outside (Wijaya et al., 2024).

The integration of democracy education into the Merdeka Curriculum is not just a necessity but also a must to shape a young generation that is critical, responsible, and concerned about national and civic life (Isitianah, 2023). Through project-based approaches, reflective learning, and involvement in extracurricular activities, democracy education can become an integral part of creating an ideal Pancasila Student Profile. Moreover, with the presence of teachers as facilitators, democracy education will become increasingly relevant and have a tangible impact on building a more democratic and just Indonesia.

Strengthening Training and Practical Activities

Strengthening democracy education among students cannot be limited to theoretical knowledge in the classroom. Students need to engage directly in practical activities that provide them with real experiences of how democracy works. This highlights the importance of practice-based and participatory democracy training, which enables students to apply democratic values in everyday life (Setiawan, 2022). One concrete manifestation of democratic action is student demonstrations, which have become an important part of Indonesia's political history. Student demonstrations reflect their understanding of democracy, where they use their rights to voice opinions, critique government policies, and advocate for social change (Saud and Margono, 2021).

As previously explained, democracy training cannot be limited to theoretical discussions in the classroom. Democracy is about participation, the courage to speak out, and the ability to debate healthily. Therefore, democracy training should involve practical activities that allow students to learn firsthand how the democratic process works (Maksum, 2021). Activities such as election simulations, open debates, student organizations, and public discussions are some examples of training that provide firsthand experience of democratic principles.



Student demonstrations are a perfect example of practical activities that involve democracy. In demonstration actions, students not only learn about their rights and responsibilities as citizens but also experience the dynamics of democratic life, where differing opinions are natural and important (Savirani, 2020). They learn how to peacefully express opinions, organize actions, and navigate the political process involving various stakeholders, such as the government, security forces, and media.

Over the last decade, major demonstrations involving students in Indonesia have raised various social and political issues, ranging from corruption to economic policies. These demonstrations show that students have a strong political awareness and a desire to actively participate in the democratic process (Kadiyono, 2020). Their experiences in these demonstrations can be seen as practical democracy training, where they learn the importance of political engagement, mass organization, and effective advocacy strategies.

However, it is also important to recognize that democracy training through demonstrations does not always go smoothly. There are challenges and shortcomings as previously mentioned, such as the potential for violence or repression from authorities. Here, students also learn about the limitations of freedom in democracy, including their responsibilities to maintain order and respect the law (Saud and Margono, 2021). Therefore, demonstrations as part of democracy education should be accompanied by a deep understanding of the ethics of democracy, including how to participate without violating others' rights or undermining public interests.

In addition to demonstrations, student organizations on campus also serve as an important platform for training democratic skills (Nastiti, 2023). Within these organizations, students learn about leadership, collective decision-making, and healthy debate. They also learn how to build consensus, negotiate, and resolve conflicts (Kadiyono, 2020). All these skills are crucial in real democratic life.

For instance, the Student Executive Board (BEM) often serves as a means for students to voice their aspirations to both the campus authorities and the government. In this process, they learn how to design political agendas, communicate with stakeholders, and build networks with various community groups (Deryane, 2023). Organizations like BEM not only become places to learn democratic theory but also serve as laboratories for students to practice democracy directly.

Training through student organizations strengthens their ability to engage in demonstrations in a more strategic and organized manner (Nastiti, 2023). Students who are accustomed to organizational structures will be better prepared to face the political dynamics on the ground when they decide to participate in political actions, such as demonstrations. In other words, student organizations provide training that helps students develop the democratic skills necessary for real actions.

To ensure that democracy education is effective, such practical training needs to be integrated into higher education curricula. One way to do this is by introducing internship programs or direct involvement in political, social, or humanitarian activities (Kholid et al., 2019). Students can be invited to collaborate with government agencies, NGOs, or community organizations that are active in social and political issues. In this way, they not only gain theoretical knowledge but also practical skills necessary for democratic life.

Furthermore, the curriculum can include community-based projects, where students are invited to identify social problems around them and develop democratic solutions (Santoso, 2020). In this way, they learn that democracy does not only occur in



the political realm but also in everyday life, where they can contribute to creating positive social change.

Conclusion

The conclusions of this research emphasize that strengthening democracy education within the Pancasila Student Profile is highly relevant, especially through training and practical activities. The involvement of students in five major demonstrations in Indonesia over the last decade demonstrates that demonstrations are not merely forms of protest but also practical training for understanding democratic values such as freedom of expression, active participation, and policy advocacy. It is crucial to recognize this so that the demonstrations conducted by students become better organized and do not turn chaotic, which often leads to more negative impacts being reported than the aspirations they wish to convey.

Therefore, the integration of democracy education in the Merdeka Curriculum is crucial for equipping students with critical thinking skills and the ability to actively participate in democratic life. Through project-based learning and extracurricular activities, students are invited to engage directly with relevant social and political issues. Thus, democracy education becomes not only a theoretical discourse but also a tangible experience that shapes students into responsible and democratic agents of change.

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