

International Journal Social Sciences and Education (IJoSSE)
Volume 4, Number 2, 2023, pa. 144-154

THE IMPACT OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE OF DEMOCRACY ON THE COMPETENCE OF CITIZENS

Andi Achruh

Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin, Makassar, Indonesia
andi.achrur@uin-alauddin.ac.id

Mirwan Fikri Muhkam

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Bone, Watampone, Indonesia
Mirwan.fikrimuhkam@iain-bone.ac.id

Andi Aco Agus

Universitas Negeri Makassar, Makassar, Indonesia
Andi.aco.agus@unm.ac.id

Received : 12 Augustus 2023

Reviewed: 11-29 November 2023

Accepted: 04 December 2023

Abstract. This study aims to explore the values of the impact of the democratic publik sphere in the maturation of citizens. Democracy and citizenship are inseparable and closely related. Democracy is a system that is built that puts the will of the people (citizens) first. The transmission of citizenship itself is always associated with effective democratic citizens so that citizenship is also defined as an act of citizenship (*civic engagement*) that builds critical thoughts, democratic actions, and is participatory. This research method uses case studies to explore the values of the democratic publik sphere holistically. The results of the research are (1) The democratic public sphere is a forum for freeing ideas about contemporary social issues and encouraging citizens to take social action or solve social problems, (2) The democratic public space is a space in the process of internalizing civil society values such as tolerance, mutual cooperation, pluralism, and civility as well as respect for diversity. (3) The public sphere is an instrument for participant and democratic space that fosters brotherly values and the character of tolerance that leads to an atmosphere of peace in society, nation and state.

Keyword: *Publik Sphere, Democracy, Citizens*

Introduction

The peculiarities of democracy in Indonesia certainly cannot be separated from the state ideology as the people's perspective in carrying out a social and state activity first with its status as a political community or in Ben Anderson's terms as an imagined community, namely a

shadow community which certainly will not unite if one of them do not act as glue in the life of the nation.

The founding fathers realized that Indonesian society is very heterogeneous so that aspirations are very varied. Therefore, the state must be managed together by optimizing participation, one of which is by developing aspirational pathways that can be accessed by all people. However, the state must be managed together by optimizing participation because it has the potential to fall into conflict, riots, community wars, and will always be preoccupied with securing society, keeping society from order. In the journal (Rosada, 2018) it is explained that the only way to promote and maintain harmonious relations, cohesiveness and mutual trust between all different communities is participation and democracy.

The condition of Indonesian society has the potential to cause conflict with all the diversity that exists because the concept of democracy requires an educated society. The number of people who have not touched adequate education makes it possible not to get democratic education which has the potential to cause primordial views and it is easy to get propaganda so that differences in democracy can lead to division, hatred and polarization in society that continues to stay away from the value of harmony.

A civilized democratic public space is a hope in a country that adheres to a modern democratic system where the potential for polarization that leads to hatred is enormous, so public awareness is needed and state administrators in their role as solidarity makers are needed. The existence of space for the formation of a participatory and democratic forum through recess as a democratic public space is the focal point of research that examines its implications in the process of democratic character of citizens.

According to Hardiman (2010, pp. 10-11) public space is a forum in terms participation of citizen and public virtue which is formed because of respect for their rights as citizens. In other words, a democratic space for the community to bridge the public interest which includes creating public opinion based on deliberation to reach consensus without interference from personal, group or government interests, which in turn conveys aspirations to the government as the organizer of the government. Therefore, public space is projected to solve the problems of the general public and not for private purposes. Commitment in maintaining the originality of the democratic public space so that it is not used as a mere political tool or used as a tool to mobilize the masses for individual political interests, but as an instrument for channeling aspirations in solving social issues in society.

The presence of a democratic public sphere is an abstraction born of political sensitivity. In a cultural oration, culturalist Radhar Panca Dahana once said that culture has many doors, politics has one door. Therefore, culture is more flexible than politics. The term cultural approach is often believed to be more capable of overcoming the limitations that exist in the political approach so that cultural movements are broader in scope than political movements. Political positions that are able to influence culture so that humans will make decisions will ultimately influence the development of human culture and civilization (Alfian, 2016, p. 38).

According to Delanty that democracy consists of elements namely constitutionalism, pluralism, and citizenship. Of course, as a modern country, the constitution is the most important thing in the continuity of the state as the Indonesian constitution which contains the ideals and ideology of the state, the functions of state institutions as a guide for state administrators, as well as the rights and obligations of its citizens. Pluralism is also the most important thing present in a democracy. As Eck's view says that pluralism is not a gift but an achievement so it really requires the commitment of citizens, because competence without commitment will not be possible to create a consistency in realizing harmony. Finally, citizenship is defined as actions of citizenship (*civic engagement*) that can take part in government policies, both expressing constructive critical thinking, commitment in carrying out rights and obligations, and participation in political, social, and cultural activities.

From Delanty's view above, it can also be said that democracy and citizenship cannot be separated and are closely related. Democracy is a system that is built that puts the will of the citizen. *First*, while citizenship actions are needed so that democracy can live, it can even be said that the progress of a country is due to the active involvement of citizens in building their nation. Reinforced by the views of Branson & Quigley (1998) that civic competence is, among other things, first, civic knowledge which relates to citizens' understanding of all binding rules in terms of their rights and obligations as citizens. *Second*, civic skills whose emphasis is more on citizen actions or can be said to be participatory actions in terms of society, nation and state as a characteristic of democratic of citizens. *Third*, the character of citizens. In this case, of course, as a country that has instilled an ideology as a reflection of national identity, it must instill a character according to the distinctive character and style of the Indonesian nation, namely, a commitment to maintain harmony and be able to adapt its national life from all differences as well as characters that support the maintenance and development of the nation. development of constitutional democracy. From the citizenship competencies above, it can also be categorized as an element in the maturity of the democratic character of citizens because everything leads to the public aspect.

The public sphere has been defined by Jurgen Habermas (in Flew & Swift, 2015) as a space for our social life where public opinions can emerge which are formed to guarantee all citizens, such as guarantees of freedom of assembly and association and freedom to express and publish opinions on matters of public interest. Therefore, public space is a potentially very effective means for the growing democracy character of citizens.

Methodology Of Research

The research method used is a qualitative approach with a case study research strategy. The research subjects were members of the DPRD Makassar Makassar City who had served more than 1 period. The samples in this study were the chairman of the Makassar City DPRD, 3 (three) members of the Makassar City DPRD who designed the recess program as a democratic public space, and each of the 3 (three) constituents involved and became the driving force in the implementation of the democratic public space. located in Mariso and Manggala sub-districts, as

well as 2 (two) experts in the field of democracy education and an expert in socio-cultural (anthropology) who served as informants in strengthening the data

Research data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation which were then analyzed using the Milles and Huberman model. Data analysis techniques consist of data reduction, data presentation, and data verification (Miles & Huberman, 2012). After that, data validation was carried out using triangulation techniques from data sources and data collection techniques.

Result Of Research

The public space can come with many instruments, the opening of the faucet of democracy allows for activities to gather, associate and express opinions. Constitutionally, the container space in the formation of public space can be implemented through a program to absorb the aspirations of the people's representatives, known as recess. Recess is one of the vertical aspirations channeling upwards from the people to the government, either through visits by the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) to selected regions (dapils) to their constituents (Maharani, 2017).

As a room for discussion and a forum for conflict resolution, recess has transformed towards the development of citizen competencies that offer citizen intelligence because they can know the regulations in the state. Another thing is the expertise of citizens because it allows honing creativity in a community that is full of the principles of equality and kinship as well as the growth of the character of citizens because it can foster public trust and distance themselves from parochial characters because they already know that all social problems have solutions that are an obligation for state administrators. and become rights for citizens. As Niall Ferguson put it that "the success of a civilization is measured not only by its aesthetic achievements, but also by the duration and quality of life of its citizens." (Alfian, 2016, p. 38) In other words, through the recess instrument as a forum for problem solving, it can grow a civilized democratic system.

The existence of a democratic public space provided by members of the legislature to meet their constituents, which is termed the recess period, is utilized as best as possible, even though there are no specific guidelines or technical guidelines in the law on recess itself so that the democratic public space is developed by members of the Makassar City DPRD themselves. In selecting a sample from the population of Makassar City DPRD members, researchers chose DPRD members who had served more than 1 period to become informants in this study with consideration of maturity in carrying out their duties and functions as legislators at the regional level. All of the informants generally emphasized that the goals of opening democratic public spaces are in order to accommodate the aspirations of the community, preserve the value of local wisdom, resolve social problems, and strengthen the emotional relationship between DPRD members and constituents (consecutive district residents) as well as relationships between fellow communities so that harmony remains. protected from all differences in political choices and also a peaceful path for all disputes and arguments.

From extracting information by researchers, it can be categorized that if the recess is transformed into a democratic public space, it can provide political education to the community in order to realize a civilized democracy free from hatred or in other words become a mediation path in solving social problems, fostering trust in state administrators and become a catalyst in supporting the acceleration of positive development which is a mutual agreement.

Some indicators of the success of the democratic public space program in the growth of democratic maturation of citizens are as follows:

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Change</i>
Knowledge level	Increased knowledge of citizens in the recess program due to the presence of experts in terms of political education and democracy so as to increase understanding of the functions of DPRD members, duties and rights as citizens, their understanding of the benefits of ethical politics, and better understanding of service corridors in the Makassar City DPRD
Change of attitude	Changes in the attitudes and behavior of citizens, namely increasing public trust, awareness of diversity that gives birth to the value of civility for citizens (civic virtue), and the internalization of the values of tolerance, mutual cooperation, pluralism, and civility.
Changes in behavior	Changes in the behavior of residents, namely the stimulation of thoughts about social issues, the emergence of social sensitivity in terms of dealing with common problems in society, the tendency to always open up public spaces in the form of friendship in the mosque after Isha prayer time, increasing the spirit of mutual cooperation in the community, Environmental Security Posts (Poskamling) is more crowded than before, and it is not awkward for people to invite DPRD members to family parties.
Maturation of Citizen Democracy	Increasing democratic activities and not being easily influenced by news or information circulating without seeing and questioning the evidence in the democratic public sphere as well as growing competence, commitment, and confidence in association, gathering, and expressing opinions for common needs in society, nation and state.

Source: *Results of observations and interviews of researchers*

Freedom of Thought on Social Issues

In a journal (Muhkam, 2022) Socio-cultural competence offers national insight which is measured by the presence of a nursery between a pluralistic society (religion, ethnicity, and culture) with democratic civility. The importance of efforts to build social and cultural capital in order to bring life together through understanding socio-cultural values. So that with increasing social competence, citizenship plays an important role in growing democratic maturity and animates social sensitivity.

The process of maturation of democracy cannot run without room for citizen involvement. Civic engagement developed by Thomas Ehrlich (in Doolittle & Faul, 2013) as a process of believing that a person can and should make a difference in improving his or her community requires knowledge, skills, and values to make a difference. In other journals, civic engagement is defined by the conception of a good society and beliefs about how individuals should behave in order to increase the social capital of youth and reduce the shortage of skilled labor, thereby increasing the demographic bonus (Bhangaokar & Mehta, 2012). Therefore, through the instrument of public space democracy can foster social sensitivity about issues and problems that exist in society.

From the two views above, the author considers that there is a mutual connection which places civic involvement as very important because it matures humans in acting and improves skills by building communication in the community so that public space is a process of maturation of democracy and can increase the demographic bonus. As noted by Ramaley, that civic engagement depends on perspectives and interests as the concept of civic engagement is much broader, as follows: (Adler & Goggin, 2005)

- a. *Civic engagement as community service*, namely the involvement of citizens which is defined as the duty and obligation of the individual to embrace his civic responsibility so that he is active in participating, individually and with others in voluntary service activities.
- b. *Civic engagement as collective action*, namely citizen involvement which is defined as an activity where people come together in their roles as citizens. Here, an individual, through collective action influences the larger civil society.
- c. *Civic engagement as political involvement*, is the involvement of citizens which is defined as individual efforts in collective action to solve problems through political processes and paths that involve active participation and leadership in public life.
- d. *Civic engagement as social change*, is citizen involvement which is defined as participation in people's lives in order to help shape the future with social change.

From the description above, it shows that civic engagement places more emphasis on the aspect of individual collectivity involvement in terms of more positive social change. In other words, the existence of a democratic public space gives birth to social competence which emphasizes always looking for solutions to social problems. The involvement of citizens in the public sphere is an act of citizenship that requires active participation through deliberation in solving public problems or challenges so that it becomes an instrument in educating citizens so as not to silence social problems and generate shared sensitivity in overcoming them.

Citizen participation in democracy is defined as an activism. The activism activity in question is an activity that focuses on social issues (Perez et al., 2010). Meanwhile, according to

Boulianne (in Boulianne, 2016) that involvement cannot be defined narrowly in terms of campaign participation. In contrast, engagement can take the form of non-institutionalized activities, such as signing petitions or boycotting more appropriate for some issues of social injustice. Even more than that, according to Verb (in Jones, 2006) Volunteering in terms of exchanging energy and giving to others as values embedded in social life is part of increasing civic engagement. Therefore, the democratic public sphere is an excess in liberating ideas about social issues and fostering collective sensitivity in their resolution

Character Development of Civil Society

According to Azyumardi Azra in (Ismatul Izzah, 2018), civil society means more than just a pro-democracy movement, because it also refers to the formation of a quality and civilized society. Therefore, civil society leads to advanced or modern living conditions that remain embedded in social values that lead to wisdom in acting, which according to Nurcholish Nadjid's character implies tolerance, the willingness of individuals to accept various kinds of political views and social behavior.

There are 5 (five) positive characteristics in participation in democracy. The literature on democratic societies shows that each of the five characteristics is positively related to civic engagement, namely Trust, Competence, Connection, Character, and Caring (Kim et al., 2016). From the five characters above, it shows that democratic citizens are very positive things in building civilization and growing civil society because the characters shown are very in line with cultural values so that in their implementation it directs citizens who understand their rights and responsibilities. This is reinforced by the expert view that good citizens (to be good citizens), namely citizens who have civic intelligence, both intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually; have a sense of pride and responsibility (civic responsibility) and be able to participate in social and state life (civic participation) in order to grow a sense of nationality and love for the homeland (Wahab & Sapriya, 2011, p. 99).

From the description above, it shows that the involvement of citizens through democratic public spaces is more directed to character building that supports the conceptualization of a country in the form of participation in maintaining harmony over all differences and fostering a national spirit that has the character of gotong royong as a reflection of civil society.

From interviews with informants as public figures explained that the holding of democratic public spaces is sometimes carried out with the concept of a semi-formal event because it has become a tradition of the people of Makassar City in fostering the spirit of local wisdom, namely sipakalebbe (mutual respect), sibawange (reminding each other), and sipakatau (mutual respect). humanize each other). Therefore, according to the definition of civil society, it is a civilized society with all the local wisdom attached to itself and a nation that can interpret its life with all the diversity in society. Values such as sipakatau, sipakalebbe, and sipakalebbi are believed to foster moral commitment within oneself. In addition, it provides the concept of the Prophet's example, namely Amanah, Fatonah, Tabligh, and Siddiq. If we follow our political commitment, Rasulullah certainly aspires to a civil society life.

In the explanation of Habermas (in Adut, 2012) that the public space is access to the open public sphere which in principle benefits all citizens without being subject to coercion which is characterized by idealistic and normative elements, namely: (1) conditions of

citizenship or decency, (2) the unification of the public sphere with citizenship, and (3) ideal for broad and egalitarian participation. This is reinforced by the conception of Bjur and Estman (in Thoha, 2002, pp. 205-207) about the characteristics of civil society or citizens who have independence as the foundation for strengthening civil society institutions. Seeing the characteristics offered in participation in the democratic public sphere strongly supports the achievement of a civil society that has the determination to build with full civility and mutual understanding and respect by prioritizing the value of decency.

In a journal (Wajdi Ibrahim, 2012) it is explained that the background of civil society is the concept of the divine city, the city of civilization or the city community. On the other hand, the meaning of civil society is also based on the concept of al Mujtama 'al-Madani introduced by Prof. Naquib al-Attas explained that the principle of civil society is a community order that puts forward the value of tolerance, democratic or participatory citizens, civility with full wisdom and respect for diversity so that the value of wisdom is built through democratic public spaces such as mutual respect, reminding each other, and humanizing each other is a form of democracy that leads to the characteristics of civil society.

Another informant added in his explanation that the public space that is built must be based on wise values, especially now that the democratic system is more open which can instill the value of capitalism which is all because of money (materialistic). Therefore, the concept of public space must include religious elements because those values can make people understand the essence of politics, such as alluding to the history of Islam, both Sayyidina Umar and the Prophet Muhammad SAW. What is more important is teaching the value of *Siri'* or shame because in meetings in public spaces always make political contracts according to the wishes of the people so that in carrying out their positions they must fulfill promises and the growth of other values built is trust.

Peace Instrument

According to a member of the Makassar City DPRD as an informant, he acknowledged that public space is the center of life because through the implementation of democratic public spaces communication can be built and if communication is built there is a better life because of friendship so that values of brotherhood and a sense of tolerance are created between people. He added regarding the urgency of the public space, that in the middle of an urban area like Makassar City, it is very necessary because sometimes they do not know each other, so it is important to have a public space. Through that communication and intimate relationships can be built properly so that they can take care of each other in the sense of maintaining mutual security so that social justice can be realized. As Arkinson's view in (Umar, 2017) that peace will not exist in society if there is no justice, "*No Peace Without Justice*". The informant continued that the meaning of public space is a place to carry out moral obligations as politicians. Therefore, the public sphere of democracy is an education of peace that can foster a sense of brotherhood or in other words foster a sense of love for the homeland.

Tillman explains in (Supriyanto & Wahyudi, 2017) about the points of reflection of the character of tolerance that will lead to an atmosphere of peace in society, namely making a sense of peace as a goal, being open and receptive to differences, respect for individuals and each other, courage and sensitivity, the growth of love and affection, the ability to face difficult situations and be able to survive against conditions that are not liked. Therefore, communication

that is built through a democratic and participatory space fosters the value of brotherhood and the character of tolerance that leads to an atmosphere of peace in society, nation and state.

Through communication that is also built between the community and people's representatives, it becomes a bridge for the birth of educational policies that are more futuristic and anticipatory and able to consider aspects of the heterogeneity of Indonesian society so that the recess program or democratic public space becomes the right place or means to foster and instill values of peace and values. the noble values of living together in all differences in society (Umar, 2017).

In the view of John J. Patrick (in Winarmo, 2014, p. 178) provides an explanation that the act of citizenship (act of citizenship) in the common interest is an indicator of citizens who have good character or character in a democratic country including respecting and protecting the right of everyone, to participate responsibly in political life, always to set an example of democratic citizenship morals in society and to promote the common good. Therefore, it is very important to hold a meeting or public space in the community because it creates an atmosphere of harmony and a sense of peace due to the emergence of a spirit of protecting the rights of fellow citizens and being committed to maintaining moral values in society.

Conclusions

The process of growing the character of democracy cannot run without room for citizen involvement. Civic engagement which was developed as an effort to foster a participatory and democratic character. The democratic public sphere is a forum for freeing ideas about contemporary social issues and encouraging citizens to take social action or solve social problems. He realized the importance of building social and cultural capital in order to bring life together through understanding socio-cultural values. So that with increasing social competence, citizenship plays an important role in growing democratic maturity and animates social sensitivity.

A democratic public space is a space in the process of internalizing civil society values such as tolerance, mutual cooperation, pluralism, and civility as well as respect for diversity. As the principle of civil society is a community order that prioritizes the value of tolerance, democratic or participatory citizens, civilized with full wisdom and respect for diversity so that the value of wisdom is built such as mutual respect, reminding each other, and humanizing each other is a form of democratic civility that leads to characteristics of civil society that can give meaning to their lives both individually and in the community.

Through communication that is also built between the community and people's representatives, it becomes a public space, a space for political communication between the community and people's representatives and becomes a bridge for the birth of educational policies that are more futuristic and anticipatory and able to consider the heterogeneity of Indonesian society. Therefore, the democratic public space can foster the value of brotherhood and the character of tolerance that leads to an atmosphere of peace in society, nation and state.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the government, especially members of the Makassar City DPRD, academics, Makassar residents who are willing to be subjects and informants in this research. In addition, thanks to the assistance and friendliness given during the process of collecting research data, it is easy to complete the research according to the allotted time.

References

- Adler, R. P., & Goggin, J. (2005). What Do We Mean By “Civic Engagement”? *Journal of Transformative Education*, 3(3), 236–253. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541344605276792>
- Adut, A. (2012). A theory of the publik sphere. *Sociological Theory*, 30(4), 238–262. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275112467012>
- Bhangaokar, R., & Mehta, D. (2012). Youth Civic Engagement in India: A Case in Point. *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 24(1), 35–59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/097133361102400102>
- Boulianne, S. (2016). Online news, civic awareness, and engagement in civic and political life. *New Media and Society*, 18(9), 1840–1856. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444815616222>
- Doolittle, A., & Faul, A. C. (2013). Civic engagement scale: A validation study. *SAGE Open*, 3(3), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244013495542>
- Flew, T., & Swift, A. (2015). Engaging, Persuading, and Entertaining Citizens: Mediatization and the Australian Political Publik Sphere. *International Journal of Press/Politics*, 20(1), 108–128. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161214552500>
- Ismatul Izzah. (2018). Peran Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membentuk Masyarakat Madani. *Pedagogik : Jurnal Pendidikan*, 5(1), 50–68. <https://ejournal.unuja.ac.id/index.php/pedagogik/article/view/219>
- Jones, K. S. (2006). Giving and volunteering as distinct forms of civic engagement: The role of community integration and personal resources in formal helping. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 35(2), 249–266. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764006287464>
- Kim, Y. Il, Jang, S. J., & Johnson, B. R. (2016). Tying Knots With Communities: Youth Involvement in Scouting and Civic Engagement in Adulthood. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 45(6), 1113–1129. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764016634892>
- Maharani, D. (2017). Pelaksanaan Reses oleh Anggota Dprd Kota Batam Periode (2014-2019) Tahun 2015 (Studi Dapil 1: Kecamatan Bengkong dan Kecamatan Batu Ampar). *Jurnal Online Mahasiswa (JOM) Bidang*, 4(2), 1–11. <https://jom.unri.ac.id/index.php/JOMFSIP/article/view/14632>
- Muhkam, M. F. (2022). *PENUMBUHAN MODAL SOSIAL DAN BUDAYA (SOSIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL) MELALUI PEMBELAJARAN PENDIDIKAN KEWARGANEGARAAN*. 6(1), 414–421.

- Perez, W., Espinoza, R., Ramos, K., Coronado, H., & Cortes, R. (2010). Civic engagement patterns of undocumented Mexican students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 9(3), 245–265. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1538192710371007>
- Rosada, D. (2018). *Model Of Democracy In Indonesia*. 129(Icsps 2017), 102–105. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icsps-17.2018.22>
- Supriyanto, A., & Wahyudi, A. (2017). Skala karakter toleransi: konsep dan operasional aspek kedamaian, menghargai perbedaan dan kesadaran individu. *Counsellia: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, 7(2), 61. <https://doi.org/10.25273/counsellia.v7i2.1710>
- Umar, M. (2017). Internalisasi Nilai Kedamaian Melalui Pendidikan Kedamaian Sebagai Penguatan Pembangunan Karakter Pada Masyarakat Heterogen. *WASKITA: Jurnal Pendidikan Nilai Dan Pembangunan Karakter*, 1(1), 77–98. <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.waskita.2017.001.01.5>
- Wahab, A. A., & Sapriya. (2011). *Teori dan Landasan Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan*. Alfabeta.
- Wajdi Ibrahim, F. (2012). Pembentukan Masyarakat Madani Di Indonesia Melalui Civic Education. *Jurnal Ilmiah Didaktika*, 13(1), 130–149. <https://doi.org/10.22373/jid.v13i1.469>