



Deliberation and Consensus as the Implementation of Pancasila Democracy

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Abstract. The democracy of the Indonesian nation is based on deliberation and consensus, not liberal democracy or communist democracy. Indonesian democracy, also known as Pancasila democracy, is rooted in collective life carried out for the common good, not for the interests of groups or individuals. This research aims to explain that deliberation and consensus are the implementation of democratic values in life. A fundamental skill in conducting deliberation and consensus is effective communication. Through communication, any issue can be discussed and a consensus can be reached. This study uses a literature review approach. The results of this research show that the implementation of democracy in Indonesia occurs through deliberation and consensus, which is implemented through effective communication skills. It is effective because it always upholds the values of divinity, humanity, and nationalism, in order to achieve a socially just Indonesian society. There is a need for a reconceptualization of the deliberation and consensus model in the Indonesian state, starting with who is eligible to be a participant in deliberation, as well as the communication requirements that must be followed in the deliberation and consensus process.

Keywords: Democracy, communication, deliberation-consensus

1. Introduction

In many districts, cities, and provinces in Indonesia that conduct direct regional head elections, problems arise, and horizontal conflicts become inevitable. The losing side appeals to the Constitutional Court, while the winning side resists. Many community organizations and political parties have fractured due to the division between the majority and the minority. This situation is also accompanied by rising levels of corruption among the political elites in power. Identity politics have contributed to national fragmentation and threaten the democratic life of Indonesia [1].

Given these facts, a simple question arises: Does our nation truly embrace democracy? Why does democracy seem to lead life in the wrong direction instead of improving it? Or is it our democratic system that is flawed? The answer can be found in the national philosophy, which is also the foundation of the state and the nation's ideology, namely Pancasila, particularly the principle of "Democracy Led by the Wisdom of Deliberation/Representation." This explains that our democracy is not a direct democracy but an indirect or representative democracy. Decision-making is not based on majority votes but rather through deliberation to reach a consensus.

Deliberation and consensus are rooted in customary law. In this context, decision-making through deliberation is based on tolerance, where the common good is prioritized over individual or group interests. The concept of "deliberation and consensus" emerges from Indonesia's cultural traditions[11] and it tends to be a lengthy process that is relatively difficult to implement in contemporary politics, except in small-scale issues.

This deeply philosophical concept of "deliberation and consensus" has yet to be translated into clear indicators for its implementation in national life. Therefore, it is not surprising that there has been a cultural shift in democracy from deliberation and consensus towards a Western-style democracy that emphasizes decision-making through majority votes for the sake of effectiveness and efficiency.

This paper is thus important as it attempts to provide an overview of how the deliberation and consensus model can be applied, who should be allowed to participate in the process, and how the sovereignty of the people, guided by the wisdom of deliberation and representation, can be effectively realized in our nation.

2. Methods

This study adopts a literature review methodology, which involves a comprehensive analysis of pertinent literary sources to investigate the application of deliberative democracy grounded in *musyawarah* and *mufakat* as a manifestation of Pancasila values. This approach enables an in-depth examination of the philosophical, cultural, and historical underpinnings of Indonesia's democratic framework, as well as the identification of challenges and opportunities associated with its implementation in societal and national contexts. By synthesizing insights from academic literature, historical documents, and theoretical frameworks in communication and democracy, this study provides a nuanced understanding of how *musyawarah* and *mufakat* can serve as a culturally congruent democratic solution.

3. Result

3.1 The Integrity of Humanitarian Values in Pancasila

The humanitarian model proposed [16] is intriguing. He explains that humans, in their entirety, consist of five elements, which are developed sequentially: 1) the body or physical form, 2) intellect, 3) communication, 4) ethics, and 5) piety. When a human is born, the first element is the physical body. As the body develops, the intellect also begins to emerge and evolve. This is evident when the senses—vision, hearing, smell, and touch—allow an individual to respond to the world around them, making sounds, crying, smiling, laughing, and moving. As the body and intellect develop, communication follows as the next stage. The questions "What is this?" and "What is that?" often characterize the communication development with their closest caregiver, such as the mother or family. From this point, a human begins to understand the world. The better the communication, the broader the reach, not only through the mother or close family but also through the surrounding environment, whether formal or informal. Thus, consciously or unconsciously, humans are forming their own ethics, which become the values that guide their life. The final stage after ethics is piety—living one's life according to ethical values based on divine principles (spiritual power).

Regarding the weight of each element in the process of humans achieving complete humanity, Mubiar assigns the following percentages: 63% for the body/physical element, 22% for intellect, 10% for communication, 3% for ethics, and 1% for piety. However, according to the ideal model of individual humanity described above, the weighting of these elements is the opposite of what one might expect. Mubiar explains that the order of these values and weights is not from 1) body, 2) intellect, 3) communication, 4) ethics, and 5) piety, but rather the reverse order: 1) piety (63%), 2) ethics (22%), 3) communication (10%), 4) intellect (3%), and 5) body/physical (1%). This can be illustrated as shown in the diagram on Figure 1.

Effort		Human elements (Individual)	Value	
Order	Percentage		Percentage	Order
5	1%	Faithfulness	63%	1
4	3%	Ethics	22%	2
3	10%	Communication	10%	3
2	22%	Reasoning	3%	4
1	63%	Body	1%	5

Fig. 1. Model of Ideal Humanity on an Individual Scale According to the Phenomenon of Effort and Its Value

It becomes even more interesting when the ideal model of humanity on an individual scale, as described above is applied to a larger scale, namely that of the nation's society. As shown in the diagram on Figure 2.

Effort		Human elements		Value	
Order	Percentage	Individual	National Society	Percentage	Order
5	1%	Faithfulness	God, the almighty	63%	1
4	3%	Ethics	Humanity, the civilized	22%	2
3	10%	Communication	Deliberation, consensus	10%	3
2	22%	Reasoning	Economy, Fairness	3%	4
1	63%	Body	Indonesia, the one	1%	5

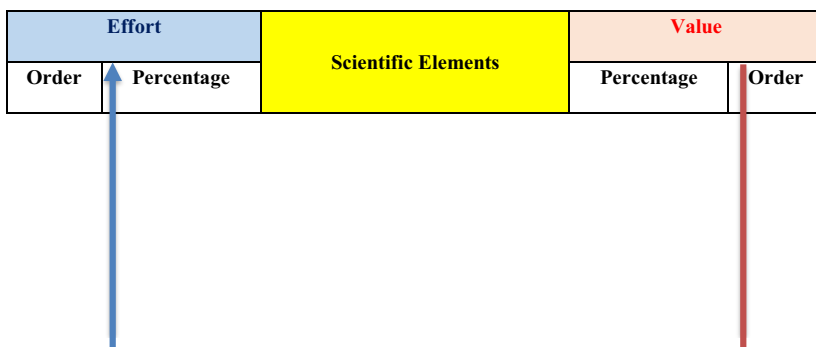
Fig. 2. Ideal Human Values in the Individual and National Society Scale

When humans first exist in the form of their body or physical being, on the scale of Indonesian society, it gives birth to the concept of the "One Indonesia" nation. The development of

human intellect on a national scale is analogous to the development of the economy, with Indonesia striving for "a just economy." As humans continue to evolve, communication skills become increasingly essential in life. On a national scale, "deliberation and consensus" serve as the foundation for communication in Indonesia to resolve various national issues. Further, as humans develop ethics in their lives, on a national scale, Indonesia achieves "a just and civilized humanity." When humans reach the level of piety in their lives, on the national scale, Indonesia embodies "the One and Only God."

From the explanation above, we can see that the ideal model of humanity on an individual scale aligns with that of the national society. For Indonesia, regardless of the order of these elements, it demonstrates the perfection of the ideal model of humanity reflected in "Pancasila." The principles of Pancasila are interconnected, continuous, and mutually influential. According to [9], the formulation of Pancasila is hierarchical and pyramidal. This explains that the First Principle: "Belief in the One and Only God" encompasses and inspires the principles of "Just and Civilized Humanity," "The Unity of Indonesia," "Democracy Led by Wisdom in Deliberation/Representation," and "Social Justice for All Indonesians." The Second Principle: "Just and Civilized Humanity" is encompassed and inspired by the First Principle: "Belief in the One and Only God," and influences the principles of "The Unity of Indonesia," "Democracy Led by Wisdom in Deliberation/Representation," and "Social Justice for All Indonesians." The Third Principle: "The Unity of Indonesia" is encompassed and inspired by the principles of "Belief in the One and Only God" and "Just and Civilized Humanity," and influences the principles of "Democracy Led by Wisdom in Deliberation/Representation" and "Social Justice for All Indonesians." The Fourth Principle: "Democracy Led by Wisdom in Deliberation/Representation" is encompassed and inspired by the principles of "Belief in the One and Only God," "Just and Civilized Humanity," and "The Unity of Indonesia," and influences the principle of "Social Justice for All Indonesians." The Fifth Principle: "Social Justice for All Indonesians" is encompassed and inspired by the principles of "Belief in the One and Only God," "Just and Civilized Humanity," "The Unity of Indonesia," and "Democracy Led by Wisdom in Deliberation/Representation" [9].

If we examine this further, the ideal human model on both the individual scale and the national society scale aligns with the values of Indonesian society. Therefore, we can conclude that Pancasila, as the nation's philosophy, the foundation of the state, and the ideology for Indonesia, reflects the perfection of the ideal life for Indonesian society. However, from a scientific perspective, the five elements of humanity can be visualized in the diagram on Figure 3.



5	1%	Religion	63%	1
4	3%	Culture	22%	2
3	10%	Social Politics	10%	3
2	22%	Economy	3%	4
1	63%	Science and technology	1%	5

Fig. 3 The five elements of humanity

In the context of scientific knowledge, from the perspective of efforts, the sequence is: 1) Science and Technology, 2) Economy, 3) Socio-Culture, 4) Culture, and 5) Religion. Meanwhile, from the perspective of values, the order becomes: 1) Religion, 2) Culture, 3) Socio-Culture, 4) Economy, and 5) Science and Technology. Each perspective carries its own weight and opposing viewpoints. This shows us that the five elements of Pancasila, as the ideal model of humanity for the Indonesian nation, possess universal values in terms of science.

The values of Pancasila live and develop in global society. This can be proven by the current developments in science. If we recognize that the development of knowledge in socialist and liberal countries tends to be anti-value/God, then in the 2000s, the theory of Spiritual Quotient (SQ) emerged, discovered by Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall, both from Harvard University and Oxford University, through very comprehensive research. Several scientific pieces of evidence about spiritual intelligence were presented by Zohar and Marshall in their book *SQ, Spiritual Quotient, The Ultimate Intelligence*. Two of the key pieces of evidence are as follows:

First, the research of neurologist Michael Persinger in the early 1990s, and more recently in 1997 by neuroscientist VS Ramachandran and his team from California University, discovered the existence of the "God Spot" in the human brain, which is built-in as a spiritual center located at the front of the brain. Second, the research of Austrian neuroscientist Wolf Singer in the 1990s, in his paper *The Binding Problem*, showed that there is a neural process in the human brain that focuses on efforts to unify and give meaning to our life experiences. A neural network that literally "binds" our experiences together for a "more meaningful life."

Another significant fact is presented by Ian Mitroff and Elizabeth Denton in their work *A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America: A Hard Look at Spirituality, Religion, and Values in the Workplace*, where they state: "Most of the executives defined spirituality in much the same way—not as religion, but as 'the basic desire to find purpose and meaning in one's life'." This further strengthens the SQ phenomenon, which is slowly but surely occupying the human heart, even for those who are not spiritualists[2].

Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall define SQ as the intelligence to address issues of meaning or value. It is the intelligence to place our behavior and life in a broader and richer context of meaning, the intelligence to judge that the actions or life paths of an individual are more meaningful than others. Although initially, this theory was not related to God (religiosity), Zohar and Marshall eventually acknowledged that it is impossible for the concept of spirituality not to be based on values of divinity. This also proves that Western secularism is merely a political claim aiming to distinguish the existence of Western countries from other countries in the world. However, in reality, values of divinity have developed rapidly in both liberal and socialist countries that initially were anti-God.

This proves that the values of divinity, as accommodated in religion, are a fundamental necessity in human life. It is from religion that cultural identities are shaped by every human group, and it is religion that provides guidance on how humans should live their social and political lives within a state, achieve and enjoy welfare from their economic activities, and develop their knowledge for the benefit of all humankind.

3.2 Pancasila Democracy and the System of Deliberation and Consensus

To truly grasp the deepest meaning of the fourth principle of Pancasila, we must reach the philosophical meaning contained within it, understand the background of its formulation, and the underlying spirit of its creation. The hierarchical nature of Pancasila, according to Kaelan, explains that Indonesia's democracy is a form of democracy that is led by wisdom and guided by deliberation and representation, based on values of divinity, humanity, and unity, with the goal of achieving social justice for all Indonesian citizens. This shows that Indonesia's democracy is not the individualistic democracy of the West, which claims that the voice of the people (the individual) is the voice of truth (the voice of God). This is also reflected in the fact that in such democracies, the victory often rests with the majority (single majority), which leads to the marginalization of the minority (the tyranny of the minority)[3].

Our democracy, based on deliberation and consensus (collectivism), is founded on people's sovereignty led by wisdom. Every decision is made based on the best reasoning, underpinned by the values of divinity and humanity, within the framework of a unitary state with social justice. As such, every policy is crafted with wisdom and prudence for the benefit of all Indonesian citizens.

To understand the philosophical meaning of our people's sovereignty more deeply, it is important to bring in the key thinkers of Pancasila's fourth principle. According to Mr. Muh. Yamin, during his oral presentation in the first BPUPKI session on May 29, 1945, documented by the[17], the term "Peri Kerakyatan" (the People's Welfare) contains three key concepts: Deliberation, Representation, and Wisdom.

- a. *Deliberation*: Inspired by Surah As-Syura, verse 38, which reads "They consult on every matter among themselves," this command is very clear. Historically, during the time of the Prophet and the four Caliphs, deliberation was carried out excellently. With this principle, the people or their representatives could contribute to the formation and execution of state policies. Deliberation becomes powerful because it opens opportunities for those with interests to engage, enhances citizens' responsibilities, and fosters a commitment to shared obligations.

Three fundamental aspects of deliberation contribute to the progress of the people living in a nation under the protection of divine greatness: 1) through deliberation, humans refine their struggle and work on the path of divinity by opening minds in mutual discussions; 2) deliberation ensures that the nation is not burdened by one individual or one set of ideas. Instead, it is shared by all groups, forming a united body where each part fulfills its duty as part of the whole; 3) deliberation reduces or eliminates mistakes in thought or action, guiding the nation to right actions and eliminating confusion.

The goodness of deliberation has been practiced in society since the era of the four Caliphs and later integrated with customary law — the union of tradition with religious command.

- b. *Representation*: Based on customary law, representation is a binding force in society across Indonesia, establishing a permanent foundation for the state's organization. In Indonesian civilization, deliberation and representation are led by wisdom, where deliberations or meetings are held with deep insight. Representation strengthens the legal bonds between societal groups, guiding national governance from the lower to the higher levels of government.
- c. *Wisdom*: Rationalism, changes in customs and society, the desire for surrender, and rationalism as the dynamic force of society.

According to Sukarno in his speech on June 1, 1945, in the BPUPKI session, he explained the type of democracy adopted by Indonesia: "...If we seek democracy, it should not be the Western kind but one rooted in deliberation that gives life, namely, *political-economic democracy* that brings social welfare! The deliberative body we create should not merely represent political democracy but should be one that, together with the people, realizes two principles: *political justice* and *social justice*...I am a Democrat because I am a Muslim, I seek consensus, and I call for each head of state to be elected. Does Islam not say that leaders, whether caliph or amirul mu'minin, must be chosen by the people?"[19].

This explains that Sukarno viewed Indonesia's democracy not as Western democracy but as a deliberation-based democracy grounded in divinity. This was formalized in the Pancasila as the principle of consensus or democracy. Sukarno concluded the principle of an independent Indonesia with a commitment to faith in the One and Only God.

Sukarno further clarified this in his work *Di Bawah Bendera Revolusi* (1963), where he wrote: "Sociodemocracy arose from socio-nationalism. It is a democracy rooted in both the political and economic spheres, aiming for political order and economic prosperity. This type of democracy does not serve the interests of a small elite but the entire community. It is a true democracy that seeks political and economic success."

According to Hatta, there are at least three sources that fuel the ideals of democracy in the hearts of the Indonesian people, especially among the leaders of the national movement. First, the tradition of collectivism from village deliberations. Second, the teachings of Islam, which demand divine truth and justice in society, as well as brotherhood among humans as God's creatures. Third, the Western socialist ideology, which attracted the attention of the national movement leaders due to its support for humanitarian principles that they advocated for and made their goals.

Thus, the ideal model of democracy is briefly explained by Bung Hatta [21] as follows:

The state must be in the form of a Republic based on the sovereignty of the people. However, the concept of popular sovereignty understood and propagated within the national movement differs from Rousseau's conception, which is individualistic in nature. The sovereignty of the people created by Indonesia is rooted in their own social interactions, which are characterized by collectivism. Indonesian democracy must also evolve from the "original" Indonesian democracy. The national spirit, which grew as a reaction to Western imperialism and capitalism, further strengthened the desire to find the foundations for a national state that would be built within its own society.

The attitude in the decision-making system based on deliberation and consensus is tolerance, meaning that each individual and group will respect the opinions of others. For these individuals or groups, there is no imposition of will or desire, even if they are in the minority[15]. The goal of deliberation is to achieve consensus, which is based on common interests and the fundamental values of Pancasila.

One of the weaknesses of this system is that decision-making through deliberation can be lengthy (prolonged), which is quite natural because decisions are made by considering the best thoughts for the common good, for the sake of collective success. From this explanation, the differences between Pancasila democracy (deliberation – consensus) and Western democracy can be clearly illustrated, as seen in the table 1.

Table 1. Matrix of Differences Between Consensus-Based Democracy and Liberal Democracy

No.	Consensus-Based Democracy	Liberal Democracy
1.	Nature: Collectivism	Nature: Individualism

2.	Victory: Shared victory	Victory: Single majority (victory of the majority or most votes)
3.	Objective: Advocates for collective interests	Objective: Advocates for group or individual interests
4.	Truth: Collective truth based on divine principles	Truth: Majority truth, leading to minority tyranny
5.	Philosophical Basis: Power is guided by divine blessings and noble aspirations, emphasizing wisdom and human values in decision-making.	Philosophical Basis: "The voice of the people is the voice of God," where majority rule becomes the ultimate authority.
6.	Process: Takes time to ensure wise and collective outcomes, involving deep thought and consensus based on ethical and rational deliberation.	Process: Quick decisions often made by voting (yes/no or candidate selection), but without guaranteed wisdom or collective benefit.
7.	Thought Approach: Idealistic	Thought Approach: Pragmatic
8.	Speakers: Statesmen or thinkers with deep philosophical understanding of their proposals.	Speakers: Anyone capable of presenting positivistic or logical arguments.
9.	Attitude: Tolerance	Attitude: Win or lose mentality

Source : Y. Kardiman, 2024

The issue we face today is that the implementation of democracy in Indonesia has become entangled in the framework of Western democracy, which prioritizes individual interests. This is evident in the decision-making processes within deliberative bodies at both regional and national levels, as well as in local and central governments, which predominantly rely on majority voting. Even in educational environments, schoolchildren are taught that this system is the best approach to decision-making for the nation and society, implicitly reinforcing this belief.

Currently, we are confronted with a deeply concerning reality: in villages, districts, cities, and provinces across Indonesia, conflicts frequently arise during decision-making processes, whether for policies or leadership elections. This is a direct result of the majority voting system. Integrity is at risk, as political parties at regional and national levels often face internal disputes during congresses or deliberations, driven by this voting system. I firmly believe that this nation cannot endure for long if a system misaligned with its cultural identity continues to be upheld.

As emphasized by our founding fathers, genuine consensus (*musyawarah-mufakat*) was historically practiced in Indonesian communities—within households, religious gatherings, and communal events. These instances of consensus were deeply rooted in a familial (collectivist) system, where every individual willingly shared responsibility for collective well-being.

There is an urgent need to reimagine and redefine Indonesia’s democracy, which has strayed far from its roots. A robust formula must be developed to establish a representative system and a consensus-based deliberation framework that can be implemented effectively and equitably for all Indonesian citizens.

3.3 The Pattern of Consensus in Communication

The concept of deliberation essentially revolves around communication methods. The rationality of ideas becomes evident and acceptable to others when communicated effectively. Good communication occurs when the communicator understands the psychological needs of the audience. The concept being communicated and the ethics of communication are fundamental [6]. A communicator may possess brilliant ideas, but if poorly conveyed, the audience may reject them. Conversely, an average idea, when communicated ethically and in a manner that pleases the audience, is more likely to gain acceptance. Thus, consensus-based communication relies on presenting the best ideas, delivered with ethical and effective communication methods[4].

In deliberation and consensus) participants must possess a mature level of interdependence. This aligns with Steven R. Covey's concept in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* [5], which explains human maturity as a continuum from dependence to independence, and finally, to interdependence.

According to Covey, interdependence signifies a process or condition where individuals have achieved personal maturity and independence. Independent individuals understand themselves, have proactive values, a clear vision, and focused goals, achieving inner peace (personal victory). Such individuals seek the next stage of maturity: fostering interdependence. This requires adopting a win-win mindset, focusing not only on personal interests but also on shared victories. They must develop the ability to understand others first before seeking to be understood, grounded in tolerance, empathy, unity, and egalitarianism.

At this stage, individuals embody comprehensive human values—divine ethics and principles expressed through effective communication skills. With a strong foundation of reason, they work collaboratively to achieve collective goals and shared well-being. Covey calls this synergy, while Soekarno referred to it as Indonesia's true cultural identity, "Gotong Royong" (mutual cooperation) or "Udunan" in Sundanese culture[16].

3.4 Consensus as the Foundation of Indonesian Democracy

According Kardiman [10], Deliberation-consensus, as the basis of Indonesian democracy, can be developed through the following patterns:

1. *Participants' Independence and Maturity:* Participants must have high levels of independence, guided by proactive principles, self-awareness (rational thinking), imagination linked to vision, creativity, and conscience aligned with life principles. For Indonesians, these principles are deeply rooted in divinity.

2. *Comprehensive and Universal Thinking*: Participants must think broadly and universally, focusing not on personal victories but on collective success during deliberations.
3. *Communication Skills*: Participants should possess the ability to communicate, discuss, exchange ideas, and be open to giving and receiving input. Listening skills are vital, not only based on tolerance but also on the need for others' ideas to refine collective concepts.
4. *Synergy*: Participants should be capable of working collaboratively with diverse individuals. They must leverage their strengths and recognize others' advantages as assets to achieve consensus.
5. *Commitment to the Consensus Process*: Participants must be willing to engage in a sometimes lengthy, consistent process to achieve the best collective outcomes, making them deserving of being called "noble individuals."

Achieving participants with such qualifications is no easy task, particularly in the rapidly evolving Indonesian society. Moreover, the current democratic climate in Indonesia often does not allow for the application of Deliberation-consensus due to increasing political complexities. In addition to challenges with political participants, the growing number of choices makes decision-making highly intricate. Consequently, mechanisms beyond Deliberation-consensus, such as majority voting, are sometimes necessary to provide faster and more efficient solutions.

Despite these challenges, the fundamental concept of Deliberation-consensus remains an invaluable cultural root of Indonesia. The author is optimistic that patterns can be developed to restore Indonesia's democracy to its true identity. As of this writing, the author remains committed to advancing consensus-based frameworks applicable to Indonesia's societal and governmental life as an effective solution for resolving conflicts[20].

Various approaches demonstrate that Pancasila embodies comprehensive human values, not only at the individual level but also on a national and global scale. The integrity of Pancasila lies in its interconnected, mutually reinforcing, and synergistic values.

The democracy practiced by Indonesia is people's sovereignty guided by wisdom through deliberation/representation. It is a democracy rooted in consensus-based decision-making, emphasizing collectivism for the common good and shared success. Power is guided by divinity (*Nomoism*), providing a framework of wisdom and discernment for humanity to navigate life. The deliberation process may take time, often requiring extended discussions to achieve wise and thoughtful outcomes. This rigor ensures the best decisions for collective interests, relying on rational thought, noble reasoning, and conscience. Thus, participants in the deliberation process must be thinkers or statesmen with deep philosophical understanding and value-based insights.

Although consensus-based deliberation is challenging to implement in national governance and public life—except in smaller-scale groups—the foundational idea deliberation and consensus should be preserved and continuously developed to adapt to broader contexts.

This emphasis is justified by history, as key decisions such as determining Indonesia's president, founding principles, and national constitution were achieved through deliberation. This legacy represents a significant asset in fostering Indonesia's democratic identity and practice.

4. Conclusion

Pancasila democracy prioritizes deliberation and consensus over majority rule, reflecting collectivism and shared interests rather than individualism. This democratic model is founded on the principles of divinity, humanity, and nationalism, aiming to achieve social justice for all citizens. The paper highlights the importance of effective communication, tolerance, and interdependence in the deliberation process, which ensures that decisions reflect the collective good and ethical considerations. It also calls for redefining Indonesia's democratic framework to align with its cultural and philosophical identity. However, the studies also acknowledges challenges in implementing deliberation and consensus in modern governance, where decision-making often adopts majority voting for efficiency. Despite these difficulties, the authors argue that the core values of Pancasila—embedded in Indonesian traditions and supported by universal principles—should guide the nation's democratic practices. They advocate for revitalizing these principles to address the growing political complexities while preserving the spirit of collectivism and mutual cooperation, which are essential to Indonesia's cultural heritage.

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