

THE CRUCIAL DEMOCRACY IN THE EYES OF ISLAM

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Abstract

Democracy is not something strange to talk about in the world of politics. Democracy is a system of government that is widely used in a country, as in Indonesia. Democracy has undergone many changes from time to time to adapt to the era, and there are various types of views from various sides. For Example, democracy in the Islamic view. Islam certainly has many views on everything; the Qur'an or Koran is a Muslim's Qibla regarding all of their aspects of life and also the problems that occur in their lives. Some people debate whether democratic values such as individual freedom, equal rights, and elections are in line with Islamic teachings. Implementation of democracy in Muslim-majority countries often faces challenges, such as internal conflict, political instability, and the emergence of extremist groups. The purpose of this article is to learn more about democracy from Islam's perspective; what is Islam's view of democracy? The importance of democracy from an Islamic perspective. And also, how do we implement democracy according to Islam? The method that we used for this research was library research; we used some literature that is relevant to this issue.

Keywords: *Democracy, Indonesia, Islam, Qur'an.*

Introduction.

Democracy is a government system adopted by many countries, one of which is Indonesia. Indonesia itself has experienced many changes in the government system since independence. Even before independence, Indonesia had various government systems, such as a royal government system. Nowadays, Indonesia has succeeded in combining Islam and

democracy. Many experts credit the success of creating democracy based on Islam positively. Such as Abdurrahman Wahid, Amien Ra'is, and many more.

In the Western tradition, democracy emphasizes that the people are the 'government' for themselves, while elected representatives act as responsible overseers. This is why legislative bodies exist.

Islam also emphasizes the importance of this. In the Quran, Surah Ali-Imran verse 104, it is explained that we should encourage good deeds and forbid evil; this is known as 'amar ma'ruf nahi munkar.' If this principle is applied, it will create a prosperous society.

The question is, what is Islam's view of democracy? The importance of democracy from an Islamic perspective. And also, how do we implement democracy according to Islam? Is it true that reality empirically, Muslim society is not compatible with democracy, according to Samuel Huntington and F. Fukuyama?

METHOD

The method that we used for this article was the library research method. Library research gathers information by collecting some data from the literature.

The procedure for carrying out library research can be carried out using the following steps:

1. Determining general ideas about the research topic;
2. Look for supporting information;
3. Focusing and organizing reading material;
4. Search and find the necessary materials;
5. Reorganize materials and make research notes;
6. Revise and enrich reading material;
7. Reorganize materials/notes and start writing.

The Definitions Of Democracy.

Etymologically, the term democracy comes from Greek; which consists of two words, “*Demos*” means people or inhabitants of a place, and “*Cratos*” means power or sovereignty.

So, linguistically, *demos-cratein* or *demos cratos* means the system of government where sovereignty lies in the hands of the people (Azra 2000: 110)

It reconceptualizes the quality of democracy by equating it with democracy pure and simple, positing that democracy is a synthesis of political freedom and political equality, and spelling out the implications of this substantive assumption.

There are many definitions put forward by experts about democracy, Joseph A. Schumpeter defines democracy as an institutional arrangement where individuals gain the power to make political decisions through a competitive struggle for the people's votes. Sidney Hook views democracy as a form of government where important decisions are, directly or indirectly, based on the freely given consent of the adult majority. Meanwhile, Philippe C. Schmitter thinks that democracy is a system of governance in which citizens hold the government accountable for its actions in the public sphere and act directly through competition and cooperation with their elected representatives. Meanwhile, democracy is also often understood to mean "the principle of equality of political, social and economic rights between citizens and also the right of the people to make the legislation they want. From the three definitions mentioned above, it is clear to us that democracy contains values, namely the existence of an element of trust given by the government to the people and the existence of accountability for a leader.

Meanwhile, according to Abdurrahman Wahid, democracy contains two values, namely basic values and derivative values. According to Abdurrahman Wahid, the main values of democracy are freedom, equality, deliberation, and justice. Freedom means individual freedom before state power and a balance between the individual rights of citizens and the collective rights of society.⁴ Nurcholish Majid, as quoted by Nasaruddin, said that a country is called democratic to the extent that the country guarantees human rights (HAM), including freedom of expression and the right to associate and assemble. Because democracy rejects dictatorship, feudalism, and authoritarianism. In a democratic country, the relationship between the ruler and the people is not a relationship of power but is based on laws that uphold human rights (HAM).

A procedural approach to democracy would regard low levels of government contestability as a legitimate outcome insofar as the formal process of participation is open and participating citizens are unobstructed by typical authoritarian controls, which include direct interventions in formal processes of political participation such as the exercise of violence, physical threat or electoral fraud, barriers to entry targeting political opponents,

banning political activities, the systematic harassment of the opposition and the censorship of political expression.

Democracy In The Views of Islam

Freedom in Islam is conditional on the public interest, namely freedom that does not endanger society. Freedom is conditional on the provisions in Islam which protect individuals as members of society.

In a democratic system, freedom is unlimited. People can do whatever they want without paying attention to group interests. Freedom is sometimes controlled by egoism and often leads to the dictatorship of capital. What is affirmed is no longer the true form of individual freedom. Capital is the goal to be achieved by the capitalist system, perhaps the end justifies the means. In Islam, capital is a blessing of life in the world and can be a source of tragedy. It is a tool for the continuation of human life. The defects of the democratic system can be seen in the fact that it pays little attention to conscience and moral values in social life.

Islam emphasizes absolute justice, extending even to one's own family. This equitable treatment applies to all, regardless of religion or citizenship. Divine revelation guides the pursuit of justice, while human nature often hinders it. Islamic law encompasses all aspects of life, aiming for comprehensive justice, including legal, social, and economic dimensions. Islam prioritizes equality before the law and strives to mitigate wealth disparities through mechanisms like zakat. It emphasizes the importance of justice as a foundation for a just and harmonious society.

In the Koran, there are many verses related to the main principles of democracy, including QS. Ali Imran: 159 and al-Shura: 38 (which talks about deliberation); al-Maidah: 8; al-Shura: 15 (about justice); al-Hujurat: 13 (about equality); al-Nisa': 58 (about trust); Ali Imran: 104 (concerning freedom of criticism); al-Nisa': 59, 83 and al-Syuro: 38 (concerning freedom of opinion) etc. 6 If we look at the empirical basis, according to Aswab Mahasin⁷, religion and democracy are indeed different. Religion comes from revelation while democracy comes from the struggle of human thought. Thus religion has its dialectics. However, according to Mahasin, there is no obstacle for religion to coexist with democracy.

As explained above, the main elements of democracy from an Islamic perspective include: as-shura, al-musawah, al-'ilah, al-amanah, al-masuliyyah, and al-hurriyyah.

Some types of democracy in Islam:

1. Syura (Deliberation)

Musyawarah and mufakat (deliberation and consensus) are a traditional decision-making rule in Indonesia which has often been observed in village meetings.

For many of the peoples of Indonesia as well as Indonesian scholars, unanimous consent is an indigenous decision-making rule. Soetardjo (1953, 102) argues, "According to original Indonesian law, every decision, whether accepted or rejected, has to be taken with unanimous consent." On the other hand, he dismisses a majority vote system like that employed in Western democracies since it is not familiar to the Indonesian people (Soetardjo 1953, 102). According to Koentjaraningrat Deliberation and mufakat grew out of a cooperative spirit that underlies the village sense of community in most Indonesian cultures.

Deliberation in Islam insight can be explained in Surah Asy-Syura. It is named "Ash-Shura" (deliberation) taken from the word "Shura" found in the 38th verse of this letter. In this verse, it is explained that deliberation is one of the foundations of Islamic governance.

2. Ijma

Ijma refers to the consensus or agreement reached by Islamic scholars on a particular religious issue. It's should used to derive Islamic law (Shariah) when there's no explicit guidance in the Quran or Hadith. It's considered one society's primary source of Islamic law, along with the Quran and Hadith.

Ijma ranks third as the Islamic legal source after the Qur'an and Sunnah. Ijma is interpreted as an agreement or consensus on the legal provisions of a religious issue for which no clear arguments or provisions are found in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The consensus was reached by all mujtahid scholars after the time of the Prophet Muhammad and has certain criteria and conditions (Syaripudin & Kasim, 2020).

For example, if a new technological advancement raises a question about its permissibility in Islam, Islamic scholars may come together to discuss the issue based on Quranic principles and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. If a majority of a qualified scholars agree on a particular ruling, it becomes an ijma.

In summary, ijma is a vital tool in Islamic jurisprudence, ensuring that Islamic law remains relevant and applicable in diverse contexts.

3. Ijtihad

The Quran and Hadith, along with ijtiḥad, serve as the third source of Islamic law, which originates from the term jahada, meaning to exhaust all efforts to achieve something in various matters (Zainuddin Ali, 2006: 38). Therefore, from the standpoint of fiqh literature, ijtiḥad can be interpreted as “the full application of all capabilities of a fiqh expert or mujtahid to derive knowledge of laws.” This definition highlights that ijtiḥad aims to extract (istinbat) the collective law. The legal justification for the acceptance of ijtiḥad is referenced in Q.S. An Nisa:59, which states, “O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.” Additionally, the Hadith that allows for the practice of ijtiḥad recounts a dialogue between Muhammad, Peace be upon him, and Muadh ibn Jabal when Muadh was appointed as the governor of Yemen. In this conversation, it is mentioned that when faced with any issue, Muadh would first refer to the Quran and Sunna, but if a particular issue was not addressed in either source, he would apply his reasoning to resolve it (Mutadha Muthahari, 1995:8).

Result of Discussion

The result of our research is that democracy in Islam is a crucial topic for us to acknowledge. From what we understand, most of Islamic law indeed resides with democratic values such as individual freedom, equal rights, and elections.

There are many opinions about how important democracy is and how Islam views democracy. However, in our view, democracy has an important role. Especially in our country. Democracy upholds that the people are in power, meaning that the people are above the government. Common interests above personal interests. And the government must maintain its mandate as the people's representative, to regulate and provide protection to the community.

In Islam, the principles of democracy are explained in many verses of the Koran. as in the example explained in QS. al-Hujurat verse 13 (regarding equality) and an-Nisa verse 59, 83 or ash-Shura verse 38 (regarding freedom of opinion).

Indonesia is also a Muslim-majority country. So, if it does not follow Sharia or Islamic law, there will be many conflicts and problems that will occur. For example, the Muslim community does not feel represented because of this. It is also not the definition or concept of democracy at the beginning, namely that all people/societies have the right to be represented without exception.

SUMMARY

Democracy form is now widely adopted worldwide, many come with different rules. Islam, too, emphasizes principles that align with democratic ideals, such as justice, equality, and consultation. 3 key Islamic concepts are related to democracy, such as shura (consultation), Ijma (consensus), and ijtihad (independent reasoning). While Islam and democracy are often seen as compatible, some critics argue that Islamic societies are inherently incompatible with democratic principles. However, historical and contemporary examples, such as Indonesia, demonstrate that Islam can be a source of democratic values and practices. It's important to note that the successful implementation of democracy in any society, including Islamic ones, requires a commitment to these principles and a willingness to adapt them to the specific cultural and historical context.

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