



Pancasila as Balancer of Rights, Obligations, and Foundation of Social Justice

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ABSTRACT

Pancasila serves as the philosophical basis of the Indonesian state and plays a significant role in balancing the rights and responsibilities of citizens to achieve social justice. This study aims to examine the philosophical role of Pancasila in linking individual freedom with collective responsibility and to analyze its function as a moral and legal foundation in Indonesian society. The research employed a qualitative method through a literature review by examining constitutional theories, legal perspectives, and civic education studies related to Pancasila values. The data were analyzed descriptively to interpret the concepts of rights, obligations, and justice within the framework of Pancasila. The findings show that Pancasila provides a balanced approach between individual interests and collective welfare through the values of humanity, unity, deliberation, and social justice. The implementation of these principles encourages citizens to fulfill their obligations while exercising their rights, thereby supporting social harmony and equitable development. Furthermore, Pancasila values contribute to strengthening democratic participation and fostering responsible citizenship in social and political life. This study highlights the relevance of Pancasila as an ethical guideline for public policy and legal practice in reducing inequality and strengthening democratic citizenship in contemporary Indonesia.

Keywords: Pancasila, rights, obligations, social justice, citizenship

INTRODUCTION

Pancasila does not only function as a national identity, but also serves as the philosophical basis that guides the life of the state and social relations in Indonesia. In the current globalization era, conflicts often emerge between the protection of individual rights and the implementation of collective responsibilities within society. The rapid growth of technology, cultural interaction, and economic competition has increasingly challenged social unity and national identity. These circumstances highlight the need for a normative foundation that can preserve balance, harmony, and justice among citizens. In this context, Pancasila provides a balanced approach by combining moral, legal, cultural, and spiritual values that are closely connected to Indonesian traditions and shared social experiences.

The importance of this study is related to understanding the role of Pancasila as a foundation for balancing the rights and responsibilities of citizens while promoting social justice and democratic governance. Earlier studies have highlighted constitutional culture, legal ethics, civic awareness, and participatory citizenship as important aspects in creating equality and fairness in public life. Through the promotion of mutual respect, tolerance, and social solidarity, Pancasila functions not only as an ideological principle but also as a practical guideline for public policy and citizens' behavior. Therefore, this article discusses the

philosophical basis and contemporary relevance of Pancasila in responding to challenges faced in Indonesian governance, legal systems, and social life.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach through a literature review method. The research mainly examines the conceptual role of Pancasila in balancing the rights and obligations of citizens and in supporting social justice within the Indonesian system of governance. The discussion is placed within the socio-legal and philosophical context of Indonesia. The focus of the analysis includes the interpretation of Pancasila values, civic responsibility, and principles of justice as the main variables of the study.

The sources of data were obtained from academic books, scientific journal articles, civic education references, constitutional documents, and legal studies related to Pancasila. These materials served as the main research population, while selected references relevant to the topic were used as research samples through purposive selection. The instruments used in this research included document review and academic database exploration. Data collection was carried out through systematic document examination, while the analysis process employed descriptive and interpretative methods to understand the relationship between the philosophical values of Pancasila and their implementation in public policies and social practices.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Balance Between Rights and Obligations

The connection between the rights and obligations of citizens is one of the essential principles in a democratic system. Rights refer to the legitimate entitlements protected by constitutional and legal provisions, allowing individuals to develop themselves, express opinions freely, gain access to welfare, and participate in public affairs. In contrast, obligations represent the moral and legal duties that citizens are expected to carry out in order to preserve social harmony, national stability, and shared prosperity. In the Indonesian context, Pancasila serves as a philosophical foundation that balances these two aspects, ensuring that neither excessive individual freedom nor collective authority becomes dominant.

The development of globalization in the modern era has increased challenges related to the balance between rights and obligations. Advances in technology, wider digital communication, and stronger global cultural interaction have encouraged greater public awareness of individual rights. Although these developments contribute to democratic growth, they may also lead to excessive individualism when personal interests are prioritized over social responsibility. This situation can weaken solidarity, reduce social unity, and trigger conflict within a multicultural society. For this reason, Indonesia needs a normative foundation that is able to combine freedom with responsibility, and Pancasila offers such an integrative framework.

The first principle of Pancasila, Belief in the One and Only God, forms an ethical basis that emphasizes moral responsibility in social life. Rights are understood not only as legal entitlements but also as moral responsibilities that must be exercised wisely. Through this principle, citizens are encouraged to respect differences, maintain tolerance, and uphold

ethical behavior in public interactions. As a result, individual freedom is not used irresponsibly because personal actions remain guided by moral and spiritual values.

The second principle of Pancasila, Just and Civilized Humanity, emphasizes that human rights are rooted in human dignity. Every individual has equal value regardless of differences in social status, ethnicity, religion, or economic condition. Therefore, the protection of human rights must always be accompanied by respect for the rights and dignity of others. From this humanitarian perspective, obligations arise as a natural consequence, where individuals are expected to understand that personal freedom has limits when it affects the dignity of other people. Through this principle, Pancasila encourages mutual respect as an ethical foundation in social relationships.

The third principle of Pancasila, the Unity of Indonesia, highlights the collective aspect in balancing rights and obligations. Indonesian society is characterized by cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity, making unity an important foundation for national life. Without a unifying principle, an excessive focus on individual or group interests could endanger national integration. Through this principle, Pancasila ensures that the exercise of rights contributes to strengthening, rather than weakening, national unity. Citizens are encouraged to place shared interests above personal or group interests while continuing to respect cultural diversity. In this way, harmony within diversity can be maintained in Indonesian society.

In addition, the fourth principle, democracy guided by deliberation and representation, demonstrates the relationship between rights and obligations within political life. Citizens are given the right to express opinions, participate in elections, and influence public policies through democratic processes. At the same time, deliberative democracy also requires society to respect collective decisions that are reached through discussion, consensus, or representation. The willingness to accept democratic outcomes becomes an important obligation in maintaining political stability and preventing conflict caused by uncompromising personal interests. Therefore, democracy based on Pancasila is not only procedural in nature but also ethical, as it emphasizes dialogue, mutual respect, and collective responsibility.

In the practice of governance, the balance between rights and obligations can be seen in public policies that both protect individual freedoms and regulate behavior for the benefit of society. For instance, freedom of expression is recognized as a democratic right, but its implementation must remain responsible in order to prevent hate speech, misinformation, and social conflict. Likewise, economic rights provide opportunities for individuals to improve their welfare, while obligations such as paying taxes and participating in social life support a fair distribution of resources. These conditions show that Pancasila is able to translate philosophical values into practical principles within governance and public policy.

Educational institutions also have an important role in building awareness of balanced citizenship. Civic education grounded in Pancasila values teaches students that rights and obligations are closely connected and cannot be separated from one another. The formation of responsible citizens is influenced not only by legal regulations but also by the development of ethical awareness within individuals. When citizens realize that carrying out obligations contributes to collective welfare, social harmony can be maintained more effectively.

The findings of this research show that Pancasila offers a balanced position between two opposing ideological extremes, namely liberal individualism and authoritarian collectivism. Liberal individualism tends to emphasize personal freedom to the point that social solidarity may decline, whereas authoritarian collectivism often limits individual freedom in the interest of uniformity and state control. Pancasila avoids these two extremes by combining individual liberty with social responsibility. This balance is closely related to the Indonesian cultural

tradition of gotong royong, which prioritizes cooperation and mutual support as the foundation of community life.

In addition, the implementation of balanced rights and obligations also contributes to preventing social conflict. Many conflicts in society arise from feelings of injustice and unequal treatment. When citizens believe that their rights are protected and obligations are shared fairly, public trust in institutions tends to increase. Strong social trust can reinforce democratic resilience and reduce polarization within society. Therefore, Pancasila functions not only as a philosophical foundation but also as a practical instrument for preserving national stability.

Another important finding in this study concerns the role of law as a balancing mechanism. Legal regulations inspired by Pancasila values seek to maintain proportionality between freedom and social order. Laws that guarantee human rights also establish certain limitations needed to protect the public interest. In Indonesia, the legitimacy of law depends on its consistency with the principles of Pancasila so that law enforcement remains humane and oriented toward social justice.

In contemporary society, the rise of digital citizenship creates new challenges in balancing rights and obligations. Social media platforms provide wider opportunities for individuals to exercise freedom of expression. However, digital spaces also increase the spread of misinformation, cyberbullying, and social division. The application of Pancasila values in digital interactions encourages ethical communication, respectful discussion, and responsible participation in online environments. This shows that Pancasila continues to remain relevant in the context of modern technological development.

Overall, this discussion demonstrates that the balance between rights and obligations based on Pancasila is dynamic and continues to develop alongside social, political, and technological changes. Even so, its core philosophical principles remain consistent. By integrating moral, legal, and cultural aspects, Pancasila provides a sustainable foundation for strengthening democratic citizenship and maintaining social harmony in Indonesia.

Pancasila as Foundation of Social Justice

Social justice is one of the main ideals contained within the Indonesian national ideology. The fifth principle of Pancasila clearly emphasizes the realization of social justice for all Indonesian people as a core national goal. In the context of Pancasila, social justice is not limited to economic equality alone, but also includes fairness in legal protection, access to education, political participation, healthcare services, employment opportunities, and social welfare. Pancasila understands justice as balanced prosperity achieved through cooperation between the state and society.

Historically, the formulation of Pancasila was closely connected to Indonesia's struggle against colonialism, inequality, and social oppression. The founders of the nation viewed independence not only as political liberation but also as the creation of a fair and prosperous society. Because of this, social justice became an ethical foundation that guides national development policies. This historical perspective explains why economic growth alone cannot be considered the sole indicator of progress in Indonesia; development must also reduce inequality and create inclusive welfare for all citizens.

The concept of justice in Pancasila differs from both purely capitalist and socialist approaches. Capitalist systems generally prioritize market freedom, which can lead to economic inequality, while socialist systems often emphasize equality by limiting individual initiative. Pancasila combines elements of both perspectives by encouraging economic productivity together with social responsibility. The Indonesian economic system supports

cooperation, community empowerment, and state involvement aimed at protecting vulnerable groups without removing opportunities for individual entrepreneurship.

Government policies have an important role in implementing the principles of social justice into practical realities. Policies inspired by Pancasila emphasize equal development among regions so that rural and remote communities receive the same opportunities as urban areas. Programs related to infrastructure, education, and healthcare expansion reflect efforts to reduce structural inequality. These policies illustrate how philosophical values can influence concrete governance strategies.

Legal justice is also an important dimension of social justice under Pancasila. Equality before the law guarantees that every citizen receives fair treatment regardless of economic or social background. Legal institutions are expected to uphold integrity, transparency, and accountability in order to maintain public trust. When legal systems operate according to Pancasila values, society views law not merely as a tool of coercion but as a mechanism for protecting collective welfare.

Social justice also includes cultural recognition and respect for diversity. Indonesia's pluralistic society requires policies that recognize cultural identities while still strengthening national unity. Pancasila promotes inclusiveness by viewing diversity as a national strength rather than a source of division. Equal recognition of cultural rights contributes to social harmony and helps prevent the marginalization of minority groups.

Economic justice remains one of the major challenges in contemporary Indonesia. Rapid economic development may create wealth concentration if it is not supported by fair distribution mechanisms. Pancasila emphasizes welfare-based development through policies such as social protection programs, fair labor systems, and inclusive economic participation. These efforts aim to ensure that development outcomes can be enjoyed by all citizens instead of only benefiting certain elite groups.

The findings of this study show that Pancasila functions as an ethical guideline for policymakers in addressing inequality. Public policies based on Pancasila values focus on long-term social welfare rather than temporary political interests. Ethical governance becomes essential in achieving sustainable development because corruption, discrimination, and exploitation are contrary to the principles of social justice.

Education once again appears as a significant instrument in realizing social justice. Equal access to quality education allows citizens to improve their socioeconomic conditions and participate actively in democratic life. Educational institutions are expected not only to provide knowledge but also to develop social awareness, empathy, and civic responsibility in accordance with Pancasila values.

Another important aspect of social justice relates to environmental sustainability. Modern development frequently creates ecological problems that disproportionately affect vulnerable communities. The emphasis of Pancasila on harmony and collective welfare supports sustainable development that balances economic growth with environmental protection. In this sense, justice also includes responsibility toward future generations by ensuring they inherit a healthy environment.

Public participation further strengthens the realization of social justice. Pancasila encourages collaborative governance involving citizens, community organizations, and local societies. Participatory decision-making allows public policies to reflect actual social needs rather than centralized assumptions. When citizens are actively involved in governance, social justice becomes a shared responsibility rather than solely the duty of government institutions.

The discussion also indicates that social justice contributes directly to national resilience. Societies marked by severe inequality often face instability, social conflict, and declining public trust in institutions. By promoting fairness and inclusivity, Pancasila strengthens social

cohesion and democratic legitimacy. Citizens who feel treated fairly are generally more willing to support national development and maintain social harmony.

Globalization also creates new challenges related to social justice, including economic competition, technological change, and transformations in labor systems. Pancasila provides normative guidance for responding to these developments by emphasizing human-centered development. Economic modernization should prioritize human welfare rather than focusing only on technological efficiency. This perspective helps ensure that globalization benefits society broadly without weakening national identity or social equality.

The novelty of this study lies in placing Pancasila not merely as a historical ideology but as a contemporary ethical framework that remains adaptable to modern governance challenges. Pancasila connects philosophical ideals with practical policymaking, enabling Indonesia to pursue democratic progress while maintaining social solidarity. Its values continue to be relevant in addressing inequality, strengthening democratic citizenship, and supporting inclusive national development.

Overall, the discussion demonstrates that Pancasila remains highly relevant as a modern ethical framework capable of responding to contemporary governance challenges. Its principles provide guidance in balancing individual rights and collective obligations while strengthening democratic participation, social solidarity, and inclusive development. Through its humanitarian, democratic, and welfare-oriented values, Pancasila continues to serve as an important foundation for preserving harmony and justice within Indonesian society.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to examine the role of Pancasila as a philosophical foundation in balancing the rights and obligations of citizens and in realizing social justice in Indonesia. The findings reveal that Pancasila offers a normative framework that combines individual freedom with collective responsibility. Within this framework, rights and obligations are viewed not as contradictory concepts but as interconnected elements that must be implemented together in order to preserve social harmony and democratic stability.

The discussion shows that every principle of Pancasila contributes to maintaining the balance between rights and obligations through the values of moral responsibility, respect for human dignity, national unity, deliberative democracy, and social welfare. Pancasila encourages citizens to exercise their rights responsibly while also carrying out their legal and social duties. In this way, Pancasila prevents the emergence of both excessive individualism and authoritarian collectivism. The study also demonstrates that the application of Pancasila values strengthens civic responsibility, encourages ethical participation in governance, and supports conflict prevention within a pluralistic society.

In addition, the research confirms that Pancasila serves as the foundation of social justice by directing public policies toward equitable development, legal equality, inclusive welfare, cultural recognition, and sustainable national progress. Social justice based on Pancasila emphasizes equal opportunities, protection for vulnerable communities, and balanced prosperity for all citizens.

In conclusion, the findings of this study answer the research objective by showing that Pancasila functions as an ethical and philosophical guideline capable of harmonizing rights and obligations while supporting the realization of social justice in contemporary Indonesian society.

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