

Democracy in Local Communities: Direct Election System versus Deliberation System in the Minangkabau Ethnicity in West Sumatra, Indonesia

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Abstract This paper focuses on the dissonance between the values of the democracy of local communities and the liberal democracy of the Minangkabau community in West Sumatra, Indonesia. A direct election system is adopted to elect the leader of the Minangkabau community. However, a qualitative study shows that, culturally, the Minangkabau community chooses its leader through a clan-based deliberation system, relying on communal rather than individual representation. Adopting direct election with the one-person-one-vote principle to elect the community leader has instead been a source of conflict. The ambiguous understanding of the community members regarding the principles of individual and collective representation has given rise to the conflict. The institutionalisation of a clan-based deliberation system in the community is a solution to solve the conflict. This scholarly inquiry underscores that the Minangkabau ethnic group's democratic ethos fosters an environment conducive to communal deliberations, thereby sustaining their social cohesion and integration.

Keywords: • Minangkabau ethnicity • local community • deliberation • direct election • communitarian democracy

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doi:10.52152/22.4.104-123(2024)

ISSN 1581-5374 Print/1855-363X Online © 2024 Lex localis

Available online at <http://journal.lex-localis.press>

1 Introduction

Following the end of the New Order authoritarian government regime in the late 1990s, decentralisation in Indonesia resulted in significant changes to local democracy. Decentralisation and regional democracy in Indonesia tend to adopt the liberal democracy concept as it develops (Törnquist, Hanif, Hiariej, Samadhi, & Savirani, 2019). One concrete example can be found in the policy governing the direct election of regional executive officials (regional heads) (Erb & Sulistiyanto, 2009). The direct election model has been used to elect village leaders and leaders of smaller community organisations.

The direct election of executive officials (regional heads) is also an election model adopted to elect the leaders of communal communities such as Nagari in Minangkabau, West Sumatra¹. For the Minangkabau ethnicity, Nagari is an essential social-political and territorial unit that forms its identity (F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013; Vel & Bedner, 2015). In the extensive formation of Indonesia, Nagari is the fifth-level governance equal to a village². This direct election was also adopted to elect Jorong (hamlet) leader, the lower unit of community/sub-section of Nagari) which is stipulated in the District or City Government policy. The socio-political situation at the central and local government levels differs significantly from the Nagari community. The Nagari community is a community that is highly bound by customary and communal law (Naim, 1990; Hadler, 2010; F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013). The leader of Nagari is not only the formal government but also the leader of the ethnic community. Direct election is a foreign system to the Nagari community. The clan-based communities in Jorong (equivalent to sub-villages) are the core of the particular Nagari society. They remain significantly attached to customary traditions and communal culture (F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013; Stark, 2013). The application of Western liberal democracy advocating individual representation in the election of leaders differs from the Minangkabau ethnic democratic values, prioritising public deliberation. The application of liberal democratic values that are different from traditional democratic values that had already existed in the Minangkabau ethnic community has an impact on social stability. The present article focuses on the potential problems when liberal democratic values are applied to traditional societies with solid communal cultures.

Studies of democracy, voting, and ethnicity have received considerable attention from researchers in the last few decades. A great writer such as Horowitz (1985) concludes that ethnicity in voting is an alarming issue for democracy. Later, many researchers followed Horowitz's lead by seeking explanatory factors. Eifert, Miguel, and Posner (2010) explain that African ethnic identity is strengthened by political competition and the interest of power. Meanwhile, Higashijima and

Nakai (2016) discovered the encouragement of political parties to strengthen ethnic identity in Africa, similar to the findings by Balasubramaniam (2006) as well as those of Xia, Lee, and Hj. Ab. Halim (2020) in Malaysia. Other findings observe economic inequality between ethnic groups in both Africa and India (Houle, Park, & Kenny, 2018; Huber, 2012). Research in Indonesia obtains similar conclusions as the studies mentioned above that ethnic identity is quickly mobilised by the elite for the benefit of votes, thus degrading democracy's quality (Erb & Sulistiyanto, 2009). The above studies also conclude that manipulation of ethnic identity causes poor quality of democracy. According to Buehler (2010), direct elections developed in local democracy in Indonesia failed to create public space.

Other scholars later challenged the conclusion that the ethnic diversity harms the democracy. According to their observation, ethnic diversity is not the main issue in determining the quality of democracy. Fish and Brooks (2004) have shown no significant relationship between ethnic diversity and democracy. The evidence presented by Chandra (2005) shows that the threat to democratic stability in India was not caused by ethnic divisions but rather by the institutions where ethnic politics occur. The evidence indicates that ethnic diversity does not always lead to poor quality of democracy. Ethnic diversity only affects the quality of democracy if the elites manipulate it. Instead of the issue of ethnic diversity or ethnic division, the issue of manipulation lies in the issue of political institutions where ethnic diversity exists (Fish & Brooks, 2004; Chandra, 2005). Their opinion is relevant to the conclusions of Crespy (2014) and Gherghina, Mokre, and Mişcoiu (2021) regarding the importance of deliberation in the context of European society. According to Crespy (2014), the importance of institutional arrangements in shaping the dynamics of conflict and deliberation is very significant in the plural and very different European Union (EU) society. According to him, if the conflict is managed through appropriate deliberation mechanisms, it can increase the legitimacy of EU policies and institutions. For Gherghina et al. (2021), the practice of deliberative democracy in European communities can explore the concept of inclusivity, primarily focusing on groups often underrepresented in politics. Di Mauro and Fikett's research (2017) provides empirical evidence that deliberative processes can shape and develop a European identity, supporting the claim that interaction and dialogue in deliberative contexts can strengthen a sense of community among European citizens. Although Crespy (2014), Gherghina et al. (2021), and Di Mauro and Fikett (2017) do not refer to ethnic plurality in the European context, they believe that the deliberation process is essential in creating democratic quality.

Disregarding the debate over these two perspectives, we observe the studies that examine democracy in the ethnic community. Riley (2007) The state could not impose universal liberal rules on human rights to tribal societies such as Indians

and must respect tribal autonomy. Meanwhile, Wheatley (2003) Observes the need to acknowledge minority groups' interests and preferences by understanding deliberative democracy and determining constitutional arrangements to guarantee the rights and cultural security of minority groups. Both Riley (2007) and Wheatley (2003) observe this problem in policy formulation that can ensure the rights of minority groups. We agree with Riley and Wheatley about acknowledging minority groups' cultures and rights. However, our paper focuses on the experience of the ethnic group democracy in electing their leader. This paper shows how the individualistic values of liberal democracy, introduced by the West, clash with the democratic values existing in the culture of this ethnic group. We also discuss how these ethnic groups can resolve the clash of values by implementing democracy with their cultural values. The democratic culture belonging to the ethnic group (clan-based deliberation system) distinguishes our study from the previous studies.

We are aware of the focus similarities between our study and the scholars cited above that the application of liberal democratic values is not suitable for all ethnic group communities that have the characteristics of a communal society. However, Riley more closely focuses on implementing the rules related to human rights, while we focus on the election of the ethnic community's leader. However, our article focuses more on applying liberal democracy to ethnic communities with different democratic values, namely the Minangkabau ethnic group, which is the object of our research. It has democratic values and emphasises dialogues and communal deliberation. The characteristics of such ethnic democracy are reminiscent of communitarian democracy (Barber, 1984; Benhabib, 1996). The local community's unique political structure has values and ways of practising democracy to maintain social stability.

This study used a qualitative approach in three Nagari (villages) from three districts in West Sumatra. It examined three cases of direct election conflict between Wali Nagari (Head of the Village) and Wali Jorong (Head of subvillage). These Nagari include (1) Kamang Mudiak in Agam District, (2) Muaro Aie in Pesisir Selatan District, and (3) Silantai in Sijunjung District. The three cases were selected to represent the Nagari in each district, although similar cases also occurred in other West Sumatra districts. This study highlights the incompatibility problems between liberal and democratic values in Nagari society, in this case, the traditional Minangkabau ethnic community. This is particularly important as Nagari and sub-Nagari leaders are expected to lead their communities in formal governance and social contexts. The primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with the selected informants, including public figures (adat, religious, and intellectual figures), candidates, election committees, voters, and the officials of the Nagari government. The study was conducted by interviewing 23 informants. The names of informants are abbreviated to protect their identity and

maintain the code of ethics. A literature study was also conducted to obtain data about the development and the principles of democracy in the Minangkabau community.

2 Literature review

2.1 Local democracy and ethnicity

The basic idea of democracy is people's participation, mutual agreement, or consensus to achieve goals formulated together. The core of democracy is the trust of all people in the government to regulate all their affairs. This essential trust can only be grown from below (bottom-up), namely from the local level (Sisk, 2002), as it is very close to their daily lives and has easy access to participation (Schiller, 2011). The various characteristics of local communities affect the characteristics of local democracy, which present various experiences and practices (Parkinson, 2007; Beissinger, 2008).

The term local democracy is open to various interpretations, depending on space and time. However, many scholars relate the meaning of local democracy to the influence of culture on democracy itself (Sisk, 2002). Differences in the values and structure of society give rise to different democratic practices (Benhabib, 1996), suggesting that there is no guarantee that the universal values of liberal democracy will be successfully applied in different societal contexts (Inglehart & Welzel, 2003). A multi-ethnic country like Indonesia is a case in point where democratic practices are influenced by local culture (Santoso, 2018). Similarly, African countries show that the ethnic influence remains strong such that liberal democracy does not guarantee the improvement of the quality of their democracy (Pius Kulipossa, 2004).

Ethnicity and the quality of democracy are the most recent and popular topics explored by political experts, either by those who consider or oppose the notion that ethnicity reduces the quality of democracy (Chandra, 2005). The phenomenon of ethnicity and plurality of identity in a democracy is unavoidable. However, the challenge is how democracy can negotiate the differences in identity to achieve the common good (Benhabib, 1996). The idea of communitarian democracy is highly relevant in small communities such as villages because of the failure of procedural-liberal democracy to accommodate public participation (Huat, 2004).

2.2 Communitarian democracy: accommodating the local community culture

Communitarian democracy can promote public participation in public affairs, governance, and development at the community level (Barber, 1984).

Communitarian democracy recommends the importance of expanding public space and activating the role of social groups, citizen forums, and inter-group networks, not only for the self-help purpose of the groups but also as a medium for community awareness, civic engagement, and participation in government affairs at the community level (Barber, 1984; Kymlicka, 2002; Eko, Barori, & Hastowiyono, 2017). Dynamic communitarian elements enable participatory community-based decision-making and governmental administration, as well as the exploration of individual potential and creativity in collective ties.

In the communitarian tradition, the decision-making mechanism is carried out by direct participation of communities instead of voting or representation through dialogue, deliberation, and agreement-making (Barber, 1984; Held, 2006). According to Dryzek (2000), to solve public problems, the quality of decision-making must be positioned at the core of the debate by strengthening discursive or communicative rationality to enable us to discover collective solutions for collective problems. Decision-making places public deliberation of free and equal citizens at the core of the legitimacy of governmental and political decision-making. In this model of democracy, political decisions that meet the standards can be defended in a public debate involving all parties with equal interests (Barber, 1984; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). This model requires understanding collective values that are valued and implemented in political decision-making (Benhabib, 1994). Mutual respect for group members, a tolerant, open, egalitarian, responsible culture, mutual trust, and equality are essential in public debate and decision-making (Dryzek, 2000). The presence of the community in public debate is part of expanding the arena of community participation in policy formulation. That is an arena for integrating ideas from the collective community. The deliberative process in democracy aims to increase the legitimacy of collective decision-making, increase community awareness and attention to public issues, increase mutual respect in the decision-making process, and assist in correcting mistakes in previous decisions (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). The domination of the majority groups is avoided over the minority groups (Barber, 1984). Adjusting and accepting every community element towards the debates for the typical good creates harmony and social integration (Ritzer & Goodman, 2004).

3 Research

3.1 Nagari in the context of decentralization

Nagari is the traditional government institution of the Minangkabau ethnic community, which they have implemented throughout the history of this ethnic life (de Jong, 1980). The Nagari government system was developed by this community based on communal culture. The units forming the Nagari government are based on tribal social units (clans). A tribe (clan) is a group of people who

come from the same genealogy based on maternal descent (matrilineal) and live in groups in a certain area (de Jong, 1980). A collection of tribes (clans) will form the Jorong region (village) administratively, and the highest administrative region is called Nagari. Their leadership system is collective among the chiefs (clans) in Nagari (de Jong, 1980; F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013). The collective institution of tribal leaders (clans) in Nagari is called Kerapatan Adat Nagari (KAN). In the historical context, Nagari organized government based on a tribal-based deliberative democratic system as their characteristic. Multilevel government institutions start at the tribal (clan) level, the Jorong level, and the Nagari level (Azwar, Yunus, Muliono, & Permatasari, 2018).

The Nagari system was integrated into the modern government system when the Minangkabau region joined the modern Indonesian state in 1945. This system was recognised as part of the lowest-level government system and had autonomy to administer government according to their cultural characteristics. Even though Nagari was removed from the formal government system of the Indonesian State during the New Order authoritarian government, this traditional government system is still alive sociologically in the Minangkabau ethnic community, such as in terms of choosing leaders and community decision-making (F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013). With the implementation of decentralisation in the Indonesian political system in 1999, the Nagari system was again recognised as part of the formal government system of the Indonesian state (F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013; Eko, 2005).

Political decentralisation in Indonesia has become a choice in the context of democratising the government system. Developing local democracy is one of the essential objectives of decentralisation (Haris, 2005). The decentralisation and regional autonomy address the distribution of authority and finance from the central government to the regional governments and aim to achieve local democracy (Eko et al., 2017).

West Sumatra, as the land of the Minangkabau ethnic, responds to the decentralisation with the slogan 'Return to Nagari,' attempting to return to the local community's identity (Biezeveld, 2007; F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013). The Regional Regulation No. 9 of 2000, established by the provincial government of West Sumatra, accommodates the modern political system integrated with the Minangkabau culture (Eko, 2005). Nagari in West Sumatra is considered the most successful model of government in the post-New Order decentralisation (F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013). The revival of Nagari has been a revival of the local identity and the democracy of the Minangkabau community in West Sumatra (F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013; Vel & Bedner, 2015).

In the context of decentralisation, Nagari can be understood within the framework of a self-governing community. In principle, the self-governing community has long existed before the integration of Nagari into the state (de Jong, 1980). Nagari is an area of the Minangkabau ethnicity in West Sumatra, highly bound to communal and egalitarian adat law (Mansoer, Imran, Safwan, & Buchari, 1970; Kahin, 1999; Biezeveld, 2007). However, the Nagari is not fully autonomous from the structure of the state. The structure adjustment is related to the state's interests in bureaucratic affairs (Djamra, 2013). The autonomy of the Nagari is currently a gift from the state through the decentralisation of power, authority, and resources. The state's involvement in regulating social and political processes in Nagari has practically altered its structure and process of democratisation. Pessimism towards the development of democracy in Nagari is prevalent (Djamra, 2013), including the issue of electing its executive leader.

3.2 Nagari, clans, and clannish deliberation: the culture of communitarian democracy in the Minangkabau ethnicity

The Minangkabau ethnicity, for an extended long time, has a history of genuine autonomy based on Nagari, which can be described as an egalitarian community that places collective agreements in decision-making (Naim, 1990). Several people define Minangkabau democracy as communitarian democracy, egalitarian democracy, and popular democracy (F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013; Eko, 2005). Nagari has a set of customary laws to manage social relations, regulate the community's behaviour, share the economic resources communally and fairly, balance nature and humans, shape self-esteem, observe the outside world, and regulate the local government system autonomously (Mansoer et al., 1970; Navis, 1983; Kahin, 1999; F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013).

Nagari government is managed autonomously, in which the local leadership is held collectively by 'ninik mamak' (traditional leader), 'alim ulama' (religious leader), and 'cadiak pandai' (intellectual), called by the Nagari community 'tungku tigo sajarangan' (the three pillars) (Azwar et al., 2018). 'Ninik mamak' (traditional leader) represents the community based on adat law. 'Alim ulama' (religious leaders) represent the authority of Islamic religious law as the Minangkabau community's religion. Meanwhile, 'cadiak pandai' (intellectual) represents authority over the rules of power outside the Nagari, identified in modern life as the parties who understand the state's laws. Thus, the collective representation of 'tungku tigo sajarangan' represents the three elements of Minangkabau identity: adat, Islam, and the state as communitarian democracy, egalitarian democracy, and popular democracy (F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013; Azwar et al., 2018). The decision-making is conducted

by the collective representatives of these three institutions ('tungku tigo sajarangan') through deliberation for consensus.

In making a decision, the Minangkabau community has a tradition of clan-based deliberation, where the clans occupy the 'kampuang' (Jorong) in Nagari (Sairin, 1995; F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013). Prior to the decision-making by the representatives in 'tungku tigo sajarangan,' the deliberation is started from the internal clan led by the 'ninik mamak' of each clan. The deliberation is later continued in the 'tungku tigo sajarangan consortium, wherein the clan members are free to attend. The culture of deliberation has been in effect for a long time. It is held not only to elect the leaders of communities such as Wali Nagari and jorong but also to elect the clan's leaders (ninik mamak) and make other decisions concerning the community. The culture of deliberation by the Minangkabau ethnicity is inherent in their daily lives, particularly in making various collective decisions.

Deliberation in the Minangkabau ethnic community is inherent. This is so because Nagari simultaneously acts as a socio-ethnic and formal governance unit (Tanjung, 2013; Vel & Bedner, 2015). Such a double function makes Nagari leadership different from district or province leaders, as the latter merely serve as formal government units. Therefore, paying attention to such socio-cultural characteristics in the Wali Nagari and Wali Jorong elections is essential.

4 Discussion

4.1 The practice of direct election and the loss of the communal democracy character

The development of democracy in Indonesia tends to be liberal (Törnquist, 2005), as well as direct elections to elect every executive official. The direct election to elect the regional executive officials has become a dominant model that is also imitated by the local governments, including formulating policies related to the political grassroots communities such as Nagari. The Regional Regulation of West Sumatra Province No. 2 of 2007 on Nagari adopted a direct election model to elect the head of Nagari ('Wali Nagari'). More specifically, all Regency also adopted a direct election model to elect the head of 'Jorong' (a subdistrict of Nagari). The election of 'Wali Nagari' and 'Wali Jorong' is a concrete form of the democratic experience of the Nagari community (Miko & Indradin, 2009). This direct election provided free competition and public participation with the principle of one-man-one-vote (Djamra, 2013). The candidate's victory for 'Wali Nagari' and 'Wali Jorong' is mainly determined by the support of individual voters in the electoral process. The uniformity of the election model for electing the Nagari political

leaders is significantly different from the character of the developing culture in the Nagari community.

The election of Nagari or Jorong leaders has long been carried out with the principle of consensus by 'ninik mamak suku' or the clans (F. von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2013; Djamra, 2013). In this deliberation, the clan's members have the right to nominate a candidate and to express their opinions to the leaders. The debate and argumentation in this deliberation are open. The decision is reached when an agreement has been obtained from all representatives of 'ninik mamak' (clan leader). Each representative clan member will approve and accept the outcome of the deliberation. Supposing the decision is not yet achieved, each 'ninik mamak' will hold a deliberation within their clan, and the agreement within the clan will be discussed in the deliberation of 'Ninik Mamak at Nagari.' The deliberation occurs within a clan and between the 'Nagari' and 'Jorong' clans to decide. There is no voting in this deliberation. Such a practice of democracy has existed and is well-known in the tradition of the 'Nagari' community.

Direct election is foreign to the Nagari community. A direct election based on individual voters leads to disagreement and conflict in the community. The election case for the Wali Nagari Silantai in Sijunjung Regency took place in September 2019. Conflicts arose during the campaign period up to the day of voting. Meanwhile, the election of Wali Nagari in Nagari Muaro Aie in Pesisir Selatan District was held in December 2014 and of a Wali Jorong in Jorong Padang Kunyik Nagari Kamang Mudik in Agam Regency in November 2015. Both share characteristics: voters rejected the election results and the 'elected' candidate. The two cases also show that the first-place candidate only slightly outnumbers the votes of the second-place candidate. In the case of the Muaro Aie election, there were only ten votes different between them, while in the case of the Padang Kunyik election, there were only 23 votes. (In Nagari Silantai, the vote difference is slightly more significant (28 votes). The slim difference in vote acquisition indicates that the two candidates secured relatively similar support from constituents. Such a situation also triggered issues among supporters, creating conflict. This conflict, as in the two cases mentioned above, led to the rejection of the voting results. In the case of Nagari Kamang Mudiak, our observation shows that this protest arose from the dissatisfaction of several community groups concerning the elected 'Wali Jorong.' The age requirement is the most effective tool to support the protest. During this period, rumours arose among supporters of the elected 'Wali Jorong' and non-elected candidates, leading to frequent quarrels, even though they are neighbours and originate from the same clan.

... He does not qualify to be a wali jorong. He is too old. Why did he nominate himself? He should be aware of the age requirements. Uni Ida (a nickname for an older sister) supports him. I fought with her (Interview with ZR, a voter rejecting the outcomes of the vote on 6 December 2015).

On the other hand, the winning candidate's supporters stated that the election outcome should be ratified since it had strong legitimacy from the voters.

That is only an excuse for the losing party. Mr. D won the election (initial). Regarding their claim that Mr. D does not meet the requirements, supposing it is true, the committee will have refused him before the election. However, it is evident that the election committee did not refuse Mr. D... the losing candidate provoked them (Interview with SY, a voter supporting the winning candidate on 5 December 2015).

This statement shows that his support for the winning candidate encouraged him to confront the opposing candidate's supporters, even though they were members of his clan.

The emerging rejection following the announcement of election results is interesting to study. During the candidate nomination and campaign period, the profile of each candidate was disseminated by the election committee in public areas. As the community had already provided the profile and then accepted the candidates, there should be no protest regarding the requirements and qualifications of the candidates. However, the rejection and conflict arose following the vote count and the determination of the election's winner, implying that the basis of the election's rejection is not the winner's ineligibility.

Further observation shows that this protest arose from the dissatisfaction of several community groups concerning the elected candidates. The reasons for refusal from a losing party vary. However, they do not always make sense and seem to be manufactured. In the case of the election in Nagari Kamang Mudiak, the age requirement was the most effective tool for building up the protests. Meanwhile, in the case of the election in Muaro Aie, the issue of the personal characteristics of the winning candidate was brought to the surface. During this period, rumours arose among supporters of the elected candidates and losing candidates. These issues often led to quarrels among them. Worse, they live in the same neighbourhood and are members of the same clan. In Nagari Silantai, the issue of ethnic representation has emerged since the campaign.

The conflict resulting from the Wali Nagari and Wali Jorong's election impacted other social activities. For example, the conflict of the Wali Jorong election in Nagari Kamang Mudik became widespread and affected its PKK ["Pembinaan

Kesejahteraan Keluarga" / Family Welfare Guidance] program. This women's organisation, which was previously solid and even won competitions at the sub-district level, was now divided. The disagreement among the management staff and members was responsible for the split stemming from the conflicting support for the election of Wali Jorong. Interviews with several other PKK members indicated that there was a confrontation between the supporters of the winning and losing candidates. As a result, the meetings they held to plan their activities became unproductive because, during these kinds of meetings, they often ended up debating the results of the direct elections. In the case of the election of the Wali Nagari Muaro Aie, the conflict expanded on issues that created conflicts between different clans from different sub-villages (Jorong).

The conflict escalation to other community organisations is the impact of individual support. These individuals view that support must be in the form of collective support. Several conclusions can be drawn from this situation: First, it is difficult for voters to accept differences between their personal choices and those of public members. The value shared by voters accustomed to community values is that the election of leaders is a group/community action (Walzer, 1990; Bell, 2005). This contrasts with the direct election system, in which an election is an individual action (Walzer, 1990). In the context of the Nagari community, voters do not realise that voting is a personal action. Since they are accustomed to living communally with joint decisions, these individuals expect their community to have the same choices. Fanatical supporters of particular candidates instil their emotional and individual support into the group. The absence of deliberation in the concept of direct election of the liberal democratic model causes individuals to impose their choice as a collective decision. They assume that the sense of collectivity in the group must be similar to particular candidates in direct elections. They do not realise that in the direct election model, representation is individual, not collective (Neal & Paris, 1990). For the Minangkabau ethnic group, deliberation is one of the essential procedures in decision-making, including the election of leaders. Differences in the characteristics of existing cultural values in society, with individual values adhered to by liberal democracy, were the cause of conflict. Second, mutual respect and communal bonds between them diminish due to individual preferences. The candidate campaign process, usually oriented toward community issues and regional representation, has resulted in voter polarisation. As a result, animosity and tension between groups of people came to the surface. Individual political support eliminates collective solidarity among them. Third, for the Minangkabau people, elections do not only elect a government leader (government) but also a community figure. Such expectation also influences their acceptance of the results of direct elections. The emotional bonding among community members to their leaders causes problems in selecting leaders, directly impacting various areas of their lives. This causes a broader impact of conflict on other aspects of society.

The election of 'Wali Jorong' or 'Wali Nagari' might end, yet the enmity between communities has been a bad experience for their social life. Thus, a direct election, as well as the emphasised individual involvement, created a hostile community. The community lost its sense of trust, tolerance, and openness. The absence of discussion and deliberation in determining the decision (Sairin, 1995; Azwar et al., 2018). To elect the leader results in the community losing their communal values. The rising social and political risks correlate with the existing political processes in this community. The Nagari community, which bases their lives on the strength of communities, is forced to understand and practice democracy with the principle of one-man-one-vote that is not rooted in local political culture. Direct elections do not guarantee the involvement of every individual in politics since they are procedural rather than substantial. The data show low voter turnout. Eventually, the goal of direct elections is achieved minimally at the expense of the unity of the community.

Observing the decentralisation objectives believed in building effective governance and developing community-based democratic governance (Haris, 2005), it is clear that implementing the direct election model to elect 'Wali Jorong' or 'Wali Nagari' is contradictory. In this context of communal community, democracy does not create a better life but instead becomes a source of social chaos. Thus, it is imperative to emphasise context rather than imposing the concept of global democracy on communal communities. Democracy at the local community level does not necessarily mean it has to be a derivative of democracy at the national level (Santoso, 2018). At the local community level, there is a context of cultural values that form the basis of the community's political life that should not be ignored.

In the context of the Minangkabau ethnic case, the root of the problem is the neglect of the existing democratic culture in its people's daily lives. The difference in the tradition of electing leaders in the Minangkabau ethnic community and the liberal democratic tradition creates social chaos and harms democracy in society. The unique political structure of local communities has values and ways of practising democracy to maintain social stability.

4.2 Clannish deliberation: arena of debate and collective agreement

The rising conflict in the election encouraged the Nagari government to change the election model and elect 'Wali Jorong' in the next period. The election applied the deliberation system based on communal agreements. Each 'penghulu' (clan leader) deliberates with their clan members concerning the candidates for the leaders of 'jorong.' The agreement reached in these clan groups was presented by 'ninik mamak' in the deliberation of 'Urang Ampek Suku', usually attended by

'ninik mamak', 'alim ulama', and 'cadiak pandai.' However, other clan members can also participate in the deliberation. The open deliberation allowed all participants to express their opinions regarding the candidates for the leadership positions of 'Jorong.'

Based on our observations during the deliberation, the participants debated the qualifications of the nominated candidates. Differences in opinion were frequent, and the participants argued with each other to support their views. These opinions and arguments will be collectively considered to determine the final decision. Their positives and negatives regarding the common good were the basis for the decision-making. The candidates for 'Wali Jorong' were nominated based on the agreement reached in the deliberation. Eventually, the decisions in deliberations can be accepted by members of the clans, both present and absent. They realised that the outcome of the deliberation system was a collective decision.

The election model of clan-based deliberation, implemented since the era of the Nagari government in 2000 based on the collective agreement, went well. In the following four electoral processes of 'Wali Jorong,' the decisions will be determined through deliberation without voting³. Applying this election model has never caused conflict or rejection by the community regarding the elected 'Wali Jorong.'

Ever since I was little, we have chosen the head of Jorong through deliberation that involves all clans in the Jorong. There is no rejection. Disagreement only occurs during the deliberation process. All community members accept the decision that has been made collectively. Supposing there are community members who disagree, Penghulu will try to explain. We should use our culture (deliberation). The protest in the 2015 direct election had also been resolved by deliberation (Interview with Z. Dt. Maruhun Batuah on November 20, 2018).

One of the protesters in 2015 stated, "I participated in the deliberation to elect wali jorong; I agreed with the appointed wali jorong. Why should I protest the 2015 direct election? It was a collective decision. The deliberation provided a reasonable explanation." (Interview with K on 20 November 2018). Referring to this statement, the decision reached in the deliberation is a collective decision, indicating the informant's acceptance of the collective decision through deliberation. The informant's collective awareness (Benhabib, 1994) has encouraged the informant to accept the outcome of the deliberation.

Further observation reveals that the electoral process did not involve all the members of the Jorong community. The deliberation is carried out on the principle of togetherness with collective representation, which is open and witnessed by

every community member willing to attend. In this deliberation, various arguments and differences in opinions emerged, yet they did not lead to a conflict when the final decision was reached. It is precisely following the statement by Dryzek (2000) that to solve public problems, the quality of decision-making must be positioned at the core of the debate by strengthening discursive or communicative rationality to enable us to discover solutions for the collective problems encountered. Mutual respect for group members, a tolerant culture, mutual trust, and equality are essential in public debate and decision-making. Therefore, the outcome of the deliberation determined the leader of the community, a decision that was acceptable to all parties. Even though not all community members were present, every member accepted the decision as a collective decision to their awareness. In this process, deliberative democracy demands an understanding of collective values that are valued and implemented in political decision-making (Benhabib, 1994).

The Nagari community in Minangkabau, West Sumatra, has the values of communal democracy. The Nagari community is egalitarian and places collective agreements in decision-making (Kato, 1978; Sairin, 1995; Kahin, 1999). Such a communal community does not recognise the individual voice as a determinant of political decisions because the individual is defined as a part of the community. (Kymlicka & He, 2005). Representation is based on communal rather than individual representation. Such a model will bind the reciprocal relationship between members, leaders, and the community. Historically and sociologically, Nagari has a tradition of clan-based communitarian democracy. The character of the egalitarian communal (clan) culture in Nagari in Minangkabau strongly influences voters to accept differences and achieve consensus through deliberation. This clannish deliberation can avoid conflict and maintain communal integration.

4.3 The development of democracy with local context

The application of liberal democracy in local communities occurs because of numerous assumptions from the central government that local communities cannot apply democracy. Western liberal democracy has limitations when used in communal communities (Kymlicka & He, 2005), particularly ethnic communities, due to differences in democratic values growing in these communities. The differences between the values of Western liberal democracy and communitarian culture in Asian multiculturalism need attention, not to be debated, but to learn from one another (Kymlicka & He, 2005). Supposing they are substantially examining, local communities have their way of creating their tools for democracy (Törnquist, 2005).

The development of democracy is inseparable from the context in which it is implemented. Cultural differences that become the context of democracy impact

communal communities differently. Not all models of democracy are suitable for all community characteristics. The suitability between the cultural characteristics of the community and the applied democratic values will significantly determine the success of the democratisation process. Considering its characteristics, a communal community may face serious obstacles when it is used in a liberal democratic model that emphasises individual rights. The application of universal democratic values should not ignore the existing local values to ensure the smooth implementation of democracy.

5 Conclusions

Democracy is an essential institution in ensuring the certainty of the involvement of all elements of society in political life. Even though democracy has universal values, in practice, variants of democracy emerge that are influenced by culture and political structures that are contextual to their environment. Likewise, indigenous peoples with cultural characteristics will create democratic practices with their own characteristics.

For the Minangkabau ethnic group, the customary and cultural rules that apply in their community are based on the deliberation model as their substance. The Minangkabau indigenous people are accustomed to deliberation in making decisions and selecting their leaders. Nagari, as a form of socio-political institution for this ethnic group, has historically developed a culture of deliberation for a long time. They are making Nagari the lowest government system in the Indonesian state government system, making Nagari adapt to the national state system. The direct election model in the Indonesian political system is also applied in the election of nagari leaders. However, this direct election model is different from the cultural characteristics of selecting leaders in Minangkabau ethnic life. The differences in characteristics between direct election on an individual basis and election using a community-based deliberation system in Minangkabau ethnic culture give rise to contradictions in practice.

The direct election model applied to elect the political leaders of communal communities may create hostility in the Nagari community, which is accustomed to deliberation and consensus in decision-making based on the common good. Their representation in decision-making and the election of their leader is collective. The individual electoral system only causes ambiguous understanding and the loss of the principle of openness in accepting differences and mutual respect of the community members. The Nagari community practically loses the

meaning of democracy when the model of democracy imposed is not by the democratic culture that they have.

The development of democracy in Nagari must also be based on the development of Nagari's culture. The principle of deliberation that characterizes Minangkabau ethnic democracy in making decisions has proven to be able to overcome conflict and create unity in their political system. The Nagari community cannot be compelling to apply the democracy applied by the higher government. The most important thing is that the empowerment of the values of communal democracy should be explored to bridge the existing changes. An essential thing to emphasise is that the tradition of the deliberation system in the Minangkabau community contains democratic values that have been applied for centuries. Therefore, in the communitarian Minangkabau community, the common good is accepted as a fundamental concept of a good life that determines the community's perspective on life (Kymlicka, 2002). The deliberation process can create togetherness and tolerance for differences in choices. We believe that a democratic system that prioritizes individual freedom without interaction in deliberation is not suitable to be implemented in a society with communal characteristics.

Notes:

¹ Minangkabau is one of the minority ethnicities in Indonesia. Based on ethnic census data from BPS (Central Bureau of Statistics) in 2010, the Minangkabau ethnicity amounts to 6,462,713 people or only 2.7% of all ethnicities. See Na'im and Syaputra (2011), *Kewarganegaraan, Suku Bangsa, Agama*, 2-10. Most Minangkabau people live in West Sumatra, although they are spread in several other regions. See Franz von Benda-Beckmann and Benda-Beckmann (2012), *Identity in dispute*, 324.

² The government system in Indonesia consists of five levels of government: central (national), provincial, district/municipality, subdistrict, and village government.

³ Interview with A. L. Dt. Samiak (wali Nagari Kamang Mudiak) on Desember, 21, 2015 and R. Tuanku Basa (public figure) on Desember, 19, 2015.

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Irawati, U. Suwaryo, A. Sulaeman & N. Y. Yuningsih: Democracy in Local Communities: Direct Election System versus Deliberation System in the Minangkabau Ethnicity in West Sumatra, Indonesia

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