

Reconstructing Disability Rights Paradigm: Harmonizing Pancasila's Humanity Principle within the Global Constitutionalism Trend

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Abstract

Global constitutionalism has fundamentally shifted the paradigm of disability rights from a charity-based medical model to a rights-based social model, as epitomized by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). However, the domestication of these global norms in Indonesia often faces friction with local cultural interpretations that still view disability through a lens of pity. This paper aims to harmonize the global standards of the CRPD with the local philosophical foundation of Indonesia, specifically the Second Principle of Pancasila (Kemanusiaan yang Adil dan Beradab). Using a normative legal research method with conceptual and comparative approaches, this study analyzes the compatibility between the "Just and Civilized Humanity" principle and the "Non-Discrimination" principle of the CRPD. The results demonstrate that the Second Principle of Pancasila inherently rejects the charity model, arguing that a "civilized" humanity requires the recognition of rights rather than the granting of compassion. Consequently, Pancasila serves not as a barrier but as a strengthening moral filter for global constitutionalism norms. The study concludes that interpreting disability rights through Pancasila strengthens the mandate for affirmative action and accessibility.

Furthermore, this harmonization is crucial to ensure that the legal protection for persons with disabilities is not only formally regulated but also culturally accepted by the Indonesian society. It is recommended that the Constitutional Court utilizes this interpretation in future judicial reviews to abolish discriminatory regulations.

Keywords *Pancasila, Global Constitutionalism, Disability Rights, UN CRPD, Human Rights.*

A. Introduction

The discourse on disability rights has undergone a revolutionary transformation in the landscape of global constitutionalism, moving away from the medical model, which views disability as a personal tragedy requiring cure or charity, toward the social model that identifies systemic barriers as the primary violation of human rights (Degener 2017). This shift is legally cemented by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which mandates state parties to guarantee full equality and participation (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008). In the Indonesian context, despite the ratification of the CRPD through Law Number 19 of 2011 (Republik Indonesia 2011) and the enactment of Law Number 8 of 2016 (Republik Indonesia 2016), the societal and institutional mindset often remains trapped in the archaic "charity model" (Faqih 2018). Many policymakers still view state support for persons with disabilities as an act of benevolence rather than a constitutional obligation. This discrepancy highlights a critical need to re-examine national ideology to support legal progression.

Previous studies have extensively discussed the technical implementation of Law Number 8 of 2016 and its compliance with international standards (Wibowo 2013). Most literature focuses on public infrastructure, inclusive education, and employment quotas. Scholars like Nursyamsi have analyzed the political rights of persons with disabilities in elections (Nursyamsi 2018). Others, such as Tarsidi, have highlighted the barriers in accessing public services (Tarsidi). However, there is a scarcity of literature that specifically bridges the philosophical gap between the universal norms of the CRPD and the indigenous philosophy of Pancasila. Most existing research tends to treat international law and national ideology as separate entities, failing to explore how the Second Principle of Pancasila (Sila kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab) can provide a robust normative justification for the rights-based model mandated by global constitutionalism (Awaludin 2017).

This article aims to fill this academic void by offering a novel interpretation of the Second Principle of Pancasila as a "Global Normative Foundation" that harmonizes with the CRPD (Peters 2009). The study seeks to prove that the values of "Just and Civilized Humanity" are not only compatible but instrumental in deconstructing the charity model. The article is structured to first analyze the global paradigm shift, followed by a philosophical reconstruction of the Second Sila, and finally, examining the implications for Indonesian constitutional law. This research strives to provide a theoretical framework for policymakers to elevate disability rights from social welfare issues to fundamental constitutional rights (Marzuki 2017), derived through the methods used.

B. The Shifting Paradigm of Global Constitutionalism : From Medical to Social Model

The discourse on disability within the framework of global constitutionalism has evolved significantly over the last few decades, marked by a fundamental departure from the Medical Model to the Social Model (Kanter 2003). Historically, the legal construction of disability was dominated by the Medical Model, which viewed disability as a biological "defect" or "abnormality" inherent in the individual (Quinn and Degener 2002). Under this archaic paradigm, the impairment was considered the root cause of social exclusion, and consequently, the state's intervention was limited to rehabilitation, cure, or social protection based on charity. Persons with disabilities were treated as objects of benevolence rather than subjects of rights, leading to their systematic marginalization from the mainstream legal and political sphere (Basser 2011). This perspective effectively stripped them of their legal capacity, justifying segregation in education and employment under the guise of "protection."

Furthermore, the paradigm shift in global constitutionalism is not merely a rhetorical change but is embedded in specific legal mechanisms within the CRPD. One of the most controversial yet transformative provisions is Article 12 regarding "Equal Recognition before the Law." Historically, legal systems worldwide, including in Indonesia (under the Civil Code), operated under a guardianship system where persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities were stripped of their legal capacity and placed under the custody of guardians (Suharso 2018). The CRPD radically challenges this by replacing "substituted decision-making" with "supported decision-making" (Degener 2017). In the lens of global constitutionalism, this signifies that disability does not negate

personhood. A person with a disability has the right to make their own legal decisions whether in finance, health, or marriage with state-provided support if necessary. This principle of legal capacity is the bedrock of the human rights model, asserting that autonomy is an intrinsic part of human dignity that cannot be alienated by medical diagnosis (Quinn and Degener 2002).

Another critical dimension of the global standard is the principle of "Universal Design." While "Reasonable Accommodation" is individualistic and reactive (fixing barriers for a specific person), Universal Design is systemic and proactive (Lawson 2017). It mandates that products, environments, and programs be designed to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. For example, installing a ramp is not just for wheelchair users but also benefits elderly people and parents with strollers. Global constitutionalism promotes this inclusive approach as a standard for public policy, shifting the narrative from "special needs" to "human diversity." By adopting Universal Design, the state fulfills its constitutional duty to serve all citizens without segregation, creating a public sphere that is inherently democratic and accessible (Lawson 2017).

1. *The Transformation of State Obligation: From Benevolence to Rights*

The transition to the Social Model imposes a new form of state obligation that transcends the traditional concept of social welfare (Fredman 2016). In the era of global constitutionalism, the state is no longer merely a provider of social assistance but a guarantor of inclusive rights (Harpur 2012). This paradigm shift redefines the concept of "equality" in constitutional law. Traditional "formal equality" which treats everyone exactly the same is deemed insufficient and often discriminatory against persons with disabilities (Fredman 2016). Instead, the CRPD introduces the concept of "Transformative Equality" or "Inclusive Equality," which requires the state to take positive measures to accommodate differences (Degener 2016). This means that treating persons with disabilities differently (through affirmative action) is not a violation of equality, but a necessary condition to achieve it.

One of the most critical legal instruments introduced by this new paradigm is the concept of "Reasonable Accommodation"

(Meyerson 2018). According to Article 2 of the CRPD, the denial of reasonable accommodation constitutes discrimination (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008). This principle mandates that the state and public sectors must make necessary and appropriate modifications to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise their rights on an equal basis with others. For instance, in the context of general elections, the state is constitutionally obligated to provide Braille ballot papers or accessible polling stations. If the state fails to do so, it cannot argue that it treats all voters "equally" by providing the same standard paper; rather, the state is liable for discrimination by failing to remove the barriers that prevent substantive participation.

2. *Accessibility as a Constitutional Imperative*

Within the architecture of global constitutionalism, accessibility is elevated from a technical building code to a constitutional imperative (Lawson 2007). It acts as a precondition for the enjoyment of all other human rights, including civil, political, economic, and social rights. Without accessibility, the right to vote, the right to education, and the right to work become meaningless concepts for persons with disabilities. The CRPD emphasizes that accessibility applies not only to the physical environment but also to information and communications, including electronic services and emergency services (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008). This comprehensive scope challenges the legal systems of state parties, including Indonesia, to harmonize their domestic regulations with these global norms, moving away from fragmented social services towards a holistic rights-based legal framework (Lord and Stein 2008).

C. Pancasila's Second Sila as The Normative Roots for Inclusive Humanity

While global constitutionalism provides the external legal pressure to adopt the Social Model, the internal justification for this shift must be rooted in Indonesia's own Grundnorm, Pancasila. Specifically, the Second Principle, "Just and Civilized Humanity" (Kemanusiaan yang Adil dan Beradab), offers a profound philosophical foundation that aligns seamlessly with the modern human rights perspective on disability (Darmodiharjo 1991). In the hierarchy of Indonesian legal

norms, Pancasila serves not only as the source of all sources of law but also as the ethical compass that guides how the state treats its citizens. Therefore, interpreting disability rights through the lens of the Second Sila is essential to ensure that the implementation of the CRPD is not merely a transplantation of Western values, but a realization of the nation's own ideological promise (Winarno 2017).

To understand the depth of disability rights in Pancasila, one must not view the Second Sila in isolation but in its hierarchical relationship with the First Sila, "Belief in the One Supreme God" (Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa). According to the philosophy of Pancasila, human dignity is derived from the fact that every human being is a creation of God (titah Tuhan). Therefore, discriminating against a person with a disability is tantamount to insulting the Creator. This theological-philosophical foundation provides a stronger protection for disability rights than secular human rights theories. In the secular view, rights might be based on social contracts or rational capacity, which often disadvantages those with cognitive impairments. However, in Pancasila, rights are inherent because of the divine origin of the human soul. Thus, the state's obligation to protect persons with disabilities is not just a legal duty but a moral and spiritual imperative rooted in the First Sila (Notonagoro 1975; Kaelan 2013).

The implementation of disability rights in Indonesia is colored by the local wisdom of Gotong Royong (mutual cooperation), which is the essence of Pancasila. Unlike the Western liberal tradition which emphasizes extreme individualism, the Pancasila-based legal system emphasizes communal support. In the context of disability, Gotong Royong implies that the inclusion of persons with disabilities is a collective responsibility of the community, not just the state. However, this must be carefully interpreted. Gotong Royong should not be an excuse for the state to abdicate its responsibility to families or charities. Instead, it should be interpreted as "Inclusive Solidarity," where the community actively removes barriers to ensure that their neighbors with disabilities can participate fully (Faqih 2018). This communitarian perspective offers a unique contribution to the global discourse on disability rights, proposing a model where individual autonomy is supported by a strong social network.

1. *Deconstructing the "Charity" Mindset through "Civilized" Humanity*

The concept of "Civilized" (Beradab) in the Second Sila implies a

society that respects the inherent dignity of every human being as a creation of God (Notonagoro 1975). Philosophically, a "civilized" nation is one that elevates the status of humans from objects to subjects (Kaelan 2013). When applied to the context of disability, the traditional Charity Model which views persons with disabilities as objects of pity and benevolence is intrinsically "uncivilized" (Awaludin 2017). Charity implies a hierarchical relationship where the giver holds a superior position to the receiver, by perpetuating the marginalization of the recipient. Conversely, the Second Sila demands a horizontal relationship based on mutual respect and human dignity (Latif 2011). Consequently, the state's failure to recognize persons with disabilities as equal rights-holders is a betrayal of the principle of civilization itself. Pancasila mandates that the state must move beyond "helping" the disabled to "empowering" them, recognizing their autonomy and legal capacity as absolute requirements for a civilized society (Latif 2011).

2. *"Just" Humanity and the Legitimacy of Affirmative Action*

The term "Just" (Adil) in the Second Sila provides the constitutional legitimacy for affirmative action and reasonable accommodation (Rawls 1971). Justice in the Pancasila perspective is not merely procedural or formal justice, but substantive justice that considers the specific conditions of individuals (Asshiddiqie 2010). If the state treats persons with disabilities the same as non-disabled persons without providing necessary accommodations such as accessibility features or sign language interpreters, the state is practicing injustice under the guise of equality. The Second Sila requires the state to act proportionally, giving more support to those who face greater structural barriers (El Muhtaj 2015). This aligns with the global concept of "Inclusive Equality" found in the CRPD. Providing specific quotas for employment or specialized infrastructure for persons with disabilities is not a violation of equality for others, but a fulfillment of "Just Humanity" (Hidayat 2017). It affirms that in the Indonesian constitutional design, the protection of vulnerable groups is a primary indicator of a just nation.

3. The Challenge of Legal Disharmony and The Role of The Constitutional Court

Although Law Number 8 of 2016 has formally harmonized Indonesian law with the CRPD, substantial challenges remain in the realm of implementation, particularly regarding the harmonization of local regulations (Peraturan Daerah). Indonesia's decentralized system allows provinces and regencies to create their own laws, which often leads to inconsistencies. Research shows that many local regulations still use derogatory terms such as "cacat" (defective) and focus heavily on social rehabilitation rather than rights-based empowerment (sumber 51 belum diberikan). This disharmony creates a fragmented legal reality where a person with a disability might enjoy rights in one province but face discrimination in another. This contradicts the unitary state principle of Pancasila, which demands a unified legal standard for justice across the archipelago (Hidayat 2017).

In this context, the Constitutional Court (Mahkamah Konstitusi) plays a pivotal role as the guardian of the constitution and Pancasila. Several judicial review cases have tested the state's commitment to disability rights. For instance, the landmark decision regarding the political rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities in elections demonstrated the Court's willingness to use a rights-based interpretation (Mahkamah Konstitusi 2015). However, the Court needs to be more consistent in using the Second Sila as a "touchstone" for review. The Court must boldly declare that any regulation whether national or local that fails to provide reasonable accommodation is unconstitutional. For example, regulations that require "physical and spiritual health" (sehat jasmani dan rohani) as a prerequisite for public office are often used to disqualify persons with disabilities (Nursyamsi 2018). A Pancasila-based interpretation would reject this requirement as discriminatory and demand that "capability" be measured by the provision of support, not the absence of impairment (Degener 2017).

Moreover, the budgetary allocation for disability inclusion remains a critical issue that reflects the state's true ideological commitment. "Just Humanity" requires material resources. Without a specific budget for accessibility in the State Budget (APBN) and Regional Budgets (APBD), rights remain on paper. The principle of social justice (Fifth Sila) dictates that state resources must be distributed to uplift the most vulnerable. Therefore, a "Pancasila Economic" approach to disability would mandate "Gender and Disability Responsive Budgeting" as a constitutional requirement, ensuring that every infrastructure project includes funds for accessibility features from the planning stage (Muhtaj 2015).

D. Conclusion

Based on the analysis above, this study concludes that the paradigm shift from the charity model to the social model in global constitutionalism is not foreign to Indonesia, but rather deeply rooted in the Second Principle of Pancasila, "Just and Civilized Humanity." The research demonstrates that the charity model, which views persons with disabilities as objects of pity, is fundamentally "uncivilized" and contradictory to the values of Pancasila. Conversely, the social model, which demands rights and accessibility, is the true manifestation of a "Just" humanity. Therefore, Pancasila serves as a strong moral filter that validates and strengthens the implementation of the UN CRPD in Indonesia. It is recommended that the government and the Constitutional Court actively use this interpretation to abolish remaining discriminatory regulations and enforce affirmative action, ensuring that persons with disabilities are treated as equal subjects of law with dignity, rather than recipients of state benevolence.

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Acknowledgment

None

Funding Information

None

Conflicting Interest Statement

None

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