



Welfare State and Pancasila Economy: Indonesia's Democratic Path to Social Justice

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Abstract

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This study examines the transformation of the state concept from *Nachtwakerstaat* (night-watchman state) to *Welfare State* within the Indonesian context. The central focus is on how democratization and the Pancasila Economy function as both ideological and practical foundations in shaping public policies, particularly in the areas of social security, education, health, and the protection of vulnerable groups. The application of social justice principles embodied in the fifth principle of Pancasila and Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution serves as the basis for developing an economy rooted in kinship and solidarity. Democratization has shifted the role of the state from merely exercising political authority to becoming a provider of public services that are accountable, responsive, and oriented toward general welfare. Through a literature-based approach, this research affirms that the Pancasila Economy provides an alternative to liberalism by emphasizing equity and social solidarity. The findings are expected to enrich the understanding of the interconnection between democracy, Pancasila ideology, and the welfare state as fundamental pillars of national development in the modern era.



1. Introduction

The concept of the welfare state has occupied a significant position in global political and economic discourse, especially since the beginning of the 20th century. Essentially, the welfare state is understood as a model of state administration that makes guaranteeing the social-economic welfare of the people the main priority. This is realized through various policy instruments, such as redistribution programs, the provision of social security, the organization of educational and health services, and protection for groups considered vulnerable. The birth of this model cannot be separated from harsh criticism of the minimalist state model, known as the *Nachtwakerstaat*.¹ The minimalist state is only seen as functioning to maintain general security and order, but it fails to provide adequate solutions to the problem of distributive injustice and the widening social gap. Therefore, the shift towards a welfare state is seen as a significant paradigm change, where the function of the state is no longer limited to being a security guard, but also actively participates as a public service provider that guarantees the fulfillment of its people's welfare.²

When viewed in the Indonesian context, the idea of a welfare state obtains a distinctive ideological foundation through Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (*Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945/UUD 1945*). The fifth principle of Pancasila, which reads "Social Justice for All Indonesian People," becomes the fundamental basis, while Article 33 of the 1945

¹ Bobi Yusuf Noor Fajar, and Zaid Zaid. "A Critical Review on The Job Creation Omnibus Law-Forming Process." *Syiah Kuala Law Journal* 5, no. 2 (2021): 195-211.

² Khudzaifah Dimiyati, Haedar Nashir, Elviandri Elviandri, Absori Absori, Kelik Wardiono, and Arief Budiono. "Indonesia as a legal welfare state: A prophetic-transcendental basis." *Helijon* 7, no. 8 (2021): 1-8.

Constitution, which emphasizes the principle of togetherness and the spirit of kinship, reinforces the nation's commitment to the principle of equitable welfare distribution. This model shows a fundamental difference compared to the system of economic liberalism which prioritizes individual interests. Conversely, the concept of Pancasila Economics emphasizes social solidarity, togetherness, and the value of kinship as the core of national economic development.³ Thus, the practice of the welfare state from the Indonesian perspective not only aims to provide basic needs but is also rooted in the nation's philosophical and ideological values.

The development of democratization in Indonesia has also strengthened the direction of the shift towards the welfare state. Democracy with the principle "from the people, by the people, and for the people" demands broader public participation in the policy-making process. Transparency and accountability of government administrators become prerequisites, so that the state must be more responsive in addressing community needs, especially in the provision of social services. In addition, democratization expands the space for civil society to participate in monitoring the government. With this mechanism, the state's role as a guarantor of welfare is no longer entirely top-down but is born through participatory dialogue involving both the government and the community.⁴

Nevertheless, the implementation of the welfare state in Indonesia still faces serious challenges, both internal and external. External challenges, for instance,

³ Nurul Dwi Tsoraya, Masduki Asbari, and GUnawan Santoso. "Pancasila dan Agama: Telaah Singkat Pemikiran Yudi Latif." *Jurnal Pendidikan Transformatif, Jupetra* 2, no. 1 (2022): 15-18.

⁴ Zulkifli Zulkifli. "Indonesian Economic Democracy: Debates, Challenges And Opportunities." *Tatar Pasundan: Jurnal Diklat Keagamaan* 16, no. 2 (2022): 190-204.

come through the flow of economic globalization which demands openness to the free market. This condition often creates a dilemma, because on the one hand, the state needs to adapt to global dynamics, but on the other hand, it must remain consistent in maintaining the principles of Pancasila Economics. From the internal side, the limitation of state fiscal capacity often becomes an obstacle for the government in realizing comprehensive welfare programs. The COVID-19 pandemic situation provided real evidence of the crucial role of the state as a protector of the community's survival. Social assistance programs and the provision of free health services became important instruments to ensure its citizens remained protected. In that moment, the value of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), which has long been rooted in Indonesian national culture, proved to be in line with the principles of the modern welfare state.⁵

The transition from *Nachtwakerstaat* to the welfare state within the framework of democracy and Pancasila Economics becomes a highly relevant theme to study. This study asserts that the welfare state in Indonesia is not merely an adoption of Western concepts but a transformation strongly rooted in the national ideology and local cultural values.

2. Literature Review

Studies on the concept of the welfare state in Indonesia have a strong ideological foundation, namely originating from Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution

⁵ Devansh Saxena, Karla Badillo-Urquiola, Pamela J. Wisniewski, and Shion Guha. "A human-centered review of algorithms used within the US child welfare system." In *Proceedings of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, pp. 1-15. 2020.

as the state constitution. Dimiyati et al.⁶ state that Indonesia as a rule of law state oriented towards people's welfare has a transcendental basis that distinguishes its character from the Western model of the welfare state. Pancasila is viewed not merely as the foundation of the state, but also as a source of morality, legitimacy, and direction in formulating legal policy, economic development, and social policy. This emphasizes that the Indonesian welfare state is a reflection of the nation's ideological values, not merely an adoption of an external model.

Furthermore, Putra⁷ stresses that the successful implementation of the welfare state in Indonesia is only possible if there is synergy between three main elements: the state, civil society, and the market. He argues that the principle of *gotong royong*, which has long been the characteristic and identity of the Indonesian nation, must be integrated with participatory democratic mechanisms. Nevertheless, the application of the welfare state in Indonesia is not immune to various complex challenges. A real dilemma arises when Indonesia must face the flow of globalization. The demands of economic openness require efficiency and market liberalization, which in many cases actually conflict with the goal of equitable social welfare. This condition creates tension between the idealism of Pancasila Economics and the pressure of global dynamics that emphasize free market orientation. Thus, the government must find a middle ground so that the principle of social justice is not reduced by the interests of global economic liberalization.

⁶ Khudzaifah Dimiyati, Haedar Nashir, Elviandri Elviandri, Absori Absori, Kelik Wardiono, and Arief Budiono. "Indonesia as a legal welfare state: A prophetic-transcendental basis." *Helijon* 7, no. 8 (2021): 1-8.

⁷ Marsudi Dedi Putra. "Negara kesejahteraan (welfare state) dalam perspektif Pancasila." *Likhitaprajna* 23, no. 2 (2021): 139-151.

Meanwhile, Mustafa⁸ asserts that the welfare state in Indonesia, especially in the reform era, can be interpreted as a form of social democracy strongly rooted in Pancasila values. However, its implementation still faces a number of serious obstacles. Factors such as political fragmentation, inter-elite rivalry, and the limitation of state fiscal capacity often limit the government's capacity to implement comprehensive welfare policies. These limitations mean that the ideal concept of social democracy has not been fully realized in the daily practice of governance.

On the other hand, research conducted by Saukani et al.⁹ shows a close relationship between the quality of democracy and the level of community welfare in Indonesia. According to them, the greater the state's commitment to human resource development and the expansion of social security, the higher the quality of democracy that can be realized. In other words, the quality of democracy cannot be separated from the state's capacity to realize equitable welfare for all its people.¹⁰ Based on this body of literature, it can be concluded that the development of the welfare state in Indonesia is the result of a synthesis between democratic principles, Pancasila values, and the need to adapt to global challenges.

⁸ Mustafa Mustafa. "Al Mawardi's Thoughts on the Welfare State in the 1998-2019 Reform Era in Indonesia." *International Journal of Islamic Thought and Humanities* 1, no. 1 (2022): 66-93.

⁹ Mohd Nasir Mohd Saukani, Iing Nurdin, and Rizqon Halal Syah Aji. "The Influence of Human Capital and Welfare on the Quality of Democracy in Indonesia." *Jurnal Cita Hukum* 8, no. 3 (2020): 567-588.

¹⁰ Axel Cronert and Axel Hadenius. "Institutional foundations of global well-being: Democracy, state capacity and social protection." *International Political Science Review* 42, no. 5 (2021): 705-724.

3. Method

This research uses the library research method, which focuses on the critical analysis of various scientific sources, including books, journal articles, and legal documents relevant to the concept of the welfare state, democracy, and Pancasila Economics. This approach was chosen because the research focuses more on conceptual and normative understanding rather than the collection of empirical field data. Through literature review, the author can trace the development of the idea of the welfare state in the Indonesian context and its correlation with the Pancasila ideology and the democratization process.

The first step in this library research is the identification of relevant primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include constitutional documents such as the 1945 Constitution, laws and regulations, and state speeches containing the idea of public welfare. Meanwhile, secondary sources are in the form of academic articles, scientific journals, research reports, and scientific publications obtained through academic databases, including Google Scholar. The selection criteria are based on topic suitability, relevance of the publication year, and its contribution to the discourse on the welfare state and democracy in Indonesia.

The next stage is to conduct a content analysis of the collected literature. This analysis aims to find patterns, concepts, and main arguments related to the paradigm shift from *Nachtwakerstaat* to the welfare state. In addition, the analysis is also directed at examining how democracy plays a role in strengthening the state's orientation towards public welfare, and how Pancasila Economics offers an ideological alternative to the liberal system. Besides content analysis, this research

also uses a comparative approach by comparing the views of various authors and thinkers. For example, how Dimiyati et al.¹¹ view the transcendental basis of the welfare state in Indonesia, which is then compared with the view of Putra¹² who emphasizes the importance of harmony between the state, community, and market. This comparison not only shows the diversity of perspectives but also helps formulate a more complete picture of the welfare state concept in Indonesia.

This library research method is descriptive-analytical, meaning the author does not only present a description of the existing literature but also conducts a critical analysis of the arguments contained within it. Thus, the results of this research are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of the Pancasila-based welfare state concept, as well as a practical contribution in providing relevant policy recommendations for national development.

4. Results

4.1. The Transformation from *Nachtwakerstaat* to Welfare State in Indonesia

Indonesia's transformation from the concept of *Nachtwakerstaat* to the welfare state is a long historical process influenced by continuously evolving social, political, and economic dynamics. In the early days of independence, the function of the state was still limited to the classic role, which was maintaining security, preserving order,

¹¹ Khudzaifah Dimiyati, Haedar Nashir, Elviandri Elviandri, Absori Absori, Kelik Wardiono, and Arief Budiono. "Indonesia as a legal welfare state: A prophetic-transcendental basis." *Helijon* 7, no. 8 (2021): 1-8.

¹² Marsudi Dedi Putra. "Negara kesejahteraan (welfare state) dalam perspektif Pancasila." *Likhitaprajna* 23, no. 2 (2021): 139-151.

and protecting national sovereignty. This minimal function aligns with the *Nachtwakerstaat* character, where the state acts primarily as a mere keeper of order. However, the increasing collective awareness about the importance of equitable welfare for all segments of society encouraged a change in the state's orientation. Indonesia gradually began to shift its role, from merely a protector of security to a proactive actor responsible for guaranteeing the basic needs of its citizens. This view is consistent with the thought of Saputra and Emovwondo¹³ who explain that Indonesia as a welfare rule of law state has a transcendental-prophetic foundation. The values contained in Pancasila function as both a source of moral legitimacy and a philosophical basis in every social and economic development policy.

This paradigm shift became increasingly evident when Indonesia implemented various social programs, including the provision of free education, health services for the wider community, and various forms of social assistance specifically aimed at vulnerable groups. Putra¹⁴ emphasizes that the idea of the welfare state with the Pancasila perspective cannot be separated from the importance of synergy between the state, civil society, and the market sector. According to him, the balance between economic efficiency and social justice can only be achieved through harmonious cooperation among these three elements. Therefore, the Indonesian welfare state model has its own distinct characteristics; it is not the same

¹³ Rian Saputra and Silaas Oghenemaro Emovwodo. "Indonesia as legal welfare state: The policy of Indonesian national economic law." *Journal of Human Rights, Culture and Legal System* 2, no. 1 (2022): 1-13.

¹⁴ Marsudi Dedi Putra. "Negara kesejahteraan (welfare state) dalam perspektif Pancasila." *Likhitaprajna* 23, no. 2 (2021): 139-151.

as the patterns of Western countries, but is rooted in the value of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) and the spirit of togetherness deeply embedded in the national identity.

A significant momentum that reinforced the state's position as the protector of public welfare emerged when the COVID-19 pandemic struck. This global crisis condition tested the state's capacity to protect its citizens. Saxena et al.¹⁵ note that social assistance policies during the pandemic were a concrete manifestation of the implementation of the welfare state's function. Although some constraints were still found in practice, such as distribution problems and limited transparency, the policy showed the state's seriousness in carrying out the constitutional mandate. This fact also shows that the Indonesian welfare state is still in the consolidation phase. Therefore, institutional strengthening becomes an urgent need for the implementation of welfare programs to be more effective, just, and equitable.

Nevertheless, the journey towards the welfare state is not without obstacles. Two main constraints faced by Indonesia are the pressure of globalization and the limitation of state fiscal capacity. The flow of globalization encourages economic openness that emphasizes efficiency and market liberalization, while on the other hand, the state is demanded to maintain the principle of equitable welfare distribution according to the mandate of Pancasila Economics. Pressure from international competition often forces the state to prioritize economic stability and efficiency over social equity. This situation creates a policy dilemma: maintaining the idealism of Pancasila or adjusting to the logic of the global market.

¹⁵ Devansh Saxena, Karla Badillo-Urquiola, Pamela J. Wisniewski, and Shion Guha. "A human-centered review of algorithms used within the US child welfare system." In *Proceedings of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, pp. 1-15. 2020.

Considering all these dynamics, Indonesia's transformation from *Nachtwakerstaat* to the welfare state can be understood as a response to the nation's fundamental need to overcome social inequality. Although there are various structural obstacles including fiscal limitations, political fragmentation, and external pressures, the direction of state policy continues to show a strong commitment to affirming the government's active role in guaranteeing the welfare of the people. This is not only a practical implementation of social-economic demands but also an integral part of the constitutional mandate and the ideological values of Pancasila that form the nation's identity. In other words, the welfare state in Indonesia is a unique model rooted in the culture of *gotong royong* and national philosophy, thus differing from the Western concept of welfare.

4.2. The Role of Democracy and Pancasila Economics in the Welfare State

The democratization process taking place since the reform era has had a major impact on the direction of state administration in Indonesia. Democratization not only opens up broader space for the community to participate in the political process but also strengthens the state's orientation towards achieving people's welfare. Democracy essentially demands accountability, transparency, and real public participation in every policy-making process. According to Zulkifli¹⁶ Indonesia's economic democracy grows simultaneously with the strengthening of the welfare state concept, where active community involvement is considered the main pillar supporting the achievement of social justice. In other words, the principle of public

¹⁶ Zulkifli Zulkifli. "Indonesian Economic Democracy: Debates, Challenges And Opportunities." *Tatar Pasundan: Jurnal Diklat Keagamaan* 16, no. 2 (2022): 190-204.

participation is not merely formal access but a substantive mechanism that guarantees the distribution of justice and welfare in democratic practice.

Within the ideological framework, Pancasila Economics becomes the national development paradigm that distinctly separates Indonesia from both pure liberal and socialist economic models. Tsoraya et al.¹⁷ assert that Pancasila Economics places the values of togetherness, the spirit of kinship, and the practice of *gotong royong* as the main foundation for national economic development. This paradigm views development not merely as an effort to pursue individual profit but as a path toward the collective welfare of all people. This shows that there is a close relationship between democracy and welfare: the stronger the implementation of Pancasila Economics, the stronger the legitimacy of the democracy being carried out. Meaning, social welfare is not only the ultimate goal of development but also an important instrument to strengthen the legitimacy of the democratic system.

The success of democracy should not only be measured by how freely and fairly the electoral process takes place but also by the state's capacity to fulfill the basic social rights of its citizens. Saukani et al.¹⁸ underline that the quality of democracy is largely determined by the level of community welfare. If the state can guarantee wide access to educational services, health, and job provision, the legitimacy of democracy will become stronger. Conversely, if the state fails to meet the basic needs of the people, public trust in democracy will erode. Thus, social

¹⁷Nurul Dwi Tsoraya, Masduki Asbari, and GUnawan Santoso. "Pancasila dan Agama: Telaah Singkat Pemikiran Yudi Latif." *Jurnal Pendidikan Transformatif, Jupetra* 2, no. 1 (2022): 15-18.

¹⁸Mohd Nasir Mohd Saukani, Iing Nurdin, and Rizqon Halal Syah Aji. "The Influence of Human Capital and Welfare on the Quality of Democracy in Indonesia." *Jurnal Cita Hukum* 8, no. 3 (2020): 567-588.

welfare functions as the foundation that supports the sustainability of the democratic system itself.

Nevertheless, the journey of democracy and the development of the welfare state in Indonesia is not without obstacles. Mustafa¹⁹ notes that the implementation of the welfare state concept in the reform era is still hindered by political and institutional issues. Fragmentation among political elites, weak bureaucratic capacity, and the practice of corruption are factors that often impede the implementation of welfare policies. This shows that although democracy opens up wider space for community participation, its success still heavily depends on the quality of political institutions and government governance. Without strong institutions, the values of democracy and the goal of welfare cannot be realized maximally.

Considering these dynamics, it can be asserted that democracy and Pancasila Economics in the development of the Indonesian welfare state have a complementary relationship. Democracy provides the space for participation, accountability mechanisms, and assurance of transparency, while Pancasila Economics serves as the ideological foundation and moral guide directing development towards social justice. The synergy between the two produces a unique welfare state model, different from other countries, because it is rooted in the Indonesian national identity. This model is not only relevant in addressing the nation's internal needs but is also important in facing the challenges of globalization

¹⁹ Mustafa Mustafa. "Al Mawardi's Thoughts on the Welfare State in the 1998-2019 Reform Era in Indonesia." *International Journal of Islamic Thought and Humanities* 1, no. 1 (2022): 66-93.

which demand the state maintain a balance between economic efficiency and social equity.

5. Discussion

The results of this study show that Indonesia's transformation from the concept of *Nachtwakerstaat* to the welfare state is both a historical consequence and a fundamental national necessity in addressing social injustice and strengthening democratic legitimacy. The change that occurred is not merely structural but also touches the ideological domain because it is rooted in Pancasila as the moral foundation and constitutional basis of the state. Saputra and Emovwondo²⁰ emphasize that the idea of the welfare rule of law state in Indonesia has a transcendental-prophetic basis, a characteristic that distinguishes it from the Western welfare state model. This shows that the direction of Indonesian national development is not only aimed at achieving material progress but also attempts to integrate the spiritual dimension, morality, and the values of togetherness that exist in society.

Within the framework of democracy, the implementation of the welfare state is proven to function in strengthening community participation and simultaneously increasing government legitimacy. Democracy provides greater space for the public to monitor the policy process, while the state responds by providing inclusive public

²⁰ Rian Saputra and Silas Oghenemaro Emovwodo. "Indonesia as legal welfare state: The policy of Indonesian national economic law." *Journal of Human Rights, Culture and Legal System* 2, no. 1 (2022): 1-13.

services. Saukani et al.²¹ assert that the quality of Indonesian democracy is closely linked to the level of people's welfare. When the state succeeds in fulfilling the basic social rights of its citizens, support for democracy strengthens. Conversely, if the state fails to consistently implement social policies, it can erode public trust in the democratic system. Thus, the relationship between democracy and welfare is reciprocal and mutually supportive in maintaining political and social stability.

Nevertheless, the practice of implementing Pancasila Economics as a national development paradigm still faces quite significant obstacles. The values of togetherness, kinship, and *gotong royong* that form the core of Pancasila Economics often clash with the logic of the free market and the demands of economic globalization. Zulkifli²² asserts that although Pancasila Economics provides an ideological alternative that emphasizes social justice, its practical implementation is often hampered by a number of factors. These include the limitation of state fiscal capacity, political fragmentation among elites, and weak bureaucratic capacity. These factors show that the success of the welfare state in Indonesia will ultimately be determined by the quality of government governance, the integrity of political institutions, and the consistency of commitment to truly implementing the principles of Pancasila.

Thus, this discussion confirms that the Indonesian welfare state model cannot be understood merely as an imitation or adoption of global concepts. Conversely,

²¹ Mohd Nasir Mohd Saukani, Ing Nurdin, and Rizqon Halal Syah Aji. "The Influence of Human Capital and Welfare on the Quality of Democracy in Indonesia." *Jurnal Cita Hukum* 8, no. 3 (2020): 567-588.

²² Zulkifli Zulkifli. "Indonesian Economic Democracy: Debates, Challenges And Opportunities." *Tatar Pasundan: Jurnal Diklat Keagamaan* 16, no. 2 (2022): 190-204.

the Indonesian welfare state is a unique form of synthesis between democratic values, the philosophy of Pancasila, and the national need to overcome social-economic inequality.²³ The existence of various challenges faced actually further clarifies the importance of collective commitment among the government, civil society, and the private sector in building a welfare system that is inclusive, just, and sustainable for all Indonesian people.

6. Conclusion

Indonesia's transformation from the *Nachtwakerstaat* to the welfare state reflects both the historical and ideological journey of the nation in realizing social justice. This shift stems from the awareness that the state does not only function to maintain security but is also obliged to guarantee the welfare of all citizens through inclusive public policies. The main foundation of this process lies in Pancasila, especially the fifth principle, and Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution, which emphasizes the principles of kinship and togetherness in economic development.

Democratization also reinforces the direction of the welfare state by increasing public participation, accountability, and government transparency. The community is no longer merely an object of development but also a subject that helps determine the direction of policy. In this context, Pancasila Economics is present as an ideological alternative that emphasizes collective welfare over individual interests. The principles of *gotong royong*, solidarity, and togetherness

²³ Moch Nur Ichwan, Arskal Salim, and Eka Srimulyani. "Islam and dormant citizenship: soft religious ethno-nationalism and minorities in Aceh, Indonesia." *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 31, no. 2 (2020): 215-240.

become the distinctive Indonesian identity in designing the welfare state model. Despite facing challenges of globalization, fiscal limitations, and political complexity, the direction of state policy shows a strong commitment to integrating democracy, Pancasila, and social welfare. With consistency and strengthening of governance, Indonesia has the potential to make its unique and relevant welfare state model the main pillar of sustainable development.

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