

# Nationalism Understanding: Citizens' National Consciousness

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**Abstract**—Nationalism is a concept that aims to establish and maintain the sovereignty of the nation and state, shaping the identity of the citizens. Thus, each and every citizen holds this concept within themselves. The spirit of nationalism of the young generation is the asset of national development. However, only small portions of the youngsters truly understand and perform the daily practice of nationalism in the modern era. This research aims to know the understanding of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan students on nationalism based on their national consciousness in their daily life. This research used mix method approach. The data were obtained from the questionnaire given to 52 non-civic education students of UAD. The results of the questionnaire was analyzed using quantitative approach and described qualitatively using content analysis and literature review. The research shows that, cognitively, students know about citizen's national awareness. Most of the respondents realize that nationalism can be fostered through their love for their homeland, their efforts to safeguard the sovereignty, their understanding on diversity, and their obedience to rules of law. However, it is necessary to shape the nationalism mentality and attitude in the characters of the youth, for example in paying the tax, obeying the rules, acting honestly, and implementing the democracy of Pancasila.

**Keywords**—nationalism; the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia; young generation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Nationalism is usually identified by the love for the homeland, which was usually had by the heroes while defending the nation against the invaders. From the meaning, the essence of nationalism has a broader sense. Indeed, it is held by everyone at any time in everyday life. Nationalism is a concept of establishing and defending the sovereignty of a country by realizing the concept of common identity for a group of people [1]. Nationalism of a nation is an identity that is not owned by other nations.

The spirit of nationalism in the young generation, especially in this development era, is now experiencing a setback. The decline of nationalism in the young generation has led to the loss of patriotism, which is the foundation of love for the homeland. As proposed by Rukiyati et al, nationalism is a feeling as a nation, unity of all citizens in the society, for the strong feeling fosters the love for the nation and the homeland [2]. The impact of faded nationalism of the young generation leads to the emergence of indifference attitude because they

have no love for the homeland and nation. Indifference creates people who do not concern about the problems and challenges of the nation, decreasing their participation in the national development.

The ignorance of the young generation about the nation and state condition becomes influential threat, for they are main resources in the development. Some examples of young generation's ignorance are the low participation in the elections, apolitical attitude, and adherence to certain groups. Irfani confirms this, stating that one of the signs of low nationalism spirit in the youth is indifference to the condition of the nation [3].

It is important for young generation to be active in the election, for they are great in numbers. Indeed, their vote can affect the results of the election. As stated by Rizki, young generation is potential voter who is considered capable of influencing the election results [4]. The data of the *Penduduk Potensial Pemilih Pemilu* (Potential Voters) in 101 districts organizing the Regional Head election in 2017 shows there are 41.802.538 voters. From all the voters, 32% are young people with the age span of 17-25 years (7.911.898 people) and the age of 25-30 years (5.690.162 people). If the potential of the young generation is not addressed, the election results will not be beneficial to the community because the elected leaders do not represent the needs of the community.

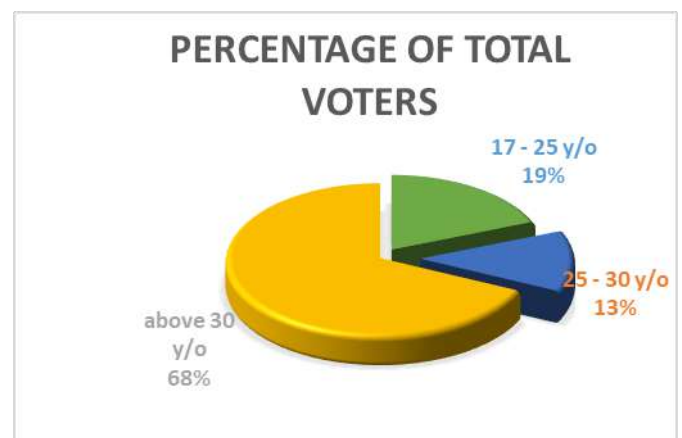


Fig. 1. Percentages of voters in Jakarta election 2017.

The number of young people who did not participate in the 2014 election is the highest. Data obtained from the General Elections Commission concerning the voter's participation in 2014 reported that 28% of voters did not use their right. Voters from the young generation dominated the number. The low level of voters' participation is due to low awareness of the election importance, voters' weariness, lack of interest in candidate figures. Besides, the ideas that elections do not benefit them and disappointment toward the results of previous elections are other factors in the decreasing participation. Apolitical attitude arises from the young generation's doubt about the election results.

Political parties have taken the number of voters with the young generation as potential voters in the election into account. However, it is to no avail because many of them choose not to participate. It is because they do not trust the government. In addition, there is an increasing stigma in the community of apolitical attitude, of unwillingness to get involved in political affairs. Apolitical attitudes have recently shown a dynamic change but also caused an imbalance in the social order of society. This can be seen from the recent events related to the election of Regional Head in Jakarta. General Election Commission stated that general election is not beneficial because of the apolitical attitudes, which is mostly caused by the voters' distrust towards the candidates.

The process of Regional Head election in Jakarta in 2017 was physically and psychologically tiring. Indeed, the election affect all regions in Indonesia. Inappropriate value order is indicated by the loss of tolerance in the forms of religion, tribe, race or ethnic. Apart from the results of the election, the process was not in accordance with the identity of Indonesia, such as politeness and tolerance of other religions and ethnic groups, which was admired by other nations. Indonesia is the only country with the largest Muslim population, where the people are able to coexist with other religions in the country. Besides, geographically, Indonesia consists of 1.340 tribes, but they can live the life without any conflict. It is in contrast with the situation of the countries of West Asia. The good situation is also found during the election. In other places the issue of ethnicity and religion are reasons to affect the electability voters.

Election is one of the manifestations of a democratic country, which is also the principle of Indonesia. In the implementation, however, building a democracy within a variety of ethnics, religions, and groups that have their own values, norms, or rules as in Indonesia is not easy. As Fuady stated, a democracy is built on the principle of people's participation, which means government by the people. It is not an easy task to reach the condition because of the country's great population or great size of the regions with all the diversity in it.

Indonesians are free to express their opinion. The State guarantees that every citizen has the same rights in expressing their, as regulated in Article 28 of the 1945 Constitution. It is clearly stated that every citizen has the freedom to express their opinions both, written or spoken. Nevertheless, there is a limitation in the freedom, in that they should not harm the value order developed in the community. As we know that

Indonesia embraces democracy with its people as the main pillar, so the value that thrive in society affects the development.

Indonesia also encounters a problem caused by the decline of nationalism value, which is evident in the people's accentuation to themselves or particular groups in the form of corruption. According to research by Transparency International in 2016, Indonesia is ranked 90<sup>th</sup> out of 176 of the world's most corrupt countries [5]. Corruption that occurred in Indonesia has been rooted and carried out in various fields ranging from energy resources, education, trade, and even the religions field. The perpetrators of corruption are from all components of government, ranging from heads of regions, law enforcers, and board members. The crime has slapped the face of the whole nation in interpreting nationalism as a whole. It needs an effective effort to make every young generation a renewal agent with high nationalism spirit to build the country.

Effective efforts to foster nationalism in the young generation can be conducted through educational institutions. Nationalism in education becomes one of the character education goals. With the spirit of nationalism based on the establishment of character and mentality, young generation becomes the foundation in the national development and the social asset in strengthening the country's civilization in the midst of development era [1]. The instilment of nationalism into the young generation is carried out by helping them to understand their national consciousness, to practice it in their daily life.

The phenomenon about the low of interest the youth to get involved in political already UNDP prediction. To reduce it, UNDP make guidance with the title "Enhancing Youth Political Participation throughout the Electoral Cycle: A Good Practice Guide". With this guidance, various efforts have been made by the government to provide nationalism understanding through giving lessons about of Pancasila and Civics and State Defense, from the basic level of education to higher education. National education has begun since the publication of 1975 curriculum in *Pendidikan Moral Pancasila* (Pancasila Moral Education) subjects as a substitute for the name of *Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan* (Civics Education). The purpose of changing the name was to instill the values of Pancasila to the students. For the wider community, Guidelines to appreciate and practice Pancasila was set up to help the people to understand, comprehend, and practice the values of Pancasila. The curriculum in school and college was based on the guidelines. In the implementation, it is just to meet the attendance requirements or task or inserted in the training materials [6].

The efforts were ineffective, for the material given is universal and is not in accordance with the needs of the nation. In education process, the needs and environmental conditions of learners are the base in developing the material, allowing them to achieve the learning objectives. Based on the explanation, this research aims to know the understanding of the young generations, particularly the students of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan on national consciousness in the daily practice.

**II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**A. Nationalism**

Riffter conveys that nationalism was first used in Germany in 15th century by students who came from the same region or the same language [7]. Nationalism has the sense of showing the feelings of love for the original tribe/nation. According to Sunarso et al nationalism is an attitude and determination to defend national independence and pride as well as showing respect for other nations [8]. In addition, Benedict conveys that nationalism is a delusion (imagined community) united by in-depth relation of which the members are believed to be unified completely and strong [9].

Rukiyati et al states that nationalism is a feeling as a nation, united with all citizens in society [2]. Otto Bauer in Djaja, mentions that nationalism is a character resulted from the feeling of the citizen [10]. Nasionalism consists of several aspects: the nation's unity, love for the homeland, a stance that reflects the nasionalism, and appreciation of the symbols of nationalism [11].

Nationalism, according to Affan & Maksum, can be maintained through: a) fostering the spirit of nationalism with the love for domestic product and culture, b) instilling and practicing the values of Pancasila, c) embedding and practicing the values of Pancasila, d) selecting foreign cultures to adapt, and e) strengthening and defending the nation identity [12].

In short, nationalism is the feeling of the members of a nation, developing the love for the homeland. Nationalism consists of values, such as unity, kindness, tolerance, family, responsibility, politeness, and feedbacks. The values should be instilled in each of the citizen in order to create the harmony within the nation's identity.

**III. METHOD**

This research is mixed methods type developed by Creswell [13]. This approach combines quantitative and qualitative method. The research started by surveying the students using questionnaire. The results were then analyzed using quantitative approach and continued using qualitative approach. The mixed methods is emphasized on the use of qualitative approach to analyze the content.

The subjects in this research are chosen by purposive sample with category the students of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, who are not from Law department and Pancasila and Civic Education department. Fifty-two students of the first semester were taken as the samples. The students come from Accounting and English Study Programs..

Questionnaire was chosen as one of the instruments in order to reach broader subjects and to obtain information in a short time. The preparation stage of the questionnaire includes: determining the variables, sub variables, indicators of each sub variables, and the answers criteria. Questionnaire that have been compiled and validated were distributed to the students, and collected again. The results of the questionnair were then captured and analyzed using quantitative approach.

Questionnaire to find the nationalism understanding consists of national consciousness, which were divided into two: nationalism awareness related to cognitive and affective understanding from taxomoni Bloom. The sub-variables of national consciousness in the cognitive domain consists of: love for the homeland, common feeling of camaraderie, anger towards foreign intervention, obedience to the law, and anger towards dishonesty. Meanwhile the national consciousness that aims to understand the affective domain are the understanding of: Indonesian archipelagic vision, national resilience, nation's diversity, globalization, liberalism, reformation, civic education, sacrifice, state defends, and national identity.

**IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results and discussion of this research describes the students' understanding on nationalism in everyday life.

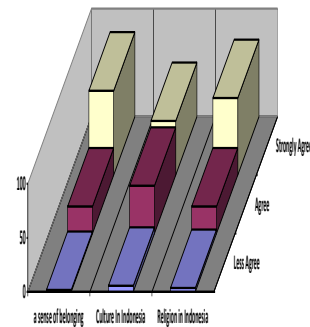


Fig. 2. Diagram of nationality understanding the nation.

From the results of the questionnaire on the cognitive domain obtained it is found that: 1,9 less agree, 25% agree, and 78.1% strongly agree that love for the homeland -- a sense of belonging to the nation with all diversity -- must be owned by citizens. Further, 5.8% less agree, 44.2% agree, and 50% strongly agree that visiting each other at the religious holyday feast is a culture owned by Indonesia. Next, 71.2% strongly agree that the recognized religions in Indonesia are Islam, Catholic, Christian, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Kong Hu Cu.

As for the cognitive understanding on the feeling of camaraderie, 3.8% disagree, 7.7% less agree, 28.8% agree, and 59.6% strongly agree that every citizen should have similar history and fate in fighting for the nation. A total of 88.5% respondents strongly agree that every citizen entitled to equal facilities without exception throughout the territory of Indonesia, and the facility must be provided by the government. In terms of constitutional rights, 88.5% respondents strongly agree that every citizen has the same right to be elected and vote.

Respondents also responded to foreign intervention to the Indonesian state with various reactions. As many as 3.8% respondents stated that they did not agree with demonstration. 26.9% disagree, 48.1% agree, 21.2% strongly agree that any form of disapproval of foreign intervention should be done through demonstration. Various reactions are also found related to the solutions offered to face foreign intervention: 1.9% disagree, 25% less agree, 53.8% agree, and 19.2% strongly



agree to have the petition. If there is an intervention, 3.8% disagree, 21.2% less agree, 38.5% agree, and 36.5% strongly agree that foreigners intervene in state sovereignty should be responded through boycotting products or anything related to that foreign country. In fact, 44.2% respondents strongly agree if the form of foreign intervention are disseminated through social media thus the public will know more.

Related to the nationality understanding in the cognitive domain to comply with the law regulation in Indonesia, 67.3% respondents strongly agree, 21.2% agree, and 11.5% less agree to the obligation of paying taxes by citizens after the government provides services, facilities, and needs as desired. 44.2% respondents disagree, 25% less agree, 21.2% agree, and 9.6% strongly agree that settlement to violations made at police stations is a natural thing. In accordance with the respect to the citizens' obligations, 92.3% respondents strongly agree that having a clear identity such as an Identity Card is a must. 57.7% strongly agree, 38.5% agree, 1.9% less agree, and 1.9% disagree that BPJS (National Health Insurance) is a fair policy for every citizen even though the amount of installment to be paid is different according to classes. For constitutional rights, 82.7% strongly agree, 15.4% agree, and 1.9% disagree that every citizen must use their right to vote.

For national consciousness reflected by honesty, 78.8% disagree with the act of cheating at the exam with any reason. In social life, the form of dishonesty when applying for state apparatus, as much as 21.2% is still willing to take corruption act and 48.1% said they do not want to be a state apparatus by doing corruption. The remaining 21.2% agree that being a state apparatus does not need to do corruption. 55.8% agree that the perpetrators of corruption should not be allowed to re-election while the remaining (23.1%) agree, 7.7% less agree, and 13.5% disagree.

The results of the questionnaire also provides depiction related to the nationality awareness on the affective domain. The nationality awareness related to Indonesian archipelagic vision, 25% disagree, 13.5% less agree, 30.8% agree, and 30.8% strongly agree that the consideration in choosing a regional leader is religion similarity. In everyday life, 63.5% respondents agree that ethnic similarity is not a factor in making friends. Even 82.7% respondents said that they are not disturbed at all by the differences in ethnics backgrounds when working in groups to complete course assignments.

On nationality understanding on social resilience, 69.2% agree to keep the environment around the house or board to be always safe. Social resilience in the field of health which is environment cleanliness also well understood by respondents. As much as 71.2% of respondents think that it is their responsibility. Even 65.4% respondents will play an active role in community work in their home environment. For economic resilience, 71.2% respondents strongly agree to be economical in order not to be consumptive while 69.2% respondents strongly agree that economic resilience can be done by being productive.

Based on national diversity, respondents agree to respect other religions when performing the daily worship. Related to liberalism, 53.8% respondents strongly disagree that liberalism is in accordance with Indonesian nation. Respondents also

strongly agree with the existence of globalization, for it is easier in carrying out the obligations as citizens. In addition, respondents still believe that the reformation is the starting point of Indonesia nation to become a real democracy. For more details, the results of the questionnaire can be seen on the following chart:

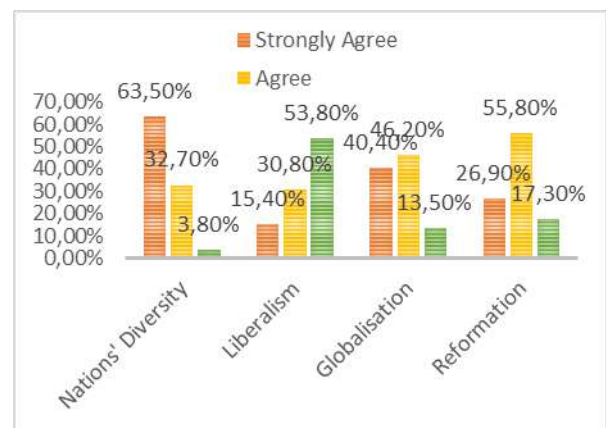


Fig. 3. Diagram of nationality understanding on the nation's diversity, liberalism, globalization, and reformation.

Likewise, for the nationality understanding that consists of civic education, willingness to sacrifice, and defend the country, a total of 76.9% respondents strongly agree that civics education should be followed and help citizens' to understand about their rights and obligations. 82.7% respondents also agree that the willingness to sacrifice is a must for every citizen. Forms of sacrifice can be done through volunteer activities and blood donors. While defending the country is believed by 55.8% respondents. They strongly agree that it can be done by obtaining achievements in the contests, not necessarily be a security apparatus in order to do state defending.

Concerning state awareness, especially in Pancasila ideology, 92.3% respondents stated that Pancasila is Indonesian ideology that cannot be replaced. Respondents also strongly agree that Pancasila is an ideology derived from religion, value, culture, and thoughts of the nation's leaders. Associated with the practice of Pancasila in everyday life, for the practice of the 1<sup>st</sup> principle of Pancasila, 71.2% respondents agree that they do not feel disturbed if other religions are carrying out the celebration of religious holidays. For the practice of 2<sup>nd</sup> principle, 69.2% respondents strongly agree to respect other religious followers in their worship. While the practice of the 3<sup>rd</sup> principle, 84.6% respondents strongly agree to help every citizen without considering the differences of ethnics, religions and race groups. A total of 82.7% respondents agree that the state should provide decent educational program and the community must support the program as the implementation of the 4<sup>th</sup> principle of Pancasila. For the 5<sup>th</sup> principle practice, 76.9% respondents agree that every citizen is entitled to education despite having financial limitations.

Related to the state awareness in Pancasila democracy, all respondents approve to disagree if one of the requirements to become a regional leader is to have religious belief.

Respondents also express their disagreement in choosing regional leaders based on ethnic, religion and race. Similarly, 100% respondents agree that every citizen has the same right to be elected even though he is a minority in the environment.

73.1% respondents also strongly agree that every citizen must know the state's symbol. As many as 82.7% respondents said that they will be very angry if there is an entity that destroy the state's symbol. 44.2% respondents also strongly agree that the president is a symbol of the state that must be respected. Response by respondents in terms of respect, 21.2% respondents strongly agree that one of the way to respect the state's symbols is by putting it on the wall, while 34.6% agree, and 34.2% less agree and 9.6 % disagree because honoring the state symbol is not just carried out by displaying it.

According to the data presented above, it can be explained as follows: respondents, cognitively and affectively, understand the nationalism concept in terms of nationality awareness. Most of the respondents, as much as 78.1%, know that the love for the homeland is a must for every citizen, regardless the diversity conditions such as ethnic, religion, race, and class. Even 71.2% respondents have accepted Kong Hu Cu as a recognized religion in Indonesia. As we know it is a religion believed by minorities of Chinese descendants. Respondents of 88.5%, people are required to get the same facilities for the entire territory throughout Indonesia. However, for the love for the homeland with the feeling of camaraderie, 59.6% strongly agree that all the people of Indonesia have the same feeling. It identifies that there is still a need to instill the sense of togetherness as a citizen, by understanding the condition of other citizens.

The attitude of understanding what is being experienced by others is a sense of togetherness that lead to sense of nationalism. Students' with low feeling of camaraderie tend to be insensitive towards the problems of the nation. Rukiyati et al explained that nationalism is built from the mutual feeling of the entire community, developing the love for country [2]. If there is no mutual feeling, it will diminish the participation of young generation in solving the nation's problems.

The respondents when faced with the question of the nation's sovereignty, which is foreign intervention, responded in various ways. The respondents gave several actions to take: to join the demonstration, to sign petition, and to boycott the product from the intervening country. 69.3% respondents agree and strongly agree that in case of foreign intervention they will follow the demonstration of rejection, while the reaction by signing a petition as much as 73% of respondents agree and strongly agree to do so. Similarly, for the reaction of boycotting foreign products, 75% respondents agree and strongly agree. In general, the response is a kind of angry reaction, but the action would not be effective because the form of foreign intervention was done with the aim to change the nation's ideology like the G30S PKI in 1965. The effective efforts to overcome foreign intervention is to strengthen the nation's ideology in every citizen.

Although respondents provide responses that show very high knowledge of nationality awareness, but in the daily life implementation the respondents still do not understand their rights and obligations as citizens. This is evident in the

statement of law-abiding. A total of 88.5% respondents agree and strongly agree to pay taxes after the government provided services, facilities, and desired needs. The act is not the attitude and mentality of nationalism that every citizen should have. Nationalism embedded in citizens should be manifested in attitudes and mentality, so as to be the foundation of the development. This is confirmed in the opinion of Ilahi, which conveyed that the foundation and social asset of national development are the attitude and mentality of the young generation in understanding nationalism character [1]. Paying taxes according to obligations is part of the participation of national development of which the end will benefit the people.

Likewise, the nationality awareness related to honesty, although most respondents 78.8% said they will not stay silent when they see their friends cheating during the exam, in social life there are still 21.2% respondents who want to commit corruption act when they want to become state apparatus. Even 44.3% respondents stated that the perpetrators of corruption may still use their constitutional right to be elected as head or representative of the people. In other words, the respondents know that violating the rules is a bad act, but in the social life they still try to break the rules. It indicates that the nationalism attitude and mentality are still not embedded in the character of the young generation as human resources that will implement the national development. As stated by Ilahi, the attitude and mentality of nationalism that must be instilled in young generation does not only provide knowledge understanding [1].

From the above data, it also obtained information that in state awareness, especially in terms of Pancasila democracy, the respondents not fully understand the implementation. It is evident in the questionnaire results, in that all 100% respondents stated that leaders do not have to have religious beliefs; minorities do not have the same rights to be leaders, and many still use ethnics, religions, races, and group differences in choosing regional leaders .

Pancasila democracy is the principle of state administration that upholds the aspirations of the people, so people's opinions should be accommodated. But from the above statement if the respondents do not understand the true diversity of Indonesian nation, whether in ethnics, religions, races, and classes, it will be very difficult to realize the ideals state that put forward Pancasila democracy in everyday life. Referring to the opinion of Fuady, implementing Pancasila democracy in Indonesia is not easy task, due to the high diversity of the nation. However, it does not mean that it cannot be accomplished.

## V. CONCLUSION

Overall, the respondents have known the awareness of nationality and state that must be done as citizen. The awareness of nationality and state is still in the level of knowledge. Most respondents already know that nationalism can arise if they have love for the country, guard the nation's sovereignty, understand diversity, and understand the rule of law. It can be the initial asset to formulate the next step which is to apply knowledge of national and state awareness in everyday life.

It is necessary to implement the knowledge on the awareness of nationality and state, for the nationalism attitude

and mental are not yet instilled in the character of the citizens. The respondents have not understood that all the citizens should overcome the problems arising in the community, as a manifestation of camaraderie. In addition, some of the respondents see that obligations such as paying taxes will be made after they obtain what they want. Even respondents have the desire to commit the act of corruption when they want to be state apparatus. Likewise in the implementation of Pancasila democracy, all respondents still choose leaders from the same ethnic, religion, race, and group. Indeed, those holding religious belief is a must-have candidate.

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