



## Inclusive Politics For Persons With Disabilities: Gus Dur's Experience in Building Inclusive Democracy in Indonesia

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### Abstract

Many believe that the reformation era of Indonesia, in the post of 1998 political upheaval, has brought Indonesia to be a democratic country, where all citizens disregard their gender, ability, ethnicity and religious status, enjoy freedom, equal right and social justice. People with disabilities is one of the groups experiencing discrimination and marginalization in Indonesia's social and political domain. While this situation continues to happen until now, the reformation era has been seen as opening the door for people with disabilities to start voicing their aspirations and enjoy wider social and political participation. Drawing from the political career of Abdurahman Wahid, widely known as Gus Dur, this paper argues that despite the promise of democracy, the position of people with disabilities in Indonesia's political context is not necessarily secure. The presidential election 1999 and 2004 followed by the 2008 election bill showed that disability was a bargaining chip for political position; it was defined differently according to the political interest of political parties. The election of Gus Dur as president in 1999 was due to the acceptance of political parties widely known as Central Poros -- as Gus Dur supporters -- toward his "disability". Such an inclusive democracy was then shattered in the 2004 election when Gus Dur's visual impairment was seen as his inability to meet the requirement of physically and mentally health (physically and mentally health), one of the eligibility for candidacy. Gus Dur was not re-elected. Such a rejection toward Gus Dur's disability lead and his team to advocate disability issue in Indonesian political policies and practices. The result is the 2008 election policy which formally stated that disability is not supposed to be seen as physical or mental condition incompatible with the criteria of *physically and mentally healthy*. The paper argues that democratic and political inclusion can never be achieved without the right understanding of disability, as well as the legal guarantee of political and social right of person with disability in Indonesia political sphere.

**Keywords:** Disability; Politic Democracy; Inclusive; Law

### I. Introduction

Nowdays, the development of the democracy political system is implemented by state majority in the world. It is caused democracy is considered a system that upholds human rights. "Human rights and freedom" is slogan in democracy system. The opening of political participation has an impact on the euphoria of the Indonesian people in expressing their will. In the political context, there are at least three things that show the euphoria of reform democracy.

First, democracy in the reform era resulted in the emergence of many political parties as vehicles for accessing politics. Political parties are one of the political infrastructures in a democratic system. There are four functions of political parties in the practice of a

democratic state, namely: as a means of political communication, a means of political socialization, a means of political recruitment, and as a means of conflict management.. As a means of political communication, political parties are a forum for *interest aggregation* and also as a medium in the formulation of interests ( *interest articulation* ), which in turn can contribute to policy formation. Political socialization can be interpreted as a means to provide direction to the public regarding political phenomena, so that people can have attitudes and orientations towards these phenomena. Meanwhile, the function of political parties as political recruitment can be interpreted, that political parties have the function of conducting cadre selection, both selection of party cadres and selection of party cadres to become candidates for national leaders. While the function of the party as a conflict regulator can be interpreted that political parties can assist in resolving conflicts that occur in society, because of heterogeneity.

Second, reformed democracy has given birth to many candidates for the nation's leaders. This can be seen in the presidential election in 1999, which had more than one presidential candidate. This phenomenon shows that there is open competition in achieving the highest power in a country, and the rotation of power, so that power is not only controlled by one group or one ruling elite.

Third, it is open to *marginal groups* in accessing politics. Among the various marginal groups in political life are women and people with disabilities, or often referred to as persons with disabilities. The 1999 presidential election was proof of Indonesia's political history, that among the presidential candidates at that time, there was a candidate who had *visual impairment* , namely Gus Dur.

Studies of Gus Dur's character have been carried out by various groups, both studies of political thought, religion, uralism, and so on. However, studies on Gus Dur related to his acceptability as a disabled president have not been widely carried out. Whereas in political culture, Gus Dur's acceptance as a disabled president is the basic concern of the Indonesian people to have an inclusive perspective on people with disabilities.

In addition, studies on disability and politics in Indonesia have not shown significant attention from academics and political activists. This is due to a negative paradigm towards people with disabilities, resulting in political marginalization for people with

disabilities. The majority of Indonesian people, including political elites, academics, and even ordinary people, still view that people with disabilities are not individuals who can participate in political contests. This has resulted in the neglect of the political rights of people with disabilities, which basically have rights as human beings and as citizens.

This negative perspective will affect the policy-making process. For example, there is a policy regarding the requirements for a presidential candidate to be “physically and mentally healthy”, which is included in various policies. The meaning of “physically healthy” is then translated that persons with disabilities are people who are not physically fit. This politicization of disability occurred in Gus Dur when he became a presidential candidate in 2004.

Everyone knows and agrees that Gus Dur is a person with a disability, and capable of political maneuvers, so that in 1999 he was elected as the fourth president of the Republic of Indonesia. However, in 2004 there was a political contradiction. In that year, Gus Dur became a presidential candidate again, but was hampered by the requirement of "physically fit" which based on the results of Gus Dur's medical examination was declared physically unhealthy due to a disability in his eyesight. The question that then arises is, how did Gus Dur's disability become an obstacle in the 2004 presidential election process, while in 1999 Gus Dur was successful in the struggle for the Indonesian presidential seat, even though he had a disability? This paper will discuss the creation of inclusive democracy for people with disabilities in Indonesia, based on Gus Dur's experience of politicizing disability, and based on certain indicators in the formulation of the concept of inclusive democracy.

## II. Method

### 1. Research Type

This type of research is library research.

### 2. Nature of Research

This research is descriptive analytic, that is to say, describe and classify objectively the data being studied as well as interpret and analyze the data.

### 3. Research Approach

As for in this study using the approach, namely, Political anthropological approach; namely an approach based on the development of political culture that occurred after the collapse of the New Order.

#### 4. Data Collection Techniques

The data used in this study consisted of primary, secondary, and tertiary data.

- a. Primary data ; is the main data used as a source of information. The data consists of books and scientific writings related to the figure of Gus Dur and disability/disability studies.
- b. Secondary data; is the data used as the second source in this study. The data used is in the form of interviews with politicians who know Gus Dur's progress during his time as president of the Republic of Indonesia.
- c. tertiary data; is supporting data in this research. The data are informative writings, both through print and electronic media

### III. Main Heading of the Analysis or Results

#### *A. Disability In The Contest Of Democracy*

##### *1. Democracy Theory*

Democracy is one of the political studies that has been widely discussed by political thinkers, since ancient Greece to the modern era. Based on the development of political thinking about democracy, the concept and implementation of democracy has also experienced a very significant development. In principle, democracy was born to provide equality, justice, *human rights protection* so as to minimize discrimination against citizens who experience social and political marginalization.

As a political system, democracy has components that can support the implementation of the system. According to David Eston, the political system is the totality of interactions that regulate the distribution of values in an authoritative (based on authority) for and on behalf of society.<sup>1</sup> While the political system according to Sri Soemantri is the institutionalization of relations between humans which is institutionalized in various political bodies, both political superstructure and political

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<sup>1</sup> A. Rahman H. *Sistem Politik Indonesia*, (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2007), hlm.8

infrastructure. The political superstructure is the relevant state institutions, which are generally in the form of a legislative body with legislative power, an executive institution with executive power and a judicial institution with judicial power. The political infrastructure of a country generally consists of five components, namely: political parties, interest groups, pressure groups, political communication tools and political figures.<sup>2</sup> This definition shows that democracy is a political system that has a control system from the community and also *checks and balances* between state institutions.

Theoretically, democracy can be defined as follows:

a. C.F Strong:

"Democracy is a system of government in which the majority of adult members of the political community participate through representative means which ensure that the government is accountable for all its actions to the majority group."<sup>3</sup>

In other words, the contemporary constitutional state must be based on a representative and democratic system, which guarantees the sovereignty of the people.<sup>4</sup>

b. According to Mayo

"a democratic political sistem is one is which public policies are made on a majority basis, by representative subject to effective popular control at periodic election which are conducted on the prinsiple of political equality and under condition of political freedom."<sup>5</sup>

c. According to Dahl

Democracy is a political system that provides the widest possible opportunity for mature citizens to participate in decision-making.<sup>6</sup>

Based on that argues, it can be understood that democracy is a political system in which *political power* is held by the people, *public policies* are determined based on a majority vote in representative institutions, and guaranteed *political equality* ( *political equality* ), and *political freedom* ( *political freedom* ) of each individual. In other words, that democracy

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<sup>2</sup> Toni Andrias Pito, dkk, *Mengenal teori-teori politik dari sistem politik sampai korupsi*, (Bandung: Nuansa Cendekia, 2013), hlm.45.

<sup>3</sup> C.F Strong, *Konstitusi-Konstitusi Modern*, Cet 9 (Bandung: Nusa Media, 2014), hlm. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Dahl, *Poliarchy*. 1994: 7.

<sup>5</sup> Moh. Mahfud MD. *Hukum dan Pilar-pilar Demokrasi*, (Yogyakarta: Gama Media, 1999), Hlm. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Opcit. p 7.

demands opportunities for all parties, including the opportunity for the people to participate in political processes.<sup>7</sup>

In another perspective, democracy consists of substantive democracy and procedural democracy (Schumpeterian).<sup>8</sup> Substantive democracy is a democracy that provides a definition with the term "the will of the people" (*the will of the people*); "the common good and the public good" (*the common good*). Thus, substantive democracy is normative, idealistic, rational. Meanwhile, procedural democracy is defined as an institutional procedure for reaching political decisions, in which individuals gain power through a competitive struggle to make political decisions, in order to get the people's vote. This democracy is empirical, descriptive, institutional, and procedural.<sup>9</sup>

According to Dahl there are ten reasons why democracy should be supported, namely: 1. *Avoiding tyranny*, 2. *Essential rights*, 3. *General freedom*, 4. *Self-determination*, 5. *Moral autonomy*, 6. *Human development*, 7. *Protecting essential personal interests*, 8. *Political equality* - *In addition, modern democracies produce*, 9. *Peace seeking*, 10. *Prosperity*.<sup>10</sup> *Dahl's argument clearly shows that the democratic system provides flexibility for the community to take part in the public sphere, as a form of appreciation for human potential and the nature of human rights.*

The full political participation of each individual shows that equal political rights and freedoms are highly upheld by the country. In addition, the fulfillment of the rights of minorities in a democracy is also a concern. This is related to the understanding that democracy relies more on freedom, human rights, and the recognition of minorities. Minority or marginalized people in a country is a necessity. Therefore, democracy provides protection for the rights of these minorities as a form of protection of human rights.

The history of democracy in ancient Greece (classical democracy), it can be seen that not all citizens can participate in state affairs, for example slaves, women, and people with low education.<sup>11</sup> The democratic practice applied by Greece (Athens) at that time,

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<sup>7</sup> Marijan, 2010. P 11

<sup>8</sup> Teori dan Ideologi Demokrasi: Diunduh pada 19 Oktober 2014, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*: p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Robert A. Dahl, *On Democracy*, (Yale University Press, 2000), p. 44-45

<sup>11</sup> Jobniarto, *Demokrasi dan Sistem Pemerintahan Negara*, (Jogjakarta: Yayasan Badan Penerbit, 1967.), p. 16.

showed that the democratic practice was still exclusive. The exclusivity of democracy does not reflect the character of democracy idealized by philosophers and Western political thinkers. In addition, the exclusivity of democracy also still shows the discrimination of social strata, which results in differences in rights among fellow citizens.

Lipson express, that the foundations of democracy that were built in ancient Greece are not just terms that come from Greece. However, democracy is a system that was first described and developed in Greek society, which matured in the 6th to 4th centuries BC, especially in Athens.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, Held says that Athenian democracy (ancient Greece) inspired the formation of modern democracy, which is based on political ideals among citizens. Such as freedom (*liberty*), respect for law and justice, ideas about the individual and his rights, which could not be applied directly to Athens.<sup>13</sup> According to Held and Lipson, the development of Athenian democracy was influenced by three main thinkers, namely Thucydides, Plato and Aristotle.

The process of developing democratic theory is quite significant in political studies. In other words, that democracy as a theoretical basis has various terms, such as liberal democracy, deliberative democracy, and the emergence of the term inclusion *democracy*. Democracy can be defined as a merger inclusion (*incorporation*), influence (*influence*), representation (*representation*) of various social groups experienced a lack of luck in democratic institutions (Christina Wolbrecht, 2009: H. 3). This definition illustrates that disadvantaged groups are a major aspect in implementing democratization, one of which is people with disabilities.

Another definition explains that inclusive democracy is a form of social organization, which reintegrates citizens with the *economy*, *polity* and *nature*.<sup>14</sup> The characteristic of inclusive democracy in terms of political power is the distribution of power among all citizens.<sup>15</sup> This has the consequence that all citizens may follow the rotation of power that occurs in a country. In other words, that political democracy is built on the basis of the *equal distribution of political power* among all citizens.

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<sup>12</sup> Mufti, 2013: p. 38

<sup>13</sup> (1996: pp. 15-16)

<sup>14</sup> (Jurnal Inclusive Democracy, Vol. 1, No. 1. 2004: h. 2).

<sup>15</sup> (Journal of Inclusive Democracy, Vol. 1, No. 1. 2004: p. 4).

In the context of democracy, there is the principle of autonomy which is a necessity. Autonomy implies that humans have the ability to make self-conscious considerations, self-reflection, and self-determination. The principle of autonomy in democracy has two essential ideas, namely the idea that the people have a role in self-determination and the idea that democratic government must uphold limited power.<sup>16</sup>

The principle of autonomy is also a principle to limit legitimized power. There are four steps to understanding the principle of autonomy in democracy, namely:

- a. The idea that everyone should enjoy equal rights and obligations within a political framework. In other words, that in principle, they should have equal autonomy, that is, the general structure of political action.
- b. The concept of 'rights': namely the granting of rights to carry out actions and activities, without the risk of arbitrary interference and unfair treatment.
- c. The view that people should be free and equal means that they should be able to participate in a process of discussion and consideration of public issues, which is open to all on a free and equal basis. A valid decision does not mean a decision based on the will of all parties. However, decisions that reflect the will of the parties involved in the political process.

Qualifications stated in the principle that individual rights require protection, indicate constitutional government. The principle of autonomy asserts that individuals have freedom and equality, and the majority society should not act arbitrarily or impose their will. Therefore, there is a need for constitutional rules to regulate the freedom and equality of each individual, both minority and majority groups

## 2. *Disabilities Studies*

The basic rule in a democratic system is to uphold human rights, freedom, equal rights, law enforcement and justice, showing that this system respects human dignity. The question then is, what kind of human being is valued in the democratization process? The existence of marginal groups in political and social life, philosophically the state has not been able to realize the state's goal of creating equality, and the existence of marginal

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<sup>16</sup> Devid Held, *Demokrasi dan Tatanan Global*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004), p. 54-55

groups is a necessity that occurs in the state process. According to Hegel, the state is a moral organization as a synthesis of individual and universal independence (Rizal, 2013: p. 49). This means that as a form of individual independence, the rules of the game in the state do not limit citizens based on race, ethnicity, gender, class, even on the basis of disability or non-disability in participating.

The phenomenon that occurs is that people with disabilities as part of a large society still experience discrimination and marginalization in various aspects of life, especially in political life. Political participation is still limited to passive participation (as voters), although there are also people with disabilities as selected subjects, but the quantity is very small. The perspective that exists in society is that people with disabilities are groups who experience obstacles in themselves, so that they will experience difficulties when carrying out social and collective activities. In the political context, people with disabilities will experience difficulties in carrying out various technical and administrative tasks because of these obstacles. This view still uses a medical approach, which focuses more on the barriers of a person with a disability, which is an obstacle to himself, not factors from outside of the disabled.

To understanding about disabilities studies, there are paradigm which construct the disabilities concept. Theoretically, disability can be formulated into the following terms:

1. *“A disability is a condition or function judged to be significantly impaired relative to the usual standard of an individual or group. The term is used to refer to individual functioning, including physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment mental illness, and various types of chronic disease”*.<sup>17</sup>
2. *“Disability is the result of negative interactions that take place between a person with an impairment and her or his social environment”*.<sup>18</sup>
3. “Disability is thus not just a health problem. It is a complex phenomenon, reflecting the interaction between features of a persons body and features of the

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<sup>17</sup> ([www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/](http://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/) accessed on 30 September 2014).

<sup>18</sup> ([disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk/.../Northern-Officers-Gr...](http://disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk/.../Northern-Officers-Gr...) Downloaded on 11 November 2014).

society in which he or she lives. Overcoming the difficulties faced by people with disabilities requires intervention to remove environmental and social barriers".<sup>19</sup>

4. "Recognizing that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".<sup>20</sup>
5. Penyandang Disabilitas adalah setiap orang yang mengalami keterbatasan fisik, intelektual, mental, dan/atau sensorik dalam jangka waktu lama yang dalam berinteraksi dengan lingkungan dapat mengalami hambatan dan kesulitan untuk berpartisipasi secara penuh dan efektif dengan warga negara lainnya berdasarkan kesamaan hak.<sup>21</sup>

Based on the above definition, there are two things that can be understood related to the term disability. First, disability is a person's inability to carry out activities, due to the obstacles that exist in the individual. Second, disability is a person's inability to carry out an activity, which is caused by the absence of support from the surrounding environment.

In general, there are two theories or approaches in the study of disability, namely the medical approach (medical model) and the social approach (social model).<sup>22</sup> First, medical / *medical* Individual model; In this paradigm, disability / *impairment* is considered a personal tragedy. The disability / *impairment* is an individual problem that causes activities to be hampered and always gets disadvantaged in society. This medical view forms a community paradigm, that people with disabilities only deserve to be rehabilitated in a special institution, with certain types of disabilities. This shows that the perspective that is built is not an inclusive paradigm, but an exclusive view. This means that people with disabilities are not integrated with society in general, thus affecting the socialization and interaction between people with disabilities. As a result, people will always have a negative view of people with disabilities, both in terms of

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<sup>19</sup> ([www.who.int/topics/disabilities/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/disabilities/en/) Accessed February 05, 2016).

<sup>20</sup> (UNCRPD, 2006: letter E).

<sup>21</sup> Law Number 8 Year 2016 Concerning Persons with Disabilities.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Oliver, *Understanding Disability From Theory to Practice*, (NewYork: Palgrave, 1996), hlm. 32.

privacy and social affairs. *Second*, the social model (*social model*); This paradigm states that the inability of people with disabilities in carrying out social activities and interactions is not solely due to the barriers that exist in the individual. This perspective prioritizes the protection and fulfillment of human rights. In this perspective, people with disabilities are no longer seen as individuals who have physical limitations or obstacles caused by the individuals with disabilities themselves. However, the obstacles that occur are from the social structure factor which does prevent people with disabilities from interacting.

Meanwhile, in other literature it is stated that the contestation of the disability paradigm consists of four concepts, as proposed by Slamet Thohari in his thesis "*Disability in Java: Contesting Conceptions of Disability In Javanese Society after the Suharto Regime*", namely: *traditional conceptions*, the concept of Islam (*Islam conception*), the concept of a medical model (*medical model conception*), the concept of a social model (*social model conception*). Briefly the four concepts are explained; the traditional Javanese concept views that disability is something related to "*magic*", while the Islamic concept believes that disability is an object for charity (*charity*), while the medical concept sees that disability is an abnormality (*abnormality*), and social concepts view that disability is a *social construction*. The four concepts are still competing with each other to this day. This can be seen from the culture of the Indonesian people, especially Java, which still views the sacredness of persons with disabilities. In addition, in the social structure, political structure, legal structure and in other aspects, it still focuses on medical assumptions.

Disabilities in the context of an inclusive democracy are ideally taken into account. There are at least two arguments to strengthen political *bargaining* in inclusive democracy. First, that disability is part of the *disadvantaged group*, so that theoretically and practically inclusive democracy must have an inclusive perspective, by forming accommodative legislation for people with disabilities. Second, that in the world of political democracy, equal distribution of power is something that citizens will definitely get, including people with disabilities. Thus, political synergy needs to be built between the community and the government.

### *C. Politicization Gus Dur's and Building Inclusive Democracy in Indonesia*

The history of Indonesian politics has recorded that this nation was once led by a president who had a disability. Gus Dur's experience as a disabled president became a lesson for the Indonesian people that the political elite at that time had tried to construct inclusive democracy for people with disabilities. However, the effort to carry out this construction cannot be separated from the political intrigues of the political elites at that time. Gus Dur's disability and personality can be used as a weakness as well as a strength in the competition for power.

Gus Dur's blindness was caused by the influence of his stroke. As a result of the impaired optic nerve, finally Gus Dur's vision began to be disturbed. In 1993 Gus Dur's eyesight began to decline, although he could still function a little. The many activities carried out by Gus Dur, resulted in the health of his eyes not getting serious attention. So in 1998 he was completely blind. However, since his blindness started from 1993 and 1998 as the peak of Gus Dur's disability, history records that his work in fighting for minorities and his efforts to oppose the new order were never hindered. This shows that psychologically Gus Dur is not disturbed by his disability.

The beginning of the reform era (1998-1999) was a transitional period that could lead to the disintegration of the nation. The acceleration of democratic presidential elections is something that must be implemented immediately. Then in 1999 a general assembly (SU) of the MPR was held to elect a new leader for Indonesia. The political situation at that time was quite tense. Various attempts to win the power struggle were intense, which was marked by the emergence of various political party identities and the formation of coalitions. Among the political parties that were born was the National Awakening Party (PKB) which could not be separated from the figure of Gus Dur.

The establishment of PKB and other political parties, both based on religion and based on Pancasila, shows that many people's aspirations were buried during the freezing of the New Order. The opening to form political parties is the first step towards democratization. As a political vehicle, political parties function as: mobilization and integration, a means of forming influence on voting behavior ( voting patterns ); means of political recruitment; and a means of elaborating policy options.<sup>23</sup> Based on these four functions, the task of political parties in the reform era must be optimal in functioning

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<sup>23</sup> (Asshiddiqie, Downloaded on 20 February 2015).

as a bridge between the lower society and the political elite. In this context, PKB as a new party, requires strong legitimacy to be able to compete with the old parties, both PDIP and Golkar as the old party and the ruling party. Politically, PKB has strong legitimacy support from NU as the largest organization in Indonesia, to gain votes in the general election, which in turn will affect the vote acquisition in the presidential election.

In the Indonesian constitution, pre-Amendment to the 1945 Constitution, the presidential election was chosen by members of the MPR, because the MPR is the highest state institution, which is used as the incarnation of the people (UUD 1945, Article 1 Paragraph (2)). Thus, in political logic, if the party that wins the election occupies the MPR seats with a majority, then the presidential candidate proposed by the winning party will automatically win as well. The results of the 1999 legislative elections in June showed that there were two political party forces that received the most seats, namely PDI-P with 153 seats and Golkar with 120 seats. This shows that there are still many people who support the products of the new order, so that Golkar as a tool to legitimize the new order government, still gets the second most votes and seats after the PDIP. president of the MPR.

As the party that has the most votes and seats, PDIP and Golkar have the right to advance to the presidential election. The candidate proposed by PDIP was Megawati Sukarno Putri, meanwhile, Golkar was identical with B.J. Habibie. From here, the terms Habibie's camp and Megawati's camp emerged. Habibie's camp is considered a stronghold of the status quo, and Megawati's camp is considered a secular nationalist stronghold.

Seeing such political conditions, reform actors must make strategies in order to balance the two camps. In the end, Islamic parties and Islamic community-based parties emerged which were incorporated into the central axis. The center axis was commanded by Amien Rais, whose aim was to balance Megawati's power with PDIP and Habibie with Golkar. The result of political consolidation carried out by the central axis, finally produced an alternative presidential candidate, namely Gus Dur. With the presence of Gus Dur, political power was divided into three variants. First, the political power that exists in the Habibie and Golkar camps, second, the political power of Megawati and the PDIP, and third, the political power of Gus Dur who is supported by the center axis politics.

There are several political reasons for the nomination of Gus Dur,<sup>24</sup> namely: First, the nomination of Gus Dur from the PKB as well as the central axis, shows an effort to unite between PKB and the central axis parties. Second, the nomination of Gus Dur as an effort to reconcile the divided political Islam between Islamic parties and parties based on Islamic mass. Besides that, sociologically, the nomination can unite Muhammadiyah and NU. Third, as chairman of the MPR, Amien Rais will get good political colleagues, if Gus Dur becomes president, so that a balance will be realized to correct each other. Fourth, as a step to continue the political reform program. It is believed by many that political reform is in the common interest of all Indonesian people. Judging from his personality, Gus Dur's figure is believed to be far more reformist than Megawati and Habibie. Likewise, in terms of his acceptability as a politician, the breadth and flexibility of Gus Dur's association made this figure accepted by all circles.

Although Gus Dur has strong political capabilities and skills, the issue of "his physical limitations" is still a matter of doubt from some circles, "whether Gus Dur will be able to carry out his duties as president."<sup>25</sup> Habibie also expressed his opinion about Gus Dur's disability when a meeting of party leaders was held at his house. The emergence of the name Abdur Rahman Wahid (Gus Dur) who was nominated by the central axis politics, was responded to by Habibie by considering his sight factor. According to Habibie, Gus Dur's vision factor could hinder his many duties as president, for example in terms of reading reports and recording reports.<sup>26</sup>

The considerations put forward by Habibie are not entirely wrong. This shows that the perspectives of people with disabilities from among the leaders of the nation and state are still not fully understood. Habibie's concerns were more technical in administration. Therefore, as people with disabilities who have visual barriers, they can use certain methods so that these obstacles can be overcome, so that the inability to see is no longer an obstacle to carrying out activities, in this case Gus Dur's activities as president.

According to ZH, there are two views regarding Gus Dur's disability. The first view stated that Gus Dur had indeed experienced a disability. The second view assumes that

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<sup>24</sup> *Gusdur Dalam Sorotan Cendekiawan Muhammadiyah*, Cet. 1 (Bandung: mizan, 1999), p. 71-72.

<sup>25</sup> Akbar Tandjung, *The Golkar Way: "Survival Partai Golkar Ditengah Turbulensi Politik Era Transisi"*, (Jakarta: pt. Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2007), p. 263.

<sup>26</sup> BJ Habibie, *Detik-detik Yang Menentukan Jalan Panjang Indonesia Menuju Demokrasi*, (Jakarta: THC Mandiri, 2006), p. 433-434.

Gus Dur is still experiencing symptoms of disability, so there is still a chance to recover.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, he stated that the nomination of Gus Dur by the central axis politics had nothing to do with Gus Dur's disability, although there were those who considered it, it had no significant effect. Gus Dur's candidacy at that time tended to be influenced by political factors, in which the middle axis had to be able to win the presidential election.

This is in line with what ZN stated that Gus Dur's disability is not a problem for any group, be it pesantren, kiayi, political friends or political opponents.<sup>28</sup> Instead, Gus Dur could be accepted by any group, such as groups of the poor, non-Muslim groups, or even different ethnicities, including friends and political opponents. He stated that Gus Dur's acceptability was based on two things, namely Gus Dur's controversial thoughts, so that it became his attraction, and his diligence in social interactions that Gus Dur carried out with various groups, including the poor, non-Muslim groups, Islamic boarding schools, including conducting social interactions (relationships) with political opponents. From this statement, it can be understood that Gus Dur's egalitarian, pluralist, humanist, inclusive, and controversial attitude became Gus Dur's capital in the presidential nomination at the 1999 MPR SU.

Meanwhile, AA also argued that in the context of politics in 1999, the figure of Gus Dur was the right choice to bind this nation.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, he also stated that his disability was not an obstacle. From these statements, it can be understood that basically the whole nation, especially the politicians, know that Gus Dur is a person with a disability. However, this disability was ignored because it was masked by Gus Dur's personal abilities and political conditions that had to support Gus Dur's candidacy.

The long debate in the party coalition process and supporting alternative presidential candidates, finally the peak of political lobbying resulted in Golkar supporting Gus Dur, and on 20 October 1999 the MPR elected and appointed Abdurrahman Wahid or Gus Dur as the fourth president of the Republic of Indonesia. Gus Dur received 373 votes, while Megawati received 313 votes. These results indicate that the winning party in parliament is not able to outperform the coalition of the center axis.

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<sup>27</sup> (Interview, June 14, 2015)

<sup>28</sup> (Interview, February 28, 2015)

<sup>29</sup> (interview, 13 June 2015)

The election of Gus Dur as the fourth president of the Republic of Indonesia, there are several things that need to be recorded as Indonesian political history, namely:

1. Gus Dur is a kiai who is involved in politics. This shows that the kiai's gait is not only in the religious world, but the kiayi can also take part in politics to build the nation and state. Politics is understood as a tool of power that can be used for the benefit, not merely to strengthen certain individuals and groups.

Gus Dur's position as a descendant of the kiai and also as the chairman of PBNU, it is undeniable that primordiality in the election of leaders is inherent in him. Moreover, the political conditions at that time were prone to vertical and horizontal conflicts, encouraging people's political behavior to choose the figures they admired. Although Gus Dur in his political struggle has shown things that can be judged rationally, the Indonesian people still have a strong bond of primordiality.

The condition of the Indonesian nation in the transition era (1998-1999) was faced with a position where the country would be divided due to primordiality. According to Clifoord Geertz, (Mahfud Md, downloaded: December 11, 2014 at [www.mahfudmd.com](http://www.mahfudmd.com) ) states that the new nation state is faced with the dilemma of "democracy and integration". This means that the nation needs both things, but they are opposite things. Democracy is free so that aspirations can be channeled, while integration is shackled in order to achieve solid unity. Democracy is absolutely necessary because democracy is built on various primordialities which are democratically aggregated. Meanwhile, integration is also needed so that the country is not divided.

The support of the center axis as a stronghold that unites several Islamic parties and Islamic community-based parties against Gus Dur, indirectly forms the primordiality of religion. This is quite capable of influencing the direction of politics, so voters who have a primordial relationship in religion (Islam) and genealogy of mass organizations (NU and Muhammadiyah), will be influenced to choose Gus Dur as an NU cadre nominated by the center axis with Amien Rais as a Muhammadiyah figure. In addition, Gus Dur's personality, which is close to minorities (religion and ethnicity), encourages the creation of unity and integrity, because it can be accepted by these minority groups.

If formulated into the concept of *ashabiyah*, then strong solidarity in a group and creates fanaticism towards a character, has the potential to be elected as a leader.<sup>30</sup> *Ashabiyah* in this context is not based on lineage. But on the pattern of the ruling political elite. Therefore, it can be said that the election of Gus Dur was based on the *ashabiyah* of the political elite. Political reality shows that the center axis is stronger than the Mega stronghold.

2. Gus Dur is a persons with disability. This reality shows that people with disabilities can carry out activities carried out by non-disabled people including practical political activities, and not only as voters, but as elected individuals. The presence of Gus Dur as president of the disabled, sociologically can give birth to a positive perspective on people with disabilities.

In the context of selecting leaders with disabilities in a democratic country, there are several principles that can be used as prerequisites, namely: First, the merit system; This principle can be interpreted as an appreciation of someone (personal) because of his goodness or services. In other words, the personal achievements and benefits in building the nation and state are more of a consideration. So that the person deserves to be elected as the leader of the country. The service or kindness is not instant, in the sense that it is not just a form of " political campaign " .

Second, rational acceptability; This principle can be interpreted that in the process of transition of power, a candidate for leader must be accepted by all circles. Rational acceptability, based on rational choice theory (rational choice theory). This approach states that voter choice actions are basically carried out based on rationality when voting in the voting booth. Rational elections do not look at religion, gender, parental background (descendants), ethnicity, or other sects, and are not based on physical perfection (disability). This choice of action is more due to the benefits obtained from the candidate for the leader.<sup>31</sup>

Despite being a person with a disability, Gus Dur has good interpersonal qualities. This can be assessed in terms of his thoughts in the political, social, religious, plurality fields, and his actions which always defend minorities, so that his

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<sup>30</sup> Ibnu Khaldun, *Muqadimah*, Terj. (Bandung: al-Kautsar, 2014), p. 202.

<sup>31</sup> Jurnal Kajian Politik dan Pembangunan, no. 1. Vol. 5. 2009. P.6

personality can be accepted by any level of society. Therefore, from the point of view of rationality, Gus Dur was accepted because of his thoughts as well as his social interactions that were limitless and without barriers, both towards the political elite and to the lower class of society, not solely because of the heredity of the kiai and the leaders of the largest mass organizations in Indonesia. In other words, Gus Dur had a futuristic vision to build the nation and state.

Third, political skills; as a candidate for leader of a country, especially people with disabilities, the two prerequisites above cannot guarantee that people with disabilities can become leaders in a country, even though the country is a democratic country. In fact, a democratic country is a country that has an understanding of wide open competition, so that if someone already has good self-quality, but does not have adequate political skills, then the candidate for leadership will be crushed by his political opponents.

As a person with a disability, Gus Dur has very adequate political skills, and it can be proven by his success in occupying the highest position in Indonesia. He did many things ahead of the presidential election as a political maneuver. Among them is the approach taken to various circles, such as visiting Suharto to get the impression that Gus Dur is not hostile to Suharto, because there are still many Suharto supporters who will affect his acceptability among the political elite. By doing so, the obstacles that arise from Suharto's supporters will not occur. In addition, his controversial statements are also one of his political maneuvers. For example, the statement that originally supported Megawati turned against Megawati, with the aim of increasing political support for Gus Dur. Thus, according to Mahfud Gus Dur, he is the "excellent politician" in Indonesia.<sup>32</sup>

If Gus Dur only relied on his quality and integrity as well as his high acceptability, then it was not enough to survive in the political world. Before the birth of the center axis that nominated Gus Dur, the Golkar and TNI camps supported Amien Rais as an alternative presidential candidate. However, Amien refused on the grounds that he had nominated Gus Dur.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Mo. Mahfud, Gus Dur, Si Politikus Ulung, [gusdurnet.tripod.com/opini/0500/000501o\\_mahfud.htm](http://gusdurnet.tripod.com/opini/0500/000501o_mahfud.htm), diakses pada tanggal 16 Juni 2015.

<sup>33</sup> Hanum, *Menapaki Jejak Amin Rais*, (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2010), hlm. 154.

Amien's refusal and Gus Dur's nomination as an alternative presidential candidate, shows that there is a fairly adept political game. If Gus Dur does not take advantage of this momentum, then there is little chance that Gus Dur will be elected president. Moreover, Gus Dur personally and PKB supported Megawati as president, meaning that groups or individuals who supported Gus Dur's candidacy, could be mobilized by Gus Dur to vote for Megawati. However, this was not done by Gus Dur. Even though he sided with Megawati, Gus Dur's political actions did not reflect what he said. This is Gus Dur's expertise in politics, even though he cannot see (the blind), but his political skills are able to bring him to the highest seat of power in the Republic of Indonesia.

Fourth, have competence in managerial. As a state leader, both as head of government and head of state, you must master managerial matters. By having managerial skills, a country leader with disabilities will be able to analyze the things needed to support the running of the government, both in the realm of program planning and technical implementation of the planning.

One of the causes of Gus Dur's downfall was the managerial factor, which was considered by his political opponents to have no such competence. Although in the end the impeachment of Gus Dur was not caused by these factors, but as people with disabilities who participate in practical politics and deal with bureaucracy, they should have good managerial competence.

The four prerequisites above can be used as guidelines for people with disabilities when they are struggling in practical politics, especially as public leaders, both at the regional (city/district and provincial) level, and even national leaders. Gus Dur's political experiments can be a political lesson for this nation, that people with disabilities can participate in competing for power. With a note, the power struggle process is based on a clean political game, regardless of physical condition (disability). In other words, the competition for power is based on a "meritocracy" system, meaning that it looks at the prospective leader on his achievements not on his disability, thus giving birth to an inclusive democratic political system. If the struggle for power considers the condition of disability, there will not be a democratic political person, automatically the democratization process fails to be

implemented, democracy no longer adheres to egalitarian and inclusive principles, but is discriminatory and exclusive.

Experiments on inclusive democracy that have been carried out in the early days of reform, with the election of Gus Dur (1999), are not used as a political experience that seeks to construct a positive paradigm for people with disabilities. This is evident in the 2004 presidential election, when Gus Dur, who wished to enter the presidential candidacy market, was hampered by regulations regarding physical and mental health. These rules are contained in KPU Decree no. 26 2004, which provides an interpretation that physical health includes not having a disability.

According to AA, that the rules for physical and mental health have been influenced by political interests to hinder Gus Dur from running for president in 2004.<sup>34</sup> He further stated that Gus Dur's political support at that time was still quite high, so the chances of to win the presidential election is quite large. Meanwhile, according to ZH, stated that Gus Dur was indeed hampered by the existence of "formal rules" set by the KPU. However, politically, Gus Dur experienced a downturn due to the lack of good performance when Gus Dur became president. In addition, new "stars" appeared on the Indonesian political scene.

The existence of a political tendency to the condition of being physically fit, Gus Dur stated that there were officials who were the "masterminds" and there was one presidential candidate who intervened in the Supreme Court to issue a negative decision on his participation in the presidential nomination.<sup>35</sup>

Based on these data, it can be stated that the requirements for being physically and mentally healthy were politicized to block Gus Dur in the 2004 presidential election. If the rules for physical health are defined as "not having a disability", then these regulations are discriminatory. This means that people with disabilities are considered as sick people who are unable to carry out leadership. This perspective is included in the "medical model" category, so that one of the benchmarks for health is to look at its physical completeness.

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<sup>34</sup> (interview, 13 June 2015)

<sup>35</sup> ([tempo.co.id/hg/nasional/2004/05/16/brk,20040516-01,id.html](http://tempo.co.id/hg/nasional/2004/05/16/brk,20040516-01,id.html), accessed on June 16, 2015).

Developments regarding disability and politics in Indonesia are getting better. This can be seen from the shift in the meaning of being physically healthy, which was originally translated that disability is not physically healthy, changing the meaning that disability is not considered physically unhealthy. In addition, Indonesia has ratified the Convention of the Rights Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) through Law Number 19 of 2011. Besides that, in particular, Indonesia also has Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities, which proves that the protection of the rights of people with disabilities has been have a legal protection.

Based on Gus Dur's experience of politicizing disability, the Indonesian nation is currently much more inclusive of people with disabilities, although not all components of the nation understand disability. Therefore, guarding the process of realizing inclusive democracy must continue to be carried out through various disabled organizations and organizations that have the same commitment to realizing inclusive democracy, both among political elites and among grassroots communities.

#### IV. Conclusion

Based on that explanation, this paper can be concluded as follows:

First, that the election of Gus Dur as the fourth president of the Republic of Indonesia was based on the *ashabiyah* of the political elite. The condition of his disability was not a significant obstacle, because at that time Gus Dur's political acceptability was quite strong, so that later political considerations emerged, which of course were also based on Gus Dur's capacity and capability as a politician. Thus, the maritime system is the basis for choosing a leader, and can realize inclusiveness in democracy.

Second, that during the 2004 presidential election, the Indonesian people experienced the degradation of inclusive democracy on politics realm. This was based on Gus Dur's obstruction in his presidential candidacy on the pretext of his disability. In addition, politically, Gus Dur still has strong legitimacy from the community, especially in 2004 Indonesia held a direct presidential election, so that Gus Dur's existence in the nomination market would hinder others in the race for the presidential seat.

Third, Gus Dur's gait at the peak of his practical politics, experienced the politicization of disability, but with this incident in the future Indonesia was more inclusive of the

political participation of people with disabilities, both as voters and as chosen subjects. This is supported by a shift in perspective regarding the requirements for physical health for people with disabilities, and is also supported by various regulations related to disability, so that there are no longer arguments that discredit disability groups in the context of practical politics in Indonesia.

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