

HOW TO ENHANCE CONSTITUTIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS?

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Abstract - This study investigates the effects of direct democracy and freedom of the press on constitutional and political awareness. For the data collection, we employed an online questionnaire distributed to 400 college students selected proportionally from six universities in East Java, Indonesia. Further, partial least square (PLS) was used to analyze the obtained data (392 or 90%). Our finding suggested that direct democracy and freedom of the press have significant and immediate effects on constitutional awareness, but they do not affect constitutional awareness. Besides, direct democracy and press freedom significantly and indirectly affect constitutional awareness through political awareness. This finding indicates that the enhancement of society's constitutional awareness can be completed by improving press freedom and the society's direct democracy and political awareness.

Keywords: direct democracy; pers freedom; political awareness; constitutional awareness.

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INTRODUCTION

Constitutional awareness represents a constitution's thought, perspective, and comprehension (Asshiddiqie, 2005; Solum, 2021; Xiansheng, 1987). Constitutional awareness promotes constitutional-compliant behavior and attitudes (Winataputra and Budimansyah, 2000). Constitution is a general agreement (Atmadja, 2012), so the appropriateness of attitudes and conduct toward the constitution reflects society's commitment to complying with their general understanding.

People do not instantly possess constitutional awareness as it grows through an evolution of state mentality (Fombad, 2018). The constitutional awareness climate can be established through a democratic system (Tolbert et al., 2003) and press freedom (Friedman, 2011). In Indonesia, direct democracy is implemented, substantially conveying society's freedom to express and aspire to their opinion while ensuring society's direct involvement in political and public regulations and decision-making (Suseno, 2001). Further, this freedom also shapes people's character. When an individual lives in a country, they hold the country's sovereignty. Thus, the success of a country relies on its society's quality (Asshiddiqie, 2008). The people must have high intelligence in conveying their aspirations,

selecting something, and getting involved in public policy formulation. The people's brilliance in the democratic system guides them in practicing the constitution.

In addition, democracy should be equipped with freedom of the press (Horváth, 2018). This freedom of the press assures the media independence in disseminating and accessing the information without interference from the country. Through this freedom, we can realize a smooth data flow from the country to the people and vice versa. Press freedom also facilitates people to get more involved in state administration. This involvement obligates people to practice the state constitution. Therefore, freedom of the press and democracy, directly and indirectly, establish constitutional awareness.

Aside from constitutional awareness, direct democracy and freedom of the press also construct society's political awareness. As society is included in the political and policy-making processes while being given extensive access to information, they have increased awareness for participating in the state political policy-making process. Accordingly, society is demanded to have significant political intelligence, which encourages the growth of political awareness. Commonly, people engage in the political world due to their confidence in their ability to contribute to their state. Further, political awareness generates constitutional awareness as citizens' belief in their active role in the political system leads them to practice their constitution correctly.

From the above explanation, our state of the art is illustrated in Figure 1.

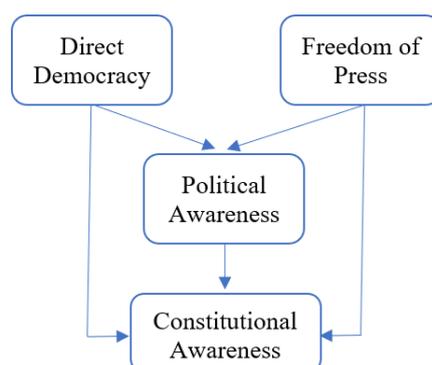


Figure 1 State of Art

To date, no studies have investigated the effects of direct democracy and freedom of the press on political and constitutional awareness, primarily in Indonesia's context, as a country implementing direct democracy and freedom of the press. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by examining the influence of direct democracy and press freedom in political and constitutional contexts in Indonesia. In this study, we gathered data from college students since they intersected and comprehended our research variables: direct democracy, freedom of the press, political awareness, and constitutional awareness.

1. Literature Review

1.1 Direct Democracy

Theoretically, democracy distributes political power, authority, or sovereignty (Altman, 2010). The sovereignty distribution can be carried out directly or through a representative body. Direct sovereignty distribution is known as direct democracy. In a direct democracy, citizens directly give their sovereignty to political and public policy decision-making (Chang, 2012). Direct democracy is also regarded as essential democracy (Maduz, 2010), while Altman describes that the direct democracy mechanism democratizes democracy (Altman, 2018b).

A number of previous studies report direct democracy increases citizen participation (Buček & Smith, 2000; Maduz, 2010), as well as citizens' political knowledge and establishing participative governance (Barczak, 2001; Tolbert et al., 2003). Additionally, direct democracy also bolsters democracy by encouraging active citizen participation, growing their political awareness, reforming

the system by motivating citizens direct participation in the public policy-making process, and increasing citizens' political interest (Leemann & Wasserfallen, 2016; Tolbert et al., 2003).

Direct democracy also carries effects on the decision-making process and the relationship between representative institutions and the citizens. In democracy system, the decision-making process accentuates political consensus since the citizens are directly involved in every decision-making process. Thus, the formulated public policies are responsive to people's aspirations and viewpoints (Arceneaux, 2002), enrich public discussion and establish a more accommodative representative institution that does not discriminate against people's aspirations (Altman, 2018b), and enhance the control upon people with authority (Altman, 2018a; Asatryan & De Witte, 2015; Beath et al., 2017).

From this theoretical discussion, direct democracy enhances the role of the citizen in the political realm through their direct involvement, increasing people's political and constitutional awareness.

1.2 Freedom of the Press

People can attain and give information about social, political, and aesthetic ideas and experiences (Bollinger, 1976; Himelboim & Limor, 2008). Press freedom refers to the degree of autonomy that each media organization and each person has over media content (Nasution, 2019). Besides, freedom of the press can also be defined as media freedom, freedom for disseminating information, and freedom from government interference (Flavin & Montgomery, 2020). This freedom is essential for media to protect exempt public expression.

In addition, freedom of the press also closely correlates with public integrity. In asking for government accountability, citizens require relevant and transparent information related to government functional continuity. That piece of information can only be obtained through the freedom of the press. Thus, freedom of the press becomes a means for control and supervision (Chowdhury, 2004; Martínez-Zarzoso & Phillips, 2020; Oscarsson, 2011), as well as education (Flavin & Montgomery, 2020). The free press carries an essential role in detecting corruption within the government system, educating citizens, and potentially enabling citizens to control the government (Flavin & Montgomery, 2020; Guseva et al., 2008).

In a democratic system, the press serves as means of education, human right assurance, corruption prevention, poverty deterrence, environmental improvement, and people's medical right fulfillment (Pintak & Setiyono, 2011). Therefore, freedom of the press not only becomes means of conveying information, but in a more extensive meaning, it also becomes means of supervision, education, and control over the authorities.

In the political context, freedom of the press educates citizens, allowing them to grow people's political awareness. Concerning the state administration, the press also serves as a supervision, control, and aspiration delivery tool, enabling it to grow people's constitutional attention.

1.3 Political Consciousness

Political awareness represents someone's political intellectual based on their political awareness, position within the political system and history, and concrete attempts to influence political realities (Rulska-Kuthy, 2014). Political awareness is also defined as a perception of collective destiny based on shared identities which may generate collective political action (Greenwood & Christian, 2008). It can also be described as a series of political awareness and action orientations rooted in their need to attain a purpose (Greenwood, 2008). Consequently, Citizens' political awareness is their political conviction in the relevance of their participation in political decision-making to achieve their specific goal.

Political awareness originates from grassroots individuals' understanding of their essential participation in the state political decision-making at both local and national levels (Shneiderman, 2009). It facilitates the implementation of equal and fair political practices (Kathard & Pillay, 2013). Besides, political awareness also correlates with identity politics, political participation, political culture, and the social contract between the government and its citizens (Rulska-Kuthy, 2014).

According to several theoretical studies in some countries, political awareness is closely correlated with citizens' willingness to be actively involved in policy and political decision-making. Accordingly, political awareness reflects each citizen's quality. The citizen quality is assessed not only from their

participation but also from their political beliefs and literacy concerning the state political system. Political awareness also determines and affects constitutional awareness because constitutional understanding begins with each citizen's consciousness to actively participate in the national political realm.

1.4 Constitutional Awareness

Conceptually, constitutional awareness is defined as someone's quality, reflecting their knowledge, behavior, and attitude following the Indonesian purposes and noble commitment. Constitutional awareness is a form of citizen's constitutional values implementation (Winataputra and Budimansyah, 2000). Constitutional awareness is a part of moral awareness (Dreisbach, 2016; Hart, 2012). It consists of three main elements. First, each citizen's awareness of practicing morality is based on the state constitution. Second, rationality represents rational and general moral awareness open to justification or denial. Therefore, constitutional awareness can be categorized as rational and generally objective, gaining communal acceptance from every citizen. Third, freedom in which represents the citizen's freedom to follow every state regulation and law, including their constitution (Magnis-Suseno, 1985).

Constitutional awareness is divided into some levels, indicating citizens' constitutional practices. N.Y. Bull in Djahiri (1985) divides constitutional awareness into four levels, namely: (1) anonymous awareness representing conformity toward state constitutional law with no apparent reason or orientation; (2) heteronomous awareness showing the conformity toward state constitution based on distinct fundamental or motivation; (3) sosionomous awareness showing the conformity to state constitution following the general public; and (4) autonomous awareness, which is the conformity to state institution based on individual's perception.

Citizens with constitutional awareness present excellent constitutional literacy (Hundley & Wamsley, 2012). In relation to that, Toni Massaro described that constitutional literacy leads to active citizen participation in completing their obligation as a citizen (Fombad, 2018; Massaro, 1993). Additionally, Udin S. Winataputra reported several types of constitutional awareness observed among Indonesian citizens (Winataputra, dan Budimansyah, 2000). First is the awareness and willingness to maintain Indonesia's independence through citizens' daily actions. They were second, recognizing that Indonesia's independence is a form of God's grace and realized in everyday activities. Third, sensitivity and responsiveness to the government's role and practices in protecting Indonesia. Fourth, awareness and responsiveness to the role and practices of the government in improving the welfare of Indonesian citizens. Fifth, awareness and responsiveness to government's role and practices in facilitating the citizens to improve their knowledge and intelligence. Sixth, awareness and responsiveness to the role and practices of government in practicing the world order based on independence, everlasting peace, and social justice

Consequently, to ensure the functionality of the 1945 Constitution in social life, we have to motivate them to practice the 1945 Constitution in their authentic state and social life (Asshiddiqie, 2005; Fadjar, 2009). Therefore, the 1945 Constitution should be practiced vigorously by every component of Indonesia.

2. Method

2.1 Procedures and Sample

The data collection process was carried out through the distribution of a questionnaire containing variables of values, attitudes, and opinions related to direct democracy, press freedom, political awareness, and constitutional awareness. A questionnaire is a useful exploratory operational tool (Toharia, 2011). Even though it cannot capture every internal and external aspect, the questionnaire can gather and measure most of the dimensions (Djamba & Neuman, 2002; Sugiyono, 2009).

The data collection was carried out in a month, from May to June 2022. The data were gathered from randomly selected universities in East Java, Indonesia. Those universities were 1) Universitas Negeri Malang; 2) Universitas Negeri Surabaya; 3) Universitas Panca Marga Probolinggo; 4) Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri, and 5) Universitas Brawijaya. The initial contact was made by emailing the research team of each university about our research purpose and request for research permission. After we attained permission, we distributed the online questionnaire through Google Forms. From the

400 online questionnaires being distributed, we garnered 392 responses (98%) since the remaining eight questionnaire responses were incomplete.

In this study, we used simple random sampling (Balvanes & Caputi, 2001; Creswell, 2014; Djamba & Neuman, 2002; Sugiyono, 2009), along with the Slovin formula involving a total 863,449 college students in East Java, Indonesia, as shown in the Formula (1).

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \tag{1}$$

$$n = \frac{863449}{1 + 863449(0,05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{863449}{1 + 863449(0,0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{863449}{2160}$$

$$n = 400$$

As listed in Table 1, we involved 24.9, 24.4, 13, 17.6, and 20% of respondents from Universitas Negeri Malang, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Universitas Panca Marga, Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri, and Universitas Brawijaya, respectively. From the respondent's origin, they were initially from 22 provinces in Indonesia, consisting of East Java (82.6%), Jakarta (3%), West Java (2.3%), Central Java (2.3%), and other regions with lower than 2% percentage. The dominant responses were from East Java respondents, as our research was conducted in East Java universities. Most of our respondents were ≥19 years old (53.6) and 20 - 29 years old (46.4 %). From gender, 27.2% of our respondents were male, and 77.8% were female. Additionally, for the race, our respondents mainly were Javanese (87.8%), followed by Malay (2.6%), Madurese (2.1%), Sundanese (2.1%), and other tribes with percentages below 2%. Besides, most of our respondents were Muslim (94.6%), Protestant (3.1%), Catholic (2.1%), and Hinduism (0.3%). Lastly, most of our respondents joined no college organization (61.7%), while the remaining joined extra campus (7.5%), intra-campus (21%), and community (9.8%) organizations.

Table1 Distribution of Respondents

	Universit y		Residenc e		Age		Gender		Ethnic		Religion		Organisation	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Universitas Negeri Malang	96	24.9												
Universitas Negeri Surabaya	94	24.4												
Universitas Panca Marga	50	13.0												
Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri	68	17.6												
Universitas Brawijaya	78	20.0												
Bali			4	1.0										
Bangka			2	.5										
Belitung														
Banten			2	.5										
DKI Jakarta			13	3.4										
Gorontalo			1	.3										



West Java	9	2.3				
Central Java	9	2.3				
East Java	319	82.6				
West Kalimantan	1	.3				
South Kalimantan	1	.3				
East Kalimantan	7	1.8				
North Kalimantan	1	.3				
Riau Islands	3	.8				
Lampung	2	.5				
West Nusa Tenggara	2	.5				
East Nusa Tenggara	1	.3				
Papua	1	.3				
Riau	1	.3				
Southeast Sulawesi	1	.3				
West Sumatera	1	.3				
South Sumatera	4	1.0				
Yogyakarta	1	.3				
≥19 years			207	53.6		
20 - 29 years			179	46.4		
Male					105	27.2
Female					281	72.8
Java					339	87.8
Madurese					8	2.1
Sundanese					8	2.1
Bali					1	.3
Banjar					1	.3
Batak					5	1.3
Bugis					5	1.3
Malay					10	2.6
Minang					3	.8
Papua					1	.3
Sasak					3	.8
Tengger					1	.3
Chinese					1	.3
Islam						365 94.6
Protestant						12 3.1



Catholic	8	2.1		
Hindu	1	.3		
Extra Campus			29	7.5
Intra Campus			81	21.0
Community Organization			38	9.8
Not joining			238	61.7

This study is a correlational study with four latent variables, consisting of exogenous latent variables of direct democracy (DD) and freedom of press (FP), along with one intervening latent variable of political consciousness (PC) and one endogenous variable of constitutional awareness (CA). The observed variables from DD included DD1, DD2, DD3, DD4, and DD5. Meanwhile, from FP, we observed FP1, FP2, FP3, FP4, and FP5. In PC we found PC1, PC2, PC3, PC4, and PC5. From CA, we observed CA1, CA2, CA3, CA4, and CA5. However, some of the observed variables were rejected since they were invalid and unreliable, such as the DD2, DD4, FP2, PC1, PC5, PC6, and CA3. Each of the observed variables was measured and scored using four points Likert Scale, ranging from highly agree (4) to disagree highly (1).

The instrument was tested using outer model analysis to ensure validity and reliability. The outer model analysis was carried out using convergent validity indicators, such as loading >0.7, Cronbach alpha (CA) >0.6, average variance extracted (AVE) >0.5, and composite reliability (CR) >0.7, as well as discriminant validity where the loading from targeted construct > loading from other constructs (Babin et al., 2008; Hair J.F. et al., 2006; Wijanto, 2008).

Table2 Value of Loading, CronbachAlpha (CA), CompositeReliability (CR), and AVE

Variable	Indicator	Loading	CA	CR	AVE
Constitutional Awareness (CA)	CA1	0.830	0.818	0.879	0.646
	CA2	0.841			
	CA4	0.750			
	CA5	0.790			
	Direct Democracy (DD)	DD1	0.804	0.767	0.863
DD3		0.839			
DD5		0.825			
Freedom of the Press (FP)	FP1	0.772	0.861	0.900	0.643
	FP3	0.836			
	FP4	0.871			
	FP5	0.780			
	FP6	0.744			
Political Consciousness (PC)	PC2	0.799	0.730	0.846	0.647
	PC3	0.835			
	PC4	0.778			

As listed in Table 2, the concurrent validity indicator has loading values >0.7 from each construct, indicating no issues from the discriminant validity. The problems were also investigated using the Cronbach Alpha (CA) test, with the obtained construct values of >0.6. In detail, the obtained construct for CA was 0.818, followed by DD 0.767, FP 0.861, and PC 0.730. The average variance extracted (AVE) was >0.5, with CA 0.646, DD 0.677, FP 0.643, and PC 0.647. The composite reliability (CR) for CA, DD, FP, and PC were 0.879, 0.863, 0.900, and 0.846, suggesting the values >0.7. The obtained CA, AVE, and CR values suggested that the construct present excellent reliability and validity.

In addition, the constructs' reliability and validity can also be examined from the discriminant validity presented in Table 3, by comparing the CR square root AVE value with the correlation values between constructs. As presented in table 3, the obtained CR square root AVE (0.804, 0.823, 0.802, and 0.804) is greater than the correlation between the construct.

Table3 Discriminant Validity

	Constitutional Awareness (CA)	Direct Democracy (DD)	Freedom of the Press (FP)	Political Consciousness (PC)
Constitutional Awareness (CA)	0.804			
Direct Democracy (DD)	0.482	0.823		
Freedom of the Press (FP)	0.500	0.795	0.802	
Political Consciousness (PC)	0.594	0.643	0.666	0.804

The results of the outer model test suggested that our instrument is valid and reliable.

3. Discussion

We conducted hypothesis analysis through Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis using the bootstrap method on 500 sub-samples. As shown in Figure 2, the results of the hypothesis test present the effects of DD on CA (0.091), effects of DD on PC (0.308), effects of FP on CA (0.129), effects of FP on PC (0.420), and the effects of PC on CA (0.449). However, these obtained values have not presented their significance values. The hypothesis can be accepted if the significance between variables reaches T lower than 0.05.

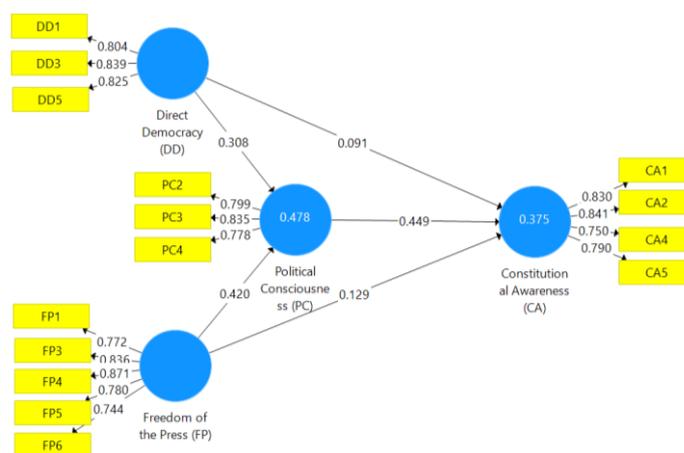


Figure2 Diagram of hypotheses in PLS

As listed in Table 3, the correlation between DD and CA presents T value of $0.215 > 0.05$, indicating no significant effects of direct democracy on constitutional awareness. Meanwhile, DD and PC present a T count of $0.000 < 0.05$, showing that direct democracy significantly affects political consciousness. The correlation between FP and CA showed T count of $0.112 > 0.05$, showing no substantial effects between freedom of the press and constitutional awareness. For FP and PC, their T count was $0.000 < 0.05$, representing significant effects of freedom of the press on political consciousness. Lastly, PC and CA showed T count of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating significant influence from political consciousness on constitutional awareness.



Table4 Direct Significant Effects between Variables

Relationships	Original Sample (O)	Mean (M)	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
DD -> CA	0.091	0.088	0.073	1.241	0.215	Not Supported
DD -> PC	0.308	0.307	0.063	4.935	0.000	Supported
FP -> CA	0.129	0.128	0.081	1.591	0.112	Not Supported
FP -> PC	0.420	0.424	0.061	6.942	0.000	Supported
PC -> CA	0.449	0.456	0.061	7.361	0.000	Supported

Table5 Significant Indirect Effects between Variables

Relationships	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
DD -> PC -> CA	0.139	0.139	0.032	4.278	0.000	Supported
FP -> PC -> CA	0.189	0.194	0.040	4.734	0.000	Supported

As listed in Table 4, direct democracy significantly and directly affects political consciousness while also indirectly and significantly affecting constitutional awareness. This finding is linear with a study by Tolbert, McNeal, and Smith in 2003 in Amerika Serikat. That study reports that democracy directly affects political decision-making, increases political involvement, and enhances political knowledge, which results in higher constitutional awareness among the citizens (Tolbert et al., 2003). Similarly, Leemann and Wasserfallen (2016) also discover that direct democracy affects citizen participation in public policy-making and muffles conflicts during policy implementation, resulting in constitutional awareness (Leemann & Wasserfallen, 2016). Serdült and Welp (2012) reveal that direct democracy improves society empowerment and involvement in the state political realm, generating greater constitutional awareness (Serdült & Welp, 2012). Also, Horvath describes that political awareness can be observed in direct democracy (Horváth, 2018). Therefore, our findings are linear with research results from countries implementing direct democracy. Accordingly, direct democracy increases political and constitutional awareness.

In addition, freedom of the press also bears significant and direct effects on political consciousness while simultaneously presenting powerful and indirect influences on constitutional awareness. In 2011 from South Africa, Friedman also reported a similar finding, showing that press freedom allows citizens to participate in the state policy-making. Thus, freedom of the press serves as a means for enhancing constitutional awareness, while control of the media obstructs the enhancement of constitutional awareness (Friedman, 2011). Additionally, Yuk (2019) reports that censors on media hinder democracy and lower people's participation in the political decision-making process, reducing their constitutional awareness (Yuk, 2019). Press freedom also grows society's awareness of their essential participation in political processes (Kaminchenko, 2014). Thus, our data analysis concludes that freedom of the press enhances political and constitutional understanding.

4. CONCLUSION

This study analyses the effects of direct democracy and freedom of the press on political and constitutional awareness. Our analysis results indicated that direct democracy possesses significant and immediate effects on political consciousness, as well as significant and indirect influence on constitutional awareness. Meanwhile, freedom of the press presents a direct and powerful impact on political consciousness, along with indirect and significant effects on constitutional awareness. Thus, in

order to accelerate citizens' constitutional awareness, we have to escalate the quality of the direct democracy system, freedom of the press, and citizens' political consciousness.

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