

# Portraying Democracy in Asia: The Comparative Study of the Social Science Textbooks at the Junior High School in Indonesia and the Philippines

by Prof. Dr. Ajat Sudrajat, M.Ag., Amika Wardana, Ph.D., Dr. Nasiwan, Maria Virginia Aquilar, Ph.D., Hamka Makruf, S.Pd., Deri Indrahadi, S.Pd., Sigit Wisnu Tomo, S.Pd.

## ABSTRACT

The future development of democracy in Asia particularly in the two leading countries of Southeast Asia – Indonesia and the Philippines – is always discussed and debated in terms of the qualities and implication for the betterment of societies of both countries. As widely agreed, the implementation of democracy as the way governing the state and the societies based on liberty, civic freedom and egalitarian values is required a systematic and continues socialization to the populace especially the younger generation. The need is equivalent with the goals and aims of teaching social science subjects for school children in the junior and senior high schools. Having explained the context, the study addresses to investigate the ways democracy is portrayed and later elaborated in the social science textbook used in the junior high school in Indonesia and the Philippines.

The study used the qualitative content analysis of social studies textbook for the secondary schools published by the ministry of education of both Indonesia and the Philippines. For the Indonesia side, the textbooks are (i) buku IPS kelas 7 (2014), (ii) buku IPS kelas 8 (2014), and (iii) buku IPS kelas 9 (2015); while for the Philippines, they are (i) *Araling Panglipunan Grado 7: Araling Asyano (Asian History) (2012)*, (ii) *Araling Panglipunan Grado 8: Kasaysayang ng Daigdid (World History) (2014)*, (iii) *Araling Panglipunan Grado 9: Ekonomiks (Economics) (2014)*, and (iv) *Araling Panglipunan Grado 10: Mga Kontemporaryong Isyu (Contemporary Issues) (2014)*.

The qualitative content analysis to the books – Social Studies Textbooks for Grade 7-9 in Indonesia and 7-10 in the Philippines – showed some similarities as well as differences on the way democracy is presented and portrayed for young students. Having considered the democratic achievement and the current deficit experienced in both countries, it was not rather not surprising that the topic was not well-presented. In a nutshell, there was not a special topic dealing with democracy, democratic values or democratization in the textbooks studied. The topic was emerged as just a veneer issue amongst the wide academic topic – from geography, culture, sociology, economics and citizenship – presented in the textbooks. There was also not a coherent definition of democracy used as it was taken for granted as a given governmental system of both countries today's without providing a critical explanation on the ways it was adopted. Lastly, the lack of clear and explicit presentation and elaboration of democracy had further been evidenced by the lack of elaborative and elusive explanation of citizenship rights as well as their civil/political obligation to preserve the democratic values of the state and the society.

Kata Kunci: *democracy, teaching social science, social science textbook*