



Justice as the Fundamental Principle in the Fulfillment of Human Rights

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Abstract

Justice constitutes a fundamental principle in the fulfillment of Human Rights, functioning not merely as a moral value but also as a normative foundation within legal systems. This article aims to examine the role of justice as a core principle in the realization of human rights and its implications for state responsibility in ensuring the protection and fulfillment of fundamental rights. This study employs a normative-conceptual approach by analyzing theories of justice, international human rights instruments, and national legal frameworks. The findings indicate that procedural fulfillment of human rights without substantive justice may result in inequality and discrimination. Substantive justice is therefore essential to ensure that human rights are not only formally recognized but also effectively implemented in an equitable manner. The article concludes that the integration of justice into human rights fulfillment is a crucial prerequisite for establishing a rule of law that upholds human dignity.

[Keadilan merupakan prinsip fundamental dalam pemenuhan Hak Asasi Manusia yang tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai nilai moral, tetapi juga sebagai landasan normatif dalam sistem hukum. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis posisi keadilan sebagai prinsip dasar dalam pemenuhan HAM serta implikasinya terhadap peran negara dalam menjamin perlindungan dan pemenuhan hak-hak dasar warga negara. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan normatif-konseptual dengan menelaah teori keadilan, instrumen HAM internasional, serta kerangka hukum nasional. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa pemenuhan HAM yang bersifat prosedural tanpa keadilan substantif berpotensi melahirkan ketimpangan dan diskriminasi. Keadilan substantif menjadi elemen penting untuk memastikan bahwa HAM tidak hanya diakui secara formal, tetapi juga diwujudkan secara nyata dan merata. Artikel ini menegaskan bahwa integrasi keadilan dalam pemenuhan HAM merupakan prasyarat utama bagi terwujudnya negara hukum yang berorientasi pada martabat manusia.]

Keywords: Human Rights; Justice; Substantive Justice; Rule of Law; Human Dignity

Introduction

Human rights constitute a normative foundation that affirms the dignity and intrinsic worth of every individual within social and state life. The existence of human rights is not merely understood as a set of individual entitlements but also as an indicator of the quality of a legal system in ensuring social justice. Within the context of the rule of law, human rights function as a primary benchmark for assessing the extent to which law operates fairly and is oriented toward human protection (Junaidi et al., 2023). Accordingly, discussions on human rights are invariably and directly intertwined with the concept of justice as their foundational principle.



Justice occupies a central position in human rights discourse because the primary objective of recognizing fundamental rights is to create a social order that is equitable and non-discriminatory. Without justice, human rights risk being reduced to formal norms devoid of protective force. This condition gives rise to serious problems when rights are normatively acknowledged yet fail to address the inequalities and injustices experienced by certain groups (Ashri, 2018). Consequently, justice cannot be positioned as an ancillary value but must be understood as a fundamental principle in the fulfillment of human rights.

Developments in modern legal systems demonstrate that a legal-formal approach to human rights is often insufficient to guarantee effective protection. Many states have adopted international human rights instruments and incorporated them into their domestic legal systems; however, law enforcement practices continue to exhibit persistent disparities. This situation reveals a gap between legal norms and social realities. Such a gap reinforces the urgency of a substantive justice approach in understanding and implementing human rights (Dwinanarhati & Firdausi, 2023).

Within the framework of legal theory, substantive justice emphasizes the importance of outcomes and tangible impacts of legal application rather than mere procedural compliance. This approach requires the law to be sensitive to social contexts, power structures, and the factual conditions of society. Human rights fulfilled substantively are measured not only by the existence of legal rules but by the extent to which those rights are genuinely experienced by citizens (Saragih et al., 2025). Therefore, substantive justice becomes a crucial instrument to ensure the effective functioning of human rights.

Indonesia, as a constitutional state governed by the rule of law, places human rights in a highly strategic position (Hidayah et al., 2025; Zega, 2015). The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia explicitly recognizes and guarantees various fundamental rights of citizens. This constitutional reinforcement reflects the state's commitment to respecting and protecting human rights. Nevertheless, constitutional recognition does not automatically ensure the fair fulfillment of human rights in practice (Nugraha, 2002).

The reality of law enforcement in Indonesia indicates that the fulfillment of human rights often remains confined within a formalistic approach. Law is understood merely as a normative instrument that demands procedural compliance, without adequately considering justice as the spirit underlying the norms. As a result, vulnerable groups frequently encounter structural barriers in accessing their rights. This condition demonstrates that human rights issues are not solely related to legal norms but also to the orientation of justice in their enforcement (Zaetama, 2024).

Philosophically, the Pancasila-based state of law places social justice as one of the principal objectives of state governance. The principle of justice is not only reflected in the fifth principle of Pancasila but is also integrated into the entire constitutional framework. This indicates that justice is a fundamental value that should animate all policies and legal practices, including the fulfillment of human rights. Accordingly, neglecting substantive justice contradicts the basic character of Indonesia's constitutional legal order.

The discourse on justice in the fulfillment of human rights is also closely linked to the concept of state responsibility. The state is not only obliged to respect and protect human rights but also to actively ensure their fulfillment. Such responsibility requires legal policies that are

responsive to social inequalities and structural injustices. In this context, justice becomes the primary parameter for assessing the effectiveness of the state's role in fulfilling human rights.

International human rights instruments, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, emphasize the principles of non-discrimination and equality. These principles are fundamentally rooted in the idea of substantive justice. The integration of international instruments into domestic law should not be limited to formal ratification but must be realized through just policies and practices. This underscores that justice serves as a bridge between international norms and national realities (Hamidah, 2021).

In practice, disparities in the fulfillment of human rights often arise from uniform legal approaches applied to diverse social conditions. Such approaches tend to disregard social, economic, and cultural differences that affect individuals' capacity to enjoy their rights. Substantive justice rejects this uniformity by emphasizing the need for proportional treatment. In this way, justice becomes a means of contextualizing the realization of human rights (Estede et al., 2025).

Human rights issues in Indonesia also cannot be separated from power dynamics and social structures. Certain groups possess greater access to legal mechanisms, while others remain in disadvantaged positions. This situation illustrates that law which is formally neutral is not necessarily substantively just. Therefore, justice must be understood as an active effort to correct such inequalities.

Academic studies on human rights often position justice as an abstract concept standing independently. In legal practice, however, justice has concrete implications for policy design and law enforcement. When justice is not adopted as an operational principle, human rights risk becoming normative symbols lacking transformative power. This condition underscores the necessity of studies that place justice as a fundamental principle in the fulfillment of human rights.

A normative–conceptual approach is relevant for examining the relationship between justice and human rights within the framework of the rule of law. This approach enables in-depth analysis of theories of justice, constitutional norms, and applicable legal instruments. Through such analysis, it becomes possible to identify the extent to which justice has been integrated into the human rights fulfillment system. This approach also opens space for critical evaluation of legal practices that tend to be formalistic.

This study proceeds from the assumption that the success of human rights fulfillment cannot be measured solely by the existence of legislation. The primary measure of success lies in the law's capacity to deliver justice as experienced by society. Therefore, justice must be positioned as an evaluative principle for policies and practices related to human rights fulfillment. This approach places human beings at the center of the legal system.

In the global context, the paradigm shift from procedural justice toward substantive justice has become increasingly prominent. States are required to ensure that law is not only enforced but also just in its impact. This paradigm is highly relevant to the challenges of human rights fulfillment in Indonesia, which is characterized by social complexity and diversity. Thus, the integration of substantive justice constitutes both a normative and practical necessity.

This article focuses on justice as a fundamental principle in the fulfillment of human rights in Indonesia. This focus is chosen to address gaps in existing studies that have predominantly

emphasized normative aspects without in-depth analysis of substantive justice. By linking theories of justice, international human rights instruments, and the national legal framework, this study seeks to offer a more comprehensive perspective. This approach is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically.

The analysis in this article aims to demonstrate that justice is not merely a moral value but a normative foundation that determines the quality of human rights fulfillment. Without justice, the law risks losing its humanistic orientation. Therefore, affirming justice as a fundamental principle is a prerequisite for realizing a rule-of-law state oriented toward human dignity. This perspective positions justice as the spirit of the entire human rights legal system.

By placing justice at the center of analysis, this article is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the challenges of human rights fulfillment in Indonesia. This study simultaneously affirms that just fulfillment of human rights is a primary indicator of the success of a constitutional state governed by the rule of law. Such an approach strengthens the role of law as an instrument of human protection rather than merely a regulatory tool. Ultimately, justice becomes the key to ensuring that human rights truly live within legal practice and social life.

Method

This study employs a normative–conceptual approach that focuses on the examination of legal norms, legal principles, and theoretical constructions related to justice and the fulfillment of human rights. This approach is adopted because the issues under study are fundamental in nature and directly relate to the conceptual foundations of the rule-of-law state as well as the principle of justice as the normative basis for human rights protection. Through this approach, the research not only analyzes positive law provisions but also explores the philosophical and theoretical foundations underlying the recognition and fulfillment of human rights.

The sources of legal materials in this study consist of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials. Primary legal materials include the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, statutory regulations related to human rights, and international human rights instruments ratified by Indonesia. Secondary legal materials comprise scholarly works in the form of books, reputable national and international journal articles, and previous studies addressing theories of justice, the rule of law, and human rights protection. Tertiary legal materials are used as supporting sources to clarify relevant legal concepts and terminology.

The collection of legal materials is conducted through a library research method by systematically tracing legal sources and literature that are directly related to the focus of the study. This process is carried out to ensure that the materials employed possess both relevance and academic authority. The literature review concentrates on works discussing substantive justice, the fulfillment of human rights, and the role of the state within a constitutional rule-of-law framework, thereby providing a strong theoretical and normative basis for the analysis.

The analysis of legal materials is conducted qualitatively using descriptive–analytical and prescriptive methods. Descriptive analysis is employed to map concepts of justice and human rights fulfillment within national and international legal frameworks, while prescriptive analysis is directed toward formulating normative arguments regarding the importance of integrating substantive justice into the fulfillment of human rights. Through this analytical process, the study seeks to produce a comprehensive understanding as well as conceptual recommendations

relevant to strengthening a just rule-of-law state oriented toward the protection of human dignity.

Results And Discussion

Justice as the Conceptual Foundation of Human Rights

Justice constitutes a normative principle that serves as the basis for the legitimacy of human rights within the legal system. Conceptually, human rights emerge from the awareness that every human being possesses inherent value and dignity from birth. This value demands fair treatment both in social relations and in the relationship between the state and its citizens. Without justice, the recognition of human rights loses its substantive meaning and functions merely as a normative symbol (Triadi, 2025).

From the perspective of legal philosophy, justice is often understood as the primary objective of law. Law does not exist solely to create order, but to ensure that such order is constructed upon principles of justice. Human rights serve as a concrete instrument for realizing this objective by guaranteeing fundamental rights necessary for human beings to live with dignity. Accordingly, the relationship between justice and human rights is inherent and inseparable.

Justice also functions as the ethical foundation for the universal recognition of human rights. Principles of equality, non-discrimination, and respect for human dignity are rooted in the idea that every individual is entitled to fair treatment. In this context, human rights cannot be understood merely as the product of political consensus, but rather as a reflection of universal demands for justice. Thus, justice becomes both the moral and normative basis for the validity of human rights.

The substantive justice approach broadens the understanding of human rights beyond procedural frameworks. The fulfillment of human rights cannot be adequately measured solely by the existence of legal norms or formal protection mechanisms. Substantive justice requires the law to consider the real-life impacts of normative implementation on human lives. When the law fails to provide effective protection, the very existence of human rights as fundamental rights becomes questionable.

Procedural justice, which emphasizes conformity with rules, often proves insufficient to address existing social inequalities. In many cases, the law is applied formally without due consideration of the social and economic conditions of legal subjects. As a result, vulnerable groups continue to face barriers in enjoying their rights, even though those rights are normatively guaranteed. This situation highlights the limitations of a procedural approach to human rights fulfillment (Lestari & Rahmadani, 2024).

Substantive justice emerges as a corrective to overly formalistic legal approaches. This perspective places human beings and social realities at the center of human rights enforcement. Justice is thus no longer understood as uniform treatment, but as an effort to provide proportional treatment in accordance with the needs and vulnerabilities of individuals and groups. Within this framework, human rights function as emancipatory instruments.

The concept of substantive justice also emphasizes the importance of legal alignment with groups in structurally unequal positions. Human rights aim not only to protect individual rights in the abstract, but also to correct structural inequalities that hinder access to justice. Justice therefore serves as an evaluative principle to assess whether the fulfillment of human rights

genuinely reaches all segments of society. Without this perspective, human rights risk reinforcing existing injustices.

Within the context of the rule of law, justice operates as the animating spirit of legal norms. A legal system oriented solely toward legal certainty, without justice, risks losing its moral legitimacy. Human rights, as an integral component of the rule of law, require a balance between legal certainty, utility, and justice. Such balance can only be achieved when justice is positioned as the primary principle in human rights fulfillment.

Justice also serves as a parameter for assessing state responsibility in the fulfillment of human rights. The state is not merely obliged to provide a legal framework, but must also ensure that the law functions fairly. The obligation to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights must be carried out with due regard to substantive justice. Without justice, these obligations risk being implemented minimally and symbolically.

International human rights instruments implicitly position justice as the foundation of rights fulfillment. Principles such as equality before the law and the prohibition of discrimination represent manifestations of justice within the human rights framework. These principles require states not only to treat citizens equally, but also to treat them fairly in accordance with their specific conditions and needs. In this sense, justice serves as a bridge between international norms and national implementation.

In legal practice, tensions between human rights norms and social realities often arise due to the absence of a substantive justice perspective. General legal norms do not always capture the complexity of social life. Substantive justice enables the law to remain adaptive without losing its normative legitimacy. This approach strengthens the function of human rights as dynamic instruments of protection.

Justice as the foundation of human rights is also closely linked to the principle of human dignity. Human dignity demands treatment that respects humanity without discrimination. Human rights exist to ensure that such dignity is protected through guarantees of fundamental rights. In this context, justice becomes a prerequisite for preventing human dignity from remaining a purely abstract concept.

An understanding of human rights detached from justice risks producing a rigid legalistic approach. Such an approach tends to treat law as an end in itself rather than as a means to achieve justice. Consequently, human rights are perceived as administrative obligations rather than as moral and juridical commitments to humanity. This condition weakens the transformative function of human rights in social life.

Justice also plays a determining role in shaping legal policies related to human rights. Just policies take into account their impact on the most affected groups. In this way, justice becomes a guiding principle in both the formulation and implementation of human rights policies. Without this principle, policies risk perpetuating existing inequalities.

Within the framework of progressive legal thought, justice is placed above legal certainty. Law is understood as an instrument for achieving just social objectives. Human rights constitute one of the primary goals of such legal utilization. This approach affirms that the success of law is measured by its ability to deliver justice as experienced by society.

Substantive justice also enables critical evaluation of human rights enforcement practices. Such evaluation assesses not only compliance with rules, but also the social impacts of law

enforcement. Through this approach, human rights are not confined to legal formalities; instead, they function as corrective instruments against unjust legal practices.

The relationship between justice and human rights demonstrates that rights fulfillment cannot be separated from social and cultural contexts. Substantive justice requires a deep understanding of the conditions of the society in which the law operates. This approach allows human rights to be implemented contextually without losing their universal character. Thus, justice becomes the principle that bridges the universality of human rights and local realities.

In academic discourse, positioning justice as the conceptual foundation of human rights enriches legal analysis. This approach enables human rights studies to move beyond normative description toward critical analysis. Human rights are therefore understood as dynamic concepts that evolve in response to demands for justice. This perspective is particularly relevant in addressing contemporary challenges in human rights fulfillment.

Justice as the conceptual foundation of human rights affirms that law must be oriented toward humanity. Human rights are not merely products of positive law, but reflections of living demands for justice within society. By placing justice as the primary principle, the fulfillment of human rights is directed toward delivering real and meaningful protection. This perspective strengthens the role of law as an instrument of humanity.

Understanding justice as the conceptual foundation of human rights further emphasizes that the success of rights fulfillment is not measured by the completeness of legal norms, but by the justice experienced by society. Justice becomes the primary indicator of the quality of human rights protection within a legal system. Accordingly, the integration of substantive justice is an essential condition for the effective and dignified functioning of human rights.

Human Rights within the Framework of Indonesia's Constitutional Rule of Law

Indonesia constitutionally affirms itself as a state governed by the rule of law based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. This conception of the rule of law does not merely position law as an instrument for regulating state affairs, but also as a means of guaranteeing the protection of citizens' fundamental rights. Within this framework, human rights constitute a fundamental element that is inseparable from Indonesia's constitutional order. The recognition of human rights represents the state's commitment to upholding human dignity (Rais, 2022).

The constitutional entrenchment of human rights in Indonesia has undergone significant development in the post-reform era. Amendments to the 1945 Constitution expanded constitutional guarantees for a wide range of fundamental rights, encompassing civil and political rights as well as economic, social, and cultural rights. The inclusion of a dedicated chapter on human rights signifies that the state no longer regards human rights as a secondary issue. Instead, human rights are positioned as constitutional principles binding upon all state authorities (Muhtar et al., 2023).

The Constitution not only recognizes the existence of human rights but also affirms the state's obligations in their fulfillment. The state is required to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights through legal policies and governmental practices. This obligation places the state as the primary actor responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of human rights protection. Accordingly, human rights cannot be understood merely as individual entitlements, but as a constitutional responsibility of the state.

As a constitutional rule-of-law state, Indonesia upholds constitutional supremacy as a fundamental principle. All legislation and public policies must conform to constitutional values, including respect for human rights. This principle demands consistency between legal norms and the practices of state governance. Where deviations occur, constitutional mechanisms function as corrective instruments.

In practice, however, the fulfillment of human rights frequently encounters structural challenges. Unequal social and economic structures affect the capacity of individuals and groups to access their fundamental rights. These disparities demonstrate that constitutional guarantees do not always correspond directly with the realities of human rights fulfillment. The constitutional rule-of-law state is thus confronted with the task of bridging this gap.

Normative challenges also arise when law is interpreted rigidly and formalistically. Such an approach tends to emphasize procedural compliance without adequately considering justice as the ultimate objective. Consequently, the fulfillment of human rights is reduced to administrative implementation that is insufficiently responsive to societal needs. This situation reveals the limitations of a legal-formal approach within a rule-of-law framework.

Ideally, a constitutional rule-of-law state integrates justice as the animating spirit of every legal norm. Justice functions not only as a moral value but also as an interpretative principle in law enforcement. In the context of human rights, justice serves as the standard for assessing whether the state has substantively fulfilled its constitutional obligations. Without justice, human rights guarantees risk losing their practical significance.

The role of state institutions in fulfilling human rights is also decisive. Legislative, executive, and judicial bodies bear interconnected responsibilities in ensuring rights protection. Legislation that lacks sensitivity to human rights can weaken constitutional safeguards. Likewise, law enforcement that disregards substantive justice may undermine citizens' rights.

Constitutional adjudication occupies a strategic position within Indonesia's rule-of-law framework. The Constitutional Court functions as the guardian of the Constitution and an interpreter of human rights values. Through its decisions, the Court may strengthen or even expand human rights protection. This role demonstrates that the constitutional rule of law is dynamic rather than static.

The integration of international human rights instruments into the national legal system further reinforces the constitutional rule-of-law framework. Ratification of international treaties reflects the state's commitment to global human rights standards. Nevertheless, such ratification requires consistent and just implementation. Without substantive integration, international commitments risk remaining symbolic (Wardani, 2025).

In the Indonesian context, social and cultural pluralism adds complexity to the fulfillment of human rights. A constitutional rule-of-law state must accommodate diversity without compromising principles of equality and non-discrimination. Justice becomes a crucial instrument for balancing the universality of human rights with local contexts. This approach requires inclusive and adaptive legal policies.

Human rights fulfillment is also closely linked to public policies adopted by the state. Policies that are not oriented toward social justice risk exacerbating existing inequalities. The constitutional rule-of-law state is therefore required to ensure that every policy considers its impact on human rights fulfillment. Justice thus functions as a guiding principle in decision-making processes.

Indonesia's rule-of-law state cannot be separated from Pancasila as its philosophical foundation. Pancasila emphasizes balance between rights and obligations, as well as social justice for all Indonesian people. These values should serve as guiding principles in human rights fulfillment. The integration of Pancasila and constitutional norms strengthens the distinctive character of Indonesia's rule-of-law system.

In law enforcement practice, tensions between legal certainty and justice are often unavoidable. A constitutional rule-of-law state is required to seek equilibrium between these principles. In the context of human rights, justice should not be sacrificed for the sake of formal certainty. This approach affirms that law must be oriented toward human protection.

Evaluation of human rights fulfillment within a constitutional rule-of-law state cannot be detached from a substantive justice perspective. Such evaluation requires assessment of the tangible impacts of policies and legal practices. In this way, human rights function not only as normative indicators but also as measures of state performance. This approach strengthens state accountability in fulfilling human rights.

Indonesia's constitutional rule-of-law state also faces challenges arising from globalization and developments in international law. These dynamics demand adjustments in the understanding and implementation of human rights. Justice serves as a principle that enables such adaptation without undermining constitutional values. Thus, the rule-of-law state remains relevant in a global context.

Human rights protection within a constitutional rule-of-law state depends not only on legal norms but also on legal culture. A legal culture that respects justice and human rights enhances the effectiveness of rights protection. Conversely, a formalistic and bureaucratic legal culture may weaken human rights fulfillment. Accordingly, fostering legal awareness constitutes an essential component of the rule of law.

In this regard, legal education plays a strategic role in instilling values of justice and human rights. Legal education oriented toward substantive justice encourages the emergence of law enforcers who are sensitive to human rights concerns. Consequently, the constitutional rule-of-law state is constructed not only through norms but also through the quality of human legal resources.

The interconnection between human rights and the constitutional rule of law affirms that the success of a rule-of-law state is measured by the protection it affords to human beings. A state governed by the rule of law that fails to protect human rights loses its constitutional legitimacy. Therefore, the fulfillment of human rights must be a primary priority in state governance. This perspective places human beings at the center of the legal system.

Human rights within the framework of Indonesia's constitutional rule of law require integration between norms, justice, and practice. The Constitution provides a strong normative foundation, but just implementation determines its meaning. By positioning justice as the animating spirit of human rights enforcement, Indonesia's rule-of-law state can realize meaningful rights protection oriented toward human dignity.

The Implications of Substantive Justice for the Fulfillment of Human Rights

The application of substantive justice in the fulfillment of human rights brings about a fundamental transformation in how the state understands and carries out its obligations. This approach requires the state to go beyond mere normative recognition of rights and to ensure

that such rights are genuinely accessible and effectively enjoyed by all citizens. Substantive justice places human beings and the real conditions of their lives at the center of human rights enforcement. Consequently, the fulfillment of human rights is understood as a process oriented toward tangible outcomes and real impacts (Ashri, 2018).

The primary implication of substantive justice lies in a paradigm shift from uniformity toward proportional justice. Formal approaches often treat individuals equally without taking into account differences in social and economic conditions. Substantive justice, by contrast, recognizes that fair treatment does not always imply identical treatment. Accordingly, the fulfillment of human rights must be adjusted to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of different social groups.

In the context of legal policy, substantive justice encourages the state to formulate regulations that are responsive to social realities. Policies that focus solely on legal certainty risk neglecting groups that occupy structurally disadvantaged positions. By integrating substantive justice, legal policies are directed toward correcting structural inequalities that hinder the fulfillment of human rights. This approach strengthens the role of law as an instrument of social justice.

Substantive justice also has significant implications for the interpretation and application of legal norms. Justice-oriented legal interpretation requires flexibility without disregarding the principle of legality. In the field of human rights, such interpretation enables the law to respond to complex social dynamics. As a result, the law is not confined to normative rigidity that may obstruct effective rights protection.

Another implication is evident in the practice of law enforcement by state authorities. Substantive justice requires law enforcement officials to consider social context and the impact of legal decisions on individuals and groups. This approach promotes a more humane form of law enforcement that prioritizes the protection of human dignity. Accordingly, human rights enforcement is not merely repressive, but also protective and corrective in nature.

Substantive justice is particularly relevant to the protection of vulnerable groups. The poor, women, children, persons with disabilities, and minorities often face structural barriers in accessing their rights. Formal approaches are frequently insufficient to address the specific needs of these groups. Substantive justice provides a framework for delivering more effective and inclusive protection.

In fulfilling economic, social, and cultural rights, substantive justice plays a crucial role. Rights to education, health, and decent work cannot be realized fairly without considering the socio-economic conditions of society. The state is therefore required to adopt affirmative measures to ensure that disadvantaged groups can enjoy these rights. This approach reinforces the understanding that justice is an integral element of human rights fulfillment.

Substantive justice also affects the legitimacy of the rule of law in the eyes of the public. A state that succeeds in delivering justice in the fulfillment of human rights is more likely to gain public trust. Conversely, a formalistic approach to human rights fulfillment may generate dissatisfaction and distrust. In this sense, substantive justice contributes directly to the stability and legitimacy of the rule-of-law state.

The implications of substantive justice are not only normative but also institutional. The state is required to strengthen institutions responsible for human rights protection by equipping

them with adequate authority and resources. Without institutional support, substantive justice is difficult to realize in practice (Tarigan, 2024).

Within the judicial framework, substantive justice encourages judges to take social justice into account in every decision they render. Court decisions are assessed not only based on conformity with positive law, but also on their impact on human rights protection. This approach reinforces the role of the judiciary as a guardian of justice and a protector of rights, positioning the courts as key actors in the fulfillment of human rights.

Substantive justice also has implications for mechanisms of remedy for victims of human rights violations. Remedies must go beyond mere acknowledgment of violations and include effective and meaningful recovery. This requires compensation, rehabilitation, and guarantees of non-recurrence, thereby restoring the dignity of victims.

In the context of public policy, substantive justice promotes continuous evaluation of the human rights impact of state policies. The state is required to ensure that policies do not generate new forms of injustice. Such evaluation strengthens state accountability in fulfilling human rights and positions substantive justice as an effective oversight instrument.

Substantive justice further enables the integration of universal human rights values with local contexts. This approach recognizes that the fulfillment of human rights must be sensitive to social and cultural conditions without sacrificing universal principles. In this way, substantive justice functions as a bridge between global norms and local realities, a particularly relevant approach in plural societies.

Another implication is the growing demand for transparency and public participation. Substantive justice requires community involvement in the formulation and implementation of human rights policies. Such participation ensures that policies reflect the actual needs of society, making human rights fulfillment an inclusive and democratic process (Nasyirudin, 2025).

Substantive justice also plays a role in transforming legal culture. A justice-oriented legal culture strengthens the effectiveness of human rights protection, whereas a culture focused solely on procedural compliance tends to weaken it. Therefore, the internalization of substantive justice is a crucial component of legal reform.

From an academic perspective, the application of substantive justice enriches human rights analysis through a critical approach. It enables the identification of gaps between norms and practice, ensuring that human rights scholarship does not stop at normative description but also offers conceptual solutions. This strengthens the scholarly contribution of human rights studies.

Substantive justice further reinforces the role of the state as a protector of human dignity. The state is no longer positioned merely as a rule-maker, but as an active agent in delivering justice. This role demands strong political and legal commitment, making human rights fulfillment an indicator of the quality of state governance.

The implications of substantive justice for human rights fulfillment are also evident in efforts to prevent rights violations. A justice-sensitive approach allows the state to identify potential violations at an early stage and to adopt effective preventive measures, thereby strengthening the protective function of human rights.

Within the context of the Indonesian rule-of-law state, substantive justice provides a normative framework for strengthening the implementation of human rights. This approach aligns with Pancasila values that emphasize social justice. By integrating substantive justice,

human rights fulfillment can be directed toward addressing inequality and discrimination, reinforcing the distinctive character of Indonesia's constitutional rule of law.

Conclusion

Justice constitutes a fundamental principle that is inseparable from the fulfillment of human rights within the framework of Indonesia's constitutional rule-of-law state. The fulfillment of human rights that relies solely on normative and procedural recognition risks neglecting the essence of rights protection, particularly for vulnerable groups within society. Therefore, justice does not merely function as a moral value but serves as a normative foundation that determines the quality and effectiveness of human rights fulfillment.

This study demonstrates that the integration of substantive justice into the fulfillment of human rights is an urgent necessity to ensure that fundamental rights are not only formally guaranteed by the constitution and statutory regulations but are also realized concretely in social life. Substantive justice enables the law to operate responsively in addressing inequality, discrimination, and complex social realities.

Within the context of Indonesia's rule-of-law state, the affirmation of justice as a foundational principle of human rights fulfillment strengthens the role of the state as the guarantor of human dignity. This approach further emphasizes that the success of human rights enforcement is not measured merely by compliance with legal rules, but by the extent to which the law is capable of delivering justice that is genuinely experienced by all citizens in an equal and dignified manner.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.

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