

The Role and Position of Women from Political and Gender Equality Perspectives

Mega Iswari^a, ^aDepartment of Special Education, Universitas Negeri Padang, West Sumatera, Indonesia, Email: mega_iswari@yahoo.com

This study aims to explain women's political education participation and identify the role and position of women in politics and gender equality. This study uses descriptive-verification approach and the research method used is a survey method with a sample of 150 respondents in Padang. Data collected by questionnaire and analysed by SPSS 20. Based on data analysis, this study shows that Political Education, Education is an essential tool for empowering the individual with abilities and capabilities necessary for full participation in national development. The education of the woman is a tremendous asset to her nation. This result concluded from the results of the correlation test, that showed the significance of $\text{sig} < \alpha$ ($0.00 < 0.05$). Therefore, it is necessary to develop women's political education. In addition, women's political participation have a role in politics as part of participation. Women' political participation is significant for self-development and independence. This result concluded from the results of the correlation test, that showed the significance of $\text{sig} < \alpha$ ($0.02 < 0.05$). Furthermore, women's representation in politics is a critical aspect if we want to arrange the context of democratisation, in the perspective of affable gender democracy (gender democracy). It is also pursuing women's political representation which is more proportional, fair and equal. This result concluded from the correlation test results obtained significance of $\text{sig} < \alpha$ ($0.01 < 0.05$). Thus, control of women's role is a useful instrument in controlling all operations in political life.

Keywords: *Women, Gender and Politics*

Introduction

The assumption that men are more powerful and dominant than women in society is very detrimental to women. It cannot be denied that the presence of women in occupation always gets a treatment that does not show professionalism. There is hesitation among them about women's capabilities. Women's ability considered to be not commensurate with the male so in

an institution is hard to find women as the control or the highest leadership in some institution. Even if there are women who have the highest office, it always related to the men among them. There are still many opinions and views that marginalise the role of women. Statements or attitudes that harm women seemed to be a groove that does not end. Even though the dignity of the female has been appreciated, it still leaves the negative views that demean women. The number of rape, sexual abuse, the violence of the husband against the wife is an example of the injustice against women.

There is a consciousness that in a patriarchy society, women as though not being one of the community participants so that the presence, the experience, the mind, the body, and its involvement is less recognised (Heroepoetri & Valentina, 2004). It is said that in the name of objectivity and generalisation, the patriarchal society defines and regulates the life that oppresses and negates women. Lifelike, this makes inequality gender. Women oppose the negative image through their works. They assume that women have dignity and equal dignity with men. For sex is indeed different, but the rights and obligations as social beings it makes no difference. Women should be given equal opportunities in social life.

The role of women in politics is one of gender equality. Where a male within the same position. The presence of political representation as a form of women emancipation is part of the Nation and the State that as well as supporting the intellectual life of the Nation. The presence of women in political representation is not for dictating men or anti-male. Women do not consider that men are not better than women, but also women have not denigrated men. Women as the feminism view that women and men have an equal part and impartial in politics but women do not forget about their duty as wives and mothers. So it can be concluded that women and politics in the view of feminism and gender equality must be balanced and balanced without forgetting the essence and the obligation.

Democracy mandates the equality of access and participation for men and women, based on the principle inequality, in all area and public life, especially in positions of decision-making. The Beijing Platform for Action and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women or CEDAW recommended that all governments in the world, need to impose a quota as special temporary measures to increase the number of women in appointive positions (based on designation/appointment) or elective (based on the results of the election) at the level of local government and national.

Gender discrimination still occurs in all aspects of life, and all development sectors in the whole country. It is a fact that cannot be denied, although there is rapid progress in gender equality today. The essence and extent of discrimination are varied in different countries. There is no region in a developing country where women have enjoyed equality in legal rights, social and economic. The gender gap in opportunity and control over resources, economic power, and

political participation and decision-making happens everywhere. Women control is on a level as objects of development and has not been targeted as development actors. One factor that leads to the circle of gender inequality is located at the level of policies that are still gender bias.

Last time, the issue of gender equality has become a prominent issue in the development platform, not only in Indonesia but also in the international world. We certainly understand that during this time, women are socially marginalised. Patriarchal societies culture that is not friendly to women. There is a social construction cultural which put women as if they only handle domestic problems. There is no right to invade other public areas. This fact shows that the belief was still firmly embedded. The issue of women's representation is important when we realise that we see women are not proportionally involved in life in the public realm. It is unfortunate when viewed from the composition of the population between men and women that almost balanced. It is in line with the opinion of the Nurianda (2010, p.34) if we want to improve the position of women, it is needed an effort to increase her power to bargain and to change their fate. It means that the involvement of women not only as objects, but also as active participants, as people who formulate their needs. The woman authors make women as objects of storytelling. They want to sound that women are no longer be considered as a weak creature. Women are not identical to the affairs of the household. Women are not only seen as housewives who should faithfully serve her husband and nurture their children. Children's success in education and career become not only a burden on women but also men.

The fundamental concepts offered by feminism to analyse society is gender. The feminist movement officially arises because a woman can prove herself as a successful individual in the various aspects of life, for example in literature, medicine, social sciences, and also in the science of work (Darma, 2003). He said that the feminism movement is arising because it turns out in various aspects of life—feminism formed by the consciousness of women in a social context. Feminism is a part of the social sciences. Nancy F. Cott (Murniati, 2004) revealed that the definition of feminism contains three critical components. First, a belief that there is no difference of fundamental rights of the sex (sex quality), which is opposed to the hierarchy between the sexes. The equation is not just the quantity; it also covers the quality. The relation position of the hierarchy produces a superior and inferior position. This is where will happen the control of superior to the inferior group.

Second, a recognition that in society has occurred social construction that gives a disadvantage to women. The relation of men and women that exist is the result of social construction, not determined by nature. Third, regarding the second component, the presence of identity and gender roles, feminism issuing the differences that conflate sex and gender so that women become distinct groups in society. Goeve (Sugihastuti, 2003) defined feminism as a theory about the similarities between men and women in the political, economic, social, or activities

organised that fight for the rights and interests of women. In addition, feminism emerged from a sense of dissatisfaction towards the patriarchal social system. It is in line with Millet that uses the term patriarchy to describe the causes of the oppression towards women (Selden, 1996).

Methods

This research use descriptive-verificative research. The method used is a survey. The survey was conducted on a population of 200 people in Padang. Data collection tool was a questionnaire using the Likert scale. The sample used is 50 women. The number of samples was taken under the sampling technique. In this study, data collected were analysed by SPSS 20.

Result and Discussion

Political Education

To identify the effect of political education on political perspectives and gender equality in simple linear regression analysis, it can be seen on the value of R Square that contained in the SPSS output.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error of the Estimate
1	.521 ^a	.272	.180	18.12192

a. Predictors: (Constant), political education

Based on the output above, noted that the value of Rsquare was 0.272. It implies that the influence of political education on political perspectives and gender equality has amounted to 27.2 %.

Political education can also be done through civic education, or nationalism education, which contains about women's political rights, and their civil rights during this neglected. This is done through counselling, seminars, or forums that disseminate the values of egalitarian, and self-reliance in social life to the formal and informal institutions then encourages women to be confident in the political scene.

Women's representation in politics may be still far from what we expected. Political education is one activity that aims to shape and foster orientation-political on any individual or group. The process of political education carried out to make wider community which can become citizens who are aware and uphold their rights and obligations in the social life of the nation, and state, as well as pay attention to justice and gender equality. This is emphasised because,

in reality, it still felt the presence of gap between men and women in a variety of roles, primarily in the public role. Therefore, increasing the role of women in the construction as an integral part of national development, have an important meaning in the effort to realise equal harmonious partnership between men and women to achieve gender equality and justice in various activities especially in politics.

Women have an important meaning to provide an understanding and unify the perception about the importance of democracy development which healthy, fair and realistic. Therefore, the development of women's political education needs to be improved in organisational and strengthening the pillars of democracy through legislative, executive and judiciary institutions which are pro towards women. These conditions require special attention, and one of the things that need to be addressed is the issue of political education for women. So, the development of political awareness among women commits to take advantage of opportunity according to its potential, the provisions of laws and regulations.

In Indonesia, special policy affirmations (Affirmative Action) should immediately be changed with the Pengurus Utamaan Gender (PUG) strategy, in all areas of life, particularly in all lines and strata to accelerate the equality of access, participation, control, as well as the benefits equally between women and men. Based on the presidential Instruction Number 9 the year 2000, the executive only binds to carry out the PUG. Therefore, there is a need to improve the number of policies the implementation of PUG, which will be binding on all stakeholders, government, election, and political parties as pillars of democracy to encourage the fulfilment of Human Rights of women in the political through the increased representation of women in policymakers. The women's movement makes a callous effort for the inclusion of 30% quota of female representation as to the minimum number in the package political from upstream to downstream.

Women's Political Participation

To identify the effect of political participation towards political perspectives and gender equality in simple linear regression analysis, it can be seen on the value of R Square that contained in the SPSS output.

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error of the Estimate
1	.482 ^a	.232	-.152	26.53399

a. Predictors: (Constant),

Based on the output above, noted that the value of Rsquare was 0.232. It implies that the influence of political participation towards political perspectives and gender equality amounts to 23.2 %.

Before discussing women's political participation, first, it needs to be defined about participation, political participation, and women's political participation, as well as their representation diparlemen. Participation is defined as taking part or participation. Participation is significant for self-development and self-reliance. Through participation, individuals become public citizens and able to distinguish personal issues and public issue. Without participation, almost all people will be controlled by private interests and the gratification of personal needs. According to McClosky (1972), political participation is the voluntary activities of the citizens of the community through taking part in the process of government election, and directly or indirectly, participate in the public policymaking process.

Budiardjo (1998) defines political participation as a manifestation of the political power implementation by the people. The public who participate in the political process through elections compelled by the belief that through joint activities, their interests would be channelled, or at least considered. In other words, they believe that their activities have an effect, and the effect is called political efficacy.

Political participation is a personal or group activity who participate actively in political life by selecting the leadership of the country and directly or indirectly affect the national policy. According to Roth et al. (1980), the activities of conventionally political participation include actions: (1) vote in the general election (voting); (2) Attend to the annual public meeting (campaign); (3) Be a member of an association or impressive group; and (4) Conducting communications with government officials or members of parliament.

While the non-conventional political participation activities are: (1) filing the petition (demands); (2) Conducting the demonstration (joint call in the street); (3) confrontation (resistance); (4) strike (non-action). Rush et al. (1997) describes this political participation are as follows:(1) Occupy positions of political or administrative; (2) Seek political office or administration; (3) active membership in a political organisation; (4) passive membership of the political organisation; (5) active members of an organisation pseudo-politics; (6) the passive membership of an organisation pseudo-political; (7) Participation in the general meeting, demonstrations, and others; (8) Participation in informal political discussion; and (9) Voting.

There is a lot of constraints in functioning the women's participation. According to Lycette (1994), there are at least four obstacles for women to participate in politics, namely: (1) Women perform two roles at once, namely the role of the reproductive and productive role, both inside

and outside the home; (2) Mostly, women have a low education degree compared with men because of the difference obtained by chance; (3) the existence of cultural barriers related to the division of labour in sexual and interaction patterns of women with men which limits the mobility of women; (4) The existence of legal barriers for women, such as prohibitions on land ownership, the ban on education participation or family planning programs without the consent of the husband or his father.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error of the Estimate
1	.607 ^a	.369	.053	24.05476

a. Predictors: (Constant)

Women's Representation in Politics

It can be seen on the value of R Square that contained in the SPSS output to identify the effect of women's representation in politics towards political perspectives and gender equality in simple linear regression analysis.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error of the Estimate
1	.525 ^a	.276	-.087	25.02836

a. Predictors: (Constant),

Based on the output above, noted that the value of Rsquare was 0.276. It implies that the influence of political education towards political perspectives and gender equality amounts to 27.6%.

Women's political representation is a critical element if we want to put the democratisation in gender democracy perspective. Different with the male politicians who are more preoccupied with “the big narrative politics”, and among women, activists seem to be more focus and consistent with striving for 30% quota of women's political representation as to the agenda of the struggle. At least, in this decade, we witnessed the strengthening of all elements both from the politicians, activists, NGOS, cbos, academics, women journalists, even artists and celebrities, who directly promoting women's political representation more proportional, fair, and equal.

The discourse of women's political representation within the democratisation framework, practically drowning in the great narrative of the developmentalism, a program of development that is pragmatic and repressive sourced from the growth and the control of political stability

ideology. Currently, with the passage of time, role, position, and actualisation of women in the socio-political arena have dwindled. In the Guided Democracy era, the role of women's social-political tends to be fragmented as a consequence of the dynamics of the politics at that time which tends to be conflictual.

To identify the effect of political, educational, political participation, and women's representation in politics towards political perspectives and gender equality in simple linear regression analysis, it can be seen on the value of R Square that contained in the SPSS output.

Based on the output above, noted that the value of Rsquare was 0.369. It implies that the influence of political education towards political perspectives and gender equality is amounted to 36.9%, while 63,1% influenced by other variables that are not included in this study.

Table 5: ANOVA^a

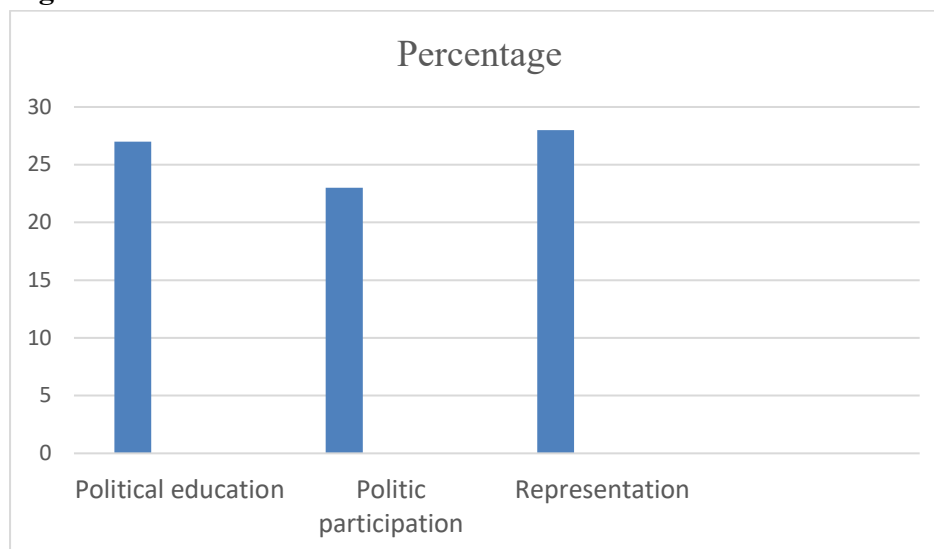
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2028.710	3	676.237	4.169	.002 ^b
	Residual	3471.790	7	578.632		
Total		5500.500	10			

a. Dependent Variable: Politics perspective

b. Predictors: (Constant

Based on the output above, know that significant value is equal to 0.002 because of the value of Sig. $0,02 < 0,05$. It could be concluded that there is an impact of political education, women's in political participation and women's political representation towards a political perspective and gender equality. The result can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1.



The Upcoming Challenges

Feminists who are embracing democratic pluralism understand that women cannot be harmed only because of their gender. As Human, women also need recognition for the existence of their femininity. The feminist movement opposes stereotypical views that have the potential to marginalise the role of women as limited to their domestic functions, not in the context of more extensive public life. Although the system and the government's political policy on women's issues are increasingly responsive toward gender, the position of women in the context of political power remains vulnerable to various forms of political manipulation. It is frequently used as a tool for political legitimacy. The assumption is simple: women are the basic unit in family and community life.

Thus, control over the role of women is a useful instrument in controlling all operations of state power. Various state regulations concerning women's issues prove that the construction of patriarchal political culture throughout history greatly determines women's life. Since the 1960s, the feminist movement that has been evolving in various parts of the world (including Indonesia in the 1990s) continues to sue the basis of state policies that are gender-biased, encourage more progressive roles, functions, and positions of women, and protest the various conservative policies of the country and stigma of society that marginalises women's aspirations, rights, and interests.

According to Arivia (2003), almost all state regulations related to women's issues contain gender bias material. This is because, in the structure of patriarchal society, the socio-cultural construction of women is often used as a tool for political legitimacy. In this context, the fundamental challenges of the women's movement in the future can be mapped into the following seven issues. First, neoliberal globalisation has emerged a world economic power centred in developed countries followed by economic restructuring in poor and developing countries. This situation has created increasingly acute and complex poverty. The global economy has dragged women as economic objects and commodities (being domestic workers, CSWs, migrant workers, factory wage workers, and low-paid informal sectors).

Second, the country's political authoritarianism. Excessive state control over citizens - especially women - has resulted in the presence of various state policies that are biased in human rights and gender and reduce the essence of democracy. The emergence of various gender bias policies (such as the Anti-Pornography and local regulations in various regions based on narrow interpretations of certain religions), is a few evidence that the implementation of women's civil and political rights has not fully gotten the space from the state.

Fourth, religious fundamentalism. Various religious movements which are allegedly trying to fight against Western hegemony and the dominance of capitalist forces based on radical,

narrow, and unilateral attitudes and actions have caused new access toward chains of violence and oppression for women. The emergence of mass organisations in the name of a particular religion and manifesting their attitudes and actions with radical understanding often make women as the object of violence. This organisation often limits the space of movement and expression of women in the political, economic, social and cultural fields.

Fifth, political liberalisation which has occurred since the Reformation era is not automatically followed by the readiness of educational institutions and political recruitment, especially political parties, to seriously and sustainably open opportunities for women's participation in politics, especially to place women in significant organisational positions and responsibilities, also preparing and placing women as reliable candidates whose equal opportunities with male candidates. Sixth, the women's movement is thus challenged to be able to break the lobby of male politicians who are elitist and the political culture of parties that tend to be centralised, patriarchal, and change the political culture and mindset of the party elite to provide greater space and opportunities for women's political cadres to receive training and political education, including providing opportunities for women to sit in various strategic positions and be involved in the policy-making process. Seventh, the involvement of women in the political system for representation is indeed necessary, but it is certainly not sufficient. This means that the go politics endeavour of women is not only an activity to enter processes, mechanisms, institutions, and the political system (crafting democracy) but also how women's political representation can expand their broadening base. At least, there are main dimensions in the context above, which involves efforts to influence public decision-making processes; and efforts to build a social basis for women's political representation, both through formal and informal political representation institutions, including direct democracy. There is a reconnection between women's movements (as an integral part of social movements), with women's political actions (which are part of representational democracy). As Lovenduski et al. (2002) point out that political representation carried out by women activists, and politicians represent three critical elements, namely representing their voters (functional), their political parties (ideology) and women's constituencies as social identities. How to synergise all three components in the reconnection of political actions with women's social movements, is a challenge that must be answered by women amidst the criticism, doubts, and even public scorn for their ability and empowerment.

The women's movement must continue to carry out critical advocacy and education at all levels of the women's community. Various analytical perspectives to see the systemic oppression experienced by women must be introduced, such as Marxian feminist analysis (to dissect the oppression experienced by female workers); analysis of the Third World feminist movement (to dissect the oppression of women in the context of culture, religion, and forms of state violence); or eco-physical analysis (to examine the oppression of women from environmental aspects and natural sources of livelihood). The various existing perspectives and strategies of

women's struggle are not only effective as a means of intelligence and awareness but also more than that as an instrument in building a broad coalition of women's movements to achieve equality, justice, tolerance, and democracy.

The diversity of women's organisations that grow in the State must be seen positively and placed in the context, which is filling and complementary. The unification of many forces in a large coalition of women's movements will increasingly heighten women's bargaining position. The struggle to achieve gender justice and realise women's political representation in this country seems to be vastly long to prove because it concerns the capability to compete and contribute to practical politics significantly, clear mass base support, relevant experience, and vision and mission not only in line with the political parties it represents, but also must be in harmony with the hopes and concerns of the people.

If we believe "politics does not originate from hatred, but from affection and reason to build a nation", then women's political aspirations to participate in the nation's political life can be interpreted as a form of strengthening our democracy which has been influenced by masculinity with the characteristic that tends to be arrogant, cheeky, and aggressive.

Conclusion

Thus, women's participation in the political realm needs to be sought by empowering women themselves, as well as the right political communication strategy, so that women can maximise their participation, including getting representation in politics that is in accordance with their numbers in the community. The limited participation of women will significantly influence, both directly and indirectly, towards community development efforts, including the empowerment of women. If the level of political participation of the people, including women is low, there are indications that the implementation of democracy carried out in a country gives a bad sign. Therefore, this will be very detrimental to the nation and state.

Indeed, the struggle to achieve gender equality and justice in politics and realise women's political representation (which is not just colour, but also colouring) in this country still seems to take a long time and an intense struggle to prove, because this concerns the capability that can be accounted for competing and able to contribute in practical politics significantly.

In communities that already believe in the nature of women as weak and somewhat sensitive, it is clearly needed extra effort to construct the issue of women's political representation in the frame of equal and participatory democracy and gender discourse in democratic (nonpatriarchal) frame pluralism as a policy priority in the future so that the order of a democratic society with gender justice can truly be realised in this country. Therefore, it is better to strive for gender equality, especially in the world of politics and decision making.



There needs to be a synergic and sustainable effort, involving stakeholders from all parties who are political actors, especially political parties, community organisations, and government through relevant institutions in the implementation of political education more widespread and planned for women.



REFERENCES

- Arivia, G. (2003). *Filsafat Berperspektif Feminis*. Jakarta: Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan.
- Budiardjo, M. (1998). *Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Politik*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Darma, Y. A. (2003). *Persepsi Aparat Pemerintah Kota Bandung terhadap Gender, Kesetaraan Gender, dan Pengarusutamaan Gender*. Bandung: Lembaga Penelitian UPI.
- Heroepoetri, A., & Valentina, R. (2004). *Percakapan Tentang Feminisme vs Neoliberalisme*. Jakarta: Institut Perempuan.
- Lovenduski, J., Rosie, C., & Jacqui, S.-J. (2002). *Women, Public Life and Democracy: Changing Commonwealth Parliamentary Perspectives*. London: Pluto Press.
- Lycette, M. (1994). *Adjusting Project to Overcome Constrant on Women Participation Forum*.
- Mcclosky, H. (1972). *Political Participation: International Encyclopedia of the social Sciences*. New York: MacMillan company and The Free Press.
- Murniati, N. P. (2004). *Getar Gender: Perempuan Indonesia dalam Perspektif Sosial, Politik, Ekonomi, Hukum, dan HAM*. Magelang: Indonesiatera.
- Roth, & Wilson. (1980). *The Comparative Study of Politic*. New York: Prencite Hall Inc.
- Rush, & Althoff. (1997). *Pengantar Sosial Politik*. Jakarta: Raja Grafindo.
- Selden, R. (1996). *Panduan Membaca Teori Sastra Masa Kini*. (Terjemahan Rahmat Djoko Pradopo). Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada University Press.
- Sugihastuti. (2003). *Feminisme dan Sastra. Menguak Citra Perempuan dalam Layar Terkembang*. Bandung: Katarsis.