



## WOMEN AND POLITICS: STUDY OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION OF WOMEN HEAD OF REGION

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### Abstract

The low participation of women in politics leads to a lack of women's involvement in politics. Although there is already 30% quota of women's representation in politics, there are still not represented women's voices in politics, especially regional leader. One way to increase women's representation is through political communication strategies involving women, affirmative action, women leadership and political education for women. Strategies carried out through messages and medias used. Give woman opportunities to empower other woman. Hopefully Indonesian women can participate in the political frenzy. Not only as a sweetener but directly involved in practical politics.

### 1. Introduction

The struggle of Indonesian women to gain political rights has been started since the New Order era. The affirmative action policy with the quota system was first published in Law No. 12/2003 regarding General Election of Members of the House of Representatives (DPR), Regional Representative Council (DPD), and Regional House of Representatives (DPRD). Although the results have not been maximized, the law is re-enacted into its successor Act, namely Law No.10/2008 regarding General Election of Members of DPR, DPRD, and DPD (Hubeis 2016; 497). Article 53 of Law No.10/2008 regarding the election states that "the list of prospective candidates, as mentioned in article 52, contains at least 30% of women's representation; through Zipper's quota as an effort to increase women's representation: **first**, the low number of women's representation in the legislature occurs even at every level; **secondly**, the transition of Indonesia's democratic framework has chance to create opportunities for non-governmental organizations to increase women's political awareness (Wahid 2012; 70); **thirdly**, the bad economic situation after the economic crisis of 1977 had a major impact on

women and children through high mortality rate and trafficking of women and children.

The same provision is also contained in Law Number 2 Year 2008 regarding Political Parties which is a change of Law number 31 year 2002 on political parties. The growing issue of women's involvement in politics encourages the issuance of a law regulating affirmative action in the post-New Order period. IDEA (2005: 276) states that Indonesian women are currently very small in their representation at different levels of decision making and influence, and access is not equal to the resources and facilities that enable them to own and gain guarantees of equal rights and opportunities.

Surbekti (2006: 4) states that there are two reasons why the regional head and deputy head are directly elected. **First**, to be more consistent with the presidential government system, among others is marked by the direct election of heads of government by the people. Through direct elections, people have the right to elect and determine their regional head and find the pattern and direction of the policy **Second**, to create a balanced power sharing and to



check and balance between DPRD and Regional Heads/Deputy Heads. One of the advantages of direct election by the people for both institutions is to ensure that the regional heads become equal partners with the DPRD and the interaction can be dynamic and productive for the welfare of the local community (Surbakti 2006: 4-5). Therefore, the political system has an important role, particularly related to direct elections in both local and national contexts.

## 2. Women's representative

Quota campaigns are a form of continued political struggle for women after the demands of suffrage in the early 20th century were reached. Quota campaign aims to counter the domestication of women (against the patriarchal party), since the domestication and domination of men over women in patriarchal culture is not destiny. The 30% quota is not completed only in the form of women's representation in political parties and parliaments, but also goes into the legislative, judicial and executive branches.

Women not only succeeded in legislative politics, but also in executive branch. Ali (2017) reported that during the period of 2005-2014, there are 26 female heads of regions, those are 20 female regents, 5 female mayors, and 1 female governor spread across various regions in Indonesia. This achievement is a proof that the community has no doubt to entrust leadership in the region to women. Among these female heads of regions, some still lead today, namely: Airin Rachmy Dianny

(Mayor of South Tangerang) and Tri Rismaharini (Mayor of Surabaya). In addition, some of them are back in simultaneous selection of 2017 including Idza Priyanti (Regent of Brebes), Atty Suharty Tochija (Mayor of Cimahi) and Neneng Yasin (Regent of Bekasi).

The success of women in executive politics or regional leadership can not be separated from the assumption of family nepotism. The emergence of female characters who are part of the family or political dynasty became a typical political phenomenon in Asian countries (Siregar 2010; 63). Inherited political leadership passed down through generations, in which women are beneficiaries of this political tradition.

On the other hand, women achieve regional leadership through the process of democracy that exist in the region. Direct election of regional heads is one of the important achievements of democratization of Indonesia after the fall of Soeharto regime from the presidency. Direct Regional Head Election is a breakthrough in strengthening democracy, particularly community participation in determining local leadership. Direct election in Indonesia is divided into three phases. The first phase (2005-2010) is referred to as the initial phase of implementation of direct Regional Head Elections mandated by Law No. 32/2004 regarding Regional Government. The second phase (2010-2015) is a continuing phase of direct elections; third phase (2015-2020) is the simultaneous election as mandated from Law No 1/2014 on the election of Governor, Regent and Mayor to Law No.10/2016 (Kurniawati 2016: 149).



## 2. Female Leadership

The concept of leadership is commonly related to human power. "This power is identical with the nature of masculinity such as firmness, strength and ability to influence others". (Honor, 2005: 3). These qualities are never considered ideal in women. Basically, women lead with a "distinctive" communication approach which is different from men. Male leadership is more inclined to act as a task leader which oriented towards achievement of results. Meanwhile, female leadership is more inclined to play a role as a social leader which oriented towards social relationships or fraternity by avoiding conflicts.

However, the definition of effective leaders is people who are willing to listen, can provide motivation and support, and have tolerance for their employees. This is supported by survey research of Pew Research Center for Social and Demographic which states that women are more honest, affectionate, and creative, and all of which are small examples of important characters that must exist in effective leaders. Thus, women have great potential to be a leader.

A female leader faces a tough problem. This is due to the assumption that only masculine leaders are able to provide the most success in leadership. This is a problem associated with the process of socialization that has been done on women who generally do not have masculine qualities. Will female leaders also achieve success? Do female leaders have to have masculine traits to achieve effectiveness? What about feminine traits? Female leaders should not have to worry about the feminine characters they have, because not a few research results that show that feminine leadership style can also achieve success.

Drucker (1981) in Moran (1992) reveals that the success of the Japanese organization is using a female oriented strategy, fostering relationships to build common interests, trust, loyalty and self-esteem in achievement for the whole organization. Naisbitt and Aburdeno (1986) in Moran (1992) states that it has now entered into an era of organizational collapse with a pyramid-like hierarchy and the emergence of a people-oriented organization.

Related to gender and leadership issues, Robbins (1998) presents two conclusions. *First*, equating between men and women tends to ignore the difference between the two. *Secondly*, the differences between women and men is that women have a more democratic leadership style, whereas men feel more comfortable with a directive style

Women have differences in the leadership style as shown in research findings of Tannen (1995). Tannen does not specifically examine issues of female leadership, yet on how women and men communicate. However, results of the study can support the previous finding that women's leadership style is different from that of men. He further states the difference between men and women in communicating is that women emphasize relationship and intimacy, while men emphasize status and independence. In addition, results of the study prove that female leaders are more likely to build interpersonal relationships with employees through communication and participation. Women are human beings who have feelings and needs, while employees also want to get satisfaction in carrying out their duties including satisfaction in communicating. Satisfaction is a concept that employees usually feel comfortable with messages, media, and relationships within the organization (Pace & Faues



2002) and such satisfaction includes leadership styles within the organization.

Susan Blackburn in *Women's Journal* (December 2012,131) reveals that the main challenge of female leadership is the strength of the patriarchal leadership system at the level of national elite and the strength of patriarchal Islamic politics. Meanwhile, the biggest obstacles to female leadership empowerment are: *first*, women work too much (overworked); *Secondly*, women are paid too cheaply by the economic system. Basically, women have many opportunities to become leaders. But the biggest challenge is the lack of trained women in public leadership and most women think they should be home. Both internal challenges are a real portrait of how women are still placed and position themselves as second class citizens.

Gadis Arivia reveals that Aristotles' thought about women in the book "Philosophy with a feminist perspective" in which there are two classes of human beings that are outside the human ratio, namely slaves and women. Slave life is a kind of property that can be used and only as a tool to achieve goals. It does not seem very different from what experienced by women. Women's life is functional. Commonly, a woman is only a wife of a man who is only used to have children, as a slave, they play a role to provide the necessities of life (Girl, 2003: 6). This thought continues to be maintained for centuries and hereditary. Rather than women, the development of human knowledge is centered on men. The omission has have occurred over the years which indicates human rights violation of women's positions and roles.

Pearce (in Pace 1993: 258) explains that "communication is seen as an instrument that people use to achieve certain purposes, such as giving instruction, persuading, or acquiring power". Communication can be used as a

tool to gain power through a process of thinking within various symbolic realities. In the context of business organization communication, this uncertainty is usually encountered when performing work or task, assessment of work, implementation of innovation or regulation, and how to foster relationships with others. Brasher (2001: 478) describes the situation as: Uncertainty exist when details of situations are ambiguous, complex, unpredictable, or probabilistic; when information is unavailable or inconsistent; and when people feel insecure in their own state of knowledge or state of knowledge in general, because it is primarily a self perception about one's own cognitions to derive meaning.

Uncertainty occurs when the situation is ambiguous, complex or unpredictable, or when the required information is absent and inconsistent. This situation may also occur associated with the condition of knowledge or understanding that belongs to a person. Based on these activities, the perception or ability to interpret the uncertainty experience is very important. Brasher (2001: 481) also added that responses to uncertainty are shaped by appraisal and emotional reactions to the experience. People will respond to the emotions they feel. These assessments determine the judgment of their decision as a social act seen in their everyday attitudes and behaviors. The meaning of experience and emotional reactions is not absolute. What everyone experiences is not the same. Everyone passes their own life and experience. Reaction or consideration of a person's decision on the condition he faces is subjective and situational. The meaning and judgment of these emotions may change as time changes and experiences they have gone through. This meaning will be very important in determining a



person's decisions realized in the form of attitude and behavior.

### 3. Women as Regional Heads

Regional-Head Election is one of the important achievements of democratization of Indonesia after the fall of Soeharto from the presidency of Indonesia. Direct election of Regional Heads is a breakthrough in strengthening democracy, particularly community participation in determining leadership at local level. The election of regional heads in Indonesia is divided into three phases. The first phase of 2005-2010 is referred to as the initial phase of direct election as mandated by Law No.32/2004 on Regional Government. The second phase (2010-2015) is a continuing phase of direct elections; the third phase (2015-2020) is simultaneous election as mandated by Law No.1/2014 regarding the election of Governor, Regent and Mayor changed into Law No.10/2016 (Kurniawati 2016; 149).

Direct election open opportunities in various layers of society, particularly women to participate in determining the direction of local democracy. On 5 December 2015, there was a direct regional head election including 269 districts (9 provinces, 36 municipalities, 224 districts), yet only 45 districts allowed female leaders with details of 24 women elected as regional heads, 22 women as vice provinces dominated by petahana. This indicates a low commitment of female regional heads in women's issues (perludem, 2015).

Foundation SATUNAMA, Yogyakarta in the results of thw research revealed that women do not experience political stagnation because half of the

women who currently become head of region became the deputy head of region about 53% of all women candidates who have a gender perspective. It also reinforces Perludem's findings that most of the elected regional heads are from incumben, former legislators, businessmen and bureaucrats.

Female leadership in different regions has given a different color. Women's feminist political leadership provides an empathetic approach. This approach distinguishes the masculine leadership approach. Masculine leadership is seen in firmness and discipline, yet lacks empathy. The masculine leadership is less able to grasp the center of the problem in society, particularly for women and children as marginalized groups in the policy-making process. Feminist political leadership and pro-development policy on women are considered more able to resolve basic issues in society such as women's and children's health issues, women's economic empowerment, education for women, as well as issues of violence against women and pro issues women. This is because women not only take care of themselves but also their social environment.

Table below shows the emergence of women in the formation of local leadership (Deputy Head of Region/particularly Head of Region) with varied results. At the Provincial level, there are two names of female leaders who once held key positions, yet today no longer have another name in the active position (petahana). Distribution of more numbers is seen in the list of leaders at the regency and city level, particularly in the top position (number 1) in the area concerned.

Table 1: Female leaders at the provincial level

No.	Name	Region	Position	Period
1.	FratuAtutChosiyah	Banten	Governor	Period I

				(2007-2012) Period II (2012-2014).
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				Previously as Deputy Governor in the Period of 2002-2005, and continued as Plt. Governor in 2005-2007
2.	Rustriningsih	Center Java	Deputy Governor	Period of 2008-2013. Previously as the regent of Kebumen in the period I of 2000-2005 & period II of 2005-2008

Table 2: Female leaders at the regency the level

No.	Name	Region	Position	Period
1.	Anna Sophanah	Indramayu, West Java	Regent	2010-2015 - 2021
2.	CellicaNurrachdiana	Karawang, West Java	Vice Regent	2010-2015 As regent of 2015-2019
3.	NenengHasanahYasin	Bekasi, West Java	Regent	Period I 2012-2017 Period II 2017-2020
4.	RinaIriana Sri Ratnaningsih	Karangayar, Center Java	Regent	Non-active 2003-2008 (period I) 2008-2013 (period II)
5.	Ni PutuEkaWiryastuti	Tabanan, Bali	Regent	2010-2015 - 2021
6.	Sri Suryawidat	Bantul, DIY	Regent	Period I of 2010-2015

Tabel 3 : Female leaders at the city level

7.	JuliartiDjuhardiALwi	Sambas West Kalimantan	Regent	Period I of 2011-2016 Previously as regent in 2006-2011
8.	Indah PutriIndriani	South Luwu Utara, Southeast Sulawesi	Regent	Vice regent in period I (2010-2015) 2015-2020
9.	WidyaKandiSusanti	Kendal, Jateng	Regent	2010-2015.
10.	ChristianyEuginiaParuntu	Minahasa Selatan, Sulut	Regent	2010-2015 - 2021
11.	IdzaPriyanti	Brebes Jateng	Regent	2012-2017 Previously as vice regent in 2011-2012
12.	Rita Widiasari	Kutai Kertanegara East Kalimantan	Regent	2010-2015 - 2021
13.	Asmin Laura	Nunukan	Regent	2016 - 2021
14.	Sri Hartini	Klaten Center Java	Bupati	2016 - 2021
15.	Sri Mulyani	Klaten Center Java	Vice Regent	2016 - 2021
16.	DyahHayuningAntono	Purbalingga	Vice Regent	2016 - 2021
17.	AriniHarimurtiAntono	Pekalongan	Vice Regent	2016-2021
18.	RatuTatuChasanah	Serang	Regent	2016 - 2021
19.	IrnaNaruliata	Pandeglang	Regent	2016-2021
20.	Indah DhamayantiPutri	Bima	Regent	2015-2020
21.	Haryantisutrisno	Kediri	Regent	2015 - 2020
22.	KusdinarUntungYuniSu kowati	Sragen	Regent	2016-2021
23.	Sofia Joesoef	Batanghari	Vice Regent	2016-2021
24.	UtjeChoeriah Hamid	Kuningan	Regent	2016 - 2021

No.	Name	Region	Position	Period
1.	Ade UU	Banjar,	Mayor	2013-2018



	Sukaesih	West Java		
2.	Airin Rachmi Diany	East Tangerang, Banten	Mayor	Period I of 2011-2015 Period II of 2015 – 2020
3.	Atty Suharti T ochija	Cimahi Jabar	Mayor	2013-2017
4.	Ida Fitriati Basjuni	Pagar Alam	Mayor	2013 – 2018
5.	Illiza Sa'adudin Jamal	Banda Aceh	Mayor	2014-2017 as a substitute for Mawardy Nurdin which paired with Illiza as major in the period I 2007-2012 Period II 2012-2014
6.	Rukmini Buchari	Probolinggo East Java	Mayor	2013-2018
7.	Sylviana Murni	Jakarta Pusat	Mayor	2011

8.	Siti Mashito Soeparno	Tegal Center Java	Mayor	2007- 2012 Period I 2002-2007 elected by DPRD Period II 2007-2012 elected by people
9.	Tri Rismaharini	Surabaya, JEast Java	Mayor	2010-2015
10.	Suryatati A. Manan	Tanjung Pinang, Riau Islands	Mayor	2001-2002 (Mayor) 2002- 2007 elected by DPRD Period II 2007-2012 elected by people
11.	Tatong Maslo man Bara	Brebes M obagu	Mayor	2013 -2018

#### 4. Women Political Communication Strategy

Election Law No 12/2004 provides 30% allocation for women's representation to contribute in legislative branch. The lawsuit in the form of affirmative action which gives women access to take place in parliament through the implementation of minimum quota of 30% can not be separated from communication strategy.

The political communication strategy of women can be done through political communication counter. It can be performed by performing gender mainstream. This is based on Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000 which encourages the attention of gender issues to be further improved. Gender mainstreaming aims to ensure that both men and women can gain access, to participate and to have upward control, and to benefit equally from development.

The second political communication center is by encouraging affirmative

action, thus mandate of Election Law No. 20/2004 regarding the representation of at least 30% women can be realized as well as possible. Various activities can be done by women are seminars, workshops, scientific studies about affirmative action.

The third political communication counter is through political education. One of efforts can be done to educate women is performing political education on basic knowledge about politics, it is expected that women can be equal to the men in the political world. Political education for women can be done by political parties. Political parties educate women, thus women capable of participating and can be active in politics. This opens up wider access by distributing women in strategic positions in the organization.

Miriam Budiardjo (1998: 3) states that there are 4 functions of political parties, namely political communication, political socialization, political recruitment and political regulator. These four



functions serve as a functional barometer for political parties in society. Election law which requires 30% representation of women in legislative branch will be measured on how political party communication strategy in socializing the law. Political parties are required to have a strong commitment to fight for the aspirations of women, as well as the interests of the wider community. The role of political parties makes political communication strategies in bridging women's political participation.

Communications strategies that can be built by political parties are message and media strategies (Firmanzaah: 2007; 59). Message strategy is the packaging of political messages that are not only a discourse, but also solving problems that occur in society.

## Conclusion

Women's participation in practical politics needs to be improved. The position of women and men is equal with 30% quota allowing women to take part in practical politics. It is necessary to give women opportunities to empower other women. Hopefully Indonesian women can participate in the political frenzy, not only as a sweetener but also directly involved in practical politics.

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