

Women's Representation as Legislative Members in Tanah Datar

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Abstract. The electability of women in the election of legislative candidates is still considered low by the people of Tanah Datar, even though there are more women than men. In terms of women's representation, following the minimum quota of 30% has been pursued by the party, although with a myriad of practical problems. Women's representation is limited which results in their low electability, what are the factors that result in the low electability of women and how is their success strategy to occupy DPR seats? This research uses a qualitative method by de-scribing the results of in-depth interviews with informants and presenting data that best fits the theory underlying the research, namely the theory of political participation and recruitment. The results show that the motivation of most Tanah Datar women to participate in political contestation as candidates is very weak. Due to cultural customs, weak regeneration practices and political education by the party, as well as the lack of role models who have successfully occupied DPRD members. Furthermore, external factors originating from party colleagues and administrators who still underestimate the role of women, as well as allegations of money politics, and the weakness of women's political capital.

Keywords: Women's participation, candidate representation, elections

1. Introduction

Women in politics has always been a hot theme that is interesting to study. The involvement of women in the public and social spheres is often an issue that is used as an effort to marginalize the role of women in the realm. Not a few views that look cynically at the figure of women who are in the form of occupying certain positions of power or who have succeeded in occupying them. In Minangkabau itself, there is a barrier that limits the movement of women in the social and political sphere. Therefore, a more in-depth literacy is needed regarding the actual position of women in the socio-political sphere in the eyes of law, religion and culture.

From the policy aspect, currently, women's representation has been set a minimum quota of 30% candidacy for legislative elections, in accordance with Law no. 12 of 2003 article 65 on elections (enhanced by Law no. 8 Article 55 of 2012, then Law

no.7 of 2017). And political parties since then have also continued to strive to achieve this figure. Based on 2019 election data, PPP, PSI, PBB and Garuda have female candidates in the range of 40% of all candidates, while PDIP has 37.52% female candidates, and Gerindra has the smallest portion of female candidates, at 36.73%. This figure decreases in the 2024 elections where Gerindra only represents 35.34% of female candidates, followed by PKS 35.86% and PDIP and Nasdem and Garuda are smaller at around 33%, followed by PPP, Demokran, Pan, PKB which only provide 30% for women.

When looking at the election data in the DPR for female candidates in the 2019 elections, 20.52% of legislative seats were successfully occupied by women. This figure is already quite high compared to the previous elections in 2014, which only elected 17.32%, and in 2009 amounted to 18.04%, and finally in 2004 only 11.6%. Meanwhile, for 2024, out of 580 DPR seats, 127 women were elected, so that the percentage of women's electability increased from the previous year to 21.9%, as explained by Arya Fernandes, Head of the Department of Politics and Social Change from CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies) as reported by Detik.com on April 24, 2024.

In the region of West Sumatra several names of female candidates appeared as legislative members of the Provincial DPRD. In 2004 there were 5 people (9.1%), while in 2009 it rose to 7 people (12.7%), while in 2014 it fell again to 6 people (9.2%), then fell again in 2019 to 4 people (6.2%). Meanwhile, in the battle for executive seats, since 2004 there have not been many women who have participated in the fight, in 2013 Emma Yohana participated as a candidate for mayor of Padang, while Betty Pasadique participated in the competition to become Regent of Tanah Datar in 2020, there was also Rahmi Brisma as a candidate for Deputy mayor of Bukittinggi in 2015.(Deviani & Subono, 2022). However, the three candidates still have not succeeded in winning the hearts of the community so that their election is still far from expectations.

The low electability of women is an important research object to be explored to see the various factors that might cause the weak political power of women in the realm of Minang. The same fact is also found in Tanah Datar, where the electability of women is among the lowest in West Sumatra, namely only 2 people out of a total of 35 members of the DPRD Tanah Datar, this figure is clearly very low because the percentage is only 7%. Thus, a synthesis can be taken of the low level of electability of women in Tanah Datar.

This condition seems to be a paradox that triggers the weak progress of women in Tanah Datar, in particular and Ranah Minang in general, which upholds the philosophy of adat basandi syara, syara basandi kitabullah, so it is necessary to conduct in-depth research on the causes of the low electability of these women. In the context of Islam itself, there is no specific prohibition for women to participate in political contestation. In fact, Islam is present to elevate the degree of women who were so despised during the Jahiliah period, where it even still happened during the pre-Christian era, parents who felt ashamed to have a daughter so they had to be killed or buried alive. Islam does not differentiate the status and roles of men and women, so it is possible for

women to take part and provide great benefits to society in every field including social politics.

The Qur'an clearly indicates that the best human being is the most pious (QS: al-hujurat 49: verse 13), while the hadith states that the best human being is the most beneficial to humans. So in an effort to motivate Muslims to become a superior Ummah, Shara' has clearly given a clear vision of its object consisting of Muslims and Muslim women, there is no interpretation that separates gender in the context of this verse. Even QS At-taubah 9: Verse 71, explains the mutual role of men and women as partners (auliya) in amar makruf etc. so as to deserve the Grace of Allah Taala.

Some people rely on the weak role of women in the public sphere by quoting QS Annisa 4: verse 34, about the rijal being the leader of women, and the hadith of abu bakar about the misfortune of a people who entrust their affairs to women. This is indeed understood textually by some scholars, but not a few scholars who allow women to take part in the field of government in accordance with their respective capacities (Damis, 2010). Because the contextuality of the verses and hadith must be presented to this age that has experienced development. This means that Islam has succeeded in raising the status of women than before, so that age-by-age women are considered increasingly capable of carrying out certain mandates. And this is also proof of the miracle of the Qur'an that can pass through every housing and development of the times.

According to Basri, the majority of contemporary mufassirs do not prevent women from becoming leaders in the public sphere based on QS. al-Taubaah /9: 71. In addition to being supported by historical facts, Queen Balqis was the ruler of the country of Saba,'as told by the Qur'an in surah al-Naml. Her leadership was successful, her country prospered with her democratic attitude and views. In addition, historical facts at the time of the Prophet many women were involved in political roles and even involved in practical politics including the Prophet's wife Aisyah r.a directly led the war against 'Ali ibn Talib (Basri, 2018).

Robeth Dahl (2005) reveals that participation is a very decisive part of the extent to which democracy is able to have an impact on the political system of government. Civil and political liberties are factors that cannot be left out of the construction of democracy. Thus, the three main dimensions of political democracy include: competition, participation, and political and civil liberties (Fadli, 2018). This participation theory still finds various challenges in Indonesia, especially in Tanah Datar.

The fact that Indonesian women are still discriminated against and oppressed by cultural constructions and power structures. In addition, the reality that prevails in the international world is lifting the dignity of women around the world. The United Nations together with elements of civil society spawned programs that must be adopted by all countries. So to find this barrier, it is necessary to look clearly at the factors.

2. Method

The method used in this research is a qualitative method. This type of research is a case study, where the case study aims to describe the unit of analysis intensively and analyze the case in depth. This research wants to see why the number of women elected to legislative seats in Tanah Datar is so low. In collecting data, the author focused on explaining the causes of the unelectability of female candidates as re-gional heads in three districts/cities in West Sumatra. The author also limited the re-search based on location, informants, events, processes and ethical considerations.

This research used various sources of data including in-depth interviews with female candidates, supporting political parties, customary institutions, relevant figures, academics and practitioners who have access to relevant information. In addition to digging up information and collecting data through interviews, the author also used observation methods and analyzed documents related to this research problem.

3. Results and Discussion

Tanah Datar Regency according to BPS data in 2024 has an area of 1,336 km² with a population of around 374,431 people, with details of 170,272 men and 177,947 women. Tanah Datar has 14 sub-districts, 75 nagari, and 395 jorong. This district is an agricultural area, more than 70% of the population works in the agricultural sector, both crop agriculture, plantations, fisheries, and livestock.

The data above clearly states that the number of women in Tanah Datar is more than men, so it is important for bundo kanduang Tanah Datar to represent women in conveying women's aspirations in their political roles. According to social observer Elget oktaviani, there should be more representation of women than men, if using the logic of population that shows the number of women is indeed more than men. So according to her, the electability of women should be higher than it should be. But the fact is that the electability of women is still very low, so of course the few representatives of women in the legislature will not be able to voice the aspirations of women because it is not uncommon for decision-making in legislative sessions to be done by voting.

In the context of adat, it is alleged that the position of women has never been involved in the negotiations of niniak mamak. Almost always found in any kind of traditional activity, women are only busy in the kitchen without participating in the negotiation process. This has created a stigma that Minang women have been regulated since the beginning in the custom as bundo kanduang who guard the heirloom property only. The impact of this stigma is the weakening of the motivation of women who are highly educated, have great capabilities and competencies, as well as strong economic capabilities to advance and take part in politics. The disinterest of Minang women who have this competence has an impact on the party's selection method to fulfill the 30% representation quota only. Because they have difficulty or do not want to be

complicated, they only invite and include women with minimal competence or lack of competence and do not have sufficient political power.

According to Priyaldi, who is an LKAAM board member as well as a former DPRD member, mentioned that it is not only the quota of candidates that is limited to 30%, but the quota of women's management in political parties is also limited to a minimum of 30% only, where it should be understood that their management should be more than 30%, but the facts on the ground, male administrators always take the minimum portion. This clearly impacts the power of women in the party management is also hindered by the minimum number of them in the party management. This significantly affects the numbering position of female candidates who will only occupy low numbers, while good numbers are usually filled by women. This condition further weakens the spirit and interest of women to compete because their role in the party is also weak.

In addition to this limiting factor, there is also a socio-cultural factor that places women as mothers of children, wives of husbands and guardians of heirlooms. Therefore, their activities outside the home are conditioned to be limited. While some women who dare to take part in party management, most of them come from low economic circles, and do not have sufficient political capital to run as candidates. Whereas in terms of higher education, the number of women based on data is more than men.

The position or position of women in Minangkabau has been clearly regulated by custom, Minangkabau women are born as caretakers of Rumah Gadang which has been socially constructed and regulated both by their own choices and by their society. Minangkabau women become passive because they are constructed by their own history as rama-rama (butterfly) Rumah Gadang, the key holder of the heirloom property, due to the discourse or discourse of custom and religion that is adhered to, namely Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah which causes an understanding in the community, that those who play a role in political affairs of government are men and wise women are women who do not leave the house. This determination of the position of women has until now caused men to widely dominate the political arena in Minangkabau.

According to Novi Budiman, an academic and political observer in Tanah Datar, the limited access of women to education and political training is still an obstacle, which is influenced by the stigma that politics is a man's business. Meanwhile, women who enter politics are often faced with a dual role as housewives as well as party officers, so that their work in politics is often not maximized by female candidates. In addition, role models and figures who become role models for women in politics tend to be very few. So they do not have many examples that can be emulated in political work.

Several female candidates who failed to win DPRD seats that researchers interviewed, assessed the weakness of the party's regeneration system, not a few of them even joined the party, but were immediately nominated as candidates from the party. There was no clarity about the political stages they would go through, nor were they

given education about the winning strategies that could be pursued, let alone information on access to campaign donors or how to find investors to raise campaign funds. Most of the failed candidates admitted that they did not make maximum campaign efforts except to consider themselves as a complement to the party's quo-ta. In fact, it is not uncommon for those who failed to feel happy with the election of just one person from their party. Some feel proud enough to compete with their pho-tos scattered in their respective electoral districts. This is the result of observation and in-depth interviews with the object of research.

The discussion of women's electability cannot be separated from the political capi-tal they have. Political capital can be understood as power capital owned by a person, which can then be allocated as a means of fighting for the success of his contestation such as in elections and will later get a position in the political field (Yunita et al., 2022). Starting from the strong motivation of the female candidates, plus their role in the community so far is also the main capital. Furthermore, building a family network that can volunteer to campaign for the candidate's eligibility is a very im-portant asset. Elected female candidates are usually valued by their constituency communities as people who are always present in every important activity in their constituency (Muzadi & Fitriyah, 2020).

There is no denying the importance of campaign costs in political struggle, and the same is true for female candidates. According to (Fauziah et al., 2023) There are 3 basic things that can lead to the victory of female candidates: first: Political Costs, Political costs in this country are indeed expensive, political costs can be said not only as a side, but an obligation that must be provided by the contestants. Therefore, many experts consider that the seeds of corruption are born during the process of electing public officials. Second, the supporting party, as a democratic country, in-volves the party as a means of increasing the political participation of members and the community in the context of organizing political and government activities. Par-ties become an important factor in mobilizing the masses to vote for contestants. Third: Family relations factor, relations are also important because communication to influential people to increase the mass can be done easily if the contestant has a strong relationship.

Money politics has become commonplace in the post-reform society, especially during campaigns, they are not ashamed to express their need for money to every candidate who tries to convey programs, so that campaign moments are often used as moments to share basic necessities, share T-shirts, share infaq and others. This is done by almost all levels of leadership in our country, so this condition has an impact on the defeat of competent candidates who do not have enough money to share with potential voters (Raharja & Setiabudhi, 2020).

Meanwhile, in the management of male-dominated parties, the problem encountered is the placement of women who are often at the lowest rank. This condition has been anticipated by the government and legislators by issuing the General Election Law No. 7/2017 regulating women's political rights, including a zipper mechanism that forces women and men to alternate in the list of candidates. However, the im-

plementation of this policy still faces obstacles such as the strong patriarchal culture, lack of good political communication and lack of public awareness of the importance of women's political rights as an integral part of human rights (Jumanah et al., 2023).

According to (Achmad, 2018) Changes to the electoral law consistently accommodate affirmative action in the form of a 30% quota for women's representation in parliament, although each law uses a different approach in ensuring the achievement of this quota. The use of the phrase 'at least' in the 30% quota, which was later changed in the latest electoral law to 'at least', actually shows the positive development of efforts to involve women in parliament through affirmative action. The choice of this phrase shows confidence that the percentage of women's involvement will increase. Not only that, the electoral law also provides for women's management at the central level for political parties as a prerequisite for participating in elections. This shows that normatively, the legislation provides space so that the target of at least 30% women's involvement is more likely to be achieved with the system built through the new electoral law than under the previous legal regime.

This means that the 30 % quota is the least percentage number, not a number that must be achieved and sufficient in that number when it has been achieved. However, the facts from the source stated that almost all parties had difficulty meeting the 30% figure due to the lack of competent cadres, so that when the 30% figure was met, the party management would no longer look for tambahan participants. This, according to them, is also due to the very minimal interest of women to enter the political realm.

4. Conclusion

From the above explanation, the author draws the conclusion that the unelectability of female regional head candidates in West Sumatra is closely related to political and cultural parties that are still held by the community. Political parties in West Sumatra have not really carried out their duties and functions in conducting political recruitment of women. Women are still used as a tool to fulfill quotas, only so that at the time of the selection of regional heads, the presence of women is still not paid attention to.

Female candidates in conducting campaigns are not as bold as male candidates. In addition, there are still views of the people in Minangkabau regarding women who are still not appropriate to be leaders, in this case as regional heads. This view has an influence on the representation of women who advance as regional heads. The matrilineal kinship system embraced by the Minangkabau people that puts women in a central position cannot encourage the presence of women in politics in West Sumatra.

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