

Gender Relations in the Implementation of the Function of the Member of the Regional Legislative Council

¹Ritha Safithri, ²Made Antara, ²Christian Tindjabate, ²Haslinda B. Anriani

¹Student of Doctoral Program of Social Sciences of Tadulako University

²Doctoral Program of Social Sciences of Tadulako University

IJASR 2021

VOLUME 4

ISSUE 5 SEPTEMBER – OCTBER

ISSN: 2581-7876

Abstract: This study aims to examine gender relations in the implementation of the function of the member of the Regional Legislative Council of Central Sulawesi Province. This study used a qualitative method and the informants were determined using the purposive sampling technique. Data were collected by observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Then, the data were analyzed through some stages of analysis including editing of data, categorizing data, interpreting the meaning of the data, and formulating conclusions and recommendations. The results of the study on gender relations in the implementation of the function of the member of the Regional Legislative Council of Central Sulawesi Province is not optimum as the position of the female and male members in the distribution of resources and responsibilities, benefits, rights, and powers in the legislative is not dialectically caused by the inequality of gender power relations, women's political capacity, and low opportunity to take roles.

Keywords: gender, participation, parliament, politics, relations.

Introduction

Since Indonesia's independence, women's rights have been recognized in politics, both the right to vote and to be members of parliament in the 1955 general election. Equality in political rights between men and women has also continued after Indonesia became a sovereign country. However, the representation of women in parliament has experienced ups and downs to the present (Parawansa, 2002). The lack of representation of women in politics is partly due to patriarchal cultural conditions that are not followed by easy access to affirmative action for women, such as the provision of quotas (Parawansa, 2002).

The involvement of women in the politic and parliament shows that the existence of women in the public is increasingly open. Indeed, the state constitution guarantees the political participation of every citizen, including women. The development of the concept of equality and justice in gender relations has encouraged the growth of women's participation in the development of the nation. Politics was identical to men, but in the last two decades, women have had the same opportunities. The multi-party system since the 1999 general election, Law Number 22 of 2007 on the implementation of General Elections which regulates 30% representation of women, and Law Number 2 of 2008 concerning Political Parties which required that 30% representation must be fulfilled have opened wider opportunities for women to get involved in the (public) politic.

A high number of obstacles faced by women to enter politics have an impact on their low representation in parliament. This is related to the cultural system of the patriarchal system in Indonesia. This system believes in the superiority of men and the inferiority of women. This acceptance of differences between men and women explains the gender-based distribution of labor characteristics of all patriarchal societies (Iglitzin & Ross, 1976).

Women are still equipped with cultural attributes that become barriers to their movement in the public sector, including in politics. The low number of women participating in the regional legislative council resulted in the non-gender sensitive policies as the policymakers are dominated by men. The political culture that is formed due to the absence of women's presence makes it difficult for women to involve in politics in the same space as men (Ardiansa, 2016).

This study examines gender relations in the political field using a sociological perspective. In the perspective of gender sociology, the relationship between women and men is fundamental because the issue of gender inequality means a conflicted relationship, while the issue of gender equality indicates a must for a harmonious relationship. It

is because gender is meaningful as a socio-cultural construction about how men and women should build cooperative relations within the social structure (Fakih, 2001).

The position of women in the political field means providing space for women to explore their abilities in the wider community (public) through political parties. This gender sociological analysis views that patriarchal culture is the main obstacle for women's movement in the public sector (Megawangi, 1999). Furthermore, the absence of an appropriate gender political field is not only due to the low quantity of representation but also due to the low intellectual quality as well as the perspective of justice and gender equality which has not been grounded. This condition can result in the issuance of non-gender-sensitive policies.

A previous study by Junaenah (2014) revealed that the position of women in the political field (parliament) is believed to have a direct impact on the issued legal products (policies). Therefore, women's participation must be expressed through public consultation. Meanwhile, a study by Hasanah & Musyafak (2017) showed that increasing the role of women and men in gender-oriented development has an important meaning in efforts to realize harmonious partnerships or realize gender equality and justice in various fields of life and development. The election of women will have an impact on the gender-responsive political agenda in parliament (Vijayarasa, 2020). Meanwhile, functional structural theory views that social relations (gender) are harmonious functional relations based on a shared value consensus. The postulates of this theory include that society is a complex social system whose elements cannot be separated and have a significant effect on each other in which each element is functional in maintaining the balance of the system as a whole. So women's participation in politics is essentially a functional need of the society that can only be carried out through roles or based on political rights and obligations to integrate women's interests in state life. Therefore, this study aims to examine gender relations in the implementation of the functions of the member of the regional legislative council at the Regional Legislative Council of Central Sulawesi Province.

Methods

This study used a qualitative method in which this method aims to describe or explain a phenomenon that occurs in the field concerning gender relations in the parliament in depth. This method is characterized by the objectives that seek to understand symptoms that do not require quantification or cannot be measured accurately (Garna, 1999). Studies with a qualitative approach require the existence of reality as a whole that cannot be understood if it is separated from its context. The nature of this study is descriptive analysis in which the data collected is first compiled, then analyzed. This method describes the object of the study in depth. This method is intended to describe the characteristics of individuals, circumstances, and situations of socio-cultural life in society.

This study was conducted at the Regional Legislative Council (DPRD) of Central Sulawesi Province. The number of female members of the DPRD for the 2014-2019 periods was 10 people. Informants were determined using a purposive sampling technique. The determination of informants is based on the knowledge of gender relations between members of the regional legislative council in carrying out their respective functions. It involved a total of 10 informants. Data were collected by observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The data analysis was based on Mamar (2018) including editing data, categorizing data, interpreting the meaning of the data, and formulating conclusions and recommendations.

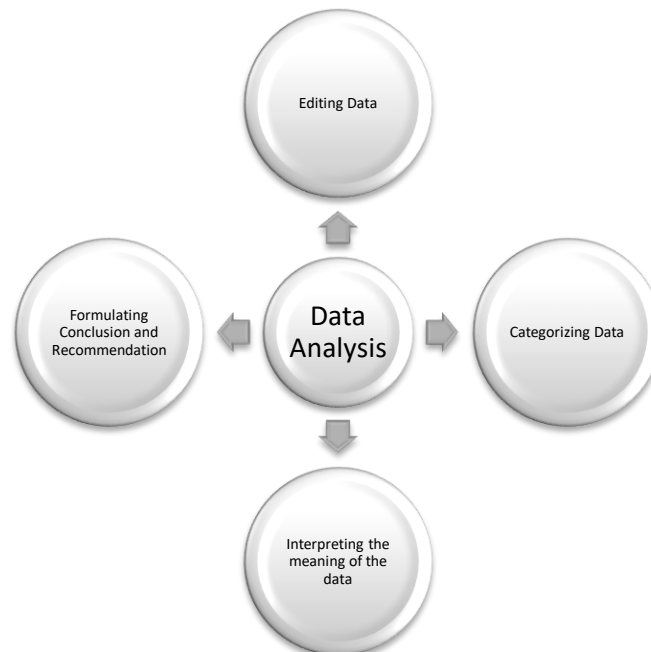


Figure 1. Stages of Data Analysis

Results and Discussion

In general, gender relations are defined as social relations between men and women. Gender is distinguished from biological relations between the sexes as gender relations are socially constructed relations. The nature of gender relations varies from time to time and place, changes from time to time, and shows diversity according to culture and place. Sociologically, gender is constructed and expressed in many social institutions, including culture, ideology, and discursive practice. Gender is part of the division of labor between men and women, in this context; it's the division of works in political institutions. Gender equality has received international support, particularly in increasing women's participation and leadership in politics (Palmieri & Zetlin, 2020).

Gender relations in this study concern the position of women and men in the distribution of resources and responsibilities, benefits, rights, and powers in the regional legislative council at the provincial level. Gender and ethnicity can be used as social identities (Cassan & Vandewalle, 2021). The current governance uses democracy system that gives equal rights and freedoms to women and men to participate in political institutions. It is based on the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, particularly Article 28D paragraph (3) in which state gives the right to every citizen or society to participate in politics, both men and women and gives freedom to speak and have democratic choices in the conduct of life for every citizen.

Even though rights and freedoms in politics are guaranteed, most people consider the world of politics full of psychological turmoil, ambition, practical interests, and so on. It forms a social construction that politics is identical and more appropriate for men than women. Therefore, women are very slow in career development in society. Women's political participation in the public sector is still low (Arvate et al., 2021)

The scope of this research reveals the continuity of relations between political actors in the regional legislative council (DPRD) of Central Sulawesi Province from the perspective of gender sociology. In the local political dynamics of Central Sulawesi Province, the involvement of women in regional legislative institutions shows a considerable opportunity for women as political actors through general elections. Politics does not only focus on the gender dimension as a representation but also on caste (Cassan & Vandewalle, 2021). The election results in the last two periods showed an increase in women's representation in this institution from 16% in 2014-2019 to 26% in the last general election (2019-2024). The results were influenced by many factors such as the elected women were the public figure of this province and have many supporters. Based on various literatures, a public figure woman who is elected in general elections will encourage young women to participate in politics (Arvate et al., 2021). Women who have power will have the potential for changes in favor of women (Bleck & Michelitch, 2018).

Election results with a significant increase in the number of women's representation in politics show that women's intervention in women-oriented public policies should be much better, as well as in decision making and taking roles in determining budget policies in legislative institutions. However, the number of representations is still not able to instill political values (culture) with the paradigm of gender equality and justice in this province as gender relations and work mechanisms in the internal political system of this province are still dominated by patriarchal culture. This condition causes the weak intervention of female members of the regional legislative council on public policies, including in the decision-making and determining strategic policies. Politics will be inclusive if local politics is dominated by women and this has a positive impact on local governments in responding to problems in society (Johnson, 2021).

This indicates that the position of women in the legislative council is still dictated by the dominance of the male role. Therefore, there are inconsistencies in the implementation of the functions of the member of the legislative council. Meanwhile, in terms of regulation, Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, Article 1 paragraph (4), explains that DPRD is a regional representative institution function as an element of regional government administration. Therefore, the overall rights of the DPRD contain the function of creating laws and regulations, establishing financial policies (budgeting), and supervising the implementation of regional government. There is a fundamental problem of the discrepancy between the roles and functions of the member of the legislative council in this institution. It lies in the non-dialectical relations between male and female political actors caused by unequal gender power relations factors, the low political capacity of women, and a low opportunity to take a role. Gender creates gaps in knowledge and political choice (Prihatini, 2018), and it also occurs in many parts of the world (Bleck & Michelitch, 2018). Understanding power relations and gender cannot be separated from a sociological perspective, particularly a critical sociology perspective. However, sociologically, the concept of gender is defined as the inherent or institutionalized nature of women and men who are socially and culturally constructed in the context or condition of a particular society. Therefore, every society has a different gender construction.

Women and their communities have become objects of social, political, and economic empowerment (Kumar et al., 2019), even politics is part of social work (Kalaramadam, 2012). Furthermore, this study found that gender is a social behavior that is learned, produced, and patterned so that it becomes a social type that is not natural. Besides, the results of this study see that gender is a socio-cultural product and even a historical product that occurs in a patterned manner and can change even in the political field, including in legislative institutions. In terms of gender, the relationship between female and male legislators is a patterned functional relationship (pair). However, such relations are often considered normative, even though there are gaps in the determination of male legislators against women, and even a determination of the power of political parties over female actors.

Conclusion

Gender relations in the implementation of functions of the member of DPRD of Central Sulawesi Province include the positions of female and male members in the distribution of resources and responsibilities, benefits, rights, and powers in the legislature. The study revealed that despite the increase in the number of women's representation, the quantity of representation still cannot instill political values (culture) with the paradigm of gender equality and justice as the relations and internal working mechanisms of the institution are still dominated by patriarchal culture causing the weak intervention of women legislators against public policy, including the role of decision-making in determining strategic policies. The key problems of the discrepancy between the roles and functions of the member of DPRD are the relations between male and female political actors that are not dialectical due to the imbalance of gender power relations, the low political capacity of women, and the limited opportunity to take roles.

Reference

1. Ardiansa, D. (2016). Menghadirkan Kepentingan Perempuan dalam Representasi Politik di Indonesia. *Jurnal Politik*, 2(1), 71–99.
2. Arvate, P., Firpo, S., & Pieri, R. (2021). Can women's performance in elections determine the engagement of adolescent girls in politics? *European Journal of Political Economy*, 102045. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2021.102045>
3. Bleck, J., & Michelitch, K. (2018). Is women's empowerment associated with political knowledge and opinions? Evidence from rural Mali. *World Development*, 106, 299–323. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.01.006>

4. Cassan, G., & Vandewalle, L. (2021). Identities and public policies: Unexpected effects of political reservations for women in India. *World Development*, 143, 105408.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2021.105408>
5. Fakhri, M. (2001). *Analisis Gender & Transformasi Sosial, Formasi Sosial*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
6. Garna, J., K. (1999). *Metode Penelitian: Pendekatan Kualitatif*. Bandung: Primaco Akademika.
7. Hasanah, U., & Musyafak, N. (2017). GENDER AND POLITICS: Keterlibatan Perempuan dalam Pembangunan Politik. *Samwa: Jurnal Studi Gender*, 12(3), 409–432.
8. Iglitzin, L. B., & Ross, R. (1976). *Women in the World A Comparative Study*. California: American Bibliographical Center-Clio Press.Inc.
9. Johnson, C. E. (2021). Connecting Malian and Burkinabe women’s local experiences of livelihood security to how they participate in politics. *World Development*, 137, 105157.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105157>
10. Junaenah, I. (2014). Partisipasi Perempuan Terhadap Pengambilan Keputusan Dalam Penyelenggaraan Pemerintah Daerah yang Demokratis. *Jurnal Cita Hukum*, 2(2), Article 2.
<https://doi.org/10.15408/jch.v1i2.1465>
11. Kalaramadam, S. (2012). Dis/empowering political subjects: The production of “failed” elected women representatives in India. *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 35(4), 276–285.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2012.05.003>
12. Kumar, N., Raghunathan, K., Arrieta, A., Jilani, A., Chakrabarti, S., Menon, P., & Quisumbing, A. R. (2019). Social networks, mobility, and political participation: The potential for women’s self-help groups to improve access and use of public entitlement schemes in India. *World Development*, 114, 28–41.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.09.023>
13. Mamar, S. (2018). *Filsafat dan Metode Penelitian Sosial*. Palu: LPP-Mitra Edukasi.
14. Megawangi, R. (1999). *Membicarakan Berbeda: Sudut Pandang Baru Tentang Relasi Gender*. Bandung: Mizan.
15. Palmieri, S., & Zetlin, D. (2020). Alternative strategies to support women as political actors in the Pacific: Building the house of peace. *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 82, 102404.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2020.102404>
16. Parawansa, K. I. (2002). Hambatan terhadap partisipasi politik perempuan di Indonesia. *Bukan Sekedar Jumlah*, 41–52.
17. Prihatini, E. S. (2018). Indonesian young voters: Political knowledge and electing women into parliament. *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 70, 46–52. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2018.07.015>
18. Vijayarasa, R. (2020). Women’s absence in Sri Lankan politics: Lessons on the effectiveness and limitations of quotas to address under-representation. *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 81, 102371.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2020.102371>