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# The Role and Participation of Women in Political Development in Indonesia

Pancasachina Yusartika<sup>a)</sup>, Tubagus Hasanuddin, Kordiyana K. Rangga

Department of Extension and Community Development, Faculty of Agriculture, Lampung University,  
Jl. Sumantri Brojonegoro No.1, Bandar Lampung, Lampung 35145, Indonesia

<sup>a)</sup> Corresponding author: panca746@gmail.com

**Abstract.** Woman's involvement continuously becomes a concern for the government in Indonesia. The role and participation of women is important to achieve gender-equality in political development. This research to (1) find out how the role and participation of a woman in political development and (2) find out the inhibiting factors for women's involvement in politics in Indonesia. The method used a descriptive quantitative approach based on a literature review. The results show that the elected women members of the DPR RI continue to increase 20,87% compared to previous years, but the representation of elected women members is only 123 people of the 575 total members in 2019-2024 which is still below the 30% target. The low representation of women compared to men indicates gender inequality, especially related to the role of women in decision making. One of them is caused by the thick patriarchal culture in Indonesia. But on the other hand, the equality in role and participation for women and men can be seen from the educational background of women in the DPR RI in Indonesia, which are dominated by undergraduates and masters are 98 members, nevertheless shows the increasing growth of Gender Empowerment Index (IDG).

## INTRODUCTION

Population census in 2020 states that Indonesia has a total population of more than 270 million people, with 136.66 million people or 50.58% of man population and 133.54 million people or 49.42% of women [1]. Base on these data, we can see that the women population is almost as same as man, but women in Indonesia are still lagging behind in public life. As a democratic country, Indonesia has challenges to realize gender equality in this era of modern political system. Indonesia has a challenge to be a democratic country in the current era of the modern political system [2]. Therefore, the state has a commitment to decrease the discrimination from ethnicity, nation, religion, including gender equality [7]. This is embodied in Law Number 2 of 2008 about General Elections by providing 30% of the proportion of seats in political parties for women's involvement [8]. In addition, the legal basis in Indonesia that supports women to be involved in political development is contained in Law Number 31 of 2002 about Political Parties, Law Number 12 of 2003 about General Elections and Law Number 10 of 2008 about General Elections for Members of the House of Representatives [17].

Government's commitment to encourage the role of women in political development can be seen from the third sub-agenda of the 2015–2019 RJPMPN about Improving the Role and Representation of Women in Politics and Development. In addition, the 2020–2024 RJPMPN has a development agenda related to gender mainstreaming in order to realize gender equality in terms of regulations, programs and policies. Thus, the Gender Development Index (IPG) and the Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) are the main indicators to measure the achievement of gender equality. These two things are a measure to see how far gender equality has been built through women's participation in politics and their role in decision making and sources of income or the economy can use the IDG value [3].

Women as a holders of important and even major roles in the political field, are not a new things in the history of this nation. As known that women have become important actors in the struggle of the nationalists in the public. This marks the entry of the nation into the era of modernity accompanied by a development process [14]. The

4 struggle of the nationalists in the public also involves women as the main actors. The development is interpreted on the role and participation of women to get involved in the world of politics.

2 In legislative institutions, the role of women's politics in influencing public policy is becoming increasingly active because it is essentially the institution that has supported the critical position in the government machinery. 2 Women's political participation is a manifestation of women's involvement in the decision-making process in public institutions and legal entities. The primary purpose of this political participation is that women have the access and structural control over the quality and quantity of representation of women on it, without being distinguished from the male involvement in the decision making the process [5]. Therefore, to be able to participate properly in society, education is an absolute requirement.

2 In the next stage, women's political participation is expected to influence public policies and encourage various gender-sensitive systems, both in the legislative and executive lines, because of the quality and quantity of women's political representation in them. 2 Therefore, women must obtain civic education first so that they are more capable and empowered in fighting to become an active members of political parties, and then become a party representatives in the legislative through the portion provided specifically for women. 1 Women's activeness in politics, actually not only gives benefit for women it selves [8]. Based on the discussion, this research is to (1) find out how the role and participation of women in political development and (2) find out the inhibiting factors for women's involvement in politics in Indonesia.

## METHOD

11 In this research, the data collection used library research method by finding facts with the involvement of women in political development in Indonesia. The results of the literature review and references relevant to the research problem are analyzed and discussed by interpreting the existing data. 14

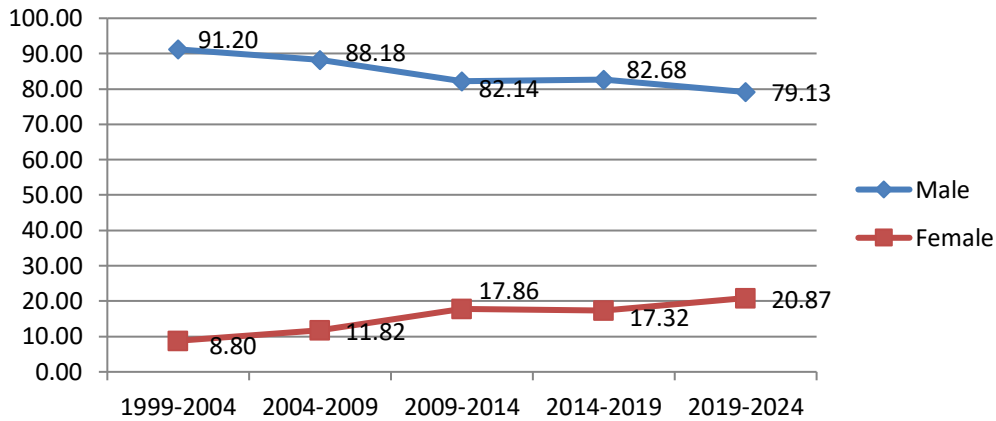
The type of data used in this study is secondary data in the form of time series data for 5 years, namely the period 2014 to 2019 for the representation of women members of the DPR, while the level of education and leadership is only seen in the last period. In addition, to see the level of gender equality, data from the last 10 years is taken. 22 Secondary data were obtained from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and the official website of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI). It aims to describe reality according to the phenomenon in detail and thoroughly, and the data collected is used by researchers as a key instrument in analyzing the problem to be 17 examined. The data obtained were then analyzed through a quantitative approach and described descriptively. Descriptive analysis is data analysis by describing or describing the data that has been collected as it is, while quantitative approach is because it is in the form of numbers [15]. 20

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1 The role and participation of women in Indonesia's political development

15 The involvement of women in politics is entirely 15 related to gender equality, starting from women's representation to their roles in politics [12]. Women's involvement in political development is related to their role in influencing political decision-makers and policies, and also related to: (1) Justice and equality, 16 women and men have the same opportunity to be involved in politics, in making political decisions and policies in a democratic system and have the same position, role and opportunity to actualize themselves in politics; (2) Women's interest, the difference in "interest" between men and women; (3) Emancipation and change, dismantling the patriarchal system in society and the state; (4) Women make a difference, not only involved in democracy but is expected to bring a different style and present a value in political parties; and (5) Women become "role models", as inspiration and encouragement for other women[9].

2 The role and participation of women in public and political development is one of the better conditions for a full democracy. If women participate in political development, for example emerge as policy makers, it will also make a huge contribution to gender equality for the achievement of Indonesian democracy. The participation of women in law positions can be achieved by being involved in one of the high state institutions such as the legislative, namely DPR RI. Members of the DPR RI play a role in representing the interest of the people or are called "people's representatives", so that the role and participation of women is influential in making political decisions and policies. 1 However, the low representation of women, which is only 21%, compared to men, which is 79.13%, has resulted in the weak involvement of women in certain matters, such as decision making or policies in the DPR RI (Figure 1).

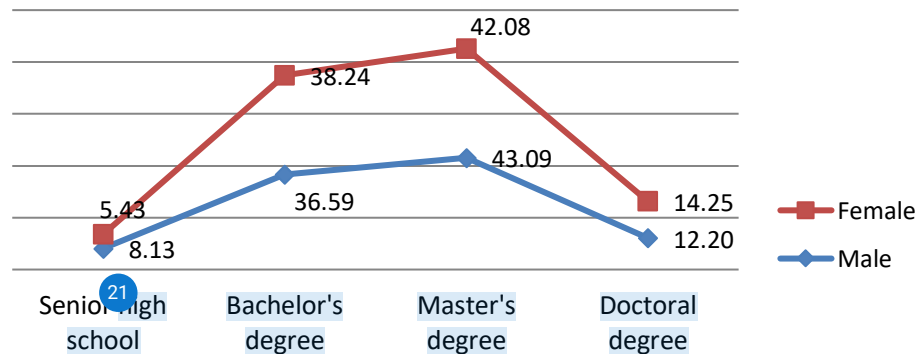


Sources: BPS (2021) (processed by the authors)

**Figure 1.** Women Representation in The DPR RI

Figure 1 above shows a graph of the last five years of women's representation in parliament for the period 2004–2019. Based on the graph, the percentage of women's involvement as members of the DPR RI continues to increase, especially in the last period of 2019–2024. The increase in the number of women's representation by 20.87% compared to the previous year indicates that women have a strong desire to fight for their rights against the given regulations to play a role and participate in politics, maintain and uphold the values of social resilience and democracy as well as improve the quality of life gender equality in Indonesia. With the increasing role and participation of women in parliament, it is hoped that the various aspirations of women in fighting for gender issues can be accommodated in the form of policies that can bring benefits to them. Without the contribution of women in politics, the decision-making processes in public policy are more difficult to achieve.

The improvement of gender equality in Indonesia is getting better, but unfortunately it is not followed by the fulfillment of the seats in the DPR RI. Since the first election, during the reformation period in 1999, until now, the election policy in the legislative has not fulfilled the ration of 30% women from the total 575 seats for members of the DPR RI. Although it has not reached the expected figure, the increase obtained in this year's period shows that there is high optimism to increase the role and participation of women in parliament.



Sources: <https://www.dpr.go.id> (processed by the authors)

**FIGURE 2.** Members of DPR RI's Educational Background in 2019–2024

Figure 2 shows a graph of the representation of women as members of the DPR RI who were sworn in, which amounted to 123 women out of a total of 575 members of the DPR RI. This shows that women's Human Resources (HR) are getting more advanced, which can also be seen from the average education of women, which is dominated

by bachelor's and master's degrees. This means that in terms of education, women are increasingly qualified to be involved in advancing development in all fields, including the balance of civil and political rights. Therefore, women are increasingly aware of the importance of their involvement in politics. The awareness of women in politics will affect the process of formulating policies with a gender perspective that is friendly to women. It is hoped that the policies produced by women in parliament are more adaptive to the conditions and circumstances of women so that do not cause discrimination. Some of the differences in policy making between men and women[18] include: (1) Women on women's issues and men on foreign issues; (2) Women on justice and gender equality and men on economics and trade; (3) Women on community and social matters and men on education; (4) Women are related to family and men are related to community and society; (5) Women on health services and men on infrastructure and development; and (6) Women on foreign issues and men on public administration. The experiences and needs of women accompanied by a qualified education will be more easily conveyed and fought for by women's representatives.

**Table 1.** Leadership in MPR, DPR, and DPD by gender in 2019-2024

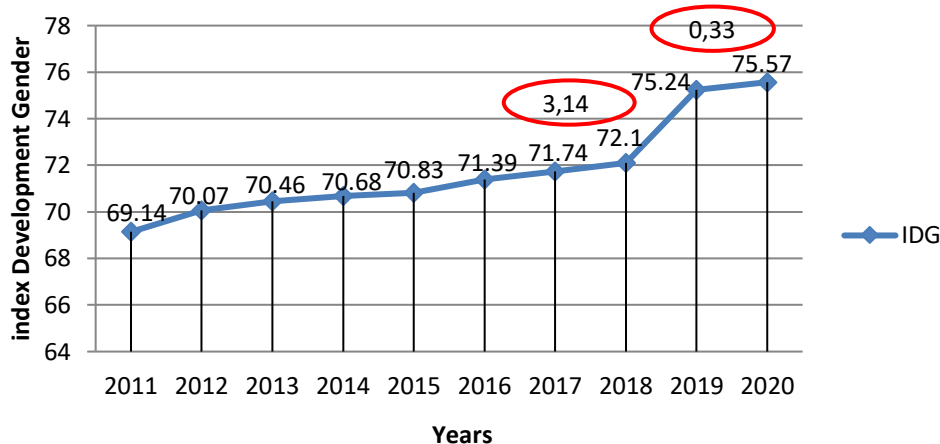
Jabatan	Number of positions	Male	Female
Chairman of MPR	1	1	0
Vice of MPR	9	8	1
Chairman of DPR	1	0	1
Vice of DPR	4	4	0
Chairman of DPD	1	1	0
Vice of DPD	3	3	0
Total	19	17	2

Source: <https://www.dpr.go.id> (processed by the authors)

The table above shows that in the 2019 – 2024 leadership period is still dominated by men. Women only filled 2 positions in 19 positions that could be filled, while the rest were filled by men. The percentage of women is only 10.53%, much lower than men who reached 89.47%. For the first time in Indonesia's history, the current leadership period of the DPR RI is led by a woman, namely Puan Maharani. This can be a reference for the future, where the strengthening of women in the involvement of the legislative still has to be improved, so that the position of women as leaders will be considered in the future. Her position as a leader gives her a strong and important position so that she can perform her role in negotiations, advocacy, and other important roles to ensure gender equality and justice in every pro-women policy.

There is no doubt about the involvement of women in politics. Some examples of women who are successful and involved in political development in Indonesia today are Khofifah Indar Prawansa (Governor of East Java), Mirna Anisa (Regent of Kendal, Central Java), Eva Dwiana (Mayor of Bandar Lampung), Puan Maharani (Chairman of DPR-RI), Sri Mulyani (Minister of Finance), and Retno Marsudi (Minister of Foreign Affairs).

The level of gender equality in politics through the involvement of women in parliament, decision-making from the position and position as professionals and the contribution of women's income to the economic sector can be measured by the Gender Empowerment Index (IDG). IDG has three indices formed from three components, namely the involvement of women in parliament, women as professionals and women's income contribution. Indonesia's IDG continues to increase. From the last ten years, Indonesia's IDG increased from 69.14 in 2011 to 75.57 in 2020. The growth of IDG value in 2020 continued to increase significantly from 2019 as much as 0.33 points, not much different from the previous year 2018–2019 which increased by 3.14 points (Figure 3). Seeing the development of the gender equality system in Indonesia in 2019–2020, although slower than 2018–2019, women's empowerment continues to show an increase with the level of participation and awareness of women to play a role in politics, along with the increasingly open access for women to be involved in it.



Sources: <https://www.bps.go.id> (processed by the authors)

**FIGURE 3.** The Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) in Indonesia

Ecotourism is an alternative tourism as a sustainable tourism activity, prioritizing aspects of environmental sustainability, culture and involving local communities, especially people in tourist destinations. Labuhan Ratu VI village located in East Lampung district, Lampung province is one of the supporting villages for Way Kambas National Park (TNWK), a village that applies the concept of ecotourism which is currently developing and becoming a tourist destination. The presence of ecotourism has an impact on the residents of Labuhan Ratu village, VI especially women.

### Obstacles to women's involvement in Indonesia's political development

As previously discussed, Indonesian legislative positions are still dominated by men. This dominance results in gender inequality, especially in political decision making. We need to see this as conceptual gender sensitivity, which aims to understand gender inequalities especially in job sharing and decision making resulting in reduced opportunities and lower social status of women compared to men. Some of the obstacles to the successful participation and representation of Indonesian women to get involved in politics are:

1. Internal factors, such as: (1) lack of self-awareness of women to be involved in political parties due to the lack of political education they have; (2) lack of confidence in women to get involved; (3) emotional issue; and (4) large enough sacrifice to get a good position in parliament [10,11].
2. Socio-cultural values, namely standard images/stereotypes/views in society that are influenced by patriarchal culture which "places" men in the position of leaders and determinants and decision makers with a "superior" position. This makes women become second-class citizens, discriminated against and marginalized (gender issues), including gender biased interpretations of religious teachings. As a result, the positions of determining public policy in representative institutions and government are dominated by men, including in political parties [13,16].
3. Structural and institutional barriers, including indonesia's masculine political system, discriminatory legislation and gender bias and the half-hearted quota system in the election law. "top-down" national development planning system and non-gender responsive government structure, suboptimal "political will" from policy makers at the central and regional levels to implement gender mainstreaming in formulating development programs/projects. As a result, the subordinates (women) remain under and marginalized. Women have more roles as subjects and implementers, so that women are left behind in various fields of life and do not receive the same benefits in order to achieve equality and justice (gender equality and justice) [13].



## CONCLUSIONS

From the study above, it is clear that the role and participation of women in political development plays an important role. The government's commitment to protect and encourage women to participate in politics is manifested in regulations, programs and policies implemented. In legislative institutions, the role of women's politics in influencing public policy is becoming increasingly active because it is essentially the institution that has supported the critical position in the government machinery. Women's participation in politics is quite low with the 30% quota not being fulfilled in parliament. With education increasingly qualified women in politics, they are increasingly aware of the importance of their involvement in the political world. The increasing awareness of women in politics will affect the process of formulating policies with a gender perspective that is friendly to women. With education increasingly qualified women in politics, they are increasingly aware of the importance of their involvement in the political world. The increasing awareness of women in politics will affect the process of formulating policies with a gender perspective that is friendly to women.

The IDG value continues to increase and indicates that gender empowerment in Indonesia is increasingly real. This means that women's empowerment continues to show an increase with the level of women's participation and awareness to play a role in politics, along with the increasingly open access for women to be involved in it. However, the cultural obstacles faced by Indonesian women are problems that are categorized as taking a long time and process to be resolved and the gender stereotypes attached to women and men can have an impact on any development carried out in Indonesia. Therefore, it is necessary to respect the rights of women and open up as wide as possible to them to be able to participate in politics as a form of gender equality.

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