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Legal Aspects of Women's Political Participation in a Gender Perspective

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the legal dimensions of women's political participation from a gender perspective, focusing on the representation of women in the legal framework to determine whether it facilitates or impedes their involvement in politics. The study is motivated by the persistent disparity in political participation between men and women across various countries, including Indonesia, despite the existence of numerous regulations supporting women's engagement in politics. The significance of this research lies in the need to comprehend the role of law in enabling and promoting women's active participation, as well as identifying structural and cultural barriers that still hinder gender equality in politics. The applied research method is a normative legal approach, accompanied by an analysis of relevant laws and regulations, as well as a literature review on gender theory. The results of the study show that although there has been significant progress in the legal framework that supports women's participation, policy implementation is still limited due to lack of law enforcement, gender-based discrimination, and patriarchal social norms. The conclusion of this study confirms that women's political participation requires not only strong regulatory support, but also cultural change and increased gender awareness in society. The novelty of this finding lies in the inconsistency between existing regulations and their implementation, as well as strategic recommendations to strengthen a more inclusive legal framework for women in politics through a gender-based approach.

Keywords: *Gender, Legal Aspects, Perspectives, Political Participation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Civil and political rights, which guarantees two basic democratic rights for women, namely, the right to vote and the right to run for office. The primary challenge in achieving gender equality lies in ensuring equal political participation between men and women. This underscores the significance of women's involvement in the political sphere as a fundamental right and a manifestation of the principle of social justice. Women's political participation from a gender perspective emphasizes not only their constitutional rights to engage in the political process, but also how various structural and socio-cultural barriers play a role in

influencing the level of participation.¹ The study of the view of gender equality between men and women is something that needs to be considered. Because the equality experienced by women until now is that women are only worthy of working in the domestic or household sector.²

Women's politics and gender issues are also increasingly in the spotlight in the global political arena. The involvement of women in politics within the framework of a gender perspective has emerged as a vital and significant issue in advocating for gender equality, supporting inclusive policies, and realizing fair and balanced representation at various policy levels. In a society that is still dominated by a patriarchal structure, women's political participation is often faced with various obstacles and challenges. Nevertheless, acknowledging that women's participation in politics profoundly influences not just their own lives but also the broader fabric of society is essential.

At many levels, women continue to face difficulties in achieving fair and equal representation in the political arena.⁶ Although legally, various national and international instruments have recognized women's right to participate in politics,²² For instance, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which obligates its member nations to eradicate inequality across all sectors, including politics. However, in its implementation, women often face significant challenges due to gender stereotypes, discrimination,²⁶ and lack of institutional support. From a gender perspective, The legal dimension of women's involvement in politics goes beyond just the number of representatives; it also encompasses the quality of participation, ensuring equality and freedom from discrimination.

It is crucial to recognize that having women involved in politics offers tangible advantages. Research indicates that women's participation in political bodies often results in decisions that are more inclusive and reflective of diverse perspectives. Women often bring different perspectives to the decision-making process, which can help ensure that the interests of all members of society, including women, are heard and represented.³

Despite numerous regulations advocating for women's political representation, notable disparities persist. The presence of women in parliament and among professional staff remains far from equal, and leadership is still far from ideal. Although there is a trend of increasing gender equality,⁴¹ this increase has not reached an adequate level. In Indonesia, the involvement of women in politics highlights a significant issue: the underrepresentation of women in the political

¹¹ Rizki Priandi and Kholis Roisah, "Efforts to Increase Women's Political Participation in General Elections in Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Legal Development* 1, no. 1 (2019): 106, <https://doi.org/10.14710/jphi.v1i1.106-116>.

³⁶ Selvia Adriani and Siti Tiara Maulia, "Women's Participation in Politics," *Journal of Practice Training and Educational Development* 4, no. 2 (2024): 131–36, <https://doi.org/10.58737/jpled.v4i2.287>.

⁴³ Adriani and Maulia.

arena and the insufficient commitment from political parties to actively support women's interests. Despite the implementation of a 30 percent quota for women in Indonesian politics, this initiative is only a step toward providing political access for women, in reality women tend to be made objects in development programs and have not been able to play a maximum role either as actors or as beneficiaries of development. This is because there is still an understanding of women's roles only as domestic roles so that they are less noticed in public roles, especially as political decision makers, plus the deep-rooted patriarchal culture.⁴

²¹ Indonesia, it has long been legalized the Law related to the Ratification of The Convention on Women's Political Rights, as outlined in Law Number 68 of 1958, establishes provisions ensuring equality in political participation. It safeguards the right to vote and run for office, guarantees involvement in policy development, offers opportunities for holding bureaucratic positions, and ensures active engagement in socio-political organizations, free from discrimination. A solid foundation is found in the 1945 Constitution, specifically Article 28 H, paragraph (2), which guarantees that "Everyone has the right to receive support and special treatment to ensure equal opportunities and benefits for achieving equality and justice." These legal provisions provide a strong basis for all individuals, regardless of gender, to be free from discrimination and enjoy equal opportunities in social, life, and political aspects.

The 30 percent quota for women's representation in Indonesia's elections is clearly outlined in Law Number 7 of 2017 regarding General Elections, specifically in relation to female involvement in legislative nominations. This can be observed in Article 1245 of the same law, which addresses the submission of candidate nominees for members of the DPR, provincial DPRD, and district/city DPRD by political parties. Incorporating the provisions regarding women's representation, paragraph (2) asserts: "When submitting a list of potential candidates as mentioned in paragraph (1), every political party involved in the election must ensure that at least 30% (thirty percent) of the candidates are women." Furthermore, Article 8, paragraph (1), Letter d of this law also mandates that the General Election Commission (KPU) is responsible for developing regulations that govern the election process, including rules that guarantee political parties adhere to the 30 percent women's representation requirement. In reality, when examining data from the General Election Commission (KPU) based on the 2019 election results, women's representation in Indonesia's National Legislative Institution (DPR RI) stands at 20.5 percent, or 118 female lawmakers out of a total of 575 members. This shows that the current percentage falls short of the legally set target, highlighting the need for more robust efforts to attain optimal female representation in Indonesian politics.

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⁴ "Law (UU) No. 68 of 1958 Approves the Convention on the Political Rights of Women," database of laws and regulations, 1958, <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Details/52837/uu-no-68-tahun-1958>.

Although the results of women's representation have not reached 30 percent in the Indonesian House of Representatives, various civil society organizations and gender activists continue to push for stronger affirmative policies. Along with boosting women's involvement in politics, several suggested initiatives focus on enhancing their skills by offering political leadership development programs, encouraging political parties to place women in strategic position numbers, and increasing public awareness of the importance of electing women as a more balanced representation in parliament. Raising women's representation to a minimum of 30 percent is crucial to consider and apply in political affairs, as it will empower women to engage more in addressing gender-related issues that have often been overlooked in various areas of life.

Women's participation in the DPR should be supported by a gender-sensitive approach and continuous efforts that ensure lasting impact in the political arena. There is a prevailing lack of confidence in women's political potential, rooted in the enduring influence of cultural norms and the patriarchal system that continues to shape societal behavior. Despite the state's legal commitment to providing equal opportunities for all citizens, women often perceive subtle forms of discrimination that hinder their political engagement. This results in a persistent gender gap in political participation, with men predominantly occupying political positions.

Previously, there have been several previous studies that are similar and relevant to this study, firstly the study conducted by Aning Sofie Liliana et al in 2021. The issue being examined is the application of the 30% gender quota for female candidates in legislative nominations as stipulated in Law Number 7 of 2017 on Elections. This study shows that although regulations have existed, their implementation still faces obstacles of patriarchal culture and lack of effective supervision. The strength of this research lies in its thorough examination of both the legal structure and cultural influences affecting women's involvement, whereas its limitation stems from the absence of firsthand data on women's personal experiences during the nomination process, making it difficult to assess the effectiveness of the policy in depth.⁵

An additional study conducted by Isyrofah Amalia Achmad in 2020 explores the issue of political parties' involvement in promoting women's representation. This study revealed that political parties often only fulfill gender quotas administratively without providing real support, such as political training or campaign funding. The results show that the advantage of this study is the use of in-depth interviews with female party cadres, providing direct insight into the challenges they face, while the disadvantage is the lack of discussion of concrete strategies to improve the role of parties in supporting women.⁶

⁵ Aning Sofie Liliana, Lusya Indrastuti, and Waluyo Slamet Pradoto, "Representation of Legislative Candidates," 2021.

⁶ Isyrofah Amaliyah Achmad, "Strengthening Women's Representation in Political Party Management," *Jurist-Diction* 1, no. 1 (2020): 164, <https://doi.org/10.20473/jd.v1i1.9734>.

Next is research by Juniari Laraswanda Umagapi in 2020 which analyzed women's contributions to the decision-making process in parliament. This study highlights that women bring a more inclusive perspective to issues such as education and family welfare. The strength of this research lies in its emphasis on the meaningful influence of women's participation in politics, rather than merely counting their representation. However, the disadvantage is that the scope of the study is limited to the local level, so it does not reflect conditions at the national level.⁷

The distinction between this research and earlier studies is found in the core perspective, this study emphasizes an in-depth analysis of regulations and legal implementation as a means to increase representation, while the research of Aning Sofie Liliiana et al. (2021) highlights cultural barriers, research by Isyrafah Amalia Achmad (2020) focuses on the role of political parties,⁶ and research by Juniari Laraswanda Umagapi (2020) analyses the influence of women's participation in shaping political decisions. In addition, this study is also broader in discussing the issue of political participation in terms of regulation, social, culture, and politics. Where the combination of all these perspectives can provide a more comprehensive analysis .

This study fills the gap of previous research by providing a holistic approach that integrates cultural barriers, This explores the significance of political parties and the impact of women's involvement in parliamentary politics. It emphasizes the importance of legal frameworks in fostering broader political engagement for women, while also applying a gender lens to examine the interplay between culture and political dynamics, political parties, and parliament and shows how gender bias in party structures can be addressed through a legal approach, Alongside exploring avenues to enhance the participation of women in politics.

An interdisciplinary approach connects how law can change culture through affirmative action. Affirmative action is essential as a legal and policy measure designed to support women and specific groups by offering compensation and privileges in particular situations, aiming to foster more equitable representation across diverse institutions and professions, thereby enhancing women's participation in politics.⁸ Affirmative action involves measures to promote equality and fairness, enforced through laws and regulations. One such measure is the

⁷ Juniari Laraswanda Umagapi, "Challenges and Opportunities for Women's Representation in the 2019 Parliamentary Election: And the Vice President and Legislative Elections in Indonesia Regarding Women's Representation in Politics, Although the Increase is Not Significant, It's Just a Gender Issue," 2020, 19–34. ⁸

⁸ Rahma Ning Tias et al., "The Challenges of Affirmative Action Policy as an Effort to Strengthen Women's Representation in the Legislature," *Journal of Political Dynamics of Domestic Political Problems and International Relations* 14, no. 2 (2023): 169–89, <https://doi.org/10.22212/jp.v14i2.4151>.

temporary implementation of quotas, known as positive discrimination, to address social disparities until they are resolved.⁹

Traditionally, it is anticipated that the inclusion of women will impact the functioning of legislative bodies, particularly in promoting the development of policies and laws that address women's interests and needs. Moreover, women's presence in parliament serves as a catalyst for transforming the culture and political framework that continue to be dominated by patriarchal values. A culture and political system that is more friendly to women is important to encourage a balance of access, participation, Dominance and advantages in political and governmental spheres. Additionally, in the period of regional self-governance, discriminatory regional regulations against women continue to emerge.

Through this article, we will discuss how gender perspectives influence the implementation of legal aspects related to women's political participation and identify factors that are still obstacles in realizing equal and inclusive political participation.

2. METHOD

This study is a normative legal analysis that examines laws, regulations, and constitutions pertinent to the involvement of women in politics. The aim is to understand how the law places women in the political structure, and to assess its suitability with the principle of gender equality. This research uses a qualitative approach method because it focuses on an in-depth analysis of legal concepts, social norms, and political and cultural contexts. This approach also considers a gender perspective, making it possible to explore structural issues that affect women's participation in politics. The data sources, apart from laws and constitutions, also come from relevant literature, such as books, journal articles, previous research reports, and statistics on women's political participation from official institutions such as the KPU. This study aims to offer an insightful critique of the impact of policies promoting women's representation in politics, along with suggestions for enhancing women's involvement in the political field, grounded in legal analysis and a gender-focused approach.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Impact of Gender Viewpoints on the Application of Legal Principles in Women's Involvement in Politics

Political equality serves as the cornerstone of social justice, guaranteeing that all voices, including those of women, influence the decisions and policies of a nation. This emphasizes the significance of acknowledging women's political rights as an integral component of universal human rights. In numerous nations, initiatives aimed at securing legal acknowledgment of women's rights and enhancing their

⁹ Lucky Endrawati, SH., MH, "Reconstruction of the Paradigm of Women in Politics (Study of the Legal Interpretation of the Text on Women's Representation in Parliament)," *Egalita*, 2012, 1–30, <https://doi.org/10.18860/egalita.v0i0.1977>.

representation in politics have increasingly been incorporated into the framework of legal and policy reforms.¹⁰

Women's political representation plays a crucial role when we aim to view Indonesian democratization through the lens of a democracy that is inclusive and supportive of gender equality.¹¹ Unlike their male counterparts, who tend to be absorbed in grand political themes, female activists appear to show greater dedication and steadiness in advocating for a 30 percent quota for women's political representation as a shared goal. Over the past decade, we've observed a powerful movement emerging from nearly all sectors of the women's rights movement, including politicians, NGO leaders, members of mass organizations, scholars, female journalists, and even artists and celebrities. All have channeled their political efforts toward one unifying cause: securing a more proportional, just, and equal representation of women in politics.¹²

The fight for acknowledging women's rights and ensuring their presence in politics has emerged as a key turning point in the pursuit of gender equality across numerous nations. Women, who were often marginalized in political decision-making, are now increasingly participating and being recognized as important actors in the governance and policy-making process. However, although significant progress has been made, challenges remain. Women face the challenge of overcoming male-dominated political networks and party cultures, which often remain centralized and patriarchal. They must work to transform the political environment and the perspectives of party leaders to create more room and opportunities for female political leaders to access training and education. This includes ensuring women are pointed to key positions and actively participate in the decision-making process. Women's involvement in politics is a crucial factor in achieving gender equality and fostering an inclusive democracy. In the legal context, a gender perspective plays a central role in ensuring that existing regulations not only provide equal opportunities for women but also address the structural and cultural barriers they face.

Furthermore, a gender perspective provides a framework for understanding that women and men face different social, cultural, and political conditions. In the context of political participation, this means that laws must be designed to address structural barriers such as discrimination in the nomination process, patriarchal dominance, and lack of access to political resources.

¹⁰ Daffa Fittaktahta Putra et al., "Pancasila as a Legal Basis in Realizing Social Justice," *Aliansi: Journal of Law, Education and Social Humanities* 1, no. 5 (2024): 233–37, <https://doi.org/10.62383/aliansi.v1i5.412>.

¹¹ R Maharani and R Ramadhani, "Women's Representation as Legislative Members in the Provincial People's Representative Council," *Lex Superior* 1, no. 1 (2022): 1–12, <https://ojs.ukb.ac.id/index.php/jls/article/view/485%0Ahttps://ojs.ukb.ac.id/index.php/jls/article/download/485/340>.

¹² Angela Ranina Listiyani et al., "The Implementation of Affirmative Action by Political Parties as an Effort to Improve Women's Rights," *Res Publica* 5, no. 1 (2021): 16–30.

Although the 30 percent quota is very strategic, The regulation represents just one of the key factors in the broader effort to enhance women's political representation. While women's participation in the political sphere for representation is undoubtedly important, it alone is far from adequate. This implies that women's engagement in politics should not merely be about entering the processes, mechanisms, institutions, and political systems, but also about how such representation can widen its support base. This involves striving to shape public decision-making and fostering a social foundation for women's political presence, whether through formal or informal political channels, including active participation.

Gender perspectives do not stop at the formation and implementation of laws, but are also important in evaluating their impact. Although the number of women in parliament has increased due to gender quotas, their influence in the decision-making process is often limited. This shows the importance of integrating gender perspectives in building support systems to strengthen women's capacity.

The acknowledgment of women's political rights started with the battle for suffrage. In numerous nations, women were denied the right to vote or run for office until the dawn of the 20th century.¹³ The feminist movements and women's advocates were pivotal in the struggle for these rights. A notable instance of this is the suffrage movement in both the United States and the United Kingdom, which marked a significant turning point for women. In 1920, with the passing of the 19th Amendment in the United States and the Representation of the People Act in the United Kingdom, women achieved the long-sought right to vote.

Similar developments have occurred in many other countries, although the timing of their achievements varies. In Indonesia, Women were granted the right to vote in the 1955 General Election, marking the first election after independence. Since that milestone, women's involvement in politics has steadily increased, although it has not yet reached the ideal level. Entering the Reformation era, the ministers of state for Women's Empowerment (especially during the leadership of Khofifah Endar Parawangsa), Relentlessly kept highlighting the importance of gender equality as a central topic. Yet, the dedicated efforts of female ministers, activists, and various women's organizations in the country to realize equal rights continues to be hampered by patriarchal culture and anti-participatory political practices. A significant root cause lies in how the social and cultural portrayal of women is frequently exploited to justify the exercise of power. This legitimacy and dominance can be seen from the attitude of society which increasingly places women's sexuality as a commodity, a tool to satisfy men's sexual desires.¹⁴

The course of human civilization has predominantly been shaped by men, leading to their dominance in nearly all societal roles throughout history, with the

¹³ Loura Hardjaloka, "Portrait of Women's Representation in the Face of Indonesian Politics: Perspective," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 9, no. 2 (2012): 404–30.

¹⁴ Hardjaloka.

exception of rare matriarchal societies. From the outset, this has fostered gender disparity, positioning women at the margins. Women have often been viewed as unfit for leadership or for possessing abilities on par with men, reinforcing the notion that women are inferior to men. Consequently, men have been seen as the rightful possessors of authority over women.

Women and politics are hard to imagine, especially in developing countries, this is because humans have been formed by culture, which makes women limited to household matters, while politics which is closely related to power is always seen as more appropriate for men with the assumption that women are still taboo and controversial towards leadership. Although advancements have been made in women's rights, the underrepresentation of women in politics remains a significant challenge. In many parliaments and legislative institutions around the world, women are still severely underrepresented. According to data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), until 2023, women will only occupy around 26 percent of parliamentary seats worldwide.¹⁵

Raising awareness of women's roles in politics is key. Education on gender equality and leadership, along with training and mentorship, can prepare women for political involvement. Some countries also use affirmative action to enhance women's political representation, such as gender quotas. These policies ensure that women have greater access to important positions in government and parliament.

Even though Indonesia has enforced a 30 percent gender quota for female candidates on the legislative list, its implementation is still far from perfect. One of the main causes is the lack of women who have good political education so that they are ready to be involved in the legislative and government processes. Effective political education can ensure that more women not only meet the quota but are also able to contribute significantly to gender-sensitive policy-making.¹⁶

Women's political education plays a crucial role in advancing gender equality in Indonesia. While considerable strides have been made in increasing women's involvement in politics, women often still face various obstacles that make their involvement in politics unequal to that of men. In this context, adequate political education is a crucial factor in empowering women to be effectively involved in the decision-making process in the political realm. Political education allows women to understand their rights in the context of politics and democracy, women can also better understand the concept of gender equality, their constitutional rights, and the role they can play in shaping policies that affect society. Awareness of these

¹⁵ Marsyifa Novia Fauziah, Mochamad Faizal Rizki, and Rachmat Ramdani, "The Challenges of Women's presentation in Formal Politics," *Journal of Government Science Widya Praja* 49, no. 1 (2023): 12–22, <https://doi.org/10.33701/jipwp.v49i1.3034>.

¹⁶ Listiyani et al., "The Implementation of Affirmative Action by Political Parties as an Effort to Improve Women's Rights."

political rights can encourage more women to be active in politics, both as intelligent voters and as potential leaders.¹⁷

In the long term, political education can also help break down gender stereotypes that exist in society. As more women engage in politics and demonstrate strong competence and leadership, society will be more accepting of the idea that women are worthy and capable of leading at various levels of government. With political education that encourages women's involvement in the policy process, we can expect more inclusive and sustainable policies that accommodate the needs of women and other vulnerable groups. This is important in addressing global challenges, such as climate change and economic inequality, which are more disproportionately felt by women.¹⁸

Not only female political candidates need political education, but also female voters. In a healthy democracy, well-informed voters are the main foundation. This allows female voters to make smarter political decisions, not only based on emotions or social pressures, but based on knowledge about candidates, programs, and the impact of the policies they propose. Politically educated female voters tend to be more critical and vocal in demanding their rights, whether from a political, economic, or social perspective. This has the potential to bring about a significant shift in Indonesia's political landscape, where women's voices grow louder and more powerful in shaping the course of national policies.¹⁹

Political empowerment for women is not only about opening access to political knowledge, but also about empowerment that can encourage the creation of a more equal and inclusive society. With adequate political education, women can be involved in decision-making, fight for their rights, and contribute significantly to shaping a more just and democratic political future in Indonesia. This urgency cannot be ignored, considering that women are half of the population whose voices are very important in democracy.

The strong patriarchal culture in many regions in Indonesia often places women in less strategic positions in terms of decision-making. With adequate political education, women can build their own capacity, increase their self-confidence, and develop the leadership skills needed to compete fairly in the world

¹⁷ Mirza Satria Buana, Erlina Erlina, and Eka Yulia Rahman, "Paradigm of Anti-Corruption Political Education and Gender Equality in Political Parties," *Integritas: Journal of Anti-Corruption* 7, no. 1 (2021): 23–42, <https://doi.org/10.32697/Integritas.v7i1.733>.

¹⁸ Vina Salviana D Soedarwo et al., "Political Education Based on Gender Sensitivity Among Political Parties in Indonesia and India," *Sociology Study Program, University of Muhammadiyah Malang Citizenship Education Study Program, University of Muhammadiyah Malang International Relations Study Program, University of Muhammadiyah Malang Centre for Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies, School of Languages, Literature and Cultural Studies Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi, India* Email: Vinasalvianaumm@gmail.com *Political Education Based on Gender Sensitivity Among Political Parties*, 48–60.

¹⁹ Tenti Omami, "The Role of Political Education for Women According to the Principles of Justice and Gender Equality Based on Law Number 2 of 2008 as Amended by Law Number 2 of 2011 Concerning Political Parties (Study on the DPC of the PDI Perjuangan Party)," *Nestor Magister Hukum Journal*, 2017, 24.

of politics. In addition, understanding how politics works, election regulations, and effective campaign strategies are skills that can be acquired through comprehensive political education. This will help women take advantage of opportunities to engage in formal politics, both at the local and national levels.²⁰

In recent decades, women's contributions to politics have been increasingly recognized as a key factor in advancing gender equality and strengthening democracy. A gender perspective provides a framework for understanding how women's presence and participation in politics benefits not only them, but also the entire society. One of the main arguments for increasing women's political participation is to achieve better gender balance in political institutions.²¹ Balanced representation ensures that women's interests and perspectives are fairly represented in decision-making processes. Gender equality is a fundamental principle in society that demands equal and fair treatment for all individuals, regardless of gender. In this context, women's political roles are crucial in efforts to achieve gender equality at various levels, from the local to the international level.²²

²⁰ Gender perspective is a key element in the implementation of legal aspects related to women's political participation. By understanding the specific needs and obstacles faced by women, the law can be a tool to create substantive equality, not just formal equality. However, challenges in implementation and evaluation indicate that gender perspective must continue to be strengthened, not only in the formation of laws but also in their supervision. Integrating a holistic gender perspective will encourage women to play a greater role in politics and create a more inclusive democracy.

3.2 Factors that are Barriers to Realizing Equal and Inclusive Political Participation

⁴⁴ Equal and inclusive political participation is one of the main pillars of democracy. However, in practice, various barriers still prevent certain groups such as women, people with disabilities, minority groups, and marginalized communities from fully participating in the political process.²³

²⁰ Syarif¹⁸ Rahmah, "Political Education for Women," *Saree: Research in Gender Studies* 3, no. 1 (2021): 79–100, <https://doi.org/10.47766/saree.v3i1.633>.

²¹ Latif Kahfi, "Analysis of Women's Political Participation in Indonesia: Women's Access to the Political Arena, Gender Disparity Is Still a Significant Problem Different (Rasyidin and Aruni 2016). Existing Inequality. (Ras⁸idin and Aruni 2016) Political System" 8, no. 1 (2024).

²² Halida Nabilla Salfa, "Women's Social Role in Society and Its Implications for the Placement of ¹⁰men Legislative Members in Commissions in the Indonesian House of Representatives for the 2019-2024 Period [Women's Social Role in Society and Its Implication to The Division of Job of Women's MP]," *Jurnal Poli⁸ dan Dinamika Masalah Politik Dalam Negeri Dan Hubungan Internasional* 13, no. 2 (2023): 162–81, <https://doi.org/10.22212/jp.v13i2.3163>.

²³ Inka Nusamuda Pratama, Ayatullah Hadi, and Rizal Umami, "Strengthening Inclusive Political Participation in Increasing ²⁷nderstanding and Involvement of Generation Z in the 2024 Election in Bagik Polak Village," *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Bangsa* 1, no. 11 (2024): 2986–93, <https://doi.org/10.59837/jpmba.v1i11.627>.

One of the main challenges faced by women in politics is gender stereotypes that limit perceptions about women. Many countries are still influenced by patriarchal norms that place men as the main power holders, so women are often considered less capable or competitive to be involved in politics. In addition, the double burden of being a family caregiver and professional makes it more difficult for women to allocate time and resources for political activities than men.

In addition to stereotypes, the lack of institutional support in political parties is also a significant obstacle. Male-dominated party structures, minimal opportunities for women to be in strategic positions, and neglect of issues raised by women often become obstacles in the political process. Although some parties have implemented gender quotas to increase women's representation, this policy is often considered a formality and has not been effective in creating significant change.

Then, the financial aspect is also an important challenge. In political campaigns, financial capital is often the determinant of a candidate's success or failure. Women, especially in countries with high economic disparities, often have limited access to the capital needed to campaign or build political networks.²⁴ Overcoming these challenges requires cross-sector efforts involving the government, civil society organizations, political parties, and the community. Affirmative action policies, education that fosters gender awareness, and better infrastructure and financial support can help encourage more substantial and sustainable representation of women in politics.

The important spirit of democracy such as representation, equality, respect for differences and opinions has been stated in the opening of the 1945 Constitution and the Amendment to the 1945 Constitution which regulates the rights and obligations of the state and citizens. Gender associations have so far created fear in both men and women who are too narrow-minded that gender is identical to "fighting men" or "fighting God's nature as women".²⁵ We have seen women sitting in strategic positions in various fields, both social and political to economic, but the expectations and demands of society for women as leaders have high standards, this is seen when women, even though they have successfully demonstrated their abilities in the field of leadership, must still have responsibilities towards the household and family. Women are required to have high qualifications to be said to be worthy of being a leader, including in terms of educational background, professional performance, or their activeness in various organizations, both social, political, and economic. Not to mention that women are always seen as ideal models to be career women, wives, and mothers who can divide their time, are smart, public figures but still do not forget their nature in the domestic sphere.

Women in politics often bring issues related to social justice to the public agenda. They tend to advocate for policies that address inequalities, such as

²⁴ Nyati Huda, *Rethinking Women and Gender Justice*, 2020.

²⁵ Lusya Palulungan, Muhammad Taufan Ramli, and M Ghufri, *Women, Patriarchal Society & Gender Equality*, BaKTI: Knowledge Exchange for Eastern Indonesia, 2020.

reproductive health, education, and protection against gender-based violence. As such, women's political engagement can bring a different perspective and complement more holistic political decisions.²⁶ In addition, women's political participation can also play a role in changing existing political culture and social norms. Through women's political success and leadership, perceptions of gender roles in politics can change, paving the way for more women to become involved in the political arena. Women politicians are often the main spokespeople in advocacy for gender issues. They fight for women's rights, fight against gender discrimination, and promote awareness of the problems faced by women. By actively championing these issues, women politicians help build public awareness and pressure governments to act in efforts to achieve gender equality.²⁷

The presence of women in political decision-making enriches existing perspectives. Women bring unique experiences and perspectives that can result in more comprehensive policies. This is important to create solutions that are more innovative and responsive to the needs of diverse communities. In addition, women who are active in politics can also provide role models for the next generation of young people to get involved in politics and fight for their rights. By seeing female figures in positions of power, girls are more motivated to participate in the political process, both as voters and as potential leaders, and they will also be more confident that they can also achieve the same position in the future. This can open the door to increasing women's participation in politics, which in turn will create a representative society.²⁸

In addition, it is also important to remember that women's presence in decision-making is not just a matter of numerical representation. Qualitative aspects such as commitment to gender issues, advocacy for social justice, and leadership integrity also need to be considered. Thus, ensuring that women are not only present in decision-making spaces but also have substantial influence in shaping policy is key to achieving sustainable change.²⁹

Women's involvement in politics has implications for the transformation of existing power structures. Increasing women's representation can challenge patriarchal norms and practices, and pave the way for broader social change. This has the potential to create a more egalitarian political system. In improving the quality of democracy, the presence of women in politics plays a major role in increasing representativeness and transparency in decision-making. This can lead

²³ Very Wahyudi, "The Role of Politics in Gender Perspective," *Politea: Journal of Islamic Politics* 1, no. 1 (2018): 63–83.

²⁷ Ulfatun Hasanah and Najahan Musyafak, "Women's Involvement in Political Development," *Surabaya: Unesa University Press* 12 (2018): 409–32.

²⁸ Abraham Nurcahyo, "The Relevance of Patriarchal Culture to Women's Political Participation and Representation in Parliament," *Agastya: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Pembelajarannya* 6, no. 01 (2016): 25.

²⁹ Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) Indonesia, *Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media - Indonesian Edition*, 2015.

to increased public trust in political institutions and strengthen democratic legitimacy. An inclusive democracy reflects the diversity of society.³⁰

The reform era is a new era of social change in the Indonesian nation after the fall of President Soeharto by the reform movement initiated by intellectuals and students, gender equality and women's participation in the public sphere after the reformation is an interesting issue because previously the role and access of women were very limited. The culture and political system that had changed during the reformation era gave rise to great women, female figures who played a role in the political sphere continued increase when the DPR made a new law requiring political parties to involve 30 percent of party management filled by women.³¹

Increasing women's representation in the political arena is not only the responsibility of women themselves, but also of society and wider institutions. The various perspectives and strategies of women's struggle that exist are actually not only effective as a tool for intelligence and awareness, but more than that as an instrument in building a large coalition of women's movements to realize equality, justice, tolerance, and democracy.³² The unification of many forces in a large coalition of women's movements will further increase women's bargaining position in the world of politics. If we believe that "politics does not start from hatred, but from compassion and reason to build the nation", then women's political aspirations to participate in the nation's political life can be interpreted as a form of strengthening democracy which has so far been strongly masculine with its characteristics that tend to be arrogant and aggressive.

4. CONCLUSION

The legal aspects that regulate women's political participation play a crucial role in creating gender equality in the political arena. Although there are progressive regulations, the implementation of these policies still faces structural and cultural challenges such as discrimination and gender-based violence that still hinder their involvement. The dominant patriarchal culture in the reality of society and even the state, makes it difficult to change the view that politics is an important public area and can be entered by women. The public's enthusiasm to enter this public area has indeed increased, but the percentage is still low even though it has been guaranteed by the provisions of the law and in reality the involvement of women in politics as members of the legislature has not been implemented optimally. By increasing representation, advocacy for gender issues, providing inspiration and providing political education, gender equality can be realized and democracy strengthened. The author's suggestion is that there needs to be legal and policy reform that focuses on the implementation of gender quotas, strengthening legal protection, leadership

³⁰ Adriani and Julia, "Women's Participation in Politics."

³¹ Priandi and Roisah, "Efforts to Increase Women's Political Participation in General Elections in Indonesia."

³² Costa Rica et al., "Women's Political Representation: Just Existing or Coloring," *Journal of Social Democracy* 54, no. 2 (2019): 553–65.

training, financial support, and education on political rights. For this reason, collective efforts are needed from various parties including the government, political parties, and civil society to expand women's access to quality political education, so that women can play a greater and equal role in contributing to political life in Indonesia.

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