

# Women and Politics in the Perspective of Feminism and Gender Equality in Indonesia: A Case in Makassar

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## Abstract

This study analyzes gender and politics which aims to eliminate discrimination between men and women, with a study on gender equality it will provide knowledge of the importance of women's ideas in decision making. The growing feminism movement can help Indonesian women to play an active role in the world of politics and become leaders who are usually only held by a man. The research method used is qualitative research with descriptive type. Sources of data used in this study are secondary data with data collection techniques using literature. This study shows that politics gives women the freedom to enter and play an active role in the political sphere. Women who previously did not have the freedom to express themselves, finally gave rise to the feminist movement. From the point of view of feminism itself, women's politics in Makassar City has existed since the revolutionary period. At that time women began to get freedom and opportunities to move forward which gave a considerable influence in the life of the people of Makassar City. Women take an active role to help the community maintain independence by forming social organizations that are solely concerned with the course of politics. So, from the perspective of feminism and gender equality regarding the role of women in politics, there is already an opportunity given for women to occupy parliament as well as men.

**Keywords:** Gender, Politics, Women

## Introduction

Currently, the issue of gender equality has become dominant in development programs, not only in Indonesia but also in the world. In the past, we could see that the position of women in politics was isolated, women only had a very small portion when compared to the portion

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owned by men. This case occurred because of the patriarchal culture that was not friendly to women. The understanding of socio-cultural constructive culture adopted at that time placed women as if they could only take care of domestic problems. In fact, there are many things that women can do, as well as being involved in political matters.

Gender equality, which is also known as gender justice, is a view where all people must receive equal treatment and there is no discrimination based on their gender identity, both as natural men and women. This is one of the goals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in which the United Nations seeks to promote equality in the social and legal fields, as well as in democratic activities (Collins et al., 2010). The goal is that everyone can get equal and fair treatment in society. Both in the political field and fields related to certain policies.

Feminism combines the position that in society it prioritizes the male point of view while from the female point of view it is treated unfairly. To change this by opening up educational and professional opportunities that are equal to men, be it by fighting for women's rights, especially the right to hold political positions. Feminism concerns about the importance of gender equality can help the character of the nation that demands changes between women's positions. The long journey that has been passed since the formation of the feminist movement has succeeded in bringing the phenomenon of women into politics.

The essence of feminism is how women should have the same opportunities as men in developing themselves, both in the economic, social, educational and political fields. The reason why feminism is so important is because we are already living in the 21st century where young people today are a critical generation and have broad minds to express their own opinions, feminism is not only for women because a man also has an important role. like a father who provides opportunities for his daughter to achieve higher education and enter the public sphere, early marriage is still a common thing in society, there are still many who think that sons are more valuable than daughters, women still often experience disrespectful treatment on the streets, women have the right to dress the way they want, the world prefers to teach women how to avoid sexual harassment than to prevent men from committing sexual crimes and there is no reason why women can't make as much money as men do (Ferree & Tripp, 2006).

The discourse of feminism in Indonesia emerged from women's organizations and then to the university level. It is proven that for a long time Indonesian women have been active in voicing their rights through organizational systematics (Ford & Parker, 2008). In 1928, when the first women's congress was held, Indonesian women had thought about various issues. The history of Indonesia is a history of respect for women, long before the Dutch colonized Indonesia, it had a culture of equality, it was proven that from the beginning women had political rights and even many female heroes and women became leaders in Indonesia (Pratiwi, 2016).

The discussion about gender equality is more due to the existence of the feminist movement, this is because women are in the process of social construction in society, it can be seen that the role of women is only domestic so there is an issue of gender equality to eliminate gender discrimination. Gender inequality does not only occur in developing countries, but in developed countries the issue of gender equality is also a topic of discussion because the effects of gender discrimination will result in people's welfare and have an impact on changes in the country itself. Governments will fail if the people they lead do not feel comfortable in their own country. The struggles that have been carried out by movements that fight for the rights of the people, both men and women, will be in vain if there is no responsibility for the governments who have duties as public servants who should be able to provide good services. Women are one of the living creatures created by God with all forms that have advantages and disadvantages as with men. If men have the main political rights such as voting, the right

to fight, the right to associate, the right to defend and the right to participate directly in diplomacy and political agreements, then women also have these rights. However, there is still an assumption that has been believed from the past until now that women are weaker than men, this is what causes the position of women to be under the power of men. Thus, it can lead to gender discrimination so that women get inappropriate treatment in society. Such treatment makes women who should have the potential to advance their country turn into women who cannot do anything to make changes.

Women have a very important meaning to provide understanding and unite perceptions about the importance of developing a healthy, fair and realistic democracy. Therefore, the development of women's political education needs to be improved both in terms of organizational and strengthening the pillars of democracy through the trias politica, namely legislative, executive and judicial institutions that are aspirational and agree with the interests of women. This kind of condition needs special attention, for that one thing that needs to be addressed is the issue of political education for women, so that political awareness grows among women. As women, they are expected to be able to take advantage of the opportunities and opportunities that exist according to their potential and in accordance with the provisions of the applicable laws and regulations. Women have a very important meaning in the world of politics to provide understanding and unite perceptions about the importance of developing a healthy, just and realistic democracy.

Women must enter politics if they want their rights to be fulfilled. Women can change the world if they are able to maximize their role and potential by entering politics. Politics is the art and science of gaining power both constitutionally and non-constitutionally, which is the process of forming and distributing power in society in the form of a decision-making process, especially in the state. In terms of understanding politics, it is necessary to understand political power, legitimacy, political systems, political behavior, political participation, political processes and what is the political background. Someone who enters politics then they will carry out activities to seek and maintain power or oppose the exercise of power. Power itself is the ability of a person to influence others so that that person thinks and acts according to the instructions of those who have power. No wonder so many people want to become rulers through politics. This is not only done by a man but also a woman can do it. A woman can channel their ideas to fight for the rights of other women who still do not dare to voice their voices and get behavior that is not in accordance with the rules, where women should be empowered. Political movements in people's lives are always developing. Various strategic efforts have been taken to strengthen political rights. In the democratic process, the issue of accountability is an absolute prerequisite for the realization of political representation itself.

In political representation, women fight for their representation in making political decisions. Therefore, the representation of women in the political sphere is an effort to strengthen political rights. An understanding of the process of increasing women's representation requires us to maintain the rights of equality and difference perspectives so that political understanding remains balanced. Women's representatives work in a context where expectations are not only sensitive to sex and gender differences, but also to constraints in various political arenas, cultural arenas and political processes or the real achievements that have resulted from feminist intervention in the political scene. The interactions that occur in the political arena include the increasing number of women's representation.

The political representation of women is a very important element if we want to place the context of Indonesia's democratization in a gender-friendly perspective of democracy. In contrast to the male politicians who are more inclined to big political narratives, while the female activists seem to be more focused on fighting for the quota that has been given as a joint struggle agenda. of almost all elements of women's struggle ranging from politicians,

activists, non-governmental organizations, community organizations, academics, journalists, celebrities and women's societies who direct almost all of their political power in one direction, namely seeking more proportional, fair and equitable political representation of women equivalent.

Because during the New Order, the discourse on women's political representation in the grand narrative of democratization, implementation of human rights, civil and political rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, almost did not find a place for women to grow (Soh, 2007). The representation of women in politics is still far from what we expect. Discrimination based on gender still occurs in all aspects of life and in all development sectors across the country. Although there has been considerable progress in gender equality today, the nature of the level of discrimination varies widely across countries or regions. Political education is one of the activities that aims to form political orientations in each individual or group. This political education process is carried out so that the wider community can become citizens who are aware of their obligations and uphold the rights that should be possessed in the life of society, nation and state by paying attention to gender equality and seeing women as men who are free to express their opinions, especially sitting in parliament to give his opinion in policy making.

However, in a democracy, the presence of women in the political system is a good thing. With the representation of women will make claims to their citizenship with the spirit of their involvement with politics. Therefore, political representation is the basis of feminist concerns, although this interest is not always recognized in society. Women's political representation requires the breakdown of the separation between the public and the private, this occurs because of the emergence of changes in institutions. Claims for women's representation are met by the involvement of a sufficient number of women in existing institutions. Attendance which involves acceptance of the existing rules of the game, is required if new rules must be made. Equality is required value differences must be compensated and differences must be recognized if equality is to be achieved.

The participation of women in the political sector does not only occur at the central level, but also at the regional level, both at the provincial and district or city levels. As is the case in Makassar City, which is one of the cities in Indonesia where women are also active in parliament. Judging from the number of members of the Makassar City DPRD for the 2019-2024 period, in which there are women who take an active role in making policies in Makassar City. Not only that, in 2018 the Governor of South Sulawesi gave his appreciation to the Makassar City Government for having achieved a commitment to realizing gender equality and empowering women. There is nothing wrong if women are also related to politics because this life has something to do with politics. The importance of increasing women's participation so that political decision making is more accommodative and substantial. In addition, strengthening democracy which always provides ideas related to legislation that agrees with women and children in the public sphere.

As a woman who has rights and obligations as an Indonesian citizen, where these obligations must be carried out and these rights must be fought for. One of them is knowing how women and politics from the point of view of feminism and gender equality in Indonesia, especially in Makassar City for the purpose of justice for the community, so that there is no discrimination for women whose voices also need to be heard. It is hoped that this can be realized to create shared prosperity.

## **Research Methodology**

The type of research used is qualitative research which is to explain or describe the problem according to what happened in the field or the research place where the event occurred which is explained in more detail, clearly and in accordance with the facts. This research method

produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words. Through this type of research, the author intends to describe how women and politics from the point of view of feminism and gender equality in Indonesia, especially in Makassar City.

The type of research used is descriptive. Research using a phenomenological approach that seeks to understand the meaning of an event that aims to provide a general description of various kinds of data obtained in the field objectively, both orally and in writing based on the phenomena that occur, then analyzed as a researcher's conclusion.

Sources of data used in this study is secondary data. Secondary data itself is obtained from media such as books, articles, journals or the internet that are interrelated with the object under study so that researchers will be more accurate. Data collection techniques using literature study which is also one of the data collection techniques that are widely used by researchers. Presentation of data in the form of brief descriptions and the like. Drawing conclusions, namely from the data obtained, then categorized and looking for themes, then conclusions are drawn.

## **Research Results**

This previous research is one of the references for the author to conduct research, so that the author can enrich the theory used in reviewing the research conducted. The author raised this previous research as additional information in increasing the study material in this paper. In this study, the authors include research results that have relevance or relevance to the researchers to be carried out.

Based on the results of previous research entitled Implementation of Women's Politics in Makassar City, the results of the research are that the actions of women in Makassar City in actualizing women's politics have not been very real. The thing that most people do is just entering a political party and registering as a legislative candidate. However, this is because political parties do not want to fully support them, and not many women have been elected to the DPRD in the 2009 legislative general election. There were only seven women who were elected to become members of the Regional People's Representative Council in Makassar City, out of a total of fifty members. In addition to joining political parties and registering as legislative candidates, there are also other actions taken by women in Makassar City, namely conducting meetings and training for all legislative candidates by mapping the potential of women who become legislative candidates with the aim of knowing which women have the potential to become legislative candidates supported.

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The similarity between the previous researchers and the research to be carried out is that they both explain how women in Makassar City implement politics in the presence of gender equality through the feminism movement. Where the quota given to women in parliament can bring about its own changes for women and for the surrounding community. The difference from previous research and the research that will be carried out is that previous research

discusses how to implement women's politics in Makassar City, while the research that will be conducted is about how politics and women in the perspective of feminism and gender equality.

The theoretical framework used in this article is the theory of Genderlect Styles Theory which outlines how to communicate effectively between each other of different genders so that there is a process of mutual respect and tolerance for differences that aim to improve relationships and reduce ongoing conflicts, moreover In the world of politics, this theory is very important to be implemented. Likewise with the theory of radical feminism which holds that gender inequality systems from biological differences between men and women (Griffin, 2006).

This biological difference is related to the role of pregnancy and the role of motherhood which is always played by women. All of this is manifested in the family institution, therefore radical feminism considers the family institution as an institution that gives birth to male domination or is called patriarchy.

The feminist theory in this article also uses the concepts of Simone de Beauvoir and Marilyn French as the basic concept of the alienation of women from the public sphere and how they take steps to enter the public sphere and be free from the domestic sphere (Bergoffen & Burke, 2004).

### **Women's Politics Leads to Gender Equality**

They are subjected to terrible breaches in numerous aspects of their country. Furthermore, women are disproportionately affected by environmental issues, and their engagement in environmental protection is undervalued. Understanding the role of elected leadership in diversifying the bureaucracy is critical because a more representative bureaucracy is likely to deliver better outcomes. Women's groups are critical to moving the gender equality agenda ahead since they are essential players in breaking down such distortions and silos at all levels. However, agenda-setting politics has an impact on financing priorities, limiting financial support and meaningful initiatives (Bayeh, 2016; Funk et al., 2017; Sen & Mukherjee, 2014). The definition of gender equality refers to an equal situation between men and women in the fulfillment of rights and obligations. Gender disparities in opportunity and control over natural resources, social, economic, power and political participation occur everywhere which results in women carrying a heavy burden that can harm everyone. Thus, gender equality is an issue that is of concern to a development goal that will strengthen the country's ability to improve, especially to empower the community.

Women's politics is a policy based on law. Therefore, politics gives women the freedom to enter and play an active role in the political sphere. Women who previously did not have the freedom to express themselves, finally gave rise to the feminist movement. Where feminism refers to a series of social movements, ideological movements, political movements that have the same goal of building and achieving gender equality in the personal, social, economic and political environment. After the existence of women's rights to freedom, the feminist movement has developed which places women's position no longer in a low position.

This is where women's politics was born. Initially, women had the freedom to work. In the end, the feminist movement demanded that women be able to voice their opinions through political channels, by participating in parliament so that they could determine policies. Not only that, but women also have the opportunity to become leaders. So that women can feel what it is like to hold power as previously felt by men. The role of women in politics as a form of gender equality. With this form of gender equality, discrimination can be eliminated in social life. Without discrimination, it will lead to comfort, peace and prosperity in society. Political freedom has been given to all people, both men and women who both have the right to enter the world of politics. However, it can be seen earlier that the quota of women is still very minimal in political positions. This can become an obstacle to the lack of women's

participation in politics or the awareness of women themselves to enter directly into the world of politics which is very different from their previous lives which did not require women to work. But doesn't education arise as a result of a lack of human resources, which if the potentials of women can be released and developed it will create new changes for this nation. The low number of women's representation in the parliament, either a little or a lot, will affect policy issues related to gender equality and have not been able to respond to the main problems faced by women.

The issue of women's representation in politics is important because it is seen from the composition of the population between men and women, which are not much different. Meanwhile, the form of women's participation is still very minimal. This is quite sad, the realization that in everyday life there is no representation of women who are directly involved proportionally in politics so that there is a need for a paradigm revolution for women in politics and gender equality. Currently, there has been a paradigm revolution for feminism gender equality in political representation. The state has provided space for women to take part in politics, including becoming leaders. This is reinforced by the establishment of a quota of 30 percent of women's representation in the government parliament. The existence of this quota opens up opportunities for women to make important policies for the Indonesian state (Purwanti, 2015).

The representation of women in Makassar City in political life is not much different from other cities regarding gender equality which is distinguished from men. In terms of life, men have the most dominant main role compared to women, as well as in terms of politics, women are only partly active in government, both in becoming government leaders and as members of the Makassar City Regional People's Representative Council. There are only a few women who fill the seats in parliament, from previous research there were 50 members of the Makassar City DPRD, only 8 women, while the others came from the male audience. In the 2009- 2014 general election, only 7 women passed the parliament. Likewise in the next general election where men dominate the parliamentary seats. Even though the lack of women in the legislature can influence the making of political policies, so that current political policies need to be gender-oriented. (Silaban, 2015)

Seen from the perspective of feminism, women who participate in politics in Makassar City as a demand for democracy so that all citizens actively participate in politics, in other words women also take part, either by participating in voicing their voices in general elections or participating directly in becoming the government for the administration of government. better. From the point of view of feminism itself, women's politics in Makassar City has existed since the revolutionary period. At that time, women began to get freedom and opportunities to move forward which gave quite a big influence in the life of the people of Makassar City. Women take an active role in helping the community to maintain independence by forming social and religious organizations that are solely concerned with the course of politics.

If you look at women's struggles first, then an understanding of the importance of creating a feminist movement, especially in politics, needs to be developed for all elements of society. The representation of women as much as 30 percent in the list of candidates for the Regional People's Representative Council of South Sulawesi Province, Makassar City has not been comprehensively fulfilled, there are still many parties that have obstacles in fulfilling the 30 percent quota, especially in small parties. In general, women still have less interest in getting involved in politics, this is caused by cultural and patriarchal factors which place the role of men as the sole, central and everything ruler. So that the patriarchal system dominates culture in society which results in gender inequality and injustice and can affect various aspects of people's daily activities. Until now, this culture is still attached to the lives of Indonesian people as well as in Makassar City, such as in domestic activities, economic and political

culture which result in social problems and problems in women's politics. Strong efforts and commitment from the government in realizing gender equality by continuing to encourage the achievement of a 30 percent quota for women's involvement in parliament and reducing gender inequality in politics.

The policy regarding 30 percent of women's representation requires political parties to nominate at least 30 percent of women from the total legislative candidates at the central, provincial and district or city levels. Like political parties that do not run it will get sanctions for not participating in the general election. This is an idea of gender equality in politics. However, in practice it is not easy to implement, as in the case of the 2019 legislative elections where one of the parties participating in the democratic party, the Golkar Party, was only able to contribute 22 percent of women's representation who passed to Senayan at the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia for period 2019-2024. Of course, this raises a polemic of gaps related to the application of these rules. The struggle for gender equality is one of the efforts to realize democratization because with the existence of gender equality, the entire community, both men and women, has access to the democratization process itself (Hamid, 2019).

## **Discussion**

Makassar City women who have a very important role in society in this case provide political education for Makassar youth. In addition, the presence of women in the legislature is not only an arena to seize power, but how this power is interpreted as a struggle to provide a bargaining position to marginalized communities. This is evidenced by the drafting of a regional regulation regarding exclusive breastfeeding and one of the proponents is the female cadre of the Makassar City Nasdem Party. The implication of the women's political role of the Makassar City Nasdem Party for strengthening women's political positions where women in the Makassar City Nasdem Party are given the same rights as men in politics, it is evident that the party itself is led by a woman who was also elected as Deputy Chairperson. Regional House of Representatives of South Sulawesi Province. This proves that the Makassar City Nasdem Party gives women a strategic position in politics, not only in the legislature but in the management of the women's party given a strategic position.

It is undeniable that men currently dominate the political space and women's representation is still minimal, so when viewed in general it is certainly very naive to think that women are not more worthy to sit as regional leaders and engage in practical politics. After the reform era in 1998, it can be said that the Indonesian state is experiencing democratic turmoil, this is marked by the lack of clarity of the direction and goals of democracy. This effect also has an impact on the context of the country's political system, including equality and opportunity for women to access practical politics. The dynamics and problems of women's representation in politics in reality. Seeing the phenomenon in the contestation for the election of Makassar mayoral candidate Danny Pamanto who was very brave to take political steps by cooperating with a woman, namely Fatmawati Rusdi as his companion. Some people regret that this step, but this step is very appropriate in accommodating the alignments of women in Indonesia, especially in Makassar City, which will complement each other in building a better Makassar. The above explains that there are still many people who do not believe in the performance of women as leaders, most of them think that only men are very worthy to lead many communities, even though a woman also has the power to lead. The women who have been fighting for the rights of other women through the feminist movement which finally gave rise to gender equality have proven that women can also fight until they reach that goal. They can even defend what they stand for. This can also happen when leading many communities. That way, women will not feel under the control and feel confident to take an active role in politics.

In Makassar City, the quality of women can be said to be good when viewed from the potential, level of education and strata of life. To be involved in politics, women's interest in Makassar City is still relatively low and few, they are more comfortable just being an active political participation in voting rather than being elected and many Makassar women prefer to be in political positions. In responding to the aspirations of the community, women legislators often do this by accepting the arrival of the community who express their aspirations or going directly to the community to conduct a recess as a form of screening community aspirations, opening a dialogue room to discuss existing problems, listening to what is conveyed by the community, filtering community aspirations. by collecting in the form of notes or writings which are then forwarded to the public relations department so that these aspirations are included in the data collection of community aspirations, clarifying problems that exist in the community and will take a special route by conveying them to the agency or related parties who have authority (Rizal & Akbal, 2017).

With the firmness of all elements in applying the rules related to women's politics, especially the general election commission and political parties, political parties need to give freedom to women sincerely without any coercion to achieve gender equality between men and women. From the perspective of gender equality, the actions of women in Makassar City in implementing women's politics have not been very real. Judging from what is mostly done just entering parties and registering as legislative candidates, but not many women have been elected to become members of the Regional People's Legislative Assembly because of the lack of full support from their own political parties and the lack of public trust in women. In fact, it would be a matter of pride for Indonesian women to be able to serve in society.

## Conclusion

The conclusion of this article is that when viewed from the point of view of feminism and gender equality regarding the role of women in politics, there are already opportunities given to women occupying parliament as well as men. Indeed, in parliament the quota for women is not as much as for men, but this has provided an opportunity for women to express their opinions in policy making. The rest is how women take advantage of these opportunities by fulfilling the quota provided without any coercion from various parties, because a woman has her own right to do something sincerely without any coercion. That way women will feel valued. The feminist movement has a positive impact on women so that they can get freedom for their rights as citizens to be directly involved in politics.

Full support from the community is very helpful so that women are willing to fight together through politics. Because with women being able to join politics, they can make policies regarding increasing women's empowerment and children's rights as well as making important policies to bring change in Makassar City for the realization of Indonesia as a country that not only has abundant natural resources, but also has human resources with great potential so that it will provide benefits, not only now but also in the future for sustainable development that will be passed on by the next generation of the nation.

The author gives advice on gender equality in politics, that women need support so that they can be confident in their potential. If there is a woman who dares to nominate as a legislative candidate, it would be better if she is fully supported by a political party. Don't see that they don't have the power to hold on to power like most men do. It is also hoped that the community will put their trust in women who do have the potential to be directly involved in the world of politics and to become a leader like men have always done.

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