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Political dynamics of women's representation: 30% affirmative action governance in Bungo Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, strategies implemented by political parties, and supporting and inhibiting factors in the affirmative action quota of 30% women's representation in Bungo Regency, Jambi, in the 2024 elections. The background of this study is based on the fact that female DPRD members in Bungo Regency are only 14.3%, which is relatively low. The successful implementation of the affirmative quota policy of 30% women's representation in the general election requirements has been administratively supported by the active participation of women as legislative candidates in strengthening the principle of gender equality in the local political ecosystem. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews with the General Election Commission, 5 political parties, and 5 elected female DPRD members for the 2024-2029 period from the PKB faction, the Gerindra Party, the Nasdem Party, the Democratic Party, and the Golkar Party. Data were collected from various literature, written documents, and field research through observation and in-depth interviews. This study employed four stages of data analysis: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. The results indicate that the five parties met the 30% quota for women's representation, and the other participating parties in the election, as stipulated in Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections in Bungo Regency, had fulfilled the administrative requirements declared by the General Elections Commission. However, the number of women actually elected as members of the Bungo Regency Regional People's Representative Council remains far from proportional. This is due to the open proportional system in elections based on the majority vote, which hinders female candidates from being hindered by the practice of money politics, the existence of gender-biased religious groups, the quality of human resources of irrational voters, patriarchal culture, and local primordialism.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as the world's largest archipelagic nation with rich ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity, has a continuously growing population and is one of the largest in the world. According to the latest data from the BPS-Statistics Indonesia in 2024, Indonesia's population reached 281,603,800. Of this total, there is a relatively small gender imbalance, with 142,188,600 males (approximately 50.49%) and 139,415,200 females (approximately 49.50%). This demographic composition reflects a nearly balanced societal structure, despite a slight

male preponderance, which serves as an important basis for analyzing gender equality issues, including social, economic, and political participation amidst national diversity (Aspinall et al., 2021; Perdana & Hillman, 2020; Prihatini, 2019). However, this very small difference in numbers should not be a barrier to women's participation in politics and government. Article 27, paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia affirms that all citizens are equal before the law and government and are obliged to uphold the law and government without exception. This provision serves as the

constitutional basis for ensuring that political rights are not discriminated against based on gender.

According to data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Indonesia's representation of women in parliament ranks sixth among ASEAN countries. Meanwhile, globally, Indonesia ranks 89th out of 168 countries, behind Afghanistan, Vietnam, Timor-Leste, and Pakistan. To address this gap and achieve this target, the government needs to reflect on the global development agenda that emphasizes the importance of gender equality (Mechkova et al., 2024). This includes providing equal opportunities for women's leadership at every level of decision-making, particularly in politics at the regional and national levels, by initiating a grand design roadmap for 30% representation. In this regard, it is certainly important to demand the role of political parties in efforts to increase women's representation in Parliament in 2024. The transition to democracy, marked by the amendments to the 1945 Constitution (1999-2002), fair multiparty elections, and the decentralization of government through Law No. 22 of 1999, has opened wider opportunities for women to fight for their rights, which were previously limited to domestic roles through institutions such as Dharma Wanita.

Post-Reformasi, the 30% quota policy for female candidates as stipulated in Law No. 7 of 2017 has increased their representation in the House of Representatives from 9% in 1999 to 20.5% in 2019, supported by the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This law, which emerged from the post-Reformasi feminist movement, has facilitated women's emancipation by reducing patriarchal stigma and expanding access to justice, thereby creating a more conducive space for women's active participation in the public and political spheres. Indonesia is a country with a democratic system of government, one of which is the open proportional representation system in elections, where every citizen has the right to make decisions. The freedom of decision-making for Indonesian citizens includes freedom of political speech, assembly, and association. This democracy involves the electoral process, citizen participation, and the protection of individual rights (Rahmanto et al., 2021; Ruriana et al., 2023; Sibarani, 2024).

Based on the results of the 2024 general election, 18 political parties registered as participants in the 2024 election, of which only eight political parties managed to secure seats in the Indonesian House of Representatives for the 2024-2029 term. Women's representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) for the 2024-2029 period is 22.1%, with 127 women filling parliamentary seats out of a total of 580 council members. The percentage of women's representation in the 2024-2029 legislative body nearly meets the affirmative action policy's 30% quota for women's representation through elections. The 2024-2029 elections saw an increase in political party participation in nominating women representatives compared to the 2019-2024 elections, which saw 20.5%. This increase in women's representation has increased, although it has not yet reached the affirmative action policy target, but it has not decreased (Birbir et al., 2025; Mukarom, 2022).

Therefore, in some regions, the involvement of women who are members of political parties and intend to run for legislative office often results in their names not being listed in the initial candidate lists of their supporting political parties. This may be due to women's inability to negotiate effectively. Political parties in Indonesia have not maximized their efforts to develop female cadres. Many women are not selected to run for office.

METHODS

The research method used in this study is a descriptive method with a qualitative approach, namely a method that depicts, describes, and explains the actual events of the object being studied based on the situation and conditions when the research was conducted. A qualitative descriptive approach is particularly appropriate for research that aims to provide a comprehensive and direct description of a phenomenon from the perspectives and experiences of the participants involved, rather than reducing the phenomenon to numerical measurements (Bradshaw et al., 2017). This approach allows researchers to explore social phenomena within their natural context and to understand how participants interpret and give meaning to their experiences (Dodgson, 2017).

The method can be conducted using various types of variables and sources of qualitative

information, depending on the nature and objectives of the research. In this approach, the researcher becomes an important instrument in understanding the research context, interpreting participants' accounts, and presenting empirical findings systematically (Starcher et al., 2018). Thus, qualitative descriptive research provides an appropriate methodological framework for describing social realities as they occur in the field and for presenting the experiences and perspectives of research participants in their own contexts.

Data are collected in the form of words, images, and narrative documents, not numbers. The research report will present quotations from the data as illustrations and empirical evidence, including interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, personal documents, official documents, journals, and other official records. Interviews are an important source of qualitative data because they provide researchers with access to participants' experiences, perceptions, interpretations, and motivations (Hughes et al., 2020), while qualitative interviewing also enables researchers to explore meanings and experiences that may not be observable directly. Field notes are used to record contextual information, observations, interactions, and reflections that emerge during the research process and can provide important details beyond the interview data (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). Photographs and other visual materials can further complement verbal accounts by capturing contextual and experiential dimensions of the phenomenon being studied (Ndione & Remy, 2018). In addition, personal documents, official documents, journals, and other documentary records can be used as complementary sources of empirical evidence, enabling researchers to contextualize and cross-check information obtained through interviews and observations (Edwards & Holland, 2020). The combination of these different forms of qualitative evidence contributes to a richer and more comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Political dynamics of women's representation

Indonesia is a country that adheres to a constitutional democratic system, as stated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, which affirms the sovereignty of the people as the foundation of

the state. This grants the people the right to associate, assemble, and participate in politics, as guaranteed by Articles 28 and 28E of the 1945 Constitution, as well as Law Number 9 of 1998 concerning Freedom of Expression in the Public Sphere. These rights enable the formation of political parties, civil society organizations, and active participation in the political process, including general elections. Therefore, the current electoral system in Indonesia is designed to realize these rights through a mechanism that is direct, general, free, secret, honest, and fair, as stipulated in Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections as amended by Law Number 7 of 2023 (Election Law).

Law Number 7 of 2017 is the Law on General Elections in Indonesia. This law was passed on August 15, 2017. Law Number 7 of 2017 was first used for the 2019 General Election, which included legislative elections and presidential elections simultaneously. This law also serves as the main legal basis for the 2024 General Election, although it has been amended through Government Regulation in Lieu of Law (Perppu) Number 1 of 2022, which was then passed into Law Number 7 of 2023, and combined with Law Number 10 of 2016 for simultaneous regional elections (Amalia et al., 2021).

In the 2024 General Election, the Regional People's Representative Council of Bungo Regency has 35 seats with 5 electoral districts. The results of the 2024 election are 30 men and 5 women as the permanent candidate list of the Regional People's Representative Council for the 2024-2029 period, based on 17 parties that have passed the verification of the General Election Commission of Bungo Regency to participate in the 2024 election. The following is an interview conducted by the Researcher with Mrs. Syamsiah, S.Sos, as Head of the Technical and Legal Subdivision of the General Election Commission for the 2023-2028 Period.

In the election in Bungo Regency, there are 17 parties that have been verified as legislative candidates in the 2024 Bungo Regency election. First, all political parties register centrally through the SIPOL (Political Party Information System) application; then administrative and factual verification is carried out by the Bungo Regency KPU to ensure that the party's digital documents are correct based on their presence in this area. These

registered parties are parties that have been designated by the Indonesian KPU as participants in the national election and can only register and submit party files to the Regency KPU when the registration date for legislative candidate files has been opened (Prihatini, 2019).

In the administrative verification of the General Election Commission Regulation Number 4 of 2022, Article 8g, namely women's representation must pay attention to 30% (thirty percent) in the management of Political Parties at the provincial and district/city levels. In this administrative verification, it can identify how political parties have implemented the regulations of Law Number 2 of 2008 concerning Political Parties, Article 2 paragraph 2, which reads "The establishment and formation of Political Parties includes 30% (thirty percent) of women's representation," so that, in the general election, it can identify the gap between the regulations of Law No. 7 of 2017 and the reality of implementation in the field that underlies the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of women's quotas, including structural and cultural factors.

Political parties that have been determined and verified as election participants by the Indonesian General Elections Commission are required to register as election participants in that area; parties in Bungo Regency that have verified status must still nominate themselves/their party to the Bungo Regency KPU with requirements that are completed by the party through a liaison officer who is tasked with managing the administrative files of election participants from that party, not election participants who come to the KPU independently/alone, but the liaison officer from that party.

Seventeen parties that registered as legislative candidates in the 2024 election have fulfilled the 30% quota requirement in one of the administrative verifications in Law Number 7 of 2017 Article 245 which states "The list of prospective candidates as referred to in Article 243 contains at least 30% (thirty percent) of women's representation" and General Election Commission Regulation Number 4 of 2022 Article 8g Number 5 which states "Including at least 30% (thirty percent) of women's representation in the management of Political Parties at the central level and paying attention to 30% (thirty percent) of women's representation in the management of Political Parties at the provincial and district/city levels".

The percentage of women's representation is divided into two, there is a percentage overall for the party and there is a percentage of women's representation per electoral district, for each electoral district the calculation of the percentage of women's representation is done if it is less than fifty percent rounded down, if it is more than fifty percent rounded up for example in electoral district one yesterday the number of seats was nine then the number of male party candidates was six and the number of female candidates was three, if there were two female candidates then there were four male candidates this means less than fifty percent rounded down.

Based on secondary data obtained by researchers, it states that of the 17 parties that have been verified by the General Election Commission as permanent candidates for legislative members of the Bungo Regency Regional People's Representative Council for the 2024 election, there are 5 parties with a rounded-down calculation of 30% (thirty percent) but still reach the 30% quota, and there are 4 electoral districts from 2 parties with a rounded-down percentage that does not reach the 30% quota of women's representation.

Based on the data, there are 13 parties with rounded-up results in the calculation of 30% of the number of permanent female candidates in several electoral districts. This means that the 13 parties have met or even exceeded the minimum requirements for women's representation, including parties that have female legislative candidates represented in the Bungo Regency Regional Representative Council, namely PKB, Gerindra Party, Golkar Party, Nadem Party, and Democratic Party, have implemented and complied with the election process as mandated by Law Number 7 of 2017 Article 245 as amended by Law Number 7 of 2023 and General Election Commission Regulation Number 4 of 2022 Article 8g Number 5.

This rounding-up policy shows the commitment of these parties to implementing gender affirmation, where they voluntarily increase the number of female candidates beyond the minimum proportion. For example, in electoral district 1, the number of seats is 9 for each party must place 3 female legislative candidates from their party because the calculation is 2.7, so rounding up means 3 female legislative candidates in the electoral district, as done by the National

Awakening Party which places 4 female legislative candidates, exceeding the minimum proportion. This shows good compliance with the regulations/policies on women's representation and is progress in increasing women's representation to be more able to be elected in the Bungo Regency as representatives of the people, especially in gender equality regarding policies that involve the advancement of women's gender, as well as being a good example for other parties in complying with the principle of gender equality in the 2024 elections and beyond.

In the recapitulation of the list of permanent candidates for members of the Bungo Regency and the fulfillment of women's representation for the 2024 election for the Garuda Party, it was not recorded because the Nomination Information System has fully optimized and integrated the entire process, starting from uploading required documents and administrative verification to determining the Permanent Candidate List is done digitally, so that parties that do not carry out the input or registration process are not processed until the final stage in Silon, so the system will not display the party's name in the Permanent Candidate List table.

The regulation of mandatory fulfillment of 30% quota has been implemented since the 2019 election, where the adaptation of this regulation in the 2024 election is actually our party wants to strengthen the effectiveness of gender representation in the Bungo DPRD, so the party makes a strategic priority to place potential women in winnable positions that have a chance of winning to avoid wasting resources on low-chance candidates, meaning the party thinks about the quality of its legislative candidates and the quantity of the percentage of female representation from our party, it can be seen that the progress of the number of Nasdem party DPRDs has increased in the 2024 election, 7 legislative candidates who became DPRDs are more than in 2019, only 4 legislative candidates who became DPRDs. The party still fulfills the 30% quota but will not fall below the regulation because it is mandatory as a requirement from the KPU; if there is a slight decrease in the percentage, it is relative, but compliance with 30% is maintained.

The decrease in the percentage of women's representation in the 2019 to 2024 general elections

in the Nasdem Party is a form of adaptation to the affirmative action policy of a 30% quota for women's representation in the 2019 elections to the 2024 elections, so that the party implements a strategy of placing potential female legislative candidates in winnable positions or those with a chance of winning, so that party resources are not wasted on candidates with low chances. This strategy proves that the party does not only think about the quantity of fulfilling the quota, but also the quality of gender representation in the Bungo Regency DPRD, the results of which are clearly visible from the increase in the number of NasDem DPRD members from 4 seats in 2019 to 7 seats in 2024.

Democratic Party: In the election registration process, the party is required to upload a Management Decree to the General Election Commission, where the Central Leadership Council will not sign the decree if the representation of women in the party's management has not met the 30% threshold. This makes the fulfillment of the Affirmative Action policy not merely an external obligation, but has been internalized as part of the internal mechanism of the NasDem party, so that the fulfillment of 30% female representation is not an obstacle, but a standard that has been consistently met by the party.

Political party strategies to meet the 30% quota of women's representation

The fulfillment of the 30% quota for women's representation carried out by 5 political parties, and the election of female legislative candidates from these political parties to the Bungo Regency Regional People's Representative Council, is a form of how political party administrators formulate strategies so that, in the election, not only is the process implemented but the realization of the policy is also implemented.

The National Awakening Party (PKB) has a strategy to oversee the affirmative action policy of a 30% quota for women's representation. This has been prepared before the general election, starting from ensuring the fulfillment of 30% women's representation in party management to the implementation of the 30% quota for women's representation as an administrative requirement by the General Elections Commission.

The Great Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra) has demonstrated a strong commitment

to fulfilling the 30% quota of women's representation, and even exceeding it, in the 2024 Election by proposing 33-40% female legislative candidates in various electoral districts (Dapil) and 39.28% female representation in the management of the Great Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra).

The Nasdem Party has demonstrated a strong commitment to meeting the 30% quota for women's representation, and even exceeding it, in the 2024 elections by proposing 33-40% female legislative candidates in various electoral districts and 30.55% female representation in the Nasdem Party leadership.

This demonstrates that the Nasdem Party has a strategy for overseeing the affirmative action policy of the 30% quota for women's representation. This was prepared before the general election, from ensuring the 30% quota for women in party leadership to implementing the 30% quota as an administrative requirement by the General Elections Commission.

The Democratic Party has demonstrated a strong commitment to meeting the 30% quota for women's representation, and even exceeding it, in the 2024 Election by proposing 33-50% female legislative candidates in various electoral districts and 34.48% female representation in the Democratic Party's leadership.

This demonstrates the Democratic Party's strategic approach to overseeing the affirmative action policy of the 30% quota for women's representation. This was prepared before the general election, from ensuring the 30% quota for women in party leadership to implementing the 30% quota as an administrative requirement by the General Elections Commission. Recruitment of legislative candidates is carried out by party cadres, there is a political education program held by the party through socialization of the benefits of women's involvement in government, cadre meetings, work meetings to recruit potential legislative candidates, the delivery of the best laws, one of which is about the 30% quota for women's representation in management so that women's management is involved in nominations and external recruitment to the community, there is spiritual education to attract public confidence, the party has a program and also prioritizes the obedience of party administrators, the party gives women's management authority to seek female cadres and legislative candidates in the

community, the placement of women's management in the party's management structure is important so that synchronization occurs and reflects the party has no gender discrimination so that for people who want to nominate and join the party there is no doubt, there is monitoring from the chairman of the DPC, DPW and DPP for the winning strategy of the party and legislative candidates, there is academic involvement, religious and women's representation in the management to expand the network of relations to get votes in the electoral district, the party places billboards on major roads, the city center near the area of the regent's house, near the government offices promote legislative candidates and party names for elections (Bayo, 2021; Mahsun et al., 2021).

The Functional Group Party (Golkar) has a strategy for overseeing the affirmative action policy of a 30% quota for women's representation. This has been prepared before the general election, starting from ensuring the fulfillment of 30% women's representation in party management to the implementation of the 30% quota for women's representation as an administrative requirement by the General Elections Commission. Fulfillment of women's representation in the Golkar Party is by recruiting candidates from outside, such as candidates who do not get a number in their party, so they are not made election participants, replaced, then they can join the party and want to join and run for office, we recruit them, then recruitment from the Golkar Women's Unity Organization, in collaboration with Al-Hidayah which is led by women as a mass organization from the Golkar Party while also looking for women who have the potential to rise and expand their voices with the help of this Islamic study group because it is believed by the community, the use of social media in exposing party activities so that people are interested in joining together, especially those who want to run for office, is really needed by women, the installation of billboards with photos of influential Golkar Party leaders, one of whom is Mr. Bahlil Lahadalia who is widely known by the community and bureaucrats.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study on the political dynamics of women's representation in political parties and women's representation in

affirmative action governance with a 30% quota in Bungo Regency, the following conclusions can be drawn:

the affirmative action policy of 30% quota for women's representation in implementing gender equality through the administrative verification process by the general election commission for the 2023-2028 period of bungo regency stated that 17 parties that registered as legislative candidates in the 2024 election had fulfilled the 30% quota requirement and 1 more party had not fulfilled the 30% women's representation in the legislative candidacy but was still declared eligible to be an election participant based on pkpu number 04 of 2022. Women's representation from 5 parties that obtained legislative seats from the Regional People's Representative Council for women in Bungo Regency for the 2024-2029 period had fulfilled the 30% affirmative action quota, namely the National Awakening Party (PKB), the Great Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra Party), the Nasdem Party, the democratic party, and the Golkar Party.

Political party strategies in fulfilling the 30% quota for women's representation in their management structure and legislative candidacy in the 2024 election, by conducting recruitment and recruitment through management and open to the public, holding workshops, discussion forums, cadre meetings, work meetings, social programs, political education programs and spiritual education to expand the recruitment of quality legislative candidates and party vote relations, organizing regional deliberations as a forum for consolidating management and legislative candidates, actively involving management and legislative candidates in party field activities, placing women in strategic party management structures, collaborating with party women's organizations, using social media as a socialization tool, re-nominating female party members who have previously served in the regional people's representative council in the previous period, collaborating with legislative candidates for the jambi provincial people's representative council and the republic of indonesia people's representative council, utilizing the popularity of party leaders as role models in society.

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