

WOMEN AND PRACTICAL POLITICS IN RIAU PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

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The number of women members of the Regional People's Legislative Assembly for Riau Province has decreased from 18 people (27.69%) in the 2014-2019 period to 12 people (18.46%) in the 2019-2024 period. Even though the number of female voters was 49.19% of the total voters in Riau Province. The purpose of this research is to find out what are the factors that influence women's choices in elections, legislative elections and local elections? This study uses the method of literature study and participatory observation. The results of the study show that female voters do not know the candidate to be elected. Something that is rather difficult for a candidate to be elected if they are not known by voters. The existence of ideological differences is also a barrier for women not to vote for candidates. Men are more suitable to be leaders than women, and this is still a perception for women voters. Women voters' doubts about the religious observance of the candidate to be elected. The door to door system (DDS) strategy for introducing legislative candidates and regional head candidates can be carried out by the winning team (success team), absorbing aspirations and conveying the program to be carried out. Prospective leaders must avoid engaging in money politics and distributing goods in order to get votes. Prospective leaders should show the work and achievements that have been made to the community as proof that they have previously assisted the community in various development activities and programs including women's empowerment activities.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every citizen has the right to vote and be elected. General elections, members of the People's Representative Council, the Regional People's Representative Council have been regulated in Law Number 10 of 2008 that political parties are required to include a minimum of 30% women's representation in their establishment and management at the central level. Every 3 prospective candidates there is at least one woman. This is evidence that opportunities have opened for women to be directly involved in practical politics. Women's involvement in practical politics includes human rights, because democracy cannot be built without women's participation. This shows the views of political parties regarding the political role of women as well as the idea of quotas. Although in the field there is a tendency for political parties to seem less important to the active role of women in

politics. In a democratic system, male and female voters have the same right to vote or be elected.

Furthermore, the number of members of the Regional Representatives Council of Riau Province for the 2014-2019 period based on gender showed that only 18 people (27.69%) were female representatives, while 47 people (72.31%) were men. This is very different from the composition of members of the DPRD Riau Province for the 2019-2024 period where only 12 people (18.46%) were women, while 53 people (81.54%) were men.

It turns out that the supposition that the number of women voters is directly proportional to the representation of women in the legislature is incorrect. Although there is an impression that it is unfair if men monopolize the representation of legislators while the number of female voters is almost the same as that of male voters. An important question that must be answered is why women don't vote for women candidates?

Now let's look at the voter data for the 2019 election. The number of voters in Riau Province is 3,863,830 people. If divided by gender, it is known that there were 1,963,115 male voters (50.81%) and 1,900,715 female voters (49.19%) (KPU, 2019). However, there is a new history in the local political culture in Riau, namely that there are 2 female Regents, namely Kasmarni (Regent of Bengkalis) and Rezita Meylani (Regent of Inhu) from 12 Regents/Mayors in Riau Province. This could be an interesting study for other researchers to find answers about women's political choices in Inhu and Bengkalis Regencies.

Table 1. Number of DPRD Members of Riau Province by Regency/City Based on Gender Period 2019-2024

No.	Regency/City	Number of Members of DPRD Riau			
		Man	%	Women	%
1.	Kampar	41	91,11	4	8,89
2.	Rohul	43	95,55	2	4,45
3.	Rohil	37	82,22	8	17,78
4.	Kuansing	33	97,06	1	2,94
5.	Pelalawan	34	97,14	1	2,86
6.	Siak	39	97,50	1	2,50
7.	Inhu	39	97,50	1	2,50
8.	Inhil	39	86,67	6	13,33
9.	Bengkalis	41	91,11	4	8,89
10.	Kepulauan Meranti	26	86,67	4	13,33
11.	Dumai	28	93,33	2	6,67
12.	Pekanbaru	37	82,22	8	17,78

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics for Riau Province, 2021

Table 1 above shows that the number of DPRD members from 12 Regencies/Cities throughout Riau Province does not fulfill the 30% representation of women. The data above shows that Pekanbaru City and Rohil Regency have the highest percentage, namely 17.78%. Inhu, Siak, Pelalawan and Kuansing districts with the lowest level of representation of women. Taking a close look at the problems mentioned above, the authors are interested in examining the factors that cause female voters not to vote for female candidates in practical politics.

2. METHODS

This research uses library research and observation methods. Literature study based on sources from books and journals. While observation is a method of collecting qualitative data that researchers do through close observation of female voters so that their mindset is known. The study data was also added from the report from the Central Bureau of Statistics for Riau Province.

Politics is a means to maintain the benefit of the people (society). Politics is not solely because of the ambition to be in power but how through Islamic religious power can be maintained and practiced by society. Political responsibility is not only for men but also for women. According to Alam Subuh Fernando (2021) states that women's political rights are something that cannot be separated from human rights, whereas in a legal perspective women's political rights have been regulated by laws and regulations so that there is no impression of discrimination. In the context of Islamic law, men and women have the same rights so that men and women can fulfill their rights in politics.

The above opinion is reinforced by Adji Suradji Muhammad, et.al (2018) who states that it is very important that women and men are fully and actively involved in political processes and decision-making. This characterizes democratic life so that women and men can equally

contribute in the political, economic and social fields. There are also writers who try to link gender and politics, such as Hillary M. Lips (1993) who states that the link between gender and politics as hope includes women.

It is also different from Nur Ainiyah (2017) who tries to do an analysis of some of the barriers for women to be involved in practical politics, namely cultural and structural barriers. In the traditions of Eastern society, women are considered shy, cowardly, sulky, often insecure, and not ready to be criticized. This is clearly different from the views of western society with a gender paradigm so that it is contrary to the characteristics of women as easterners. Structurally, women are still not given the opportunity to be in a strategic position in political parties. When viewed from the functionalities of political parties, the management of political parties is almost entirely dominated by men, only a small number of women occupy positions in the party. The small number of women sitting in political parties and legislative bodies results in less influence on decision-making processes and policy products that voice women's aspirations.

The low involvement of women in practical politics is an important issue for women to articulate their interests. Due to such circumstances, the issued government policies are less in favor of women's interests. By incorporating various women's interests, it is hoped that decision-making can be more sensitive to various kinds of differences, not only differences in gender interests, but also differences in social class, ethnicity, religion, and others. So that women's voices have the opportunity to bring about meaningful change in the political decision-making process (Nur Ainiyah, 2017).

Riau is a Malay land inhabited by the majority of people who are Muslims. Malay traditional values are very closely related to Islamic teachings, including in matters of leadership. According to Adji Suradji Muhammad, et.al (2018) that one of the classic issues that is always actual and often becomes an academic debate in Islamic studies is the discourse on women's leadership in the public world, especially leadership in politics. The debate around this discourse gave birth to pros and cons with a series of arguments put forward by each group to support its stance, both from a theological, sociological, and historical standpoint. The textual and sociological reality places women, both in the world of texts and in practice, in a discriminatory position, especially in the following matters; First, there is a stereotype that women are weak creatures because they were created from crooked ribs. Second, the quality of women's self-worth is half that of men. Third, women are not worthy of being state leaders because they are considered incapable of dealing with serious and complicated social problems. The self-image of women in the repertoire of classical interpretations is still biased with a touch point of interpretation that is gender biased by positioning women as inferior, weak and inherited evil beings.

There are two arguments that are often used as a ban on women being appointed as leaders, namely Surah An Nisa Verse 34 (Men are female leaders) and the Hadith of Imam Bukhari's history (it will not be lucky for a people if they surrender their leadership to women). But actually what is prohibited is that a woman leads a country, while leading an organization/institution other than the state is permissible on condition that the woman has the eligibility, ability, competence to lead. Halimah B (2018) argues that women's leadership is being debated among experts and some

commentators. Some argue that absolute leadership is held by men. Another opinion says that women may also be leaders both in the public sphere and in the household.

According to Yanti Haryani (2016) a woman must have the ability more than other women or also including men. The criteria that must be possessed by a woman to become a leader are:

- a. Knowledgeable. In this case what is meant by science is science related to politics, but it cannot be separated from science related to politics such as social sciences and others. This is different from the requirements put forward by previous fiqh experts, namely: they required that they must have religious knowledge so that they could perform *ijtihad* in dealing with complex issues.
- b. Responsible for everything he has done while being a leader.
- c. Physically and mentally healthy so that they are not hindered from carrying out their activities as a leader.
- d. In carrying out her duties as a leader, she does not forget her household life, in the sense that she still has responsibilities as the wife of her husband or the mother of her children.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Factors Causing Female Voters Not to Vote for Female Candidates

There are five main factors causing female voters not to vote for female candidates, namely:

1. Voters do not know the female candidate/candidate to be elected. Female voters tend to vote for candidates they know without distinguishing between men and women
2. Female voters have ideological differences with the female candidates to be elected
3. Men are more worthy of being leaders than women
4. Female voters doubt the religious observance of the female candidates to be elected
5. There is no guarantee that voting for women candidates will result in them having people's representatives who defend women
6. Female voters disagree when it is said that female candidates have more limitations and weaknesses than male candidates. women voters are fair and rational.

The results of the author's observations corroborate the research results of Munawir Haris (2015) proving that NU women do not vote for candidates from NU circles and even tend to vote for legislative candidates from political parties that are not supported by NU. This is reinforced by the results of Yanti Haryani's study (2016) that the obstacle faced by women is the lack of support from women themselves in order to fulfill the 30% quota. Meanwhile, Irwan Abdullah (2014) also stated that socio-political changes did not have a significant impact on the role of women in politics, namely that they had not placed women as leaders, women as political sweeteners to attract voters' attention, and weak efforts to strengthen women's roles in politics.

In contrast to the results of the study by Subhan Agung and Fitriyani Yuliwati (2014) which stated that women candidates had no obstacles in candidacy, their political parties made it very easy and supportive. Instead, obstacles come from family and society. Representation in quantity means that there are women who are directly involved in political institutions and are part of policy making. Meanwhile, substantively, how can women's issues come to the fore, and even become the main issue discussed in every decision-making, whether it is voiced by the women themselves, or men who are sensitive to issues of gender equality.

Based on the author's experience in the election survey (see Figure 1 below), Pilgubri and Pilkada from 2016 to 2020, if female candidates want to win and be elected in legislative elections, there are a number of tips that must be followed, namely (see Figure 2):

- a. Maximize Popularity (be known) in the Dapil Region by way of outreach, introducing yourself, conveying ideals, vision, mission and promises that will be fulfilled when elected. The level of popularity can be helped by social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, short videos) and the installation of billboards/banners.
- b. Increase acceptability (recognized ability) in the eyes of voters by conveying information to prospective voters about what achievements, products, works and forms of service that have been done so far for the community.
- c. Increase Electability (selected) must be measurable so that energy, money, time are not wasted. How to?. Conduct a survey to measure what percentage of voters will vote when they are at TPS.

There are 11 demographic aspects of voters that should be an important note in mapping the chances of winning and losing for each candidate (legislative and regional head) and their winning team, namely:

1. Organizational affiliations: voters from Muhammadiyah organizations tend to refuse to vote for candidates from organizations outside Muhammadiyah. Likewise, voters from NU mass organizations tend to vote for candidates from the same mass organization. The way to approach so that the votes of voters coming from a particular mass organization is to approach the most influential figures from that mass organization. Create video content that contains support for candidates.
2. Origin of village/kampung: each kampung/village has its own characteristics. Villages originating from former transmigration villages (Javanese) have different cultures from villages where the majority of the people are indigenous people (for example: Malays in Riau). The way to influence the residents is by adjusting themselves, their appearance, their way of speaking according to the traditional and cultural values of the local community.
3. Occupation: the choice of residents is also influenced by the type of work. There are often different choices between farmers and fishermen, as well as different choices between workers and civil servants.

4. Level of Education: the higher the education level of a voter, the more rational the way of thinking is in making choices.
5. Gender: how to influence men is different from women. There are some men who like DPD candidates (women) because they see a beautiful photo.
6. Religion: voting for candidates of the same religion has become a local political culture in Riau. Rejection of candidates with different beliefs is not something that violates political ethics, but rather a positive value that must always be preserved.
7. Age: beginner voters usually have different choices with parents. So the way to approach millennial voters is usually done through activities that are in accordance with the hobbies of young people.
8. Marital status: married voters are more mature than single/girl voters. The life burden of voters who have many children is different from that of voters who do not have children because the (economic) burden of life is not the same.
9. Tribe/ethnicity: ethnicity is often used as a weapon to bring down political opponents. Candidates who come from Malay (Riau) will carry out a black campaign by rarely voting for non-Malays (Riau)
10. Income level: the higher the income level, the more rational voters are and are not easily influenced by money politics
11. Preferred political party: voters will choose a candidate from their favourite political party. If you want to advance, data is needed on which political party is the most liked by the public so they don't vote for the party as a political vehicle.

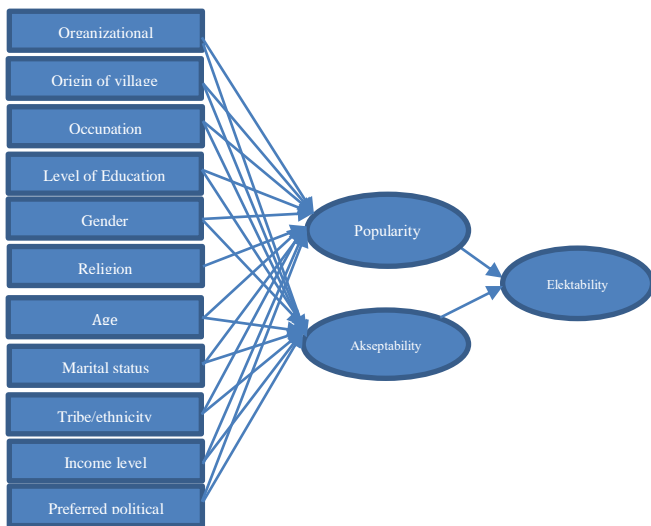


Figure 1. The Relationship Between Voter Demographics and Candidate Levels of Popularity, Acceptability and Electability

Relations between Political Communication and Candidate Election

Allah SWT created the mouth (oral) so that humans can easily communicate. Not only men are given the ability to communicate, women are also required to be able to communicate properly, politely and wisely. Many verses in

the Qur'an begin with the word "qul" which means say, convey. Saying or conveying something is the main key in communication. According to Eko Harry Susanto (2013) argues that political communication is political talk or the delivery of verbal and non-verbal political messages that can influence the people and the government in a political system. Or simply it can be stated that political communication is the delivery of politically charged messages from a source to recipients to create an understanding of shared meaning.

Every human behavior, including when they are silent and do not respond to political messages from a source, still creates meanings related to political nuances. In relation to the life of the nation and state, Bambang Setiawan (1990) states that political communication is the process of conveying opinions, attitudes and behavior of people, institutions or political forces in order to influence political decision-making. In simple terms, political communication is communication that refers to political activities.

The use of mass media such as print media, electronic media and online media, to spread political messages that can reach heterogeneous and very broad target audiences. The mass media and social media have a responsibility to always provide correct, accurate and clear information, broadcasts and broadcasts. With that function, the media is able to supply the information needs of the public. In political communication, the most realistic fact to use as a measure of the success of conveying a message is the increasing number of audiences who agree on the contents of the message. Even more assertive is being willing to become a follower of a political communicator (Eko Harry Susanto, 2013).

In political contestation, the hope is to be willing to vote in general elections. Adding followers and the number of audiences can be formed through the opinions formed by political communicators. The problem is that public opinion can be widely accepted by the public or rejected because it does not provide significant benefits to the public. Political communicators are required to build public opinion, by formulating issues related to political competition and other political activities that are considered to increase public trust. The success of forming public opinion is the key to the formation of audiences in political communication, considering that public opinion is very sensitive to issues that concern the interests and are felt by the wider community. If the arrangement of messages in political communication can touch the basic needs of society and is carried out programmed and continuously, then the political impact of political communicators cannot be separated from the ability to organize messages to audiences who demand democratization in the state, prosperity and justice.

Diagram 2 below shows the stages in conveying the message to voters which begins with visiting the voter's house by the candidate with a team of volunteers. Before leaving, the team of volunteers must be briefed, equipped to maintain manners (code of ethics) when meeting with the community. There are three forms of community response when they are visited, namely accepting with pleasure, refusing firmly and passively (neither accepting nor refusing). Voters who accept gladly have the possibility of being influenced to vote for candidates by introducing the candidates, conveying the Candidate's Vision, Mission, Program, convincing Voters of the achievements and work done by the candidates and pasting stickers, distributing brochures/pamphlets at voters' homes.

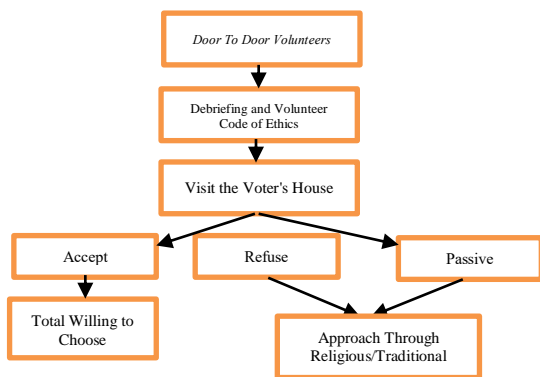


Figure 2. Models and Strategies for Winning Candidates in Practical Politics

Ideally women who will, are and have been involved in practical politics must have good political communication skills with the community, but according to Nur Ainiyah (2017) there are several obstacles for women in carrying out political communication, namely:

1. Women's Double Burden. The double burden of women as someone who is required to take full responsibility in the domestic environment (home and family) as well as activities in the public area requires women to sacrifice more time or have to be good at time management.
2. Low Education and Economic Levels of Women. Economic and educational constraints are also a big challenge for efforts to improve women's communication in the public sphere. Economic constraints make it difficult for women to be totally involved in the political arena. Economic dependence on other people makes women unable to make decisions about political budgeting.
3. Misunderstanding of Community Politics. Society's view of politics is wrong, making society look down on the role of women in politics. The public's view that politics is dirty has become something that threatens women, dwarfing women's courage to appear in politics.
4. Cultural Barriers. Another cultural obstacle, women are also stereotyped as housewives, domestic workers, inappropriate to appear in public compared to men. This stereotyped perception causes women to receive and face a lot of criticism when appearing in public, both appropriate and inappropriate. They are also stereotyped as people who are not fit to lead. This identity causes women to be reluctant to speak openly, shy and not confident.

4. CONCLUSION

From the explanation, it can be concluded that in an effort to increase women's participation in practical politics, hard work and smart work are needed to be able to compete with men both from the aspects of leadership, professionalism, self-integrity, religious observance, communication skills, working with various parties and having a good team. will strengthen the candidate to be able to win in political battles. Conducting Political Mapping, Determining winning targets and sources of voter votes,

Forming volunteer/winning teams, Formulating campaign strategies, Networking, Organizing campaigns and escorting vote acquisition. Candidates should already know the trend of voter behavior in terms of the media sources most frequently accessed by voters (TV, Radio, Internet, Newspapers), the types of TV channels most often watched by voters (Local/National), the types of local radio channels most often listened to by voters, the type of newspaper most often read by voters, the type of online media most often read by voters and the most frequently used social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, WhatsApp, Tik Tok).

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