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## Gender Contest in Public Office Study at North Sulawesi Provincial Government

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### **Abstract:**

*Gender mainstreaming in the field of governance amidst gender inequality due to the construction of people's thinking triggered by gender stereotypes which is a barrier factor for women to actively participate in community development and empowerment. This study uses descriptive qualitative methods with the intention of revealing how gender contestation is in public office in the Provincial Government of North Sulawesi. The analysis of this study uses the Liberal Feminist theory of Gender. The results of this study reveal that gender contestation in public office is still not optimal due to uneven competence between men and women, lack of access and opportunities given to women, as well as internal factors of women who do not develop self-competence, supported by the absence of rules that regulates the representation of women in public office. In addition, the regional head's commitment has not been optimally implemented in the policy for determining candidates for high-ranking officials because it is still influenced by patriarchal culture in the organizational culture so that in determining the filling of the JPT, they still use the conventional model which should use a non-gender model that is competent which is recommended to be implemented in filling out the JPT in the Province. North Sulawesi so that gender mainstreaming can run in all levels of government to accelerate the development of human resources.*

**Keywords:** Contestation, Gender, Public Office and North Sulawesi

## **1. Introduction**

The state apparatus is a tool of the state, especially covering the institutional, administrative and staffing fields, which has the responsibility of carrying out the wheels of government on a daily basis which includes the state and government apparatus as servants of the state and servants of the community, tasked with and responsible for administering the state and development and always serve and be loyal to the interests, values and aspirations of the struggle of the nation and state based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. The State Apparatus as administrator of government is given the responsibility to formulate strategic steps and creative efforts to realize social welfare as a whole fair, democratic and dignified (Siriani 2010).

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Phenomena as stated by Habibie in year 2011 in Silaknas quoted from Sugiharto, 2012 that: a) We are rich but poor, i.e. natural resources but poor in income, b) We are big but small, very large area and population but small in productivity and power competitiveness, c) We are strong but weak, strong in anarchism but weak in global challenges, and d) We are beautiful but ugly, beautiful in its potential and prospects but bad in its management. Why is that, because we are infected with the "Orientation Disease" which: 1) relies more on natural resources than human resources, 2) is oriented to the short term rather than the long term, 3) prioritizes images over concrete work, 4) looks at the macro rather than the micro, 5) rely on cost added rather than value added, 6) oriented towards balance of payments and trade rather than balance of working hours, 7) prefer short cuts (corruption, collusion, misappropriation, etc.) rather than honesty and policies, and 8) regard position as a goal rather than as a means to an end.

The low activity of women in the political sphere, both as members of parliament and decision makers, is a common phenomenon in many countries. This reality can be seen from the fact that women are not proportionally represented in politics, especially when sitting as members of parliament. Factors inhibiting or encouraging women's political participation vary according to the level of socio-economic development, geographical conditions, culture, and the model of the political system used. So that ignoring women's representation in politics, especially in legislative institutions (decision makers), will greatly affect the various public policies produced, the development of democracy, and gender equality.

There are a number of factors that influence the pattern of selection between men and women in almost all occupations. First, the socio-cultural context in Indonesia is still very thick with a patriarchal culture which requires women not to participate in politics and government (Agra et al., 2018). Position is considered as a prerogative domain belonging to men. Second, it relates to the selection process in determining high-level positions that is not yet gender responsive. Awareness regarding gender equality and justice is relatively low (Brennan et al. 2012).

In addition, there are several other problems faced by women in being actively involved in governance: 1) Poverty and low levels of women's education, both formal and informal. Reflected in the competition for positions where women are often less able to compete with men, it is difficult to recruit women who have comparable abilities or can even compete with men. Women who have adequate capacity and capability tend to be involved in businesses outside the government; 2) Family factor. Women who are married often experience certain obstacles, especially regarding the issue of permission from their

husbands. Many families tend to reject women's views and additional activities outside the home (Robeyns 2013).

Various research results show that there are benefits from having women occupy positions at the top level of management (Rosette & Tost 2010; Ballenger 2010). However, it is realized that the progress is not evenly distributed. The female talent pool has expanded globally. Today, more women are completing tertiary education than men, increasing the number of skilled women. Although there are also challenges for them to be recruited and have a career. There is still a "leaky pipeline" phenomenon where the more senior the position in a company, the fewer women are found. Not to mention the phenomenon of "glass walls" and "glass ceiling" so that it is difficult for women to get promoted to a higher position. In this regard, organizations need to review planning and strategic recognition of women's talents and skills, to be utilized optimally by identifying supporting and inhibiting factors in women's career advancement. That is, organizations need strategies that enable them to identify, promote and retain skilled women at higher levels.

This research is to ascertain the status quo and representation of women in government, as well as the role of leadership and management by identifying the challenges faced in promoting women within the bureaucratic structure. The results of this study will be able to describe an assessment of women's participation in the decision-making structure in the bureaucracy based on gender composition, executive management, promotion of women's leadership; and possible limited capacity to promote gender equality in leadership and bureaucratic management

## **2. Theoretical Background**

The concept of government originates from human life, the existence of a relationship between God the creator of the universe and the humans He created. The Creator gave orders to His creatures to do His commands and stay away from His prohibitions (Jayawarsa et al., 2021).

According to (Box 2011) Government Science can be defined as a science that studies how to fulfill and protect everyone's needs and demands for services - public and services - civil, in government relations, (so that they are acceptable) when needed by those concerned.

Human Resource Management (MSDM) is a process of utilizing human resources effectively and efficiently through planning, activating and controlling all values that become human strength to achieve goals (Subaidi et al., 2021). HRM is the process of human empowerment as a humane

workforce, so that all physical and psychological potentials have maximum function to achieve goals. HRM is the management of the utilization of individuals (AM et al., 2010). HRM as a series of strategies, processes and activities designed to support organizational/company goals, by integrating organizational/company and individual needs (Muchtar et al., 2022).

Organizations move because they are driven by the people within them. Organizations live because they are turned on by their members. Organizations develop and advance because they are developed and advanced by the organizational actors involved in them (Haas 2018).

Gender is a distinction between men and women that is determined socially by society and culture whose forms can vary according to time, place, ethnicity and can be studied (Zinn & Dill 2016). Meanwhile, sex or nature is a distinction between men and women determined by God Almighty, or is natural, which is permanent and usually involves differences in biological and physical functions (Scott 2007).

Gender is the various attributes and behaviors attached to women and men and shaped by culture (Tripp & Munson 2022). From this comes the idea of what is considered appropriate by both men and women. Masculinity and femininity are a result of culture and cultural processes that can be found in various general societies and are also practiced in different variations.

### **3. Methodology**

Research methods in principle discuss concepts and theories as well as scientific evidence relevant to the problem under study, including conducting rhetoric from various patterns and methods, both of which have been used with all their strengths and weaknesses in research. While research methodology is the science that discusses methods to be used in research activities, including domains, as well as instruments in research which are stated as efforts to expand capabilities and can be used in everyday life. Research design is a necessary process in planning and conducting research. "Research design is a framework or blueprint in carrying out a research project".

This research is a gender-oriented qualitative research specifically representing the reality of women, prioritizing women's needs, and aiming to change the situation to realize gender equality (Wijaya, 1996). The qualitative research approach was chosen for the following reasons: first, qualitative research is a type of research that emphasizes exploring the object of the problem in depth and dynamically to reveal various aspects included in objectivity according to the study area designed. Second, qualitative research

was chosen on the grounds that qualitative research can reveal social phenomena that are formed from certain situations and conditions in depth and dynamically through the mediation of primary data obtained from parties who are seen to both understand and experience directly the dynamic situations and conditions of the object being studied. researched but show different points of view and interpretation of the dynamic situation and condition of the problem which allows the discussion of the research object to become heuristic and empirical

#### **4. Empirical Findings/Result**

Sexual discrimination in the labor market is a more compelling reason for women's lack of work productivity due to a reluctance to become a professional in the long term. "As Judith Bardwick wrote in the *Psychology of Women: A study of Biocultural Conflicts*. Collecting information from the National Human Resources Agency, the President's Commission on the Status of Women and the Radcliffe Committee on Higher Education, Bardwick concluded that "girls who are academically gifted are less likely to enter high school and earn their baccalaureate than young men. with the same intelligence, they are also less likely to take advantage of the Ph. D they earned; their productivity is also less than that of men, even though they already have a Ph.D.; less likely to remain unmarried and continue working full time. (Dowling: 1992)

Various studies show that, in addition to the disparity in the number of women who seek higher education, many women work in places that are not in accordance with their degrees and skills. Most are placed in administration (administration), personnel or do not work at all. In other words, the potential of available resources is not used properly. This happens for various reasons, but almost always the reason is that there is no belief that a woman can do technical or technological work. In addition, the small number of women occupying high leadership or managerial positions in various fields, especially in technical or technological fields. What is also needed is to eliminate stereotypes among company or agency leaders, for the placement of women in technical leadership positions according to the field of science and technology they have.

Article 2 of Law No. 14 of 1969 concerning Basic Provisions for Manpower, clearly states that: "In carrying out this Law and its implementing regulations there shall be no discrimination". Article 3 states: "Every - every worker has the right to work and a living that is worthy of him".

In Indonesian laws and regulations it does not explain anti-discrimination, article 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which the Government of Indonesia ratified with Law No. 7 of 1984, provides the definition of "Discrimination" as follows: "Every distinction, exclusion and restriction made based on gender, which has the effect or purpose of reducing or eliminating the recognition, enjoyment or use of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field by women, regardless of their marital status on the basis of equality between men and women. Article 11 of the Convention contains steps and efforts needed to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment.

The results of the work of the "Gender Working Group" of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development from the United Nations stated that there were 7 issues that required "Transformative action", namely (Achmad, M.A. et al: 1998): 1) Gender equality in science and technology education (gender equity in science and technology education); 2) Eliminating obstacles for women in pursuing careers in science and technology (removing the obstacles o women in scientific and technological careers); 3) Making science responsive to the needs of society by providing a gender dimension (making science responsive to the needs of society; the gender dimension); 4) Making science and technology decision making more gender aware; 5) Connecting better with local knowledge systems (relating better with local knowledge systems); 6) Determine ethical issues in science and technology by providing a gender dimension (addressing issues in science and technology: the gender dimension); 7) Improving the collection of gender-disaggregated data for policy makers;

As the first woman to become mayor of San Francisco, Dianne Feinstein in the book *Women in Power - Women's Action in the World of Politics* says "It is more difficult for women to succeed in politics than men". Women always have to prove that they are worthy and reliable. The key to the success of women in government positions is to be a "reliable" person: giving clear and willing to follow up orders, double-checking every statement for accuracy, maintaining personal integrity, and truly maintaining the public's trust. Most importantly, must be able to work together in a group and build relationships with colleagues based on integrity and respect. Able to complete the tasks assigned to him. Women must be leaders in the truest sense. There is no freeway to become a successful leader, but with hard work and never give up and support from family, nothing is impossible.

In this case politics and political behavior are seen as masculine activities. Political behavior, including independence, freedom of opinion, and

aggressive actions. Meanwhile, society considers women who are aggressive and independent as unacceptable and unwanted.

All Indonesian citizens, without exception, have duties and obligations to participate in the development of the state and nation. In return, all citizens have rights and enjoy the fruits of development.

All development activities are directed towards development goals that aspire to a just and prosperous society. The word fair is mentioned first because equity must take precedence. The ideals of this nation must be fought for by all citizens who are loyal to their nation.

Women, including citizens, have the same duties, obligations and rights. This statement is acknowledged in writing in the Outline of State Policy. But what is written is different from the reality. This situation still requires struggle, especially by women themselves. Judging from the potential of human resources to support development with a larger female population than males, in fact the potential of women and their participation in development is still less visible.

The role of women in the economy of a region is getting higher from time to time, although there is still discrimination for women in the social arena. Women's wages are still lower than men. Apart from that, the culture of placing women in the household kitchen matters still applies. So that women's educational opportunities are relatively low and have an effect on low competitiveness in society.

Evaluation to improve women's development is needed so that women's positions are increasingly equal to men. So that the role of women in providing added value in society will be more real. The results of the new IPG calculation method show that North Sulawesi's IPG follows an upward trend as shown in the table below.

As the results of an interview with the Regional Secretary of North Sulawesi Province Mr. Steve Hartke Andries Kepel, ST, MSi regarding the determination of candidates who will occupy high leadership positions, it was conveyed that the North Sulawesi Provincial government has carried out in accordance with applicable regulations and has been based on gender, as the leadership's commitment namely the Regional Head, in determining candidates for high-ranking officials and positions below them, must pay attention to the rules and regulations that apply, including the representation of women. However, it is undeniable that in the process of determining candidates who will occupy high leadership positions based on the names entered in the shelter

and then processed according to the rules and regulations that apply, starting from the stages of file selection, writing, to interviews. And gender is not a barrier for a candidate to occupy a position, so that every ASN who meets the requirements according to the position being auctioned has the same opportunity.

So that the determination of names that will follow the selection process is very important and determines the gender representation in the final result. From the results of field observations and the results of interviews with the Regional Civil Service Agency, it is clear that in the process of determining names that will take part in the selection stages for high-ranking positions, they must be recommended or have permission from the Regional Head, however, until now there are no standard rules governing the percentage representation of women in determining positions both structurally and functionally starting from the determination of the names of the candidates for selection.

In addition, the participation and achievements of women's ASN at this time can already be seen from the presence of high-ranking female officials who have formal degrees up to the highest level of education, namely Strata III and have even attended training courses at Lemhannas, even competition has been seen by the participation of women in job auctions. echelon I, namely the Regional Secretary whose series of appointments has just been completed, and this proves that women have been able to participate actively and even compete in determining the position of mid-high leadership or the highest position for the state civil apparatus at the level or provincial level (as conveyed by the Regional Secretary North Sulawesi Province in the interview).

From the results of these interviews, it can be concluded that gender has not been one of the considerations in determining candidates for officials in high-ranking positions because there are no rules governing the representation of women in the intended JPT.

In addition to challenges that come from outside, challenges can come from within women themselves, or come from women as a group. This challenge is the weakness of women as individuals and as a group.

Weaknesses in themselves and in women's groups include the following: 1) It is difficult for women to get rid of feelings of shame and fear of being wrong which are the result of cultural structures. As a result, it is difficult for women to find their own identity as a person; 2) Personal ambition driven by uncontrollable emotions will create unhealthy competition among women themselves; 3) Stereotyped views have damaged women's mentality, causing women to be less able to think sharply and clearly, so that women are often left behind in decision making; 4) Lack of courage to accept power, let alone seize



power; 5) The environment creates women as nurturing beings who serve all the necessities of life, especially through the family environment. Therefore, women are mental as dependent beings; 6) Various mental disorders easily settle in women, such as self-alienation, excessive low self-esteem, extreme introverted attitudes, and so on; 7) Inability to forge a solid union because they cannot control jealousy and jealousy, so they easily fall apart; 8) Lack of interest in improving thinking skills and interested in motor skills; 9) Lack of awareness of the power of women as a group that can actually make changes in society; 10) Tend to create their own closed world, because they feel safer.

## **5. Discussion**

Empowerment of employees is one of the strategies to create superior employees in their performance. There are various strategies used by organizations to develop and update the capabilities and expertise of employees in dealing with various organizational problems. Empowerment is one way of developing employees through employee involvement, namely by giving enough authority and responsibility to complete tasks and make decisions. Employee empowerment is something that is very significant, strategic and comprehensive for every process of organizational activity in realizing the expected performance. In this empowerment, employees determine the survival of the organization because employees become more confident, responsible, creative and innovative in responding to various changes that are very dynamic at this time.

By empowering employees, they will show that they have more autonomy to take initiative, be more productive, and the results of their work will be of higher quality. Empowerment is an increase in ability, knowledge, and skills, as well as the various potentials they actually possess. employee. Empowerment of employees is essentially a cultural change, because it is difficult for empowerment to develop if the entire organizational culture does not fundamentally change, as shown by the presence of human-sourced energy. Furthermore, this power will empower other resources in a management, to achieve a goal as set by the organization.

Power (energy) in terms of employee human resources, is power that comes from humans, in the form of energy and thoughts that exist within the human himself, which shows the ownership of the ability to be able to work as well as possible, professionally, and full of responsibility, progress and compete positively in every organizational activity. Empowerment of employees in general means that these employees become more empowered than before, both in terms of authority, responsibility and individual abilities they have. HR is intended as human-sourced power. Human-sourced power This can also be

called energy or power that is inherent in the human being himself in the sense that it can be shown in terms of energy, power, ability, strength, existence, role, authority and responsibility and has competence in the form of ability (ability), good knowledge, skills, and attitude.

Clutterbuck, et al (1995:12) stated in their theory that "empowerment in terms of encouraging and allowing individuals to take personal responsibility for improving the way they do their jobs and contribute to the organization's goals." This opinion shows that empowerment is intended as an encouragement and allows individuals to take responsibility in order to improve the way they do their work and contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. After remuneration and discipline coaching, these human resources need to be encouraged or motivated so that they continue to work well and always provide the best performance for the organization.

Furthermore, Stewart (1994:73) proposed a theory of HR empowerment with the term "employee" known as "the eight e's of empowerment", saying that "people want to do a good job and will do so if you let them". On the basis of this description, it can be emphasized that this does not mean completely eliminating control over employees, but giving employees the freedom and authority to manage and develop their abilities in completing their duties and responsibilities in a more positive direction. The granting of authority here is a tool or legal basis to act or regulate and develop their ability to complete their duties and responsibilities in a more positive direction. The granting of authority here is a tool or legal basis to act or regulate and develop their ability to complete their duties and responsibilities in a more positive direction.

In empowering these employees according to Stewart (1994:73) employees must be given several possibilities to be able to develop their abilities such as developing a shared vision, educating employees, eliminating obstacles, expressing desires, providing motivation, providing equipment, evaluating, expecting success and problems. Thus, it can be stated that giving motivation to HR is an important thing because HR or staff is different from the leadership.

Mulyadi (1998:228) further states that employee empowerment is the duty and responsibility of the leadership. The opinion in full is as follows: "Managers are responsible for making employees empowered in making decisions about the work that is the responsibility of the employee concerned, through the provision of technology, to obtain quality information, education and training, as well as support from managers for employee."

Based on the description above, it can be stated that with the lack of opportunities for employees to be empowered, this is a barrier to increasing

their creativity and innovation. Empowerment needs to be done by creating a climate or condition that makes bureaucrats more empowered. The desired effort is to provide several possibilities for employees to develop themselves in a better direction. Therefore, actually the essence of civil servant empowerment is to give trust and ability to these employees that they have an important role in achieving government goals. So that leaders or superiors who empower employees, must have new abilities or skills for this purpose. This is in accordance with Ibrahim's statement (2000:27) that "The essence of real total quality is empowering and making decisions at the middle and lower levels in the organization."

Based on the description above, it is clear that empowering employees will provide benefits for both parties, namely for the employees themselves and the organization. Thus, the empowerment of civil servants must be carried out, so that the desired quality of service is produced for the community. Furthermore, with the ability of employees to contribute their best ideas and initiatives to the work environment, with a feeling of pleasure, a feeling of belonging, and a feeling of pride, the goals and objectives of the organization can be achieved with greater quality. Ideas or initiatives as well as being innovative are very beneficial for the future development of the organization, because without this effort the organization will become a static organization, and not ready to meet the demands of society who demand fast, precise and safe services.

Furthermore, Sedarmayanti (2008: 289) suggests the following: "The benefits of empowering human resources in organizations include: 1) as a management tool in order to empower various sources to achieve the goals that have been set; 2) as a management reformer in order to improve organizational performance; 3) as an initiator of the organization in order to take advantage of opportunities to improve and develop the organization; 4) as a mediator for other parties in order to improve organizational performance; 5) as a thinker in the context of organizational development."

Based on the description above, it can be stated that the first benefit or use of an employee empowerment is as a management tool in order to empower various sources to achieve the goals that have been set. Regarding these benefits, namely with employees who have been empowered, namely employees who have been given autonomy, freedom of creativity, given high trust, and are involved in every decision-making, it will be easier for the organization's goals to be achieved optimally. The granting of autonomy to employees is in the sense that employees are given rights, powers and obligations to regulate and manage their duties in accordance with their responsibilities based on existing provisions. Creativity is the power of thought

and enthusiasm that allows us to create something that has use, order, beauty, or significance from something that doesn't seem to exist.

Furthermore, trust means that employees are entrusted by superiors or higher leadership to carry out tasks according to their competence, obtain their rights according to the provisions, exercise their authority and exercise control for the success of tasks so that they are more effective and more efficient. Lastly, to empower these employees, it is necessary to involve employees both in planning tasks, implementing task plans and controlling task plans. Furthermore, the benefits of employee empowerment are management reformers in order to improve organizational performance. The increase in performance is both quantitative and qualitative the resulting performance. Quality service is service that fulfills the element of speed in service, namely the target time of service that can be completed within the time determined by the service delivery unit.

## **6. Conclusions**

Management is faced with a challenge to deal with and to handle employee careers. For this reason, a clear, systematic and well-planned career and development process concept is needed. Career as a means that has the opportunity to shape a person makes career planning by bringing together expertise, desires and goals with the needs and goals of the organization.

The conclusions to answer the questions in the formulation of the problem are: 1) Gender contestation in public office is still not optimal in North Sulawesi Province, this is due to uneven competence between men and women, lack of access and opportunities given to women and the internal factors of the women themselves who do not want to develop their own competence, plus the absence of regulations governing the representation of women in public positions; 2) The commitment of regional heads in determining high-level leadership positions in the framework of implementing gender mainstreaming within the North Sulawesi Provincial Government has begun to be seen from the positions held by women although it is not directly proportional to the number of employees, most of whom are women who have the same competence as men. However, it has not been properly translated by the relevant agencies, both in determining the nomination of candidates for high-ranking officials or other positions; 3) In determining JPT filling, they still use the conventional model which should use a non-gender model that is competent in filling out JPT in North Sulawesi Province.

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