

Study of the 30% Quota of Women's Representation Against the Number of Legislative Members of the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia

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Abstract

This research examines the phenomenon of unfulfilled 30% women's representation quota in Indonesia's House of Representatives despite affirmative policies being implemented for almost two decades. Using a normative juridical method supported by statutory, conceptual, comparative, and historical approaches, this research identifies various factors hampering women's representation. The results show that women's representation in the House of Representatives still reached only 20.52% in the 2019 Election, not meeting the 30% target. Identified structural barriers include women's subordination in politics, money politics practices, gender-biased recruitment systems, and women's political-social capital deficit. The research recommends comprehensive strategies including gender mainstreaming in policies, women's capacity development, gender-just legal reform, political culture transformation, and multi-stakeholder approaches. This research contributes to the development of gender politics studies and women's political representation, while providing input for policymakers to improve regulations on women's representation in the electoral system.

Keywords: women's representation, affirmative policy, gender-just democracy

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia as a sovereign state with Pancasila as the basis of the state has an obligation to realize justice for all its citizens without exception. (Febriansyah, 2017). As stated in the IV Paragraph of the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, the foundation of the Indonesian state is based on the noble values contained in Pancasila, including the principles of "just and civilized humanity" and "social justice for all Indonesian people". These values indicate the importance of equality and justice for all citizens, including women as a vital part of national development. (Nurisman, 2024). Constitutionally, equality of status for men and women has been guaranteed in Article 27 paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution. Indonesia's commitment to gender equality is also confirmed through the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) through Law No. 7 of 1984. As a form of implementing this commitment, Indonesia has implemented an affirmative action policy in the form of a 30% quota for women's representation in the legislative general election system.

This affirmative policy was first regulated in Law Number 12 of 2003 concerning the Election of Members of the DPR, DPD, and DPRD, which mandates a minimum of 30% female representation in the nomination of legislative members.(Irfandi et al., 2022). This policy was then refined through the implementation of the zipper system (placement of at least one woman for every three prospective candidates) which is regulated in Law No. 10 of 2008, and was most recently reaffirmed in Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections. Although it has been implemented for almost two decades, the results of this affirmative policy have not reached the expected target. Election data shows fluctuations in women's representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives: in the 2004 Election it was 11.24% (65 out of 550 seats), in the 2009 Election it increased to 17.86% (100 out of 560 seats), in the 2014 Election it decreased to 17.32% (97 seats), and in the 2019 Election it increased again to 20.52% (118 out of 575 seats)(Susiana, 2014). Although there was an increase in the last election, the number of women's representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives has not yet reached the critical figure of 30% as targeted.

The phenomenon of the 30% quota of women's representation in legislative institutions not being met is interesting to study in depth.(Asmara & Cahyowati, 2023). Various complex factors that become obstacles need to be identified, both from regulatory, socio-cultural, economic, and political aspects. Ann Philips in *The Politics of Presence* (1998) emphasized that politics for women is not only a battle of ideas and concepts, but must also be interpreted in a meaningful presence. The presence of women in significant numbers in legislative institutions is expected to be a force in fighting for women's rights and maximizing the role of women as policy makers. Women's participation in politics, especially in legislative institutions, is an important indicator in measuring the quality of a country's democracy(Nurdin, 2021). Proportional representation of women has significant implications for the quality of public policies produced, especially those concerning gender-sensitive issues. A study conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) shows that countries with higher representation of women in parliament tend to have better human development indices, especially in terms of reproductive health, education, and women's economic empowerment.

In the Indonesian context, the gap between the quota set and the actual representation of women in the Indonesian House of Representatives is still quite wide.(Wa Ode Nur Iman, 2023). This phenomenon is inseparable from the various structural and cultural challenges faced by women in participating in the political arena. Structurally, the open proportional election system implemented in Indonesia presents its own challenges for female legislative candidates, because it relies on popularity and strong political networks. Meanwhile, cultural factors such as gender stereotypes, women's double burdens, and lack of family and community support are still significant obstacles for women to enter the world of politics.(Mandasari, 2023). The uneven representation of women is also seen from the distribution of commissions in the Indonesian House of Representatives. Data shows that female legislators tend to be concentrated in commissions considered "feminine" such as education, health, and social welfare, while their presence is still very limited in commissions considered "masculine" such as defense, finance, and infrastructure. This uneven distribution has an impact on the still limited influence of women in strategic decision-making in various development sectors.

The implementation of the 30% quota policy for women's representation has not been balanced by strengthening the capacity and quality of female cadres in political parties.(Sulastri, 2020). The majority of political parties still view the quota policy as an administrative obligation to meet nomination requirements, not as a substantive commitment to fight for gender equality. As a result, recruitment of female legislative candidates is often carried out instantly before the election, without going through a systematic and ongoing cadre process. This has an impact on the limited

capacity and political experience of some female legislative candidates, which ultimately affects their chances of being elected. In addition, it should be noted that women's representation in legislative institutions is not only a matter of quantity, but also the quality of representation.(Dewi et al., 2021). The presence of women in the Indonesian House of Representatives is expected to provide real contributions in fighting for gender justice and women's rights through various gender-responsive legislative, supervision, and budgeting products. Therefore, efforts to increase the number of women's representation must be accompanied by strengthening the capacity and political commitment to fight for the gender equality agenda. Thus, the presence of women in legislative institutions is not only meaningful descriptively, but also substantively and symbolically.

This study attempts to examine the phenomenon of the unfulfilled quota of 30% representation of women in the legislative institution of the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia which has been regulated in affirmative policies for almost two decades. The main problem studied is the factors that cause the critical figure of 30% representation of women in the DPR RI to not be achieved even though there are regulations that mandate this. In addition, this study also questions the strategies and efforts that need to be made to increase the number of representation of female legislative members in the legislative institution of the DPR RI based on the principles of gender justice and equality, considering the importance of substantive representation of women in the process of making gender-responsive public policies.

This study aims to comprehensively analyze various structural, cultural, and institutional factors that cause the 30% quota of women's representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) legislative body to not be fulfilled, including identifying weaknesses in the implementation of existing affirmative policies. Furthermore, this study also aims to formulate effective strategies and policy recommendations to increase women's representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) legislative body, both quantitatively and qualitatively, by considering the Indonesian socio-political context and the principles of gender justice and equality. With an in-depth review, it is hoped that comprehensive and sustainable solutions can be identified to address the gender gap in political representation in Indonesia.

This research has theoretical significance in the development of gender politics studies and women's political representation in Indonesia, especially in the context of the effectiveness of affirmative policies and electoral systems on women's representation in legislative institutions. Practically, the results of this study can be a valuable reference for policy makers in improving regulations related to women's representation in the general election system, while also providing strategic input to political parties to improve the quality and quantity of women's cadres in their organizational structures. For civil society organizations and gender activists, this study can strengthen the basis of arguments in advocacy for increasing women's political participation. On a broader scale, this study contributes to efforts to fulfill Indonesia's commitment to gender equality as mandated in the constitution and international conventions, and encourages the realization of inclusive and gender-just democracy in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses the normative legal method as the main methodological framework in examining the problem of women's representation in the legislative institution of the Indonesian House of Representatives. The normative legal method was chosen because this study focuses on the analysis of legal norms and affirmative policies related to the 30% quota for women's representation in the legislative election system in Indonesia. The following is a description of the approach, data sources, data collection techniques and data analysis used in this study.

Research Approach

This study uses several approaches that are relevant to the normative legal method. First, the statute approach is applied to analyze various regulations related to women's representation, starting from the 1945 Constitution, Law No. 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of CEDAW, Law No. 12 of 2003, Law No. 10 of 2008, to Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections. Second, the conceptual approach is used to understand the concept of gender justice, affirmative action policies, and political representation in the context of the general election system in Indonesia. Third, the comparative approach is applied to compare the implementation of gender quota policies in Indonesia with best practices from other countries that have succeeded in increasing women's representation in legislative institutions. Fourth, the historical approach is used to trace the development of affirmative action policies on women's representation in Indonesia since they were first implemented until now.

Data Sources and Types

The data used in this study are secondary in nature, consisting of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials. Primary legal materials include laws and regulations relevant to women's representation, such as the 1945 Constitution, Law No. 7 of 1984, Law No. 12 of 2003, Law No. 10 of 2008, Law No. 7 of 2017, and Constitutional Court decisions related to the general election system. Secondary legal materials include scientific works, legal journals, research results, and publications from related institutions that discuss affirmative policies and women's representation in politics. Tertiary legal materials include legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other sources that provide guidance or explanations to primary and secondary legal materials.

Data collection technique

Data collection in this study was conducted through a comprehensive library research. This technique includes tracing and inventorying various laws and regulations, literature, scientific journals, research reports, statistical data on women's representation from the General Election Commission and the Central Statistics Agency, as well as other documents relevant to the research topic. In addition, to enrich the analysis, this study also collected data from the results of conferences, seminars, and scientific discussions related to women's representation in politics, as well as reports from civil society organizations engaged in gender and political issues.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative legal analysis techniques with a deductive approach. The analysis began with a review of legal norms and affirmative policies in general, then specific conclusions were drawn regarding their implementation in the context of women's representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives. The content analysis technique was also applied to review the substance of various laws and regulations and policies related to women's representation, as well as to identify weaknesses and inconsistencies. In the analysis process, systematic and teleological interpretations were also carried out to understand the purpose and spirit of the formation of affirmative policies for women's representation, as well as to identify factors that caused the 30% quota not to be achieved as targeted.

Theoretical Framework

This research is based on several theories that are relevant to the study of women's representation in politics. First, the theory of gender justice that emphasizes the importance of equal access and opportunity for women and men in various areas of life, including politics. Second, the theory of political representation from Hanna Pitkin that distinguishes between descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation, to analyze the quality of women's representation in legislative institutions. Third, the theory of affirmative action from Anne Phillips that explains the

importance of temporary special actions to address structural inequalities faced by discriminated groups. Fourth, the theory of legal feminism that criticizes gender bias in the formation and implementation of laws. This theoretical framework is used to analyze the problem of women's representation comprehensively, both from normative, structural, and cultural aspects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gender Injustice in Indonesian Politics

Gender injustice in Indonesian politics is rooted in the historical subordination of women.(Ana et al., 2023). Society often constructs gender as natural, so that differences in roles which are actually social formations are considered as biological provisions that cannot be changed.(Latief et al., 2019). This has an impact on the low representation of women in legislative institutions, especially the Indonesian House of Representatives, even though demographically the number of Indonesian women is almost equal to that of men. The secondary position of women in the political space is clearly seen from the position of women as legislative candidates who are often placed at the last number on the list of permanent candidates.(Satriawan & Firmansyah, 2019). Women also face barriers in the form of negative stereotypes and labels when trying to get involved in politics, such as the assumption that they are "running away from domestic obligations" or "unladylike" for daring to run for parliament.(Prihantoro, 2018). This practice of subordination does not only occur in politics, but also in various aspects of life such as education and economics, thus forming a systemic discrimination pattern that prevents women from contributing optimally in the political space. The subordination of women in the context of Indonesian politics can also be seen from the low level of political party support for women's agendas.(Hardjaloka, 2012). Although the law has confirmed the 30% quota for women's representation, political parties often only make the quota a mere formality without providing substantial support for the success of female legislative candidates. This is reflected in the lack of capacity building programs for female cadres and the absence of special funding allocated to support female legislative candidates' campaigns. The multiple discrimination experienced by women in politics is also further emphasized by the practice of double burden.(Hidayati, 2016). Women who enter the world of politics are not immediately freed from domestic responsibilities, so they have to manage their time and energy for two areas at once.(Argawidyanti et al., 2023). This double burden puts women in an unequal position in political competition because they have to allocate their time, energy, and thoughts to household matters while male competitors can devote their full focus to political activities. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of social infrastructure support such as childcare facilities or party meeting schedules that are not friendly to women's needs. Gender inequality in Indonesian politics is also reflected in political communication patterns that tend to be masculine. Political discussion forums, legislative debates, and party meetings often use a competitive, confrontational, and dominance-oriented communication style—a style that is culturally more identified with masculinity. This creates an unfriendly environment for women who may have a more collaborative and consensus-oriented approach to communication. As a result, women's voices are marginalized in political decision-making processes, even when they formally have equal positions with men. The marginalization of women in politics is also reinforced by the lack of gender-responsive policies and infrastructure in political institutions.(Alamona et al., 2017). Long and inflexible court schedules, work facilities that do not take into account women's specific needs, and the absence of adequate maternity leave policies are structural barriers that force women to work harder to be able to participate equally in the formal political process. This unfriendly political infrastructure not only makes it difficult for women who are already members of parliament, but also becomes a consideration for potential women to cancel their intention to enter the world of politics.(Mudrikah, 2015). Gender injustice in Indonesian politics is further exacerbated by the phenomenon of gender-based violence in politics (GBV). Female politicians are often the target of intimidation, harassment, and violence, both physical, psychological, and symbolic.(LewoLeba et al., 2023). In the digital era, this form of violence has evolved into cyber

harassment, doxing, and the spread of disinformation targeting women's gender identity. KBGP is not only a violation of human rights, but also a systemic mechanism to silence women's voices in the political arena. Research shows that this violence is not only carried out by political opponents, but also by party colleagues and the media, creating an intimidating and unsafe environment for women's political participation.

Structural Barriers to Women's Nominations

Structural barriers faced by women in political contestation include political resistance and lack of internal support.(Suaib, 2024). Politics is still seen as a "man's room" that women should not enter. The deep-rooted patriarchal culture causes women to have a double burden, where in addition to having to compete in male-dominated political battles, they are also still expected to fulfill traditional roles assigned to women.(Halizah & Faralita, 2023). The gap in access and public participation further worsens the conditions of women's representation.(Hall, 2023). The process of nominating members of parliament begins with internal party selection which is dominated by men. Unfair distribution of ballot numbers and a gender-biased nomination system are significant obstacles for women to be elected, as expressed by Luluk Nur Hamidah who was only elected after three election contests, with an increase in ballot number from 5 (2009) to 3 (2014) until finally getting ballot number 1 (2019). This access issue is a prerequisite for women's participation in politics, but it does not in itself produce social transformation and fair gender relations without further struggle from women themselves. The practice of money politics which is deeply rooted in the election system in Indonesia is also a significant structural obstacle for women(Iminullah et al., 2024). Transactional politics that prioritizes the financial capabilities of candidates directly harms female legislative candidates who generally have limited access to economic resources.(Asra et al., 2024). In the context of elections with an open proportional system, candidates with large campaign funds have a higher chance of winning the competition, thus creating systemic inequality for female legislative candidates who on average have lower financial capacity than male legislative candidates. The cadre recruitment system in political parties is also a structural inhibiting factor for women. The recruitment mechanism is not transparent and tends to use informal networks (old boys network) systematically eliminating women from the party's internal decision-making process. Male-dominated party leaders often prioritize personal closeness over capacity and competence in determining legislative candidates.(Riska Buhungo et al., 2024). This is reflected in the composition of party administrators at the central level which is still dominated by men, so that party policies, including the determination of candidates, tend to be less supportive of the agenda of increasing women's representation. Another aspect of the structural obstacles faced by women is the failure to implement effective affirmative action policies.(Tias et al., 2023). Although the 30% quota has been stipulated in the law, there are no strict sanctions for political parties that do not meet the quota, other than delaying administrative verification. Even more problematic, political parties often exploit legal loopholes by placing female candidates in electoral districts that are not the party's mass base or in non-strategic ballot numbers, so that even though the quota is formally met, in substance the chances of women being elected remain low. The absence of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the implementation of this affirmative policy further weakens its effectiveness.(Situmorang et al., 2025). Unequal campaign financing also poses a significant structural barrier for women. Indonesia's electoral system, which requires large campaign costs, puts women who have historically had limited access to financial resources at a distinct disadvantage. The average campaign cost for legislative elections is between Rp 500 million and Rp 1 billion per candidate, an amount far beyond the reach of most women.(Made et al., 2024). Meanwhile, regulations on campaign finance have not adopted a gender perspective that can compensate for this structural inequality, such as special incentives or campaign subsidies for female candidates. The polarization of identity politics in recent years has also created new structural barriers for women.(Dianti, 2017). The strengthening of identity politics, especially those based on conservative religious interpretations, has led public discourse in a direction

that tends to limit women's space for movement in politics. Public narratives that associate leadership with masculinity and use religious interpretations selectively to delegitimize women's political participation are serious challenges. Several studies have shown that female candidates often receive pressure from certain social groups who use religious sentiment to discredit their political competence, creating a dilemma for women to balance their religious identity and political ambitions.

Women's Political and Social Capital Deficit

Women face significant limitations in political and social capital in Indonesia's political arena.(Aziz et al., 2023). The social stigma against female candidates, especially those who are young and unmarried, is a major obstacle because leadership qualities are often associated with domestic affairs.(Yovita et al., 2022). The phenomenon of kinship in politics which is still strong also tends to sideline female legislative candidates from among mass organization/NGO activists who actually have a better understanding of community issues, especially women's issues.(Rizky, 2018). Limited economic capital is an additional obstacle for women, considering the high cost of campaigning. Procurement of campaign equipment, socialization, and mobilization of votes require a lot of money. However, according to Luluk Nur Hamidah, friendship and social networks can be alternative capital that is stronger than money, so women need to be active in organizations and expand social networks, not only with community leaders but also with the general public. This low social capital is further exacerbated by the lack of electability of female parliamentary candidates from among mass organization/NGO activists, even though they are parties who are closer to the community and understand the problems, especially women's issues. The problem of women's representation in politics is also exacerbated by the limited media exposure of female legislative candidates.(Umagapi, 2020). Mass media, both conventional and digital, tend to give a larger portion of news coverage to male politicians, while female candidates are often ignored or receive minimal coverage. When female candidates receive media attention, discussions often focus more on their physical attributes or marital status than on their vision, mission, and political capacity. This gender-biased media framing directly affects public perception and the electability of female candidates.(Isra Exmanda, 2023). The deficit of women's social capital is also exacerbated by the lack of support from community organizations for female legislative candidates. Unlike men who generally have wider access to various community organizations such as religious groups, alumni associations, or professional organizations, women often face obstacles to being actively involved in these organizations. This condition limits women's ability to build a solid support base, which is important capital in electoral political competition. In addition, unequal access to informal networks that are often the determining factor in Indonesian politics also positions women in a disadvantageous situation.(Iqbal & Harianto, 2022). In addition to deficits in conventional political and social capital, women also face gaps in their mastery of contemporary political technology. The digital era of political campaigns demands skills in utilizing social media, data analytics, and effective digital communication strategies. Recent research shows that female legislative candidates often lag behind in digital technology access and literacy compared to their male counterparts.(Program & Students, 2017). These limitations not only hamper the reach of female candidates' campaigns and visibility, but also make them more vulnerable to disinformation and manipulation of public opinion, which are often used as weapons in digital political battles. Political cadres that are not yet gender-responsive also contribute to the deficit of women's political capital.(Raya et al., 2025). Cadre development programs in most political parties are still designed with a masculine perspective that ignores social realities and the specific needs of women. Training materials that do not integrate gender issues, teaching methods that do not consider women's experiences and learning styles, and implementation times that often clash with domestic responsibilities limit women's participation in the cadre development process. As a result, when entering the arena of political competition, women are often less equipped with comprehensive political knowledge and skills than men. Inequality in intellectual and epistemic capital is also a hidden dimension of women's political capital deficit.(Inrastuti &

Polamolo, 2019). The construction of political knowledge dominated by masculine perspectives causes women's experiences, knowledge, and ways of thinking to often be underestimated or considered less relevant in political discourse. This is evident from the lack of space for feminist perspectives in public policy analysis, the marginalization of issues considered "women's affairs" such as reproductive health and childcare from the main political agenda, and the delegitimization of women's leadership based on gender stereotypes. This epistemic inequality not only limits women's substantive contributions to politics, but also reinforces the dominant narrative that questions women's capacity and credibility as political actors.(Haboddin, 2023).

Strategies for Increasing Women's Representation

To increase women's representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives based on gender justice and equality, a comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategy is needed. Strengthening the implementation of Presidential Instruction Number 9 of 2000 concerning Gender Mainstreaming needs to be done by integrating gender perspectives into policy planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.(Machmud, 2013). Including reforming the education curriculum that is still gender biased to break the long chain of patriarchy in Indonesian society. This approach is the foundation for creating collective awareness of the importance of gender justice and equality in all aspects of life, including politics. Women's capacity development must be carried out sustainably through political education, economic empowerment, and mentoring and strategic networks.(Marofah & Ma'ruf, 2022). Special programs that equip women with knowledge, skills, and confidence are essential to prepare them for the competitive political arena. This increase in women's resources is not only beneficial for promoting representation in politics, but also contributes to the progress of the nation as a whole by harnessing the potential of half of Indonesia's population.(Inhibitors & Enablers, 2024). Gender-just legal reform must be a priority by ensuring the implementation of policies that guarantee non-discrimination, equal rights, and women's participation in politics. A gender-just legal approach aims to eliminate systemic discrimination, promote equal opportunities, and protect women from various forms of violence and exploitation.(Lubis & Triadi, 2024). Effective implementation of gender-equitable laws can create a significant impact in improving women's welfare and forming a more inclusive society.(Hidayat, 2014). Political culture transformation is a fundamental aspect to change the patriarchal paradigm through public awareness campaigns and inclusive political education. This effort must involve various stakeholders, including political parties, civil society organizations, and the media to create a political environment that is more friendly to women's participation. By changing social norms and attitudes related to gender roles, it is hoped that a more just and equal society will be created that recognizes and values women's contributions in political decision-making that reflects the needs of the entire population in accordance with the principle of people's sovereignty.(Septiani et al., 2023). Strengthening women's institutions and organizations is a crucial strategy in efforts to increase women's representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives. Women's organizations such as women's political caucuses, women's activist networks, and gender study groups need to have their capacity strengthened to become an arena for developing female leaders.(Iskandar, 2016). Through these organizations, women can build solidarity, share experiences, and access wider support networks. In addition, institutional strengthening must also include internal political party reform by setting a minimum quota for women's representation in party management structures at all levels, so that women have strategic positions in party decision-making.(Pratiwi et al., 2022). A multi-stakeholder and collaborative approach is needed to create a more women-friendly political ecosystem. This includes the involvement of the mass media in promoting gender equality through balanced and substantial reporting on female legislative candidates, the role of educational institutions in instilling the values of gender equality from an early age, the contribution of religious institutions in reinterpreting religious texts that support gender equality, and the participation of the private sector in supporting women's political empowerment programs. This holistic approach is needed to overcome systemic

and cultural barriers that have been rooted in Indonesian society, so that women's representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives not only increases quantitatively but also brings qualitative changes in the public policy-making process. The digitalization of women's political empowerment strategies is imperative in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0. The development of digital platforms for political education, network building, and mobilization of support can significantly expand the reach of women's political empowerment programs.(Padilah et al., 2023). Initiatives such as virtual mentoring, online leadership training, and gender-responsive digital campaigns can help women overcome the geographical, time, and cost barriers that often prevent them from participating in conventional programs. Gender-sensitive digital literacy also needs to be developed to protect women politicians from increasing online gender-based violence, while maximizing the potential of digital media as an effective and inclusive campaign tool.(Center, 2024). An intersectional approach in strategies to increase women's representation is crucial to addressing the complexity of injustices faced by women from various backgrounds. Women are not a homogeneous group; they have diverse identities and experiences based on class, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, and sexual orientation. Strategies that ignore this diversity risk only benefiting groups of women who already have privilege. The development of affirmative action programs that consider intersectional dimensions, such as special quotas for women from minority groups or disadvantaged areas, can create more inclusive and substantive representation of women in the Indonesian House of Representatives. Reconstructing the narrative of political leadership from a feminist perspective needs to be encouraged to counter the hegemony of masculinity in the concept of leadership. Through research, publications, and public campaigns, leadership characteristics that are traditionally associated with femininity—such as empathy, collaboration, and participatory decision-making—need to be revalued and positioned as important strengths in contemporary democratic governance. Redefining political success that measures not only electoral victories but also substantive contributions to transformative and inclusive policies can open up space for alternative leadership models. These new narratives will not only strengthen the basis of women's legitimacy in politics, but also broaden the spectrum of political leadership that is recognized and appreciated in Indonesian society.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that although the affirmative policy of a 30% quota for women's representation has been implemented for almost two decades in Indonesia, its implementation has not reached the expected target. Election data shows fluctuations in women's representation in the Indonesian House of Representatives with the highest achievement in the 2019 Election of 20.52%, still below the critical figure of 30%. Structural obstacles identified include political resistance based on patriarchal culture, money politics practices, a gender-biased cadre recruitment system, and the placement of female legislative candidates in non-strategic ballot numbers. The limitations of women's political, social, and economic capital are exacerbated by the lack of internal support from political parties and unbalanced media exposure. The study emphasizes that women's representation is not just a matter of quantity, but also the quality of representation in fighting for gender justice through gender-responsive legislation, supervision, and budgeting. To increase women's representation, a comprehensive strategy is needed including gender mainstreaming in policy, women's capacity building, gender-just legal reform, political culture transformation, strengthening women's institutions, a multi-stakeholder approach, digitalization of empowerment strategies, and an intersectional approach that takes into account the diversity of women's identities. The implementation of this strategy is expected to not only increase women's representation quantitatively but also bring qualitative changes in the gender-just democratic process in Indonesia.

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