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Gender Sensitivity among Political Parties in Indonesia and India

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Abstract

In Indonesia and India the participation of women in politics is influenced by their traditional social roles. This implies that gender ideology, cultural patterns, and previously determined conceptions of suitable social roles dictate the roles of men and women. Although there is a quota system for ensuring that the representation of women in democratic representation reaches the 'critical minimum of 30%, it is a sad fact that gender sensitivity towards women as a political class is still severely lacking among the political parties both in Indonesia and in India. This is caused by the patriarchal gender bias against women that is inherent in political parties itself and also due to the lack of political education in gender sensitivity for both men and women. In Indonesia and India, the gender sensitivity of secular political parties is almost same but for the Muslim political parties, Indonesia has better condition than in India.

Keywords: gender sensitivity, political parties, India, Indonesia

1. Introduction

The core value of democracy is equality and includes Gender equality including in the political life of the State as equal citizens irrespective of gender. However the reality is that Social factors impede the full participation of women in political life both as participants and representatives and this ubiquitous situation has been acknowledged by the UN which recognizes women as the world's largest excluded category. For ensuring Gender Justice in society and for the expression of the problems that are unique to women, their empowerment as a class and their participation as equals in the Political life of the State is crucial. Empowerment of women through political participation, as envisaged here, is not the domination by women of men or of the offices of democracy, but rather the ability to influence political decisions and effect changes as well as participate in the institutions of democracy.

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However, several factors continue to impede the participation of women in Politics in established democracies. This paper presents the results of a comparative study of the reasons for the exclusion of women in politics, based on extensive field studies in Indonesia and India. It seeks to evaluate the nature of political participation of women and factors which enhance or impede the establishment of gender equality and representation as a basic democratic value in two representative democracies from Asia. The study analyzed the sensitivity among political parties in Indonesia and India as the democratic states in Asia. Also the impacts on the construction of their each cadres, constituents and communities. Those purposes are based on the reality from the previous study that there is a relation between political education in the political parties and the impact on the construction of their cadres, constituents, and communities. Those factors will influence the gender sensitivity mindset of the political party's cadres, constituents and communities in Indonesia and India.

2. Theoretical Background

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 in its very first Article 1, while asserting the inherent dignity of all humans and proclaims the equality of rights of all human addresses the issue of gender in the second Article and declares full entitlement to all rights and freedoms without gender discrimination.

The U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEADAW), upholds the political rights of women and specifically enumerates the right of women to vote in all general elections and referendums and to be elected to general assemblies, the right of women to participate in the formulation and implementation of governmental policies and to hold public offices and, their right of participation in non-governmental and socio-political organizations, as inalienable.

Political participation is the active involvement of individuals both men and women in their political life. Active involvement includes voting, gaining positions, joining political parties or to take part of political party campaigns and to exert influence in the process of decision making through political debate and dialogue with representatives they choose or use public power by holding public positions at various levels of administration local, national or international (Sahu & Yadav, 2018) [1].

Democracy necessitates the participation of the citizens in political affairs for legitimation of the decisions taken by the Executive. Conversely greater participation increases the chance of the public policies being more inclusive and representative of the will of the citizens as it influences the decision of the policy makers (Graves & Palmer, 1977)

[2]. Political Theorists identify several components of Political Participation (Schonfeld, 1975) [3].

Political participation encompasses more than the mere exercise of Right to vote as formal participation in democratic life of the Political State. In addition to vote, it includes political campaigning, cooperative action for political mobilisation and includes contact with other citizens for creating support for own political view (Dowse et al., 1973) [4]. Protest and Communication of political views are also important components of political participation (Milbrath et al., 1978) [5]. Political Participation however is socially determined through complex interaction of diverse factors. Socio-psychological, Socio-Religious, Socio-Economic and political structural environments influence political participation. Each of these categories encompasses various variables such as income, occupation, age, social background, place of residence, religion, education and, last but not least, gender. However, age, education, social status and sex have been identified as the predominant factors influencing political participation among citizens in democracies. Culture, political culture and acceptance, and religion are the major structural determinants of political participation (Lane, 1959) [6]. The oppression of women in politics is an universal phenomenon because exclusion of women has existed from birth in the world. There are several social factors that contribute women to passive involvement in politics, namely, patriarchal values, social commitment and lack of family awareness and low education (Khan, et al., 2018) [7]. Feminist critics identify the dearth of women political participation in their assigned gender roles and identify child birth and child rearing, fear of sexual exploitation and perception of politics as a Male domain to be the primary cause for alienation of women from politics (Lee, 1976) [8].

Exclusion and alienation of women from politics or their apathy and estrangement towards political participation may result from an interaction of various variables. Structural factors and gender role socialisation however predominate in determining expression of political participation and accounts for the domination of men in political participation (Tedin et al., 1977) [9]. The main core of participatory is popular sovereignty. Citizen participation is often equated with more democracy, better accountability, and more effective policy decisions (Abels, 2007) [10]. Likewise, women's participation in politics is expected to increase involvement in decision making in various fields

Political parties in Indonesia and India all have models of political education but each has its in own form. However, not all political parties have political education that is based on gender sensitivity, even if political parties that have women's wing organization, they usually have gender sensitivity but it is still low.

This can be proven by the acquisition for seats of women politicians in parliament who have not been able to meet the 30 % quota this condition occurs both in Indonesia and India. The following is a comparison table between the acquisition of seats in the Indonesian and Indian parliaments based on gender differences in 2009 and 2014.

TABLE 1: The representation of women in Parliament of Legislative Election Results in Indonesia and India

YEAR	INDONESIA Representation of Women in National Parliamentary			INDIA Representation of Women in Lok Sabha		
	Total no of Seat (election Held)	No. of Women Members Won	% of the Total Women Members	Total no of Seat (election Held)	No. of Women Members Won	No. of Women Members Won
2009	560	100	17.86	543	59	10.92
2014	560	97	17.32	543	61	11.20

Source: General Election Commissions (quoted from Indonesian Statistic Publication, 2015) [11] and Election Commission of India (2014) [12]

3. Research Methodology

This research is aimed to elaborate political education concerning the issues of gender sensitivity in both countries conducted by political parties also the impacts on the construction of their each cadres, constituents and communities. Those factors will influence the gender sensitivity mindset of the political party's cadres, constituents and communities in Indonesia and India. The paradigm pf the research is synthesizing both macro and micro-paradigm (*macro-micro link*). As in Sociology, this paradigm shows the development of reality in the relational process between actor and structure. The object of this research is the leader of political parties giving information on the cultural values of Indonesian and Indian society. The method used in this research is qualitative research based on the interpretative approach by collecting the data through observation, in-depth interview, documentation and focus group discussion conducted in Malang and New Delhi, followed by each three political parties in Indonesia (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, Partai Golongan Karya, and Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*) and India (*Bharatiya Janata Party*, *Indian National Congress* and Indian Union Muslim League). The data analysis technique is interactive analysis on Miles et al (2013)[13].

4. Analysis

On the basis of this research, it was revealed that each political party possessed relatively different platforms. The history of the establishment of PDIP began from the construction of Partai Demokrasi Indonesian (Indonesian Democratic Party) in 1973, where it is a party produced from the fusion of some political parties among others PNI (Indonesian National Party), MURBA ("National Communist" Political Party), IPKI (League of Upholders of Indonesian Independence), and two religious parties, Parkindo (Indonesian Christian Party) and Partai Katolik (Catholic Party). PDIP as the medium for struggle and political power of the people as stated in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution is line with the spirit and passion of the party born in June 1, 1945. In its realization, PDIP has a national identity, democracy, and social justice with democratic, independent, tenacious, and open characters which are a whole the basis for developing the nation and national characters and motivating power and struggling the people's aspiration to become a state policy. PDIP has a duty to defend and embody the state ideals, to practice *Pancasila* (Five basic Principles), and to serve as the way of life in the nation and the state and to prepare the national cadres. Hence, it is through political power and strength that PDIP is determined to actualize the life of the nation which shall be free, united, sovereign, just and prosperous under the Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia. PDI-P is party which has an aim to create a just and prosperous life. Therefore, its platform it to emphasize the democratic principle and carry out Pancasila with full devotion in order to prepare the cadres of the nation.

Golkar Party struggles to realize a New Indonesia with progressive, modern, unitary, peaceful, just and prosperous characters and with religious, and cautious people who give prominence on human rights and love of the country. Democratic and just society means that a civil society order which is independent, open, egalitarian, aware of law and environment will be created. Moreover, a society mastering the science and technology, possessing high work ethos and spirits and also discipline will also be realized. Golkar Party struggles to uphold, practice, and maintain Pancasila as the foundation and ideology of the nation in order to strengthen the Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia and realize the ideals of the proclamation through the implementation of the national development in all fields to create a democratic society, uphold the law supremacy, actualize the welfare of the people and human rights. Consequently, Golkar Party has a platform standing on the foundation of the Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and 1945 Constitution. As a consequence, from this platform, Golkar Party adopt a national insight: Indonesia is one and united.

PKS with the basis of Islam religion has an economic platform as follows: the wheel of the development of the economy moved by the corporate commercial community, equitable distribution of sustainable development, economic growth with high-added value, and gaining a just, welfare, and dignified society. Its political platform gives an emphasis on good governance, healthy democracy, an upholding rule of law, strong defense and security with clean, concerned, and professional human resources. All of these are based in a specific vision of this Party: PKS is a party which is influential in either the political power, participation, or opinion to create a civil Indonesia society.

The political education model based on gender sensitivity is not given a specific name in the political parties in Indonesia, but each has its own model. The political education conducted by PDIP is by holding a political school attended by the figures in the political parties presenting the following materials: the socialization of 4 pillars: Pancasila, the Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia, 1945 Constitution and *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Unity and Diversity). But no specific thing could be found out in the political education related to the women's interests namely the equality between women and men, but the reinforcement of women's empowerment could be identified namely the cooperation in the establishment of women empowerment and SBW (Koperasi Setia Budi Wanita) programs.

For PDIP, a specific political education based on gender sensitivity has not existed, but some programs on empowerment for women have been implemented by its cadres. In Golkar Party, any program related to gender sensitivity is dependent on the policy from the central management, since in this party itself women are still considered as complement, and no structured programs based on gender sensitivity have not been formally launched. Therefore, any programs dealing with women are contingent on each branch in local management. For PKS, the issue of gender which was mostly discussed and became its program is protection for women and children, especially those dealing with bullying cases, immoral acts on children and women, and coercion for early marriage. But no political education which is special for gender sensitivity has been established, since the existing programs have been emphasized on the building of the family and women tenacity.

In India, women participation in politics related to the kind of culture. However, there were also some women figures in Indian politics, such as Sonia Gandhi but it is not the products of the system regarding with gender equality. Right now, there are more women are involving politics in India, so, their participation in political parties increases. In India, politics are still men domination. The highest participation of women in Indian

politics is at the level of panchayat (villages). So, the participation of women is still also lacking, under the quota

According to Shvebova (2002) [14], it can be proved when women become politicians, they cannot stop being women. The womenness should be in the first place, since it contains different intellectual strengths and creative potentials. Ideological and psychological constraints for women that enter the parliament include the followings:

(a) gender ideology and cultural patterns and social roles that are previously determined to be given to women and men, (b) women's less self-confidence to make themselves the candidates; (c) women's perception that politics is a "bad game" and (d) the ways women are described in mass media. These characteristics occur in Indonesia and India.

From the reality, it can be stated that the paradigm of the roles of women in the life of the state and the nation is still complement in nature since a perspective that the main duty of women in the domestic domain still exists in the society. According to interview with one of research subjects an Indian Educationist, and veteran Student activist and the National Organising secretary of the *Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad* (ABVP) stated that BJP have the issue of women issue, since a long time ago. Currently, the condition has been changed because of internal and external factors. The participation of women in public life is less. However, now the political parties, government, and everybody believe that women should actively participate in politics and public life. Most of the working population now are women. Their participation is increasing.

In ABVP organization, that he is working with BJP, the largest student organization in India, and ABVP are working on the increase of women participation. In all level of the organization, girls should be there, or there should be a unique program to increase the women participation. Last year, there are some crimes causing fear among women. Some self-defence programs were conducted. Only under ABVP, there is more than eight lack (160 million) women have been trained. ABVP are the king efforting to that level. Another thing, in politics, now in parliament, ABVP cannot achieve the consensus, even though in BJP, we have optimized the plan to increase the participation of women.At the local government, I think there are almost 50 % of the local government reserved for the women. This program has been offered for thirty years. After one or two next elections, the woman leader will come. Now, they are in the process of learning how to be part of the government. According to Sunil, every institution, government, campus, organization, etc, should make an effort to reserve the position for women. BJP is very keen on women participation, and congress party is not very keen on women participation, but they still have women participation. However, in the communist party,

there is not women participation at all, as we can see in polite biro where there are no women.

According to the constituent of Congress Party, at least in India we ever had a woman president, prime minister, as well as also ministers. However, it does not mean that the problems of women have been solved. I think, especially in the aspect of politics, women in politics are not in the right way. Women in politics are complicated because they have to be economically independent, and there is also social construction of gender as well. That is why women have not been able to raise very much in politics. there are still some areas where the women should work on politics because we got so many reservations in political parties, in universities, colleges, and schools, to put women in mainstream. However, still, there are so many problems, violence making the women in suffer. Therefore, India still needs work over upon that to achieve equality. It is 33 % reservation for women at assembly and 50 % in the Panchayat. However, there is still debate regarding why should women get the reservation. Within the Congress party, has women organization to represent to women participation in politics — almost all the parties working on that. Congress gave India Indira Gandhi as the first Indian president and prime minister. It shows that Congress is always working for women. The reality here, gender is socially constructed. For women going back home at ten at night, for example, there will be a negative image. Moreover, the institutions of gender at various level in India have been established. However, the institutions have their politics.

According to the constituent of Muslim League, generally talking about gender in India, the south part has different characteristics with the north part. After the research subject coming here (JNU- in north part), she found that the men are more dominant than women. However, among the Moslems in south part of India, they are more democratic since the influences of outer impact the south part such as the Hambali mazhab from Arabian countries. Such condition influenced by the geographical position of south part of India which directly has the ocean border. So, there are many ideas coming from outside. They migrate to India and being an Indian. If you see north India, they are landlocked.

She said that women Muslim India should actively participate in politics. Theologically speaking, Islamic support the equality between men and women. Based on, Islam, every woman should come forward. However, the problem is that most of them cannot fully understand the urgency of this women participation. One of the forms of equality can be seen from the freedom of women to go to the mosque together with men as in Bandung (Indonesia) which is hardly find in the north part of India. However, in the south part of India, we still can see the women perform *Jum'ah* prayer in the mosque and five times

prayer. Even as a woman, if she does not go, then her mother will get angry. So, in her place, you are sitting quietly in the most is an obligation even as a woman. We have this principle because we follow *Syafi'i mazhab* and not Hanafi. Moreover, for the Arab tribe in my society, they are matriarchy. Therefore, woman is more powerful than man. In Madras, the society is also matriarchy. It is very cultural. In India, according to her, the number of quota for women is 33 %. However, women are becoming the face of men, especially their husband and the party men. The existence of women is only the tools of the party to fill the position. So, in here, reservation is only one of the steps. However, it could also be manipulated. So, changing is always run. How to assure that the women politician will benefit for the empowering of women and obtaining the women interest? It is a kind of gradual process. So, it also will take times. Because the party, including also the Islamic one, not always a concern and consistent working with its ideology. On the other hand, we also do not trust the political party. In *jamaat Islamic* for example, we can find special wing of the organization for women. Even *jama'at Islamic* in term of its women, they are more potent than *jama'at Islamic. Jama'at Islamic* is still finding the format. Even if they have the programs for the women empowerment, it is still general. For example, the program is for women, but the speaker is still entirely men. According to the constituent First of all, the position within the organization between men and women should be equal. Moreover, in term of women issues, Islamic political parties tend to discuss only the way women dress, and the kind of hijab the wear. There is no such kind of critical point of view to understand the life of women fully. So, it becomes only a kind of formality. Even also possibly will oppress women. No one is ready to hear and see her outside matters. The political party has the women wing, but formality and has not full struggling for the interests of women.

5. Conclusion

The quota system also guarantee women to be able to reach a 'critical minority" of 30%. This system is aimed at improving women's representativeness in the parliament. This aim is relevant, remembering that in Indonesia more than 50% of the population are women, and women voters in Indonesia are 57%. This shows that the election system has given a significant opportunity, although the pro and contra for this system is underway up to now. Those who support the quota system argue that as a reality we can study the number of women as the members of the Parliament of the Republic of Indonesia on the basis of the results of the 2009 legislative general election has not fulfilled the quota of 30%, namely 17.86%, while men, 82.14%.

The **patriarchy** ideology still exist. The people living in Indonesia from the family, then develops into political parties wherein a "masculine model" in the political arena men are still very dominant in making political rules and mostly in defining the standard of evaluation.

Moreover, political life is often arranged in line with norms and values of men and a particular case, even with the lifestyle of men, for example, the political model based on the idea of the "loser and winner", competition and confrontation, instead of respect one another, collaboration and consensus. This environment is often in contradiction with women, refusing the politics as a whole or even the political style of men.

Differences between men and women also arise in the content and priority in making decisions determined based on interests, backgrounds and work patterns of the two sexes. Women tend to give priorities to social problems, such as social assurance, health services and issues on children and women.

The men-dominated work patterns are then reflected in the work schedules of parliament members which are often characterized by a weak structure to support working mothers in general and especially women parliament members. Women show flexibility and hard work, besides doing activities in their parties and constituents, they should also help various committees, work networks with women in their parties and the multi-parties level, and also with women out of the parliament. Dealing with the constraint where women still show minor mental state, the mental state giving more emphasis on activities in the domestic sector also makes their position difficult.

From the findings above, it can be concluded that in Indonesia and also India have not a political education model based on the gender sensitivity. The inexistent political education based on gender sensitivity is also influenced by the ideology of political party and patriarchy ideology (culture).

The impact of the gender sensitivity among political parties in Indonesia could not be fully felt by their constituents /communities. In India for secular political parties almost same with political parties in Indonesia, but for Muslim political party, Indonesia has better condition than in India. Previous research conducted by Sahu and Yadav did not compare between two countries with a different majority of the people's religion and also did not compare gender sensitivity in Islamic political parties. So, it becomes very important further research that examines the problem of whether there are religious differences held by politicians and the level of women's participation in politics

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