

# *Political Education for Female Cadres as an Effort to Gender Equality in Politics*

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**Abstract**—This study aims to describe the role of the *Nasional Demokrat (Nasdem)* party of the Regional Executive Board (DPW) of West Sumatra in conducting political education to female cadres as an effort to create gender equality in politics. Political parties are obliged to educate cadres by paying attention to justice and gender equality. This research employs qualitative approach with descriptive method. The participants were selected based on non-probability sampling with purposive sampling technique. To validate the data, triangulation of data sources were done. The research findings show that the party made several efforts, namely (1) the preparation of political education activities in the annual work program is conducted by division of political education of DPW of Nasdem of West Sumatra; (2) DPW of Nasdem of West Sumatra coordinated, coached and facilitated Regional Governing Councils (DPD) of Nasdem Party in West Sumatera in conducting the activities of political education to cadres.

**Keywords**—female cadres, gender equality, political education

## I. INTRODUCTION

Political education is necessary in a democratic country. Citizens need to gain knowledge and understanding and even enlightenment around the political issues that occur. According to [1] states that political education is the efforts devoted by formal and informal institutions of education, which seek to shape and foster a political personality on every citizen that is in line with the political culture of people assigned in political institutions. By shaping and growing political awareness at all levels, citizens become aware and able to gain their own consciousness.

It is so essential that political education is given to every citizen. In relation to this, some parties have juridical and moral obligations in conducting political education to citizens. The Political Party Law provides an open space for women to participate actively in both the internal level of the party and in the process of public policy making. From the internal level of the party, the Law requires the 30% quota of representation of women in the management of political parties both at the central and regional levels and also must be fulfilled by the party in proposing legislative.

Female politicians have different concerns comparing to male politicians, they tend to pay attention to social needs that are full of services such as public health rather than issues of power defense. This statement is supported by a number of research results in several countries, such as in the United States that the high number of women's political representation in parliament is related to the lack of infant mortality in the United States in the period of 1990-2012. Results indicate that higher percentages of women in state legislatures are associated with reduced IMRs [2] and also occurs in the Indian Bihar region [3] attributed to women politicians concern in promoting the progress of public health. Result find that the increased participation of women at local governance led to increased survival rate of children belonging to richer households. Then, the life satisfaction/quality of life is high in countries with high women's political representation because one of the indicators used is public health service is given high priority. Result says that people report the highest levels of life satisfaction in nations where women have greater political representation, where military spending is low, and where health care spending is high, controlling for a variety of other factors[4].

However, it should also be recognized that women's leadership does not necessarily affect political policies such as research results in some cities in the United States where the position of female mayors does not affect the size of local government, regional expenditure and crime rates. Nevertheless, women who win in political contestation are women who have superior political skills compared to men[5]. So, it is not based on *charity*, but political skill of women politicians. Political skills of women politicians are sharpened when they involve in political parties.

More specifically, [6] states that the goal of political education for women is not to seize the dominance of the political power of men but to form a balance of roles in practical politics so that the interests of both parties can be accommodated fairly and proportionately. Based on this rationale, this article aims to describe the role of the *nasdem* party of the Regional Executive Council (DPW) of West

Sumatra in conducting political education of female cadres as an effort to create gender equality in politics.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHOD

This research employs qualitative design with descriptive method. It was conducted in the Regional Executive Council (DPW) of *nasdem* party of West Sumatera. The research instrument is the researcher itself. The determination of informant in this research was done through non probability sampling with purposive sampling technique. Meanwhile, the data were collected through interview and documentation. Data analysis includes data reduction, data presentation and drawing and verifying conclusions. Triangulation technique was used to testing the validity of the data.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

There were some principles of political education, as suggested [7] fundamental principles underlying the implementation of political education can be described as follows: (a) Cultural educational platform, which means the given political education must contain educational values in accordance with the cultural style in which the education is given. The important thing to avoid is when political education received is contrary to the cultural style, resulting in a contradictory situation in its implementation; (b) Democratic principles means that the giving of political education is done democratically and not using authoritarian ways. In addition, political education should be provided in a persuasive manner by respecting the relationship between the giver and the recipient of education accompanied by mutual communication between the two; (c) Integralistic principle, which means the political education given must be balanced with the progress of the nation in the fields of economy, politics, culture, ideology and religion. Thus, the education received has a balanced proportion; (d) The principle of benefit means political education should bring benefits to the well-being of the individual, especially for the purpose of the future. Political education is expected to lead an individual in playing his/her status and role as a political actor; (e) The gradual, tiered and continuous principle means political education is given according to the character and age of the individual.

Age differences affect a person's mindset so that given political education is expected to be in accordance with the mental and psychological conditions of the individual. The implementation of tiered and sustainable principle is crucial because political education is a long process and is a long live education. These principles show that political education is conducted by considering so many things that it cannot be treated spontaneously, incidentally, and indoctrinally.

Looking to the position, role, and relationships of women and politics, then the discussion will be focused on the concept of gender and politics because gender perceptions affect women's participation in politics. Gender comes from the word "gender" (English) which is defined as sex. But the sex here is not sex biologically, but socially and psychologically. In principle, the gender concept focuses on the differences in roles between men and women, formed by

society according to social norms and socio-cultural values of the people concerned [8]. Gender is not a biological and irreversible gender-based distinction, but a distinct role a society attaches to men and women so that it (i) can be altered by attempting to alter perceptions, and (ii) the role of gender may differ in one society and the other.

Sidney Verba argues that the most important contribution of women in politics is that they are more interested in doing something useful for society than to broaden the scope of power [9], [10]. Robert L.Cord, et.al in the book *Political Science* [11] states that Politics is the human interaction involved in the authoritative allocations of values for society. It involves people deciding, or having decided for them, how to distribute material goods and services or even symbolic values and it includes the procedures and "power plays" involved in reaching those decision. Politics is human interaction in the context of power, wherever it is.

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Party has several roles in empowering the female cadres, *first*, the preparation of political education activities in the annual work program of the political education field of The Regional Executive Board (DPW) of *Nasdem* party of West Sumatera. In the report on the use of political education assistance funds in 2015, *DPW* of *Nasdem* conducted a political education in the form of a legislative school for members of the *Nasdem* faction in the parliament and party leaders. In 2016, the party conducted a political education activity in the form of legislative meeting. In 2017, the party held 3 political education activities namely: (i) Training of Trainers (ToT) Desk activities for witness at sub-district level; (ii) consolidation of faction of *Nasdem* at Parliament of West Sumatera, and (iii) Training of Trainers of Witness Commission of *Nasdem*.

*Secondly*, the Regional Executive Board (DPW) of *Nasdem* of West Sumatera coordinates, guides and facilitates the Regional Governing Councils of *Nasdem* party in West Sumatera in doing cadres political education activities. For example, political education activities conducted by the Regional Governing Councils of *Nasdem* party of Padang City held in December 2016, carried out on self-help by the cadres and the *Nasdem* faction of the city councils. However, in the last 2 years, the political education of cadres, especially for the empowerment of female cadres has never been conducted. Political education that is lack of attention raises the lack of cadres political participation. Seeing female cadres apart from internal constraints in partying activities, they are also relatively less participative in party activities. In party activities such as party meetings in Regional Governing Councils, women are less participative and frequently absent.

If traced to the principles of political education presented as [7], according to the researcher, the political education held by the Regional Governing Councils (DPD) of *Nasdem* Party from 2015-2017 has fulfilled the following principles: (a) cultural education. Political education conducted by the the Regional Executive Board (DPW) such as legislative meeting, faction consolidation and the Committee of National Witnesses(KSN) focus on West Sumatera as the

basis for giving material, which means that cadres are given understanding about the territory of West Sumatra so that they get understand, sensitive and responsive to the needs of the community;

(b) The democratic principle. Based on the information of the research informant, the way to deliver political education materials tend to be one-way, such as by using lecturing method. However, the *Nasdem* Party does not force the cadres; (c) the principle of integralism, Based on information from the informants and data obtained from the *Nasdem* Party, it was revealed that the party had not fulfilled the integralistic principle because in providing political education to the cadres, it did not distinguish the form of political education through special programs and budgets for women cadres, whereas in the party platform it was stated that the party seeks to promoting gender equality in politics. Special programs and special budgets for women's political education are the internal affirmative policies of the party to promote gender equality in politics.

(d) The principle of benefit. The form of legislative school (political education's program in 2015) is in form of political education, legislative meeting and consolidation of fractions are beneficial for the implementation of the duties of the members of the house of representatives. Materials given by the speakers such as prevention and handling of corruption, drug eradication..

(e) the tiered and sustainable principles. If examined on this principle in the political education activities of the *Nasdem* Party, it has not been seen that the party conducts continuous political education for the cadres, except for the consolidation of the factions with party executives which is held annually.

However, in relation to the role of Regional Executive Board (DPW) of *Nasdem* Party of West Sumatra in conducting political education to increase the political participation of female cadres, it can be seen as less than optimal for the following reasons: (i) the absence of special areas for women empowerment in the Structure of the Regional Executive Board (DPW) of *Nasdem* Party of West Sumatra; (ii) the absence of special programs and budgets for political education activities of female cadres. As stated by *Nasdem* women cadres that the needs of women and men differ in political party.

Similarly, Amirullah's [7] research on 3 political parties, Golkar, PPP and PKS, found that none of the three parties have special policies and strategic programs related to women's political empowerment in order to increase understanding, awareness and women's participation in the mandate of 30 percent quota policy, both in vision and mission, platform, statutes and bylaws and results of big meetings such as *Munas*, *Rakornas*, and *Rakerda*. Affirmative action is aimed at reducing gender disparity in politics. The special act of internal party in fostering female party cadres is a strategic step in improving the quality of women representation in legislative institutions and women's political participation [12], [13].

Ideally, there is a different form of political education between male and female cadres because the two depart from unequal points and also face unequal challenges. Women engaged in practical politics face greater challenges than men. This statement departs from the socio-cultural construction of a society that has not been permissive with women politicians.

According to [14] that women who work outside the home in this case in practical political activities in both party and government have two challenges. On the one hand, she has to struggle with the stigma of a discreet society, and on the other side the woman must also demonstrate his ability to assume the task and manage the organization.

When women are faced with two choices between political activity outside the home or focus on family care, the choice is likely to fall on the second option. However, it also does not neglect the intellectual and organizational skills of female cadres. Therefore, a political education strategy is needed to increase the political participation of party cadres. Indicators of such political participation are (i) initiation of female cadres in party program planning; (ii) liveliness in party activities, (iii) participate in the success of party programs, and (iv) submit themselves and/or are willing to be nominated as legislative candidates.

Women who are active in party politics are based on several reasons: (a) political rights are a part of human rights and women's political rights are rights that must be protected, respected and fulfilled by the state and accepted by society. Indonesia has ratified several international covenants on the recognition and protection of women's rights including political rights; (b) Politics is the business of every individual regardless of gender and gender role inherent in socio-cultural construction of society. Politics is also women's business; (c) women - just like men - have political needs and interests that must be fought for. Both of these tend to be more successful when they are self-styled because they better understand their needs and interests than others. The political path through political parties is the right path for it because politics adheres to the power and the main goal of political parties is to seize and retain power to implement its policies and programs.

Therefore, political parties need to take the following steps to empower women cadres toward gender equality in politics, namely: (i) it requires training and special programs of political education for female cadres in which those programs provide suitable experiences to the needs of women because women tend to have different needs with men, and (ii) there needs to be internal regulation to encourage the political participation of female cadres.

## V. CONCLUSION

Political education activities in the Regional Executive Board (DPW) of *Nasdem* Party do not distinguish the form of political education for male and female cadres. In increasing the political participation of women cadres through political education, the party seems has not optimally done the effort for the following reasons: (i) the absence of a special field/division for women's

empowerment in the Structure of the Executive Board of the *Nasdem* Party of West Sumatra; (ii) the absence of special programs and budgets for political education activities of female cadres. Women's empowerment does not have to be rigidly defined because of the low literacy and leadership qualities, but empowerment should be directed at increasing women's access to power so that women can take part in controlling and influencing the government.

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