

The Urgency of Women's Legislative Representation: Education and Political Participation

Humiati^{1✉}, Kristina Sulatri²

^{1,2}Independent University of Pasuruan, Indonesia

Email: humiatiaryono@gmail.com

DOI: 10.31958/jies.v5i2.16615

Article info

Abstract

Article History

Received:

10/09/2025

Revised ed:

10/10/2025

Accepted :

30/11/2025



Corresponding author

Women's representation in legislative bodies is a constitutional mandate and a key indicator of democratic quality and gender equality. Although Indonesia has established a minimum 30% quota through Law No. 7 of 2017 on General Elections, representation reached only 21% in the 2019–2024 period. This study examines the constitutional and gender equality foundations of women's representation, identifies barriers to achieving the quota, and analyzes the role of education in enhancing women's political participation. Using a qualitative normative-juridical approach and literature review, the research analyzes statutory regulations, scholarly works, and statistical data. Findings show that women's representation is grounded in Articles 27 and 28 of the 1945 Constitution and reinforced by international commitments such as CEDAW. Major obstacles include entrenched patriarchal culture, double burden, limited access to education, gender-biased political party systems, weak law enforcement, economic constraints, political violence, and an electoral system that does not fully support affirmative action. Education functions as a transformative instrument through formal education, practical political training, and political literacy development. Policy recommendations include integrating gender equality into curricula, strengthening structured political training, enhancing digital literacy, and implementing regulatory reforms such as the zipper system and legal protection against gender-based political violence.

Keywords: *Women's Representation, Gender Equality, Political Participation*

Abstrak

Keterwakilan perempuan di lembaga legislatif merupakan mandat konstitusional sekaligus indikator penting kualitas demokrasi dan kesetaraan gender. Meskipun Indonesia telah menetapkan kuota minimal 30% melalui Undang-Undang Nomor 7 Tahun 2017 tentang Pemilihan Umum, capaian keterwakilan perempuan pada periode 2019–2024 baru mencapai 21%. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis landasan konstitusional dan perspektif kesetaraan gender atas urgensi keterwakilan perempuan, mengidentifikasi hambatan pencapaian kuota, serta mengkaji peran pendidikan dalam meningkatkan partisipasi politik perempuan di lembaga legislatif. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif normatif-yuridis dengan kajian peraturan perundang-undangan, literatur ilmiah, dan data statistik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keterwakilan perempuan memiliki dasar kuat dalam Pasal 27 dan 28 UUD NRI 1945 serta diperkuat oleh komitmen internasional seperti CEDAW. Hambatan utama meliputi budaya patriarki, beban ganda, keterbatasan akses pendidikan, sistem partai politik yang bias gender, lemahnya penegakan hukum, keterbatasan sumber daya ekonomi, kekerasan politik berbasis gender, serta sistem pemilu yang belum sepenuhnya mendukung kebijakan afirmatif. Pendidikan berperan sebagai instrumen transformatif melalui

penguatan pendidikan formal, pelatihan politik praktis, dan pengembangan literasi politik. Reformasi kurikulum, penguatan pendidikan politik terstruktur, peningkatan literasi digital, serta penerapan zipper system dan perlindungan hukum terhadap kekerasan politik berbasis gender menjadi langkah strategis untuk mewujudkan keterwakilan perempuan yang adil dan demokratis.

Kata Kunci: *Keterwakilan Perempuan, Kesetaraan Gender, Partisipasi Politik*

INTRODUCTION

Women's political participation in legislative institutions is an important indicator of the success of democracy and gender equality in a country (Paxton, P., & Kunovich, 20023). In the Indonesian context, the journey of democracy after the 1998 reforms has provided a wider space for women's involvement in politics, but its implementation still faces various structural and cultural challenges (Sa'diah et al., 2022; Sari et al., 2023; Shair-Rosenfield, S., & Wood, 2017a). After the 1998 reform era, the Indonesian nation has held 5 (five) General Elections (Pemilu) to elect members of legislative institutions, namely the People's Representative Council of the Republic of (R, 2023), the Regional Representative Council DPRD of the Province, the Regency/City DPRD, and the Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia (R, 2023)(Wulandari, 2020). Article 1 number 1 of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections stipulates that the sovereignty of the people is implemented through the election of legislative bodies and executive institutions (President and Vice President) directly, generally, freely, secretly, honestly and fairly (luber jurdil) within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia.

Although Article 27 paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia guarantees equal status for all citizens before the law and government without exception, the reality on the ground shows that there is still a significant gap in women's representation in legislative institutions (Muhyi et al., 2018). Data from the General Elections Commission (RI, 2019) shows that in the 2019 Election, of the total 575 elected members of the Indonesian House of Representatives, only 118 people or 20.52% were women (RI, 2019). This figure experienced a slight increase from the previous period, which only reached 17.32% in 2014, but was still far from the minimum quota of 30% as mandated in Article 245 of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections (UI, 2020). A similar phenomenon also occurred at the Provincial DPRD and Regency/City DPRD levels, where women's representation on average still ranged from 15-18% (R, 2023)

Initial observations conducted by researchers in several regions in East Java, particularly Pasuruan Regency and Pasuruan City, during the January-March 2025 period, indicate that the low representation of women in legislative institutions is inseparable from the complexity of social, cultural, economic, and educational factors.

Interviews with 15 female legislative candidates who were not elected in the 2024 Election revealed that the majority of them (73%) admitted to experiencing obstacles in terms of campaign strategies, political networks, and an in-depth understanding of public policy issues. The majority of them (60%) had a maximum educational background equivalent to a diploma or bachelor's degree with limited political experience. Meanwhile, data from political parties shows that female legislative candidates who were successfully elected generally had at least a master's degree and had participated in various political education programs such as party schools, women's leadership training, and political mentoring (Field Observations, 2025).

This study focuses on legislative elections, with a specific focus on women's representation and the role of education in enhancing their political participation. Gender equality in politics deserves serious attention because it implies a fair distribution of roles, functions, responsibilities, rights, and spaces for activity for men and women in public decision-making processes (Phillips, 1995). Low female participation in politics impacts not only numerical representation but also the quality of gender-responsive public policies (Krook, 2009). Research by Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004) in India demonstrates that increased female representation in legislative institutions is positively correlated with policies that are more responsive to the needs of women and children, such as the provision of clean water, sanitation, and education.

Legally, Indonesia has demonstrated its commitment to increasing women's representation through a gender quota system in elections. Article 245 of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections stipulates that the list of prospective legislative candidates must contain at least 30% (thirty percent) female representation. This provision is reinforced by Article 246 paragraph (2), which requires that every three (3) candidates must have at least one female candidate (zipper system). However, the implementation of this quota policy has not shown optimal results (Pratiwi, C. S., & Prastiwi, 2021a). Research by Mulyono (2019) identified that the main obstacle lies not in regulations but in implementation at the political party level, which tends to position women as "complements" to fulfill administrative requirements without providing adequate political support.

One crucial factor influencing women's representation in legislative institutions is education. Education not only provides technical knowledge and skills but also shapes political awareness, self-confidence, and the ability to compete in the competitive political arena (Campbell dan Wolbrecht, 2006; Burns et al., 2006). Women's formal education levels have been shown to be positively correlated with their political participation, both as voters and as legislative candidates (Verba et al., 1995). A study by Schlozman et al (2021). In the United States showed that women with higher education were 3.5 times more likely to be actively involved in politics than women with less education. Similar research by Salmond (2006) in various democracies

demonstrated that proportional representation systems combined with high levels of female education resulted in better representation of women in parliament.

In Indonesia, research by Soetjipto (2011) found that the majority of successfully elected female legislators had at least a bachelor's degree (S1), with a significant proportion holding postgraduate degrees. A longitudinal study by Shair-Rosenfield and Wood (2017) analyzed Indonesian election data from 2004 to 2014 and found that education level was the most consistent predictor of female legislative candidate success, even stronger than wealth or family connections. However, women's access to higher education in Indonesia still faces various structural barriers. Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (Rika Widianita, 2023) shows that the Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) for women in higher education reached 34.2%, still lower than that of men, which reached 36.8%. This gap is even sharper in rural and underdeveloped areas, where patriarchal culture remains deeply entrenched.

Beyond formal education, specialized political education also plays a vital role in preparing women to enter the legislative arena. Political education encompasses an understanding of electoral systems, campaign strategies, political management, public speaking, negotiation, and political leadership (Burke, Mary Ann, 2001). Research by Krook and Norris (2014) in various countries shows that specialized political training programs for women, such as women's political schools and political mentoring, have proven effective in increasing the capacity and electability of female legislative candidates. In Indonesia, various institutions have implemented political education programs for women, such as the Indonesian Women's School of Politics (Sekolah Perempuan), the Association for Elections and Democracy (Perludem), and programs run by political parties. Evaluations of alumni of these programs indicate that they have a higher success rate in local and national elections (Pratiwi, C. S., & Pratiwi, 2021b).

Women's political literacy and critical awareness are also products of education. Educated women tend to be more critical of gender injustice, more aware of their political rights, and more motivated to engage in the political process (Delli Carpini, M. X., & Keeter, 1996). Research by Inglehart and Norris (2023) shows that changes in cultural values toward gender equality are strongly influenced by the level of education of the community, especially women. In countries with high levels of female education, resistance to women's political participation tends to be lower. Researchers' observations in the field also found that women with higher education are more confident in voicing their political aspirations and are better able to overcome the social stigma often attached to women who are active in politics.

Although the importance of education has been widely recognized, there remains a knowledge gap regarding how education can be specifically designed and implemented to maximize its impact on increasing women's representation in Indonesia's legislature. Previous studies have tended to be descriptive or focused on a single aspect, failing to integrate various dimensions of education (formal, political, and

literacy) within a comprehensive analytical framework. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by in-depth analyzing the role of education in its various dimensions in increasing women's political participation, particularly in the context of representation in the legislature.

Based on the above background, this study aims to: (1) analyze the urgency of women's representation in legislative institutions from a constitutional and gender equality perspective; (2) identify factors that hinder the achievement of the 30% quota of women's representation in legislative institutions; (3) analyze the role of formal education, political education and political literacy in increasing women's participation and representation in legislative institutions and (4) formulate policy recommendations to increase women's representation in legislative institutions through strengthening education. This study is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to the development of policies to increase women's political participation in Indonesia.

METHODS

Types and Approaches

This study uses a qualitative research method with a normative-judicial approach and library research. The normative-judicial approach is used to analyze legal provisions and regulations governing women's representation in legislative institutions, specifically the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections.

Data Types and Sources

This research uses secondary data sourced from: 1) primary legal materials including laws and regulations related to women's representation, namely: the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, specifically Article 27 paragraph (1) and Article 28 paragraph (2); Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, specifically Article 245; Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence; and Law Number 4 of 2024 concerning the Welfare of Mothers and Children. 2) secondary legal materials, including scientific books on gender, politics, and constitutional law; national and international scientific journals on women's political participation; scientific articles on women's education and representation in legislative institutions; and previous research results relevant to the research topic. 3) tertiary legal materials, including legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, and statistical data on women's representation in legislative institutions from the Indonesian House of Representatives.

Data Collection Technique

Data were collected through library research by reading and studying laws and regulations relevant to women's representation in legislative institutions, reviewing scientific literature in the form of books, journals, and articles discussing gender, politics, education, and women's political participation, collecting statistical data on women's representation in Indonesian legislative institutions and recording and documenting information relevant to the research focus.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data was analyzed using a descriptive-qualitative analysis method with the following steps: first, identification, namely identifying problems related to the low representation of women in legislative institutions and the factors that influence it, especially the role of education. Second, classification, namely grouping data based on certain categories, such as the legal basis for women's representation, gender concepts, forms of gender inequality, and the role of education in increasing women's political participation. Third, interpretation, namely, interpreting relevant legal provisions and theories to understand the urgency of women's representation in legislative institutions and the role of education in increasing women's political participation. Fourth, systematization, namely compiling the results of the analysis systematically and logically to answer the research problem. Fifth, evaluation, namely evaluating the implementation of the 30% quota policy for women's representation in legislative institutions and the effectiveness of education in increasing women's political participation. Sixth, conclusion, namely drawing conclusions based on the results of the analysis to provide recommendations regarding increasing women's representation in legislative institutions through education. Data analysis was conducted inductively, namely starting from specific data (statutory regulations, theories, and statistical data) to then draw general conclusions about the urgency of women's representation in legislative institutions and the crucial role of education in increasing women's political participation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The Urgency of Women's Representation in Legislative Institutions from a Constitutional and Gender Equality Perspective

The urgency of women's representation in legislative institutions has a strong foundation both constitutionally and from a gender equality perspective. The Indonesian Constitution provides a clear guarantee of equal rights between men and women. Article 27 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia stipulates that all people have equal standing before the law and government and are obliged to uphold the law and government without exception (1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia). This provision affirms the principle of equality before the law, which is the foundation of a democratic state based on the rule of law. Furthermore, Article 28, paragraph (2) of the

1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia grants every person the right to advance themselves by collectively fighting for rights to build society, the nation, and the state. This constitutional provision implicitly opens up space for women to hold public office, including in legislative institutions.

From an international legal perspective, Indonesia has ratified several important instruments. The 1981 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was ratified through Law Number 7 of 1984 (Law Number 7 of 1984). CEDAW stipulates state obligations to eliminate discrimination, empower women, accelerate gender equality, and revise laws and regulations that provide equal treatment to women. In addition, the 1952 Convention on the Political Rights of Women, ratified through Law Number 68 of 1958, Article 1 stipulates that women have the right to vote in all elections with equal status with men without discrimination, and Article 2 stipulates that women can be elected to all bodies regulated by national law with equal status (Law Number 68 of 1958).

The urgency of women's representation in legislative institutions from a gender equality perspective has several fundamental urgencies, namely: 1) the realization of inclusive popular sovereignty: Given the almost balanced composition of the Indonesian population between men and women, representation in legislative institutions should reflect this demographic composition. According to Phillips (1995), descriptive representation is important to ensure that the diversity of society is reflected in political institutions. 2) Formulation of gender-responsive policies: The presence of women in legislative institutions has been proven to produce legal products that are more responsive to women's issues. Some legislative products that reflect increased legal protection for women include Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence and Law Number 4 of 2024 concerning the Welfare of Mothers and Children. 2) Elimination of structural gender injustice: Women's representation is an important instrument for changing the structure of gender injustice that has long been constructed in society. Lovenduski (2005) states that women's political representation is a prerequisite for achieving substantive equality, not just formal equality. 3) Substantive democratization: true democracy requires the active participation of all citizens in the political process. Young (2000) in "Inclusion and Democracy" emphasizes that the inclusion of marginalized groups, including women, is a crucial element of deliberative democracy.

Thus, Article 245 of Law Number 7 of 2017 stipulates that women's representation in legislative institutions should be at least 30% (Law Number 7 of 2017). This affirmative action policy is the state's effort to accelerate the achievement of gender equality in the political sphere. According to Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005), gender quotas are a form of "fast track" to increase women's representation in politics. The 30% quota is seen as the "critical mass" necessary for women to exert significant influence in the legislative process.

Factors Inhibiting the Achievement of the 30% Quota for Women's Representation

Despite an adequate legal framework, data shows that Indonesian women's representation in legislative bodies for the 2019-2024 period only reached 21%, an increase from 18% in the previous period, but still far from the 30% target. Research identifies several key inhibiting factors:

First, a deeply rooted patriarchal culture: the patriarchal culture inherent in society gives rise to various forms of discrimination, such as subordination, marginalization, and stereotyping, that hinder equality, where this culture views women as individuals who must submit to male control. This patriarchal culture manifests in several forms of gender inequality: 1) subordination: placing women in a lower position than other groups with authority, creating social injustice and hindering women's development. 2) negative stereotypes: forms of unfair negative assessment of women, such as the assumption that women are less rational, too emotional, or unsuitable for political leadership. 3) marginalization: Women are positioned as entities that are less important than men, limiting women's roles in the public sector so that they do not have access to and control over resources. According to Walby (1990), patriarchy in the modern context operates through various social structures including the household, work, the state, violence, and cultural institutions. In the political context, patriarchy creates a "glass ceiling" that limits women from reaching the highest leadership positions.

Second, the double burden: the workload received by women is greater than that of men, where women who take on roles in the public sector cannot set aside their central role in the domestic sector as housewives. Women's dual role, which differs from men's single role, has an unfair impact on the struggle for economic resources and political power due to the difference in the intensity of time spent. Women must balance household responsibilities, childcare, and political careers simultaneously. Hochschild (1989) in "The Second Shift" explains that working women face a "second shift" when they return home to do domestic work. In a political context, this double burden becomes a significant obstacle because political activity requires a lot of time, energy, and mobility.

Third, limited access to education: Women's lower access to education impacts their access to employment. Although the formal education gap has narrowed, the gap in political education and political literacy remains significant. Women often do not receive adequate political socialization from an early age. According to Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995), civic skills acquired through education, the workplace, and civic organizations are essential for political participation. Limited access to political leadership training hinders women's ability to compete in the electoral political arena.

Fourth, weak legal protection and enforcement: World Bank data from 2024 shows that women only enjoy two-thirds of the legal rights enjoyed by men. Although a 30% quota regulation exists, enforcement mechanisms and sanctions for political parties that fail to meet the quota remain weak. Krook (2014) identified that the effectiveness of gender quotas depends on institutional design, including placement mechanisms (placement mandates), clear sanctions, and a supportive electoral system. In Indonesia, although political parties are required to nominate at least 30% female candidates, there is no guarantee that female candidates are placed in winnable positions.

Fifth, inequality in the political party system: political parties as gatekeepers in political recruitment often do not provide equal opportunities for women. Some problems in political parties: 1) gender-biased recruitment: political parties tend to recruit candidates who have strong political, economic, and social capital, which is generally more owned by men. 2) placement in non-electable sequence numbers: even though the 30% quota is met in the candidate list, women are often placed at the bottom of the sequence numbers or in electoral districts that are difficult to win. 3) limited access to the party power structure: strategic positions in the political party structure are still dominated by men, so that women have limited influence in internal party decision-making. Lovenduski and Norris (1993) explain that the candidate selection process in political parties is a "secret garden of politics" full of hidden gender bias.

Sixth, limited economic resources: Women's economic disempowerment has the potential to exacerbate various problems, including political participation. Political campaigns require significant funding, and women generally have more limited access to funding sources. According to a study by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (Ballington, 2003), high political costs are a structural barrier for women. Women have more limited access to business networks, donors, and campaign funding sources.

Seventh, political violence against women: Women involved in politics often face various forms of violence, intimidation, and harassment, both verbal and physical, aimed at discrediting and hindering their political participation. Krook and Restrepo Sanín (2014) define violence against women in politics (VAWIP) as violence directed at women because they are women or that disproportionately affects women. This violence serves as a deterrent for women from engaging in politics.

Eighth, the social construction of political leadership: There is a view that women who manage the private sector of the household on a daily basis are considered incapable of managing the public sector. This social construction creates the perception that political leadership is a masculine domain. Eagly and Karau (2002) in their "role congruity theory" explain that the mismatch between women's traditional gender roles and leadership roles creates an evaluative bias against female leaders. The stereotype that leaders must be assertive, aggressive, and possess dominant characteristics

associated with masculinity makes women less suitable for political leadership positions.

Ninth, an inadequate electoral system: Indonesia uses an open proportional representation system for legislative elections to the House of Representatives (R, 2023), provincial councils (DPRD) and city/district councils (DPRD), where candidates compete to win the most votes. This system has an ambivalent impact on women's representation. On the one hand, a proportional representation system with closed lists has proven more effective in increasing women's representation because parties can ensure women are elected. On the other hand, the open system implemented in Indonesia allows voters the freedom to choose individual candidates, so the effectiveness of quotas is reduced if not accompanied by massive campaigning and financial support.

Tenth, lack of role models and mentoring: the limited number of female political figures who can serve as role models and mentors for other women aspiring to enter politics. Political networks and mentoring, which are generally dominated by men, make it difficult for women to build effective political capacity and strategies.

Thus, achieving the 30% quota for women's representation in legislative institutions is hampered by structural factors (patriarchal culture, electoral system, political party structure), individual factors (double burden, limited political and economic education), and cultural factors (stereotypes, social constructions of leadership). These obstacles are interconnected and reinforce each other, creating a multi-layered barrier that must be addressed comprehensively.

The Role of Formal Education, Political Education, and Political Literacy in Increasing Women's Participation and Representation

Education in its various forms plays a crucial role in increasing women's participation and representation in legislative bodies. This research identifies three interrelated dimensions of education:

The Role of Formal Education

Formal education is an important foundation for women's political participation through several mechanisms: first, the development of cognitive and critical capacity: formal education develops critical, analytical, and argumentative thinking skills that are essential for effective political participation. According to Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry (1996), education increases "cognitive sophistication" that enables individuals to understand complex political issues and identify their political interests. For women, formal education provides the ability to: 1) Analyze public policy and its impact on women. 2) Identify and articulate women's political interests. 3) Construct strong arguments in political discourse. 4) Understand the mechanisms of the political system and how it works.

Second, increasing political awareness: formal education increases women's political awareness by introducing them to the concepts of democracy, human rights, gender equality, and civic participation. Gender-responsive civic education can shape women's critical awareness of their position in socio-political structures and their rights as citizens. Third, the formation of social capital and networks: educational institutions

provide a space for building social networks and social capital that are essential for political mobilization. Coleman (2008) explains that social capital formed through networks and norms of trust facilitates collective action. For women, the educational environment can be a space for building solidarity, sharing experiences, and organizing women's movements.

Fourth, accessibility to economic resources: Women's lower access to education impacts their access to employment. Formal education opens up better-paying jobs, which in turn increases economic independence. This economic independence is crucial for overcoming financial barriers to political participation. Fifth, legitimacy and credibility: A high level of formal education provides legitimacy and credibility for women who want to enter politics. In societies with persistent gender bias, educational credentials can help women overcome negative stereotypes and demonstrate their competence.

The Role of Political Education

Political education encompasses specific learning about political systems, political processes, and practical political skills. Key components of political education include: First, understanding political systems and structures: Political education provides an in-depth understanding of: 1) Political institutional structures (legislative, executive, and judicial). 2) Electoral systems and election mechanisms. 3) The roles and functions of political parties. 4) The legislative process and public policymaking. 5) The relationships between various political actors. This understanding is essential for women to navigate the political system effectively and identify entry points for participation. Second, developing practical political skills: Political education develops practical skills such as: a) Public speaking and political communication, b) Campaigning and electoral strategy, c) Negotiation and coalition building, d) Campaign management and fundraising, e) Media relations and digital communication, f) Mass mobilization and community organizing. Verba, Scholzman, and Brady (1995) emphasize the importance of "civic skills" that can be learned and developed through political education and training.

Third, gender-responsive political socialization: The function of political party socialization includes efforts to create an image that the party fights for the public interest and educates members to be aware of their responsibilities as citizens who place the interests of the state above personal and group interests. Gender-responsive political education specifically: 1) Identifying and addressing specific obstacles faced by women in politics, 2) Providing a feminist perspective in political analysis, 3) Building awareness of gender issues in public policy, 4) Developing strategies to address gender discrimination and bias in politics.

Fourth, building political self-confidence (political efficacy): Political education increases "political efficacy," an individual's belief that they can understand politics and that their participation can make a difference. For women who have internalized negative stereotypes, political education can build confidence that they are capable and have the right to participate in politics. Fifth, mentoring and role modeling: Effective political education programs include a mentoring component in which experienced female politicians guide and share their experiences with women new to politics. The

presence of female role models in politics is crucial for inspiring and motivating other women.

The Role of Political Literacy

Political literacy refers to the ability to access, understand, evaluate, and use political information critically. In the digital era, political literacy also encompasses media and digital literacy skills. First, access and understanding of political information: political literacy enables women to: 1) access various sources of political information, 2) understand contemporary political issues, 3) critically evaluate political programs and promises, 4) distinguish accurate information from disinformation and propaganda, 5) understand available mechanisms for political participation. According to Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996), political knowledge is a prerequisite for meaningful and effective political participation.

Second, policy analysis skills from a gender perspective: Gender-responsive political literacy equips women with the ability to: 1) Analyze the impact of public policies on women, 2) Identify gender bias in government regulations and programs, 3) Formulate gender-responsive policy alternatives, 4) Understand the concepts of gender budgeting and gender mainstreaming. Third, participation in digital political discourse: in the digital era, political literacy includes the ability to participate in online political discourse through social media and digital platforms. Women with good political literacy can: 1) Use social media for campaigns and mobilization, 2) Build alternative narratives against gender stereotypes, 3) Organize online movements and advocacy, 4) Access and disseminate political information effectively. Third, advocacy and lobbying skills: Political literacy develops women's ability to conduct policy advocacy and lobbying, including: 1) Understanding the policy-making process and points of intervention, 2) Building arguments and evidence-based advocacy, 3) Identifying key stakeholders and building alliances, 4) Using public participation mechanisms in the legislative process.

The interconnection of the three dimensions of education, namely formal, political, and literacy, is interrelated and strengthens each other in increasing women's political participation, namely formal education provides a cognitive foundation and access to resources and political education applies cognitive capacity to specific political contexts and political literacy enables sustainable and effective participation practices.

Based on the analysis, the three dimensions of education increase women's representation by increasing the supply side, which increases the number of women with the capacity, motivation, and confidence to run as candidates. Furthermore, it strengthens the demand side, which increases voter awareness of the importance of women's representation and the competence of female candidates. Furthermore, it acts as a structural transformation that changes political culture and challenges patriarchal norms through educated women who bring new perspectives and values, and increases the effectiveness of female politicians in carrying out their representation and legislative functions. Various studies show a positive correlation between education and women's political participation. Burns, Schlozman, and Verba (2021) found that education is the strongest predictor of political participation, and the effect is stronger for women than for men. In line with Paxton and Kunovich (2023), a cross-country study found that women's education is positively correlated with the proportion of women in parliament.

Furthermore, UNESCO (2014) reported that countries with a high gender parity index in education tend to have higher female political representation.

Thus, education in its three dimensions: formal, political, and literacy, plays a fundamental role in increasing women's participation and representation in legislative institutions. Formal education builds a foundation of capacity, political education develops specific skills, and political literacy enables sustained participation. Investing in women's education, particularly gender-responsive political education and political literacy, is an effective long-term strategy for increasing women's representation.

Policy Recommendations to Increase Women's Representation through Strengthening Education

Based on an analysis of the urgency, obstacles, and role of education in increasing women's representation, this study formulates comprehensive policy recommendations that cover the dimensions of formal education, political education, and political literacy: first, Transformation of Formal and Academic Education: This recommendation positions educational institutions as the vanguard in eliminating gender bias from an early age. The policy begins with the integration of gender equality curriculum at all levels of education, which includes eliminating stereotypes in textbooks and introducing female leadership *role models*. To strengthen the supply side of candidates, a special scholarship program is proposed for women in politics and government, especially for those from 3T areas. In addition, universities are encouraged to become centers of research and advocacy through the establishment of Gender and Political Studies Centers on each campus, to ensure that national policies are always based on data and scientific evidence.

Second, Strengthening Practical Political Education : At the practical level, recommendations focus on building the direct capacity of candidates. A strategic step is the establishment of the National Women's Political Academy as an official institution that trains technical skills such as *public speaking* , campaign strategy, and negotiation. This policy also targets political party institutions by requiring the allocation of 30% of political education funds specifically for women. As a complement, political internship programs in legislative institutions (DPR/DPRD) are provided for young women to provide direct experience in technocratic and political processes, so they are not awkward when entering real contests.

Third, Improving Political and Digital Literacy : In the information age, literacy is key to sustainable participation. Recommendations include a national multimedia campaign to change public perceptions of women's leadership and the use of interactive digital platforms as flexible learning resources. Specifically, female candidates will be provided with digital literacy training to address unique challenges in the online world, such as *cyberbullying* and disinformation. This support will be strengthened by the establishment of a Gender Politics Information Center and Library, which will document the track records and successes of female politicians for public reference.

Fourth, Regulatory Reform and Socio-Cultural Change : This recommendation targets the root of structural barriers through stricter enforcement of the 30% quota system (such as the implementation of *the zipper system* and disqualification sanctions for parties that violate it). In addition, it is proposed to establish a Special Agency for Women's Political Empowerment and provide campaign funding assistance from the

State Budget to help female candidates overcome financial barriers. On the social side, policies focus on gender mainstreaming in government, legal protection against gender-based political violence, and the involvement of community leaders (including men as *male champions*) to collectively deconstruct patriarchal culture.

Table1. Matrix 1 Implementation of The Three-Phase Strategic Policy

Phase 1	Foundation	Focus on strengthening regulations, establishing academies, and launching digital platforms.
Phase 2	Acceleration	Focus on implementing massive training, strengthening internal parties, and expanding programs to the regional level.
Phase 3	Consolidation	Focus on impact evaluation, institutionalization of best practices, and achieving the target of minimum 30% representation in parliament.

Discussion

Women's representation in legislative institutions is a constitutional mandate (Article 27 paragraph 1 of the 1945 Constitution) and an international commitment (CEDAW) that is essential for substantive democratization. The presence of women is not simply a matter of numbers, but key to creating gender-responsive policies, such as the Law on the Crime of Sexual Violence (TPKS) and the Law on the Welfare of Mothers and Children. Without adequate representation, the legislative agenda will be trapped in a "masculine bias" that tends to ignore the specific interests of women and other vulnerable groups. Despite a strong legal basis, the reality is that women's representation is still stuck at 21% (2019-2024 period), far from the target quota of 30%. The main obstacles are rooted in a patriarchal culture that gives rise to negative stereotypes and the phenomenon of *the glass ceiling*. Women face the challenges of a double burden (*time poverty*), limited financial capital, a gender-biased party recruitment system, and the threat of gender-based political violence (*VAWIP*), which creates a deterrent effect for prospective new leaders.

Education has emerged as the most effective instrument of transformation to break the chain of these obstacles through three pillars: 1) Formal Education: Provides a cognitive foundation, critical thinking skills, and academic legitimacy. Highly educated women have a much greater probability of political involvement due to the economic independence and credibility they build, 2) Political Education: Hones practical skills such as *public speaking*, campaign strategy, and negotiation. This pathway also opens access to a *mentorship system* that is crucial for aspiring politicians, 3) Political Literacy: Empowers women to critically navigate information in the digital era, conduct data-driven advocacy, and build alternative narratives to challenge gender stereotypes in society (Robbins & Judge, 2013; Septiani et al., 2025; Siahaan & Hidayat, 2019; Tambusai & Umami, 2019).

To achieve the parity target, integrated measures are needed, encompassing regulatory reform and capacity building. Key recommendations include the

implementation of a *zipper system* in elections, the allocation of special party funds for women's cadre development, and the integration of a gender perspective into the national curriculum. Through long-term investment in women's education and law enforcement against political violence, Indonesia can create a more just and inclusive political ecosystem that reflects the true demographic composition of its population.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on the urgency of women's representation in legislative institutions: the role of education in increasing women's political participation shows that increasing women's representation in legislative institutions is a crucial constitutional mandate for realizing substantive democracy, but its achievement is still hampered by the thick wall of patriarchal culture, double burdens (*time poverty*), and internal mechanisms of political parties that are gender biased. To overcome these obstacles, education is present as a multidimensional transformative instrument that integrates formal education as a foundation for cognitive capacity, political education as a builder of practical skills and self-confidence (political *efficacy*), and political literacy as a tool for navigating information and data-based advocacy. The synergy of these three dimensions of education effectively strengthens the supply side *through* the birth of competent female candidates, while improving the demand side *by* changing voter perceptions. Therefore, strategic investment in gender-responsive education, accompanied by regulatory reforms such as the implementation of *the zipper system* and legal protection against political violence, is the main key to dismantling the masculine structure in politics and ensuring that women's representation reaches the 30% quota to achieve equitable parity.

REFERENCES

- Ballington, J. (Ed. . (2003). *The Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns: A Handbook on Political Finance*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/funding-of-political-parties-and-election-campaigns.pdf>
- Burke, Mary Ann, L. O. P. (2001). *Developing Community Empowered Schools*. Corwin Press, Inc. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/216030496?sourcetype=Scholarly Journals>
- Burns, N., Schlozman, K. L., & Verba, S. (2021). *The Private Roots of Public Action: Gender, Equality, and Political Participation* (H. U. Press (ed.)).
- Campbell dan Wolbrecht, 2006; Burns et al., 2001). (2006). See Jane run: Women politicians as role models for adolescents. *The Journal of Politics*, 68(2), 233–247.
- Delli Carpini, M. X., & Keeter, S. (1996). *What Americans Know about Politics and Why It Matters*. Yale University Press.
- Duflo, R. C. dan E. (2004). Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India. *Econometrica*, 72(5), 1409–1443.

- Eagly, A. H dan Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, 109(3), 573–598.
- Hochschild, A dan Machung, A. (1989). *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home*. Viking.
- Inglehart, R., & Norris, P. (2023). *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change Around the World*. Cambridge University Press.
- Krook, M. L., & Norris, P. (2014). Beyond Quotas: Strategies to Promote Gender Equality in Elected Office. *Political Studies*, 62(1), 2–20.
- Krook, M. L. (2009). *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender Reform across the Globe*. Oxford University Press.
- Lovenduski, J dan Norris, P. (1993). *Gender and Party Politics*. SAGE Publications.
- Lovenduski, J. (2005). *eminizing Politics*. Polity Press.
- Muhyi, A., Tinggi, S., Islam, A., & Karawang, A. (2018). Paradigma Integrasi Ilmu Pengetahuan UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. *MUTSAQQAFIN: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Dan Bahasa Arab*, 1(01), 45–64.
- Mulyono. (2019). *Dinamika Politik dan Representasi Perempuan di Indonesia*. Prenada Media.
- Paxton, P., & Kunovich, S. (20023). Women's political representation: The importance of ideology, resources, and political systems. *Social Forces*, 82(1), 87–113.
- Phillips, A. (1995). *he Politics of Presence: Issues in Democracy and Group Representation*. Clarendon Press.
- Pratiwi, C. S., & Pratiwi, A. M. (2021a). hambatan Struktural dan Budaya terhadap Representasi Politik Perempuan di Indonesia. *Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan*, 14(2), 145–162.
- Pratiwi, C. S., & Pratiwi, A. M. (2021b). No TitaHambatan Struktural dan Budaya terhadap Representasi Politik Perempuan di Indonesia. *Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan*, 14(2), 145–162.
- R, D. (2023). *Laporan Kinerja DPR RI Tahun Sidang 2022–2023: Gotong Royong Membangun Negeri*. Sekretariat Jenderal DPR RI.
- RI, K. (2019). *Laporan Penyelenggaraan Pemilihan Umum Tahun 2019*. Komisi Pemilihan Umum Republik Indonesia.
- Rika Widianita, D. (2023). Analisis struktur kovariansi indikator terkait kesehatan yang berfokus pada kesehatan subjektif pada lansia yang tinggal di rumah. *AT-TAWASSUTH: Jurnal Ekonomi Islam*, VIII(I), 1–19.
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2013). Organizational Behavior. In *Sustainability*

(Switzerland) (Vol. 11, Issue 1). Paerson.

- Sa'diah, H., Zuhendri, Z., & Fadriati, F. (2022). Development of Learning Videos with Kinemaster-Based Stop Motion Animations on Thematic Learning in Elementary Schools. *Journal of Islamic Education Students (JIES)*, 2(2), 91. <https://doi.org/10.31958/jies.v2i2.5615>
- Salmond, R. (2006). Proportional Representation and Female Parliamentarians. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 31(2), 175–193.
- Sari, I. P., Warmansyah, J., Yuningsih, R., Sari, M., & Yandira, R. (2023). The Effect of Realistic Mathematics Education (RME) Learning Approach on the Ability to Recognize Number Concepts in Children Aged 4-5 Years. *Journal of Islamic Education Students (JIES)*, 3(1), 38. <https://doi.org/10.31958/jies.v3i1.8654>
- Septiani, D. N., Alfirdaus, L. K., & Yuwono, T. (2025). Kolaborasi Pemerintah, Swasta Dan Masyarakat Dalam Pencegahan Stunting: Studi Kasus Program Rumah Sigap (Siapkan Generasi Anak Berprestasi) Di Kelurahan Bandarharjo Kecamatan Semarang Utara. *Journal of Politic and Government Studies*, 14(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/https://ejournal3.undip.ac.id/index.php/jpgs/article/view/48732>
- Shair-Rosenfield, S., & Wood, R. M. (2017a). Governing Boards: The Effect of Female Representation on Public Goods Provision. *The Journal of Politics*, 79(3), 823–837.
- Shair-Rosenfield, S., & Wood, R. M. (2017b). Governing Boards: The Effect of Female Representation on Public Goods Provision. *Journal of Politics*, 79(3), 823–837.
- Siahaan, A., & Hidayat, R. (2019). Konsep-Konsep Keguruan dalam Pendidikan Islam. In *Sustainability (Switzerland)*. Lembaga Peduli Pengembangan Pendidikan Indonesia (LPPPI).
- Soetjipto, A. W. (2011). *Politik Perempuan Bukan Gerhana: Kebijakan Afirmatif dan Keterwakilan Politik Perempuan di Indonesia*. Kompas Media Nusantara.
- Tambusai, A. B., & Umami, I. (2019). *In-Service Training dalam Pengembangan Kompetensi Guru*. Idea Press.
- Tony Bush, M. C. (2008). *Management Strategic for Educational Management*. IRCiSoD.
- UI, P. (2020). *Potret Keterwakilan Perempuan di DPR RI Hasil Pemilu 2019*. Pusat Kajian Politik Universitas Indonesia.
- Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L., dan Brady, H. E. (1995). *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Harvard University Press.
- Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L dan Brady, H. E. (1995). *No Titleaoice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Harvard University Press.

- Walby, S. (1990). *Theorizing Patriarchy*. Basil Blackwell.
- Wood, S. S.-R. dan R. M. (2017). Governing boards: The effect of female representation on public goods provision. *Journal of Politics*, 79(3), 823–837.
- Wulandari, A. S. dan D. (2020). Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0. *Jurnal Administrasi Dan Manajemen Pendidikan*, 3(1), 1–10.
- Young, I. M. (2000). *Inclusion and Democracy*. Oxford University Press.