

# PAHMI 13

*by* Ichsan Kabullah

---

FILE	HE_CASE_OF_WIVES_OF_GOVERNOR_AND_BUPATI_IN_THE_WEST_SU MATERA.DOC (56.5K)	WORD COUNT	3239
TIME SUBMITTED	29-NOV-2020 09:09PM (UTC+0800)	CHARACTER COUNT	17161
SUBMISSION ID	1459121461		

# <sup>1</sup> Women's Pathway into National Parliament: The Case of Wives of Governor and Bupati in the West Sumatera

Muhammad Ichsan Kabullah

<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Andalas, Padang,  
Indonesia muhammadichsankabullah@soc.unand.ac.id

## Abstract

In recent years, the increasing number of the wife of the Governor and Bupati as parliament candidates has been subjected to intense scholarly interest around the world, including Indonesia. Most studies have a focus on patronage concept by exploring the influence of family political dynasties and clientelistic ideas by looking at the widespread use of money politics in winning candidates. The general election in West Sumatera's experience suggests otherwise. This article argues that the victory of the wives of Governor and Bupati in the vote reflects a combination of electoral strategies between patronage, clientelistic, state, and non-state support. The implication is a wife as elected parliament member tends to be a complement of power their husband rather than to struggle for gender agenda.

**Keywords:** Wives, parliament, election, electoral strategies.

## INTRODUCTION

Elections as manifestations of political representation can be interpreted by a person or group who has the ability or obligation to speak and act on behalf of a larger group, namely the people [1]. Elections as political representatives are a necessity because of the diversity of community groups in the community. However, in various discussions, it can be seen that the elections have not been able to represent political groups that are in the minority position, one of that is women.

Increasing women's participation in elections<sup>268</sup> in Indonesia has been an issue that has long been discussed. The state has made various efforts to strengthen the representation of women in parliament. After the collapse of the New Order regime, the issue of increasing women's representation in political contestation gained momentum when Megawati was elected as the first female President in Indonesia even though at that time, there were small groups in the community who refused women to be leaders [2]. The government has introduced a 30 percent gender quota to increase woman representation in parliament [3]. Besides that, the new electoral law also required parties to place woman candidates in one of every three places on the list, which call the zipper system. [4]. These policies affect marginally in an increasing number of women representation in the parliament.

The lack of representation of women in parliament made a less sensitive gender policy. The less sensitive of gender not only comes from the different positions of men and women in the socio-economic landscape, but also comes from the way gender is intertwined in the electoral campaign, the political process, and the policies [5]. Besides that, the role of women is increasingly decreased in public areas, and they only focus on taking care of the household due to the strong patriarchal culture. It is often termed the domestication of women where women are preoccupied with private rights, and at the same time, the woman also could be mobilized to support elite [6].

Although the position of women in politics has decreased from male domination due to patriarchal culture, there is still a chance for strengthening women's representation in parliament through an increasing number of wives leaders who advance in elections. In the 2019 elections in West Sumatera, there are eight wives of the Governor, and Bupati decided to be candidates for parliament at various levels. Specifically for the national parliament/ DPR itself, there are three wives namely, Nevi Zuairina (wife of the Governor of West Sumatera, Irwan Prayitno) candidate from PKS; Lisda Hendrajoni (wife of the Bupati Pesisir Selatan, Hendrajoni) candidate from the Nasdem Party; Suriati Muzni (wife of Bupati Solok Selatan) candidate from the Nasdem Party.

The running of the three wives of the elite in the 2019 election in West Sumatera should be appreciated as an affirmative act. Moreover, the Province of West Sumatera as the only region that uses the matrilineal system in Indonesia, giving several benefits for women, especially related to social relations, labor, and land ownership [7]. The high position of Minang women has not only applied to the social sphere but also transform into the political sphere. However, this phenomenon needs to be addressed proportionally because the success story from wives of Governor and Bupati as elected members of the DPR has indicated patronage, clientelism, growing the fertility of political dynasties, and potentially strong corrupt practices at the grassroots level. In that sense, this brings us to the following question what kind of electoral strategies done by the wife of the Governor and Bupati to win the parliament election?

## DISCUSSION

The Province of West Sumatera is located on the west of Sumatera Island. In the elections on 2019, there were 3,718,003 voters spread across 19 districts/ cities. In the DPR level, West Sumatera is divided into two electoral districts. For the 1 district of West Sumatera 1 consisting of Padang City, Mentawai Islands Regency, Pesisir Selatan Regency, Dharmasraya Regency, Solok Selatan Regency, Solok Regency, Solok City, Sawahlunto City, Sijunjung Regency, and Tanah Datar Regency. Meanwhile, for the district of West Sumatera 2 consisting of Padang Pariaman Regency, Pariaman City, Padang Panjang City, Bukittinggi City, Agam Regency, Lima Puluh Kota Regency, Payakumbuh City, West Pasaman Regency, and Pasaman Regency.

Specifically, for the phenomenon of female candidates, from the election in 1999 to 2014, only three women from West Sumatera were able to pass to the DPR. They are Aisyah Aminy from PPP in 1999, Zalmiar Yanri from the Democratic Party in 2009, and Betti Sadiq Pasadigoe from the Golkar Party in 2014. While in 2019, there were three wives of Governor and Bupati from West Sumatera who passed to the DPR. Although there is an increasing number of women candidates passed the DPR, there is a change of women candidates phenomenon.

Previously, Aisyah Aminy and Zalmiar Yanri's have elected as a member of DPR because of their track record in voicing women's aspirations. Since 2014, the elected women candidates who passed to the DPR were people who had kin of elite, specifically Governor and Bupati. In 2014, Betti Sadiq Pasadigoe was the wife of the Bupati of Tanah Datar, Sadiq Pasadigoe. Even though it was placed 6th from the list of Golkar Party, Betti Sadiq Pasadigoe got 77,663 votes. Betti's victory at that time could be said to be phenomenal, considering that she was the only woman who passed the DPR and obtained the highest vote of all DPR candidates from West Sumatera.

This phenomenon continued five years later in 2019. Nevi Zuairina and Lisda Hendrajoni are the wives of regional heads in West Sumatera. Nevi Zuairina is the wife of the Governor of West Sumatera, Irwan Prayitno, while Lisda Hendrajoni is the wife of the of Pesisir Selatan, Hendrajoni. Nevi Zuairina, who occupies sequence number 2 from PKS list, has succeeded in achieving 52,141 votes. Meanwhile, Lisda Hendrajoni, who placed number 3 in the Nasdem

Party, succeeded in obtaining 37,326 votes. Nevi's and Lisda's elections were equally successful in ousting incumbent DPR members in their respective parties.

Meanwhile, Athari Gauthi Ardi, young ladies from Partai Amanat Nasional, although not the wife of the regional head, is the son of a former member of the DPR from West Sumatera, Epiyardi Asda. Although the woman of West Sumatera making in passing three women candidates to the DPR in the elections in 2019, this fact also indicates the existence of political network by women candidates to be able to win for parliament. In that sense, it is interesting to know how electoral strategies of Nevi and Lisda to win an election in 2019.

Nevi Zuairina, 54 years old, is the wife of Irwan Prayitno, Governor of West Sumatera Province. The mother of ten children claimed to have been active in practical politics since 1999, together with her husband in the Justice Party. Although Nevi has long been involved in party activities, she did not have the motivation to join as a DPR candidate. However, the party's instructions melted her heart to be the candidate of parliament members due to fulfilling the women's quota.

Nevi, who came as a beginner in the election in 2019, immediately won with the acquisition of 52,141 votes, far leaving the closest rival of her party, Refrizal, an incumbent member of the DPR for three periods which only got 27,331 votes. This victory is quite phenomenal considering that she advanced in district 2 of West Sumatera, a region that is not her main base considering her hometown is in Padang City, zone 1. Nevi's choice to fight in zone 2 of West Sumatera is based on careful calculation. Nevi, who has been the Governor's wife for eight years, is considered a popular figure among the public.

In organizing her campaign, Nevi relied on three pillars. First, the success team. Nevi's success team was very diverse, consisting of community leaders who had supported her husband both when Irwan Prayitno became a member of the DPR for three periods and the Governor of West Sumatera for two periods. The Irwan team used by Nevi, considering that Nevi acknowledged Irwan was her political mentor (Interview with Nevi on 1 June 2019). This success team is priceless, considering that the team has a wide network that has proven its reliability and experience to be a vote-getter of people. The network continues to be fostered by Irwan, mainly through government assistance programs. This pattern shows that the use of networks and family connections that become local elites will help women candidates get public positions in the elections [8].

Second, PKS cadres and patrons. The PKS became a powerful political machine for Nevi given the many cadres and patrons who volunteered to help Nevi. The high militancy of PKS cadres and patrons to support Nevi departs from the closeness of the ideology they prepared through the Tarbiyah system so that Nevi as a candidate does not need to be expensive to finance the volunteer activities because their motivation to help is "lillahitaala". This pattern makes Nevi's campaign costs very efficient.

Third, women's groups. Nevi's interaction with various women's groups is found in Nevi's capacity as the Governor's Mother. Nevi said she was happy to be organized and became the leader of more than 15 women's organizations, including PKK, GOW, and others. These organizations are automatically attached to Nevi as the wife of the Governor. With her various positions, Nevi managed to make the most of her position to engage more intensely in the activities of these organizations while building her network more informally to the community, especially women's groups. The importance of maximizing informal networks in winning elections because the formal structure is no longer effective in gaining votes [9]. Nevi admitted that she had used various activities in the group by campaigning on women's issues such as sakinah, mawadah, warahmah for family security. Furthermore, Nevi also often toured with the tagline "women choose women" to make it easier for women voters to remember. Thus, although there was no explicit support given by various women's organizations such as PKK

to Nevi as PKS candidates who advanced in the election, Nevi used her position in these multiple organizations to build relations with the community.

Three pillars of Nevi's political machine make her campaign activities organize well. Nevi admitted that her campaign schedule was set systematically by her team (Nevi Interview June 1, 2019). So it is not surprising that the intensity of Nevi in visiting residents' homes can spend up to 10 locations in one day, far from leaving other candidates who can only attend 3 to 5 sites. The high intensity of Nevi's visit to various districts/ cities in her constituency makes many parties not surprised by the votes she gets in the election of 2019. Moreover, Nevi seems to have the privilege to reach all districts/ cities in district 2 of West Sumatera, something that taboos for other PKS candidates. In contrast, one of the characteristics of the PKS strategy so far in capturing votes is to apply a more centralized pattern where the party divides zoning for each candidate to minimize conflicts [10].

Unlike Nevi who synergized her campaign activities with her supporter's groups, Lisda Hendra Joni, DPR candidate from Nasdem Party in zone 1 of West Sumatera, was very focused on her role and her husband in building social relations with voters. Lisda is the wife of the Pesisir Selatan Bupati, Hendra Joni. Lisda is a friendly and active woman. It is not surprising given the work experience that had been a flight attendant. Lisda is often fashionable but still in Islamic clothing.

In this 2019 legislative election, Lisda could be said to have won a remarkable victory amid the great rivalry in its internal party. With the results of 37,326 votes. Lisda, candidate of parliament member number three from list of Nasdem Party, succeeded in overthrowing four internal opponents from the Nasdem Party namely incumbent member of DPR Endre Saifoel, wife of South Solok Bupati, Suriati Muzni Zakaria, former Mayor of Padang, Fauzi Bahar and former Bupati of Solok, Syamsu Rahim. Several factors caused Lisda's victory.

First is the mobilization of bureaucratic support by her husband to Lisda. Hendra Joni, as the regent of Pesisir Selatan looks serious about supporting Lisda. Hendra Joni's support was carried out in a bureaucracy in the Pesisir Selatan where officials were given a target of voting at the polling station they chose (interview D et al 4 April 2019; interview A et al. 8 April 2019) . People around the Bupati often deliver the sanction for delay of promotion and non-jobs to the official. Bureaucratic support is not only in the form of mass mobilization but also the use of government facilities for the socialization of Lisda. The advertisement of government in the way of billboards often show Lisda's face<sup>271</sup> in various moments such as health campaigns, and others. From these multiple phenomena, it is clear that bureaucrats can be mobilized both in social and professional networks in the success of the electoral competition, given that bureaucrats themselves are sound brokers [11]. In this network, civil servants are bound by reciprocal obligations to succeed in the patron's mission [12].

Second, the massive phenomenon of pork barrel. On some occasions, Lisda often provided a donation to the community in its capacity as the wife of Bupati in various official events of the services in the Pesisir Selatan. The gifts began in the form of money, goods, and government aid. The recipients have focused on women, children, people with disabilities, disaster victims, and the poor. This pattern has been prevalent throughout Indonesia in mobilizing the votes of voters as happened in Batu City [13].

Third, Lisda, in her campaign collaborates with Nasdem Party candidates, especially women at the regencies and provincial levels, to support each other in gaining votes. Some candidate for provincial DPRD candidates Lisda work with, including Emi Irdinansyah, the wife of the Regent of Tanah Datar, and Mailinda Rose, a member of the DPRD Padang. The cooperating with candidates at different levels or in some places, commonly referred to as a package system, makes the campaign more efficient. Although their collaboration is based on emotional closeness as female candidates, this is considered better considering that they believe the party machine will not provide a vote advantage for them.

Four, Lisda has a charisma that is not owned by most of the other regional heads' wives. Her ability to speak in public makes sure people will vote for her. She also acts friendly, especially in front of mothers, and children so that she is often called "bunda" by the residents. Lisda is also a multi-talented figure. In various activities, Lisda was seen actively taking part in activities ranging from attending Majelis Taklim, singing at marriages event, and even playing golf as we saw in her Instagram Stories activities.

Finally, Lisda also managed to modify its relations in the community. Lisda is aware of being easily attacked by campaigns that use the sentiments of native sons so that she cleverly enters the social structure of the Minang community by appointing relatives (interview A et al. 8 April 2019).

What Lisda is doing indicates that she is not merely rely on networks of informal structures such as the bureaucracy to gather votes, but also use informal structures, such as family relations. Lisda's foresight to look for "dunsanak" reflects the transformation of kinship. In anthropology, the concept of kinship is no longer based solely on biological factors, such as family relationships and marital status. Some other reason, such as social factors which reflected by relationships between individuals in a broad context such as culture, may also contribute to kinship. It is what Carsten termed as 'after kinship.' Another study by Rivers also argues that relationships are not only based on marriage or family but have also been determined by psychological aspects. Thus, the modification of relations daily is a combination of effective strategies to make Lisda Hendra Joni successful in winning the DPR seats in the election of 2019.

## CONCLUSION

The success of the <sup>1</sup>wives of Governor and Bupati in West Sumatera in the election is not directly affecting the strengthening of women in politics. The choice of the wives of Governor and Bupati is inseparable from family political kinship, such as family combined with state and non-state support. The existence of this support has implications for the growth of personal ties between the wives and voters accompanied by competitive networks. Even so, the wife of the regional head who won in the election still faced domestication considering the political relations that were built were still under the shadow of her husband. It causes no guarantee that

- [1] M. Budiardjo. *Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Politik*. 272 Gramedia, Jakarta (1982)
- [2] I. Rodiyah. Keterwakilan Perempuan dalam Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah. *JKMP*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2013).
- [3] B. Hillman. Increasing Women's Parliamentary Representation in Asia and the Pacific: the Indonesian Experience. *Asia & The Pacific Policy Studies* Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 38-49. (2017).
- [4] B. Hillman. The Limits of Gender Quotas: Women's Parliamentary Representation in Indonesia. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 48, No. 2, pp/ 322-338 (2018).
- [5] M. C. Kittilson. Gender and Electoral Behavior in Franceschet, Susan., Krook, Mona Lena., & Tan Netina (ed). *The Palgrave Handbook of Women's Political Rights*. Palgrave Macmillan: London (2019).
- [6] J. Suryakusuma. *State Ibuism*. Komunitas Bambu: Depok (2011).
- [7] E. Blackwood. Not your average housewife: Minangkabau women rice farmers in West Sumatera. in Michele Ford & Lyn Parker (Eds.), *Women and Work in Indonesia*. Routledge: Abingdon (2008).  
the strategic issues of women campaigned will be realized when they sit in the DPR.

REFERENCES

- [8] I. A. Putri. Strategi Politik Perempuan Caleg Sumatera Barat dalam Pemilu 2014. *Journal of Moral and Civic Education*, Vol. 1, No. 2.(2017)
- [9] G. Helmke, and S. Levitsky. Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda. *Perspective on Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 4, (2004).
- [10] E. Aspinall, and W. Berenschot. *Democracy for Sale: Pemilu, Klientelisme, dan Negara di Indonesia*. Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia: Jakarta (2019).
- [11] S. Tidey. *Performing the state: everyday practices, corruption and reciprocity in middle Indonesian civil service*. PhD thesis Universiteit van Amsterdam. Retrieved from: <http://dare.uva.nl/record/410537> (2012).
- [12] M.F. Adzmy, and F. Disyacitta. The Indonesian Family Welfare Guidance Programme (PKK) and the Revitalisation of Corporatist State Organisations: A Case Study of the Mobilisation of Support for Dewanti Rumpoko in the 2017 Batu Municipal Election. *PCD Journal*, Vol. VI, No. 1, (2018).
- [13] J. Carsten. *Cultures of relatedness: New approaches to the study of kinship*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. (2000).

## ORIGINALITY REPORT

%**2**

SIMILARITY INDEX

%

INTERNET SOURCES

%**2**

PUBLICATIONS

%**0**

STUDENT PAPERS

## PRIMARY SOURCES

- 1** Muhammad Ichsan Kabullah. "Women's Pathway into National Parliament: The Case of Wives of Governor and Bupati in the West Sumatera", Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2019  
Publication % **1**
- 2** "The International Conference on ASEAN 2019", Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2019  
Publication <% **1**
- 3** Jacqueline VEL, Yando ZAKARIA, Adriaan BEDNER. "Law-Making as a Strategy for Change: Indonesia's New Village Law", Asian Journal of Law and Society, 2017  
Publication <% **1**

EXCLUDE QUOTES ON

EXCLUDE ON

BIBLIOGRAPHY

EXCLUDE MATCHES

< 5

WORDS