

# Woman on Board; The Case of Publicly Listed Companies in Indonesia

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## *Abstract*

The representation of women in corporation has become an increasingly important topic. One of the most significant governance issues currently facing the managers, directors and shareholders of the modern corporation is gender, racial and cultural composition of the board of directors (Carter, Simkins & Simpson, 2002). Given recent publicity concerning corporate governance, research into the effectiveness of boards of directors is more critical than ever. Though not a completely new idea, there was growing pressure throughout the 1990s from corporate governance experts advocating greater diversity amongst corporate boards of directors as a necessary ingredient for a firm to best meet and survive the challenges of the new business environment. Previous study (e.g. Catalyst, 2007) found that companies with higher percentages of women board directors, on average, financially outperformed companies with the lowest percentages of women board directors by significant margins.

This study utilizes independent sample t-test to measure the differences between woman on board and firm characteristics as measured by firm size and firm industry. The proportion of board seats filled by women and having at least one woman director are proxies of woman on board. Data are collected from 303 publicly listed companies in Indonesian Stock Exchange at the year of 2006. The result of the study shows that the proportion of board seats filled by woman will be not different whether in large companies or small companies. Additionally, having at least one woman director will be not different whether in large companies or small companies. In line with the abovementioned results, the proportion of board seats filled by women will be not different whether in financial firm (industry) or any other industries and having at least one woman director will be not different whether in financial firm industry or any other industries.

**Keywords:** *Board of Directors, Board Governance, Gender Diversity, Firm Size, Firm Industry*

## **I. Background**

Corporate governance reform has been a major topic for a number of years. During the Asian financial crisis, countries that suffered dramatic reversals of fortune have identified weaknesses in corporate governance as one of the major sources of vulnerabilities that led to their economic meltdown in 1997 (see for example, Lukviarman, 2004). Indonesia, as one of the countries most affected by the crisis, has been forced to consider corporate governance issues at the forefront of the nation's agenda for corporate and economic policy (Lukviarman, 2004). Consequently, the role of Corporate Governance in recovering the economic crisis in Indonesia is needed to be implemented substantively.

One of the most significant governance issues currently facing the managers, directors and shareholders of the modern corporation is gender, racial and cultural composition of the board of directors (Carter, Simkins & Simpson, 2002). Given recent publicity concerning corporate governance, research into the effectiveness of boards of directors is more critical than ever. Though not a completely new idea, there was growing pressure throughout the 1990s from corporate governance experts advocating greater diversity amongst corporate boards of directors as a necessary ingredient for a firm to best meet and survive the challenges of the new business environment (see, for example, Daum, 1998; Daily & Dalton, 1997a; Gilbert & Ivancevich, 2000 c.f William,S.M, 2000).

The issue of board composition diversifications in terms of gender and race has regularly been emphasized by commentators (Wang & Dewhirst, 1992; Siciliano, 1996). Moreover, the composition of corporate boards,

particularly the gender composition, is a growing area of study (e.g. Catalyst, 2001; Fagenson & Jackson, 1994; Sheridan, 2001). In line with the abovementioned study, Adler (1997) highlights how some women global leaders use influence and inspiration, rather than command and control to achieve their goals. Furthermore, female board members represent career opportunities for potential female employees (Bilimoria, 2006), inspire women employees to senior management roles (Bilimoria & Wheeler, 2000) and often engage in networking and mentoring of women through corporate networks. Thus, recruiting more women directors is a growing concern for organizations (Gutner, 2001).

Why should woman directors? Based on interview and discussion with 50 women directors, 12 CEOs and 7 corporate secretaries from *Fortune* 1000 companies held by Kramer, Konrad and Erkut (2006) found that women do make a difference in the boardroom. Accordingly, Kramer et. al. (2006) found that women bring a collaborative leadership style that benefits boardroom dynamics by increasing the amount of listening, social support and win-win problem-solving. Although women are often collaborative leaders, they do not shy away from controversial issues. Further, women also bring new issues and perspectives to the table, broadening the content of boardroom discussions to include the perspectives of multiple stakeholders (Kramer et al., 2006).

The Catalyst has already studied these questions from a financial perspective and found that companies with higher percentages of women board directors, on average, financially outperformed companies with the lowest percentages of women board directors by significant margins (Catalyst, 2007). Prior study by Shrader et al. (1997) also found significantly negative relationship between Tobin's Q and the proportion of women on the boards of Fortune 1000 firms after controlling for size, industry and other corporate governance measures. The study by Erhardt et.al. (2003) also reported that the percentage of women on the boards of large U.S firms is positively associated with two accounting measures of performance, return on asset and the return on investment.

A more recent study by Terjesen & Singh (2008) investigated gender diversity and governance on corporate boards, at individual and firm levels, in single country studies. This study explored the environmental context of female representation on corporate boards of directors, using data from forty-three countries. The result suggests that women's representation on corporate boards may be shaped by the larger environment, including the social, political and economic structures of individual countries. Utilizing the *logit regression*, the results indicate that countries with higher representation of women on boards are more likely to have women in senior management and more equal ratios of male to female pay. However, this study found that countries with a longer tradition of women's political representation are less likely to have high levels of female board representation.

Despite the growing presence of women in the workforce, representation of women in corporate governance is relatively low. The present study examined the gender composition of corporate boards as a function of organization and industry. Hyland and Marcelino (2002) gathered data from government filings for the top 100 public companies in a suburban region of the US. The result of such study indicated a positive relationship between organization size and women on boards. Further the study also found partial support for hypotheses related to industry (Hyland & Marcellino, 2002).

The relationship between firm size and opportunities for women has found conflicting results in the past study. Traditionally, research has found that women encounter increased opportunities in smaller companies. Two studies specifically related to women board members found a positive relationship between firm size and the presence of women on the board (Harrigan, 1981; Heidrick & Stuggles, 1977). In addition, recent efforts at improving diversity have been embraced by large companies (Hyland & Marcellino, 2002). According to Bertrand & Hallock, (2001), firm size was measured by sales, total assets or number of employees while Padgett (2001) measured firm size based of the revenue.

The industry in which an organization operates may also affect the opportunities for women to advance to top level positions (Hyland & Marcellino, 2002). A larger study by Harrigan (1981) examined eight industries and found that the strongest effect on the presence of women directors for process technology, service and financial companies. Sectors where women directors were likely to be found were retail, especially grocery; saving institutions health; media and publishing and utilities. The study by Harrigan (1981) was supported by the *Sunday Times* report (Oldfield, 2000) which states that 44 percent of all woman directors work in banking, finance or insurance industries. Another study by the Catalyst (1999) on the US Fortune 500 companies, found that woman directors were most likely in toys and sporting goods, soaps and cosmetics, savings institutions and media/publishing (Catalyst, 1999).

## II. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Corporate Governance

Corporate governance has become a key policy in addressing the way a company is governed in various countries. Blair (1995) defined corporate governance as the whole set of legal, cultural and institutional arrangements that determine what publicly traded corporations can do, who controls them, how the control is exercised and how the risks and returns from the activities they undertake are allocated. This definition is accommodative in order to consider the differences in governance systems across countries (Lukviarman, 2004).

### 2.2 Board Governance

For organizations to perform well and maintain their reputation, sound governance is considered to be increasingly important and critical. Effective performance by the board governance helps to ensure that objectives are realized, resources are well-managed, important relationships are nurtured, and the interest of all stakeholders are reflected in decision. However, the functionality of board governance varies from firm to firm and influences board composition.

In relation to the board structure, corporations in most countries around the world have board of directors, although they have differences in practices, such as position and composition (Moerland, 1995). In general, the practices of Board of Directors within the corporate governance framework could be classified as one-tier board model or two-tier board model (Lukviarman, 2004).

Indonesia has adopted this two-tier system of board. While under the Indonesia Company Law 2007 both the members of supervisory board and management boards are elected and held responsible to shareholders through the General Meeting of the Shareholders (GMOS).

### 2.3 Gender Diversity

It can be argued that greater board diversity increases a firm's competitive advantage relative to firms with less diversity. The arguments that lie behind this are based largely on intuitive reasoning and are articulated by Robinson & Dechant (1997). *First*, it is argued that greater diversity promotes a better understanding of the marketplace by matching the diversity of a firm's directors to the diversity of its potential customers and employees, thereby increasing its ability to penetrate markets. *Second*, that diversity increase creativity and innovation as these characteristics are not randomly distributed in the population but tend to vary systematically with demographic variables such as gender. *Third*, diversity can enhance problem-solving as the variety of perspectives that emerges from a more diverse board. By taking a broader view, the board will have a better understanding of the complexities of the business environment and thus improve decision-making.

A study by Fondas & Salsalos (2000) indicated that boards with one or more woman directors had significantly more influence over management decisions. A more gender diverse board may also improve a firm's competitive advantage if it could improve the image of the firm and if this has a positive effect on customers' behavior and thus on a firm performance (Smith et.al, 2006). Besides, the heterogeneous groups consider more alternatives when defining the strategies (Eisenhardt, 1989).

In corollary with the above mentioned arguments, the business case for bringing more women into corporate leadership positions has been conducted repeatedly and from a variety of vantage points over the past decade. Research studies have correlated board diversity with good governance practices and with superior economic performance. Other observers argue that including women in corporate leadership is imperative to survival in today's business environment, citing factors such as the changing compositions of the marketplace, the globalization of the economic, the increasingly important roles played by women as consumers, business owners, investors and employees, and the importance of diversity to corporate reputation and employee morale. Shareholders, too, have voiced support for including more women on corporate boards. The socially responsible investment community, which has long been in the forefront of those calling for greater board diversity and using proxies to oppose slates of directors nominees that do not include women or people of color, has been joined by foundations and other institutional investors who care about the inclusiveness of corporate boards (William, 2000).

Farrell & Hersch (2004) report a non-significant stock market reaction to the announcement of woman additions to the board. They also report that women had a higher probability of serving on the boards of better performing firms. However, they are unable to conclude that more boards with greater gender diversity generate better performance. A report by Catalyst (2004) finds that *Fortune* 500 companies with the highest representation of

women on their top management teams experienced significantly higher returns on equity and total shareholder returns compared to the companies with the lowest woman representation.

According to the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA 2008), Australian Census of Women in Leadership, board directors that are women are different among countries.

Table 1. Percentage of Board of Directors that are Women

No.	Country	% of women directors
1	Australia ASX200 (2008)	8.3%
2	Canada FP500 (2007)	13.0%
3	New Zealand NZSX100 (2006)	8.7%
4	South Africa JSE (2008)	14.3%
5	UK FTSE100 (2007)	11.0%
6	US Fortune500 (2007)	14.8%

Source; EOWA (2008)

Meanwhile, statistic data from the Department of Transmigration and Labour of Indonesia showed working women in leadership position in the year of 2005 was 37.801 women (13%) from total 290.464 working people. Further, in 2008 women working on the leadership position in Indonesia was 121.782 (18,8%) from among total 648.719 working people (<http://www.nakertrans.go.id>). The data shows that there are incremental numbers of working women every year from 2005 to 2008. Further, the empowerment of gender should given further attention, especially for the leadership positions in every organization. This gender empowerment measure (GEM) reveals whether women take an active part in economic and political life. It tracks the share of seats in parliament held by women; of female legislators, senior officials and managers; and of female professional and technical workers- and the gender disparity in earned income, reflecting economic independence. GEM exposes inequality in opportunities in selected areas. In 2006, Indonesia ranks 87<sup>th</sup> out of 108 countries in the GEM. There is the increasingly changing from 2002 where Indonesia ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> out of 71 countries (UNDP Indonesia, 2008).

Although there are increasingly number of women empowerment, the lack of women on corporate boards has been listed as a barrier to career advancement for women (Salompek, 1999), yet there has not been much improvement in the number of women on boards of directors. Studies of women's progression into various positions in management have found the greater the representation of women in the existing managerial hierarchy, the more women advance into management (see for example; Pfeffer et al., 1995; Tharenou, 2001).

Even though, large theories have attempted to explain gender differences in management (Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990), few have addressed how structural organizational factors are related to differences in men and women career success. Two theories that have addresses such factors are dual labor market theory (Thurow, 1969) and the organizational structure perspective (Kanter, 1977). Dual labor market theory as discussed in Thurow (1969) suggests that there is limited mobility between better, primary jobs and less desirable, secondary jobs. Most women's jobs are in the secondary labor market in lower level and staff (rather than line) position (Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990). Dual labor market theory posits that individuals in such positions are unlikely to move into top management positions. A second theory of interest is the organization structure perspective proposed by Kanter (1977) that woman's lack of power and opportunity in organizations explains the barriers that face woman. Serving as a "token" woman attracts attention, limits performance, and causes differences to be exaggerated.

## 2.4 Firm Size

Past research on the relationship between firm size and opportunities for women revealed conflicting results. Traditionally, research has found that women encounter increased opportunities in smaller companies. This is in part due to a lower likelihood of women being relegated to secondary jobs. For example, a study of highly-paid executives in the USA found that the firms that executives women worked for were 35-45 percent smaller than the firms those executives' men worked for, regardless of whether size was measured by sales, total assets or number of employees (Bertrand & Hallock, 2001).

On the other hand, two studies specifically related to women board members found a positive relationship between firm size and the presence of women on the board (Harrigan, 1981; Heidrick & Stuggles, 1977). Furthermore, recent efforts at improving diversity have been embraced by large companies (Hyland & Marcellino, 2002). In addition, larger firms are more likely than smaller firms to have a woman director, and they also have a greater share of board members who are women (Flynn & Adams, 2004).

The relationship between firm size and representation women on board can be seen in Table 2. The information in the table shows a tendency for large firm to have higher women on board when firm size was determined by revenue.

Table 2.  
Percentage of FP500 Canadian Companies with at least One Woman Director (2005)

<b>Firm size Rank</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
FP 1 – 100	76.0%
FP 101 – 200	58.0%
FP 201 – 300	43.0%
FP 301 -400	46.0%
FP 401 – 500	41.0%

*Source; Catalyst Census of Women Board Directors of the FP500 (2005)*

In 175 public companies in Georgia, women hold 7.1 percent of the board seats and 54.3 percent of companies have no women directors (Board of Director Network). In Chicago, for instance, while 12.7 percent of the Fortune 500 board seats are held by women, the percentage drops to 8.4 percent for companies in the Fortune 501-1000. These numbers shows that women’s boardroom participant overall hovers around 10 to 12 percent. They also demonstrate the considerable range in results across countries and geographical areas, especially regarding the share of companies that still operate with all-male boards (Flynn & Adams, 2004).

Although the arguments presented support predictions that women could be more highly represented in board positions at small or large companies, past research that has directly examined this issue found that women directors are more prevalent at large companies (i.e. Catalyst, 2001; Harrigan, 1981; Heidrick & Struggles, 1977). Given these past empirical findings:

H1: *The proportion of board seats filled by women will be higher at large companies than at small companies.*

H2: *Having at least one woman director will be more common for larger companies than for smaller companies*

## **2.5 Firm Industry**

The industry in which an organization operates also may affect opportunities for women to advance to top level positions. Some industries, such as construction and manufacturing, have been traditionally dominated by men, while women are more likely to be employed in services and trade (Brewer, 2001). A major movement towards gender equity in the 1960s led to government regulation and the entrance of women in male dominated professions such as business, accounting, finance and banking (Renzetti & Curran, 1992).

Base on EOWA (2008), Insurance, Retailing, Banks, Consumer Services, Consumer Durables & Apparel and Telecommunications Service industry groups of Australia Stock Exchange (ASX) have over 15% of Women Board Member. However, this high percentage representation does not always translate into a large number of actual seats and since 2006 census, the majority of the new companies in ASX200 population are mining, minerals exploration or energy companies, or services to those industries. Health-related companies, where women tend to be more represented have dropped out.

There are two studies that looked specifically at the gender composition of board by industry. One is a survey of internet-related companies which found that only 3 % had female directors (McDonald, 2000). A larger study by Harrigan (1981) examined eight industries and found the strongest effect on the presence of women directors for process technology, service and financial companies. There are also several studies that have addressed women’s advancement by industry, although they do not focus on woman directors. Women’s bureau (1989) data suggest

that women are most highly represented in services, finance/insurance/real estate, wholesale/retail trade and manufacturing respectively. More recently, Andre (1995) found that economic development organizations' participation differs by industry, but only for larger companies.

Based on the above-mentioned arguments, the two major divisions that are most commonly identified as having opportunities for women are finance/insurance/real estate and services. Thus:

H3: *The proportion of board seats filled by women will be higher in financial industry than in any other industries.*

H4: *Having at least one woman director will be more common in the financial industry than in any other industries.*

### III. Research Methodology

The research collected data among companies listed in Indonesian Stock Exchange (IDX) at the year of 2006. The sampling used in this research chosen based on certain criteria. Based on the sampling conducted in the observation in sum, the sample in this research is 303 firms.

The dependent variables used to measure women on board are:

1. The proportion of board seats filled by women

Determination of gender will use the information stated in annual report of each firm by looking the name, photo, professional title etc.

Woman representation = (number of woman board member/number of board member) x 100 %

2. Having at least one woman director

It will use dichotomous (dummy) variables to classify whether the company has at least one woman director or not. If having at least one woman director = 1 and if having no woman board member = 0.

Independent variables are:

1. Firm size

The size of the firm base on revenues as determined by 303 firms of the company listed in IDX 2006. Revenues are inflows or other enhancements of assets of an entity or settlements of its liabilities (or combination of both) from delivering or producing goods, rendering services, or other activities that constitute the entity's ongoing major or central operations (SFAC no.6). The straight line method will be used in this research. If the revenue smaller than average revenue, it means small company. But if the revenue higher than average revenue, it will larger company.

2. Firm industry

To determine firm industry will use dichotomous (dummy) variables to classify whether financial industry or any other industries. If financial industry is equal to 1 and other industries = 0.

Analyses method that is used to examine the research hypothesis is independent sample *t-test* model to compare representation women on board from two different or independent groups of companies.

### IV. Analysis and Discussion

This study has examined whether the proportion of board seats filled by women and having at least one woman director, is higher at large companies and in financial industry relative to those small companies and in any other industries. The empirical result for the first hypothesis shows that there are insignificant differences between large size and small size toward the proportion of board seats filled by women. This is contradictive with the researches that have been done by prior researchers; Harrigan (1981) and Heidrick & Stuggles (1977). Here, two studies specifically related to women board members found a positive relationship between firm size and the presence of women on the board. Base on census done by Catalyst to Women Board Directors of the *Fortune* 500 Quintile (2005), it was seen the companies which is included in TOP 100 largest firms, the percentage is 16,9% rather than companies in range F101-200 is 15,3%. And also the companies in range F201-300 is 14,3%, F301-400 is 14,0% and F401-500 is 12,5%. Previous research by Carter, Simkins & Simpson (2002) conclude that size, as measured by the natural logarithm of total assets is positive and significant in all three estimations indicating that larger firms are more likely to have larger numbers of women on their boards of directors. Meanwhile this research is supported

by Campbell & Vera (2007) by having samples made up from non-financial firms in Spain from the register of directors of the Spanish Stock Exchange Commission (CNMV), firm size (size measured by the natural logarithm of total assets) does not have a significant effect on the percentage of woman on the board.

The empirical result for second hypothesis exhibits having at least one woman director will be more common for larger companies than for smaller companies is not supported in this research. There are no differences between these two variables. In contrast, Hyland & Marcellino (2002) find that there is a positive relationship between organization size and both the number of women and the likelihood of having at least one woman on the board.

Third hypothesis shows the proportion of board seats filled by women will be not different whether in financial firm industry or any other industries. Here, the hypothesis is not supported. It means there is no differences the proportion of board seats filled by women in financial industry or not. The significant difference is shown in census done by Catalyst Census of Women Board Directors of the *Fortune* 500 and Canada's FP500 Boards (2005).

The empirical result for the fourth hypothesis shows by having at least one woman director will be not different whether in financial firm industry or any other industries. Based on the research done by Hyland & Marcellino (2002), the likelihood of having at least one woman on board was not significantly related to any of the industries, with the exception of finance, insurance and real estate being marginally significant. It means research done by Hyland & Marcellino (2002) contradictive with this research.

Current condition and firm characteristic in Indonesia and the other countries are different. The implication, the research results between Indonesia and other countries will be different (Kusumastuti, Supatmi & Sastra, 2007). According to Flynn & Adams (2004), percentage of women on boards also demonstrate the considerable range in results across countries and geographical areas, especially regarding the share of companies that still operate with all-male boards. Based on research done by Darmawati et. al (2004), the impact of firm size toward corporate governance has been unclear direction yet. The large companies have bigger agency problems that need better corporate governance (Durnev & Kim c.f Darmawati et al. 2006). In the other hand, Klapper & Love c.f Darmawati et al. (2006) stated that small companies have opportunities to grow and enlarge the company. It will demand for external funding. Thus, the companies need for better corporate governance mechanism.

The practical implications of this study for aspiring women board directors are that they may want to become involved not only in large companies but also in small companies. Further, there is no limitation for women to involve in non-financial industry as long as they have the qualification and capability in that field. Women now have higher academic qualifications on average than men (HESA, 2003). Gender diversity research on corporate boards is an important tool, not only for making an academic contribution, but also for providing the basis for change to a more equitable gender representation at the decision-making levels of the corporate world. According to the business case, gender diversity at leadership level offers a strategic advantage in meeting the challenge of globalisation as women can bring their diversity, cross-cultural awareness and transformational leadership skills to their boards (Adler, 1997).

There are a number of trends that are important to watch. First, the changing demographic profile of the workforce in Europe, America and Asia may result in more women on the board. Second, corporate governance scandals such as Enron, WorldCom and Parmalat have prompted a new set of regulations (e.g. Sarbanes-Oxley Act; Combined Code) concerning the structures and processes of company boards and the roles and responsibilities of independent directors. Subsequent reports recommend increasing board diversity, including gender representation on board (Terjesen and Singh, 2008).

## **V. Conclusion**

The purpose of this research is to get statistical data that shows whether firm characteristics: large firm size and financial industry lead to higher proportion of board seats filled by women and having at least one woman director.

This research use independent sample t-test to measure the differences between independent variables toward the proportion of board seats filled by women and having at least one woman director. The entire hypothesis is not supported. The proportion of board seats filled by woman will be not different whether in large companies or small companies, having at least one woman director will be not different whether in large companies or small companies. It presents that women could be more highly represented in board position at small or large companies. The proportion of board seats filled by women will be not different whether in financial firm industry or any other industries and having at least one woman director will be not different whether in financial firm industry or any other industries. There are no boundaries for woman to be involved in corporate board whether in small firm or

large firm. Also, there is no limitation for women to involve in non-financial industry as long as they have the qualification and capability in that field. The changing demographic profile of the workforce in Europe, America and Asia especially in Indonesia may result in more women on the board. Based on the business case, gender diversity at leadership level offers a strategic advantage in meeting the challenge of globalisation as women can bring their diversity, cross-cultural awareness and transformational leadership skills to their boards.

### **Limitation and Area of Further Research**

1. This research is only considered women on boards as dependent variable; the proportion of board seats filled by women and having at least one woman director. Future research should take into account other aspects of diversity, such as ethnicity, nationality and age.
2. Furthermore, additional aspects of organizational structure should be considered, such as the age and maturity of an organization relative to corporate governance.
3. The present study suggests that organizational size and industry are related to the presence of women on the board. All of the suggested future research would shed additional light on this issue either by broadening the lens through organizations, or by looking in greater depth at the experiences of individuals on the boards.

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