REINFORCEMENT OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS THROUGH POLITICAL EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION NETWORKS

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Abstract

Women's participation in politics in Indonesia has not met the quota of 30%. Such a low participation is generally thought to be caused by various constraints namely among others the difference of socialization between women and men, political socialization at level of citizens, ideological and psychological constraints, external constraint, less political education for members of women's political parties, less numbers of communication networks among women's organizations, and political parties and their constituents. Then, they are extended by building a network between one country and other countries in South East Asia so that this may contributed to the embryo of (Women) ASEAN Community.

A.   Introduction

Talking about women's participation in politics, there are three significant matters to improve the participation, namely the system of election, the roles of political parties and the socio-cultural acceptance of the people. In Indonesia, it is the discussions and movements through this affirmative action that enables women's participation to take any decisions in order to be able to improve the condition, namely through a quota system of 30%.

And it is is a happy opportunity, especially with the approval of the 2003 draft of the law on the General Election article 65 verse 1 stating that each political party of the election participant may propose candidates of legislative members for each election area by paying attention to women's representativeness of at least 30%.

The basic idea of the quota system is to recruit women in order to be able to occupy positions in the parliament so that they are not merely impressed as a merely complement and politic accessory. The quota system also guarantee women to be able to reach a 'critical minority" of 30%. This system is aimed at improving women's representativeness in the parliament. This aim is relevant, remembering that more than 50% of the population are women, and women voters in Indonesia are 57%. This shows that the election system has given a significant

opportunity, although the pro and con for this system is underway up to now. Those who support the quota system argue that as a reality we can study the number of women as the members of the Parliament of the Republic of Indonesia on the basis of the results of the 2009 legislative general election has not fulfilled the quota of 30%, namely 17.86%, while men, 82.14%.[1]

Less increase in the number of women involved in politics was once studied by Salviana et all (2004) with the conclusion that the cause is the limited political education for cadres of women in political parties[2], even Salviana and Wahyudi (2013) showed that political education for cadres of relatively new political parties was very inadequate[3]. Moreover, Salviana research (2009) showed that female politicians are not fully free from a patriarchal ideology, except for those who have got a strong socialization of gender equality values since their childhood[4] . Then, a limited political education should be reviewed in terms of some aspects dealing with less improvement of women participation in politics. The aspects are discussed below.

B.   The Constraints the Women Face in Political Participation

There are some constraints the women face in taking part in politics. According to Ramlan Surbakti[5], they are from first, the difference of socialization between women and men, biological characteristics and life cycles, inequal access to resources professions and finance, low appreciation to works which are traditionally made by women, and the like. Another constraint is due to the fact that women possess minor mental, the one which shows more activities in the domestic sector containing elements of ***maintenance***, ***love work*** and ***emotional work.***

First, the *maintenance* element means to care , *love work* means any works dealing with love, and *emotional work* is any job involving emotion. Those mean that women are more appropriate to work on any field with characteristic of maintaining, for example,   caring children or in public sector, nurses in the hospitals, baby sitters, and the like.

Second, some constraints deal with   socialization of politics, political behavior at the level of ordinary people and political behavior of women at the level of political elite. The differences in political behaviors of women and men at

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[1]   http://mediacenter.kpu.go.id/data-olahan/879-rekapitulasi-perolehan-kursi-partai-politik-dan-klasifikasi-berdasarkan-jenis-kelamin-anggota-dpr-periode-2009-2014-html

[2]   Vina Salviana. et.al. 2004. *Pengembangan Model Pendidikan Politik Berbasis Kesetaraan dan Keadilan Gender Pada Organisasi Partai Politik dan Organisasi Perempuan Sebagai Upaya Implementasi Keterwakilan Perempuan di Parlemen, Penelitian Hibah Bersaing XII*, Research Report, Ditlitabmas, The Ministry of National Education of Republic Indonesia.

[3]   Vina Salviana and Wahyudi. 2013. *Penguatan Wawasan Kebangsaan dan Kesadaran Berpolitik melalui Model Pendidikan Politik Partisipatif Integratif di Propinsi Jawa Timur,* Hibah Pascasarjana Research Report, Ditlitabmas, The Ministry of National Education of Republic Indonesia.

[4]   Vina Salviana. 2009. *Politisi Perempuan dalam Pasungan Ideologi Politik Aliran dan Ideologi Patriarkhi*. Hibah Doktor – Research Report, Ditlitabmas, The Ministry of National Education of Republic Indonesia.

[5]   Mohammad Asfar,"Wanita dan Politik antara Karir Pribadi dan Jabatan Suami" in *Prisma*, no. 3 1996, Jakarta, LP3ES: p. 7.

the ordinary people or political elites are explained through the history of the socialization, namely how women learn from suitable sex roles in the field of politics.

The constraint of the socialization between women and men in the political roles starts from the family, for instance whether there is a value representing that the roles in a political field tend to be more suitable/proper for men rather women. The *patriarchy* ideology [6] still colors the people life in Indonesia from the family, then develops into political parties where in a "masculine model" in the political arena men are still very dominant in formulizing political rules and mostly in defining standard of evaluation.

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

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

The men-dominated work patterns are then reflected in the work schedules of parliament members which are oftenly characterized by a weak structure to support working mothers in general and especially women parliament members. Women show flexibility and hard work, besides doing activities in their parties and constituents, they should also help various committees, work networks with women in their own parties and in the multi-parties level, and also with women out of the parliament.

Dealing with the constraint where women still show minor mental state, the mental state giving a more emphasis on activities in the domestic sector also makes their own position difficult. For example, they should play roles as mothers, housewives, sisters, and grandmothers, the roles that should be played according to the demand of social value.

Women emotionally becomes tied with domestic jobs which realize their loves and maintenance. Even now, most programs and the period of parliament meetings are not carefully adjusted to dual loads the women have. There are many women members of the parliament who struggle to balance between their family lives and the work demands that often take time for journeys, but with limited facilities.

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[6] According to Macionis, *patriarchy* is a form of a social organization where the roles of men dominate those of women; in *Sociology*, 1991:New Jersey:Englewood Cliffs:.pp. 344.

It cannot be denied that women have flexibility and hard work, and besides activities of parties and jobs in other public sectors, they are also involved in and are "still responsible" for their domestic jobs, playing roles as mothers, house wives, and even as granmothers.

Such constraints are   as ideological and psychological ones, according to   Nadezhda Shvebova. It can be proved when women become politicians, they cannot stop being women. The womenness should be in the first place, since it contains different intellectual strengths and creative potentials. Ideological and psychological constraints for women that enter the parliament include the followings: (a) gender ideology and cultural patterns and social roles that are previously determined to be given to women and men, (b) women's less self-confidence to make themselves the candidates; (c) women's perception that politics is a "bad" game and (d) the ways women are described in mass media[7]

In many countries, there is a prevailing tradition to press, even to dictate the main roles as mothers and house wives. The system of traditional, strong and partiarchal values support the sexually-inseparable roles, and what is so called "traditional, cultural values" may hinder the development of women's participation in each political process.

Third, another constraint is less support from parties, such as limited financial support for female candidates, limited access to political networks and prevalence of double standards. It is proved from the facts that there is no benefit for women from resources to hold election whereas parties possess the resources. For example, parties do not give adequate support of fund for female candidates. In Indonesia, the case is that minimum support from parties happens in the fund for campaign, especially for female candidates who face limited fund than the male candidates. Even, men candidates think consider women candidates as opponents.

The process of selection and nomination in political parties are also bias for women where "characteristics of men" are given emphasis and often become criteria for selecting candidates. The political environment support men to and prejudice women from any involvement in the work of their parties. It is called "masculine model", namely a model that dominates the arena of politics for men and it is men who often define any standard of evaluation. In Indonesia for example, the "fit and proper test' is more made by men as the "representation" of the authorized institution. As a result, some trifling to women as politicians is made by those supplying money for campaign, which then hinders women to be nominated.

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[7] Nadezhda Shvebova, *"Kendala-kendala terhadap Partisipasi Perempuan dalam Parlemen"*, dalam Perempuan dalam Parlemen; Bukan Sekedar Jumlah, Indonesia version, (Stromsborg Swedia: Publication Office International IDEA, 2002), p. 28.

Besides internal constraints, there are also external ones (out of the female politicians) that make the women difficult and heavy to accommodate various contradictory expectations. This results in internal constraints in the women themselves, not to mention the above-mentioned constraints that narrow down the political roles of women so that they have more tendency to participate in the local area. Why?

Concerning with female politicians working at local levels as proved by a study made by Shirin M Rai, Farzana Bari, Nazmunessa Mahtab dan Bidyut Mohanty (2006), it is stated that (a) women are more comfortable participating in loal politics than in politics further away from home: (b) 'the local' is closer to the needs of the people than national politics, and (c) given the high levels of illeteracy among women, local politics is more within the grasp of women participating in local government institutions than the'high politics' of parliaments.[8]

From the study made by Shirin M Rai et all, it may be assumed that female politicians prefer to "everyday" or "day to day" politics where issues to be developed for any programs they make are more directed to issues of prosperity such as incomes improvement, health services and problems of mothers and children.

Moreover, it is generally assumed that male politicians tend to discuss wars, but female politicians tend to discuss peace. It is caused by the socio-cultural construction that grows and develops in the society. A traditional concept of gender assumes that men fight in wars and manage the nation, while women basically are irrelevant for all of them.[9]

In general in the last decade, there is an increase in the number of women as representatives in the life of the on-going democracy. One of critical reasons of the increase in number is due to the influence of women organization, either in internal or external political parties. Women organizations really realize the influence of the election of single majority of members on female candidates. They work with government and political institutions to pacify changes in election in order to facilitate the election and nomination of women. This strategy produces the representation of women in legislative bodies.

For example in Indonesia[10], there are a number of factors that do not give any benefits for Indonesian women who want to enter into political world. For example, the prevailing dichotomy between the personal and public environments has narrowed down Indonesian women to be actively involved in the political life in their country. The

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[8] *"Gender Quotas and the Politics of Empowerment- a Comparative Study"* in Drude Dahlerup, *Women, Quotas and Politics*, Routledge, (London: 2006), p. 222. *High politics* means as a political tendency which is characterized by wars, fights and masculinity. This is explained by a biological concept that the testosterone hormone more increases in aggressive behaviors and culturally "war" means *heroism*.

[9] Joshua J Goldstein, *International Relation,* Addison Wesley-Longman (NewYork:2001), p. 125.

[10] Francisia Sse Seda, *"Sistem Rekruitmen Anggota Legislatif dan Pemilihan di Indonesia", in* Perempuan dalam Parlemen; Bukan Sekedar Jumlah, Indonesia version, (Stromsborg Swedia: Publication Office International IDEA, 2002), p. 93

next factor is the characteristics of the system of election and how political parties advance and promote women as candidates in the election.

There are many people, including Francisia Sse Seda, think that political parties play important roles in influencing the number of women elected into the parliament. At present, in their own organizations, political parties have not shown strong commitment to and formulation on equal policies for women to be elected as "functionaries" in the parties and members of parliament.[11]

For women, it feels "difficult" for women to become members of parliament, especially to be the chair of parliement, because it is rather different from the condition of other countries in the 1945-1998 periods, where there were 41 women in European countries who brcame the chairs of parliement or one of the chairs of boards in parliaments, namely 17 counties in Europe, 19 in America (including Latine American), 3 in Africa, 1 in Asia and 1 in Pacific countries. Twenty four out of 41 countries posses bicameral parliament (consisting of 2 legislative boards) amd the heads are given to women, a little bit more often in senate than in low chamber.[12]

Besides a system of election, a nation plays an important role in political representation of women, especially in advanced countries, it is the socio-economic condition that also plays important roles. In Indonesia, according to some researchers, socio-economic constraints occupy the second position after the system of election in recruiting women in legislave bodies in an established democracy is applied.

These socio-economic constraints also influence women's partcipation in parliament namely poverty and unemployment, less adequate financial sources, illiteracy and limited access to education and profession choices, besides double loads of domestic and professional duties.[13]

The high number of poverty and unemployment in Indonesia also affects the socio-economic condition of women in Indonesia, and there are many Indonesian women who have not yet got high education well and this in turn influences the quantity and quality of women involved in the political field.

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[11] *Opcit*, p. 95.
[12] IPU, *Women Speakers of Parliament*, http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/speakers.htm.
[13] Nadezhda Shvebova*, "Kendala-kendala terhadap Partisipasi Perempuan dalam Parlemen"*,in Perempuan dalam Parlemen; Bukan Sekedar Jumlah, Indonesia version, (Stromsborg Swedia: Publication Office International IDEA, 2002), p. 28.

For female politicians, the constraint of adequate financial resources is the main constraint in their involvement in the political arena, remembering that the cost for candidacy and for campaign is felt to be so high that it cannot yet be reached by financial ability of most female politicians.

Fourth, there is less political education for members of women political parties. Therefore it is felt to improve the well-constructed system of training and education for women leadership that in turns may promote the rises of high-qualified female candidates. A well-formed and periodical education of politics for cadres of political parties is really needed. Meetings in political parties should not only discuss how to win legislative candidates, but also talk about political education for cadres since the their levels of education vary and clearly not all their backgrounds of education are from political science. Political educations really contribute to the nation if the cadres really understand about politics. They will take part in making this nation smart at democracy and will not make the people "fool by giving empty promises.

Fifth, a communication network among women organizations is low. Anyhow, cooperation with other women organizations are also important in a democratic life, whereas the women organizations are able to work with government and political bodies so that these facilitates the election and nomination of women. In western, already advanced countries, the cooperation with women organizations has proved to support the number of women elected in parliaments.

Different from countries that have newly experienced a transision of democracy (including Indonesia), any networks with women organizations are still weak. In Indonesia, there are is a cross-party network namely *Kaukus Politik Perempuan Indonesia (Political Caucus of Indonesia Women* (KKPI) and women members of parliament (*Kaukus Perempuan Parlemen*) (Caucus of Women Parliament), but these networks have not strong enough.

C. Participative-Integrative of Political Education and ASEAN Women Organization Networks

A participative-integrative political education is a concept of political education that is implemented by involving either leaders of political parties, cadres or constituents integratively. Leaders of political parties possessing capitals may give political education to cadres of political parties in a patterned and periodical way, and focused on the improvement of the insights of nation development with gender equality, that in turns they are transferred to their constituents.

Moreover, it seems necessary to established an interconnection among actors in higher education and actors in women organizations to give political reinforcement and education to cadres of political parties, especially issues on programs that struggle the women's interest. If each actor in the community has never "greeted one another", strong actors in their communities may never spread their strength to others. All actors work by themselves, as a result, weak actors remain weak. This inter-connection may be widened among countries in ASEAN through social networks.

Borrowing a concept of network fromWellman (1983)[14], a network starts from a symmetrical binding among actors either in its content or intensity. Actors supply one another something different and they do so with higher and higher intensity. For instance, actors of higher education and those from organizations of political parties establish a symmetrical relationship by supplying something different, for example knowledge of political science and practical political science and skill with large intensity.

It is then continued with the increase in the number of actors involved whether they are from higher education or political parties. The wider the structure of this group, the higher the tendency to become stringer become weaker, but this may be controlled by the attainment of goals agreed by the involved actors. If the goal is to attain, the intensity of the relationship among the actors may be improved. Of course, the goals should be agreed upon first and they are a building of norms of solidarity among women in order to bind and to control the attainment of the goals. The goals that may be reached by the group may be in the forms of the improvement of productivity in the economic field, of psychological health of families, of law literacy, and the like.

Reinforcement of women's participation in politics may be built using the above –mentioned ways, without interfering ideology of each involved political party. The main interest and goal is to improve the quality of women as citizens in various lines. If the women cadres from various political parties are strong, they will gains their constituents better, especially for the interest of women. For a clear explanation, see the following scheme:

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[14]   George Ritzer dan Douglas J Goodman, *Teori Sosiologi Modern*, , translated by Tri Wibowo Budi Santoso, (Jakarta: Prenada Media. 2003), p. 384.
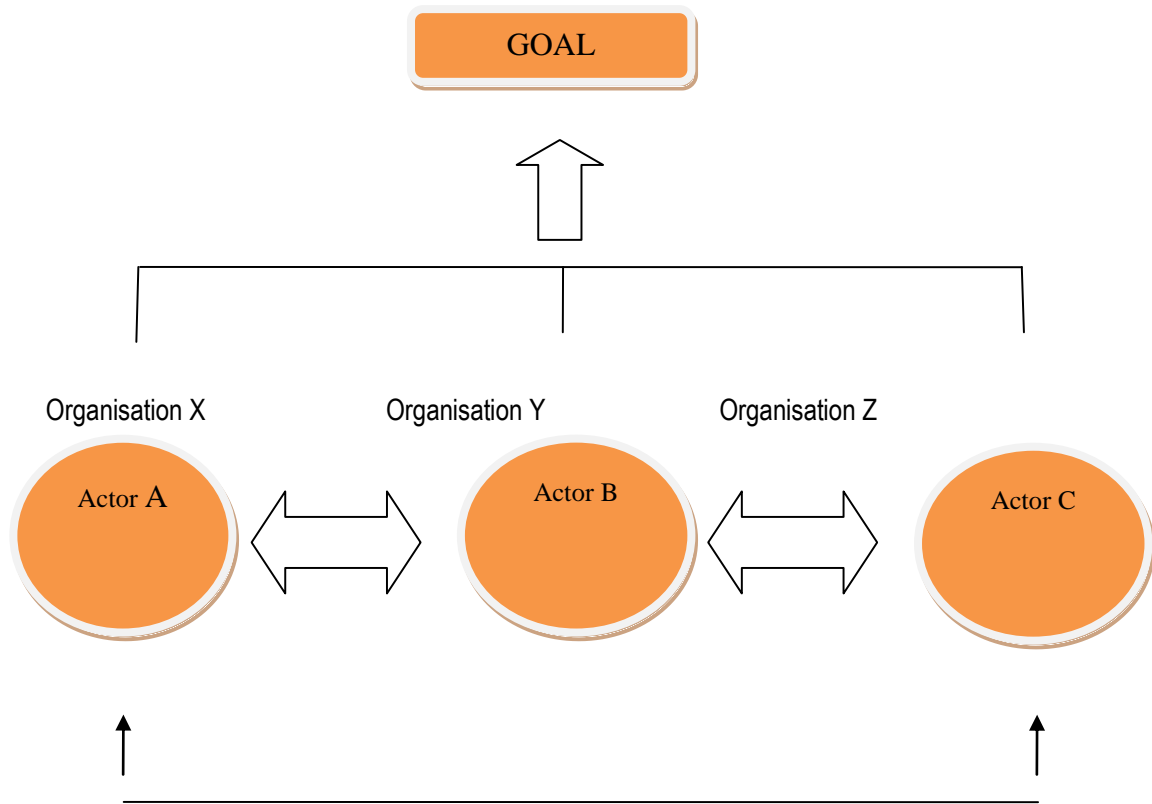
D.   Conclusion

From the description above, it can be concluded that to empower women to be able to play more roles in politics means to improve political education to cadres of political parties and constituents. Political education either for the cadres or constituents may by made by building a cooperation between higher education and women organizations or political parties. Then, this cooperation may be extended by building networks among countries, starting from countries in South East Asia with the agreed goals, for example the improvement of productivity of women in economic field and that of awareness of the importance of psychological health of families.

If the network is strong, the improvement of the quality of ASEAN women can be realized. This of course may really make contribution to the embryo of the 2015 (Women) ASEAN Community.

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............IPU, *Women Speakers of Parliament*, http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/speakers.htm.