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The Use of Social Capital and the Victory of Female Representative Candidates in East Nusa Tenggara's Regional Representative Body during the 2019 Elections

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Abstract

This research is based on the success and feats of female legislative candidates in East Nusa Tenggara's 2019 elections, despite the deeply-rooted patriarchal culture. The increase in female representation in East Nusa Tenggara's Regional Representative Body heralds good news because the number increased from 9 to 12. This research assesses how four female representative successfully became legislative members using their social and moral capital. This research uses Robert Putnam's social capital theory and Claudia Derichs', Andrea Fleschenberg's and Momoyo Hustebeck's moral capital theory as the main theories. This study uses a qualitative method with a case study and in-depth interviews with the four female representatives. The principal findings of this research reveal that patriarchy contributed to the success and victory of these four female representative candidates, nothing that the men (husbands and fathers of these women) have social influence as a regional leaders, public figures, cultural figures, and religious figure. Furthermore, moral capital also plays a vital part because these women are role models and have honorable professions as teachers, lawyers, and/or activists that are deeply connected with the people.

Keywords: Social Capital, Moral Capital, Female, Representation

1. Introduction

The victory of female representatives in the elections in Indonesia marks a monumental moment in electoral politics. The reason is that female representation brings about new colors in policy-making. Budiarti wrote that female representation in the legislative body is very strategic because the way they socialize and their experience are very different. Women are assumed to bring different values, experiences, and skills (Budiarti, 2011).

Women's presence in the parliament is necessary to realize the interests and needs of women. The ability to utilize social capital, whether in the form of connections, norms, or trust is vital in these women's victory in the elections.

The victory of female representatives has been previously studied in the West Java Province, specifically in Indramayu (Nurmalasari, 2011), as well as in the West Sumatera Province (Putri, 2018). The focus of these studies elaborates how social capital, whether through connections, norms and the constituents' trust is a major contributor of the female representatives' victory in the elections. Social capital among the people is described as the readiness to live side by side—evident in the local culture that promotes togetherness, cooperation, and social relationships. Social capital could manifest in the form of having connections with a public/cultural figure and organisations that could become a political resource for the female representatives. Social capital is the catalyst to collective action and cooperation through the exchange of information and knowledge, and is the basis of trust in a political process—this can be seen in West Sumatera, specifically in Bundo Kanduang, an area that uses a matrilineal system. In this article, the success of these female representative candidates in East Nusa Tenggara despite the patriarchal culture is particularly interesting. The reason is that patriarchy contributed to these women's entrance in politics, until they were elected as legislative members.

The number of women elected in East Nusa Tenggara's legislative elections has not fulfilled the 30 percent quota. However, during the 2014 and 2019 elections, the number of female representation in the East Nusa Tenggara's regional legislative body increased significantly. In the 2014 elections, there were only six female representatives, while in the 2019 elections, the number increased twofold and reached 12. This heralds good news because in spite of East Nusa Tenggara's patriarchal culture, the number of female representation increased. This article aims to explain how social and moral capital contributed to the success of these female representatives in the 2019 elections.

2. Method

The approach of this article is qualitative in nature and the type of research uses case studies. The source of data uses primary data gathered from in-depth interviews with four female representative members of East Nusa Tenggara's regional legislative body that was incumbent in the 2014-2019 period, namely Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth, Kristien Samiyati, Ana Waha Kolin, and Inche D.P. Sayuna. The data relates to the social and moral capital possessed by these women and is analyzed using an analytical and descriptive method (Creswell, 2014).

3. Results

3.1. Female Representation in Politics

Women's representation in politics has been frequently discussed globally. One of the figures that discussed female representation is Hanna Pitkin. In her classical book "The Concept of Representation," Pitkin identified four kinds of representation: formal, substantive, symbolic, and descriptive (Pitkin, 1967). The first two kinds of representation describes representation as a 'way of acting' or 'acting for,' while the last two is described as 'way of being' or 'standing for.' In order to understand the meaning of these concepts, we must first be aware of the contexts in which these types of representation are placed upon.

Formal representation is defined as the institutional rules that are conducted before and after the commencement of representation. This type of representation has two dimensions, namely authorization and accountability. Authorization refers to how a representative is able to gain her position and status. Accountability is the ability of constituents to punish their representative for acting against the interests of the constituents or for not being responsive towards the needs and choices of the constituents.

Symbolic representation is the way a representative 'stands for' her constituents or her electors. A symbol can represent a cause or idea, or realize it by way of representation, even when it does not exist. Descriptive representation refers to representation that is based on commonalities or similarities between the representative and her constituents. In this type of representation, the representative does not act on behalf of someone else, but she stands for a certain cause. Hence, she presents something that is nonexistent by using similarities or commonalities.

Substantive representation, also known as ‘acting for’ representation is a concept which shows that activities conducted by a representative are carried on behalf of her constituents. Her role is as an agent and a substitute for who or what she is representing. In this representation, collective issues that are geographical (district) or other kinds of collectivity are not taken into account. The types of representation put forward by Pitkin are forms of representation that are incited by the notion of an activity, such as creating a descriptive or symbolic representation (Suseno, 2013). Political representation has several issues relating to the relationship of the representative and her constituents, how the interests of the constituents can be realized by their representative in the political process. Representation is said to be related to presence and absence. The responsibility of a representative is to make present the interests of her constituents in the policy-making process (Wardhani, 2018).

There are three arguments on the importance of female political representation in the parliament. First, there is no true democracy and no true people’s participation in the government and in development, without equal participation of men and women. Hence, in order to realize politics that is democratic, female representation is a necessity. Second, the goal of development will never be achieved without female representation, not only in the development itself but also in determining the goal of development. A proportional number of women are required to determine the perspective and goal of development that sides with women’s interests. Third, female participation in decision-making bodies will prioritize and give new perspective that sides with the people, especially women and children. The significant result that is expected from female representation is the realization of gender equality through the parliament (Subono, 2013).

In East Nusa Tenggara’s context, the increase of female political representation to 12 people in the parliament during the 2019 election heralds good news. The number increased from 6 during the 2014 election. Below is a list of the 12 women elected in NTT’s 2019 legislative election.

Table 1: Female Representatives of the East Nusa Tenggara Province in 2019

No	Area of Election	Name	Party	Sequence
1	East Nusa Tenggara I (Kupang City)	Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth	PDIP	1
2	East Nusa Tenggara II (Kupang, Rote Ndao, Sabu Raijua District)	Maria Saku	Perindo	1
3	East Nusa Tenggara III (Sumba Island, which consists of East, Central, West, and South West)	Kristien Samiyati Pati	Nasdem	1
4	East Nusa Tenggara III (Sumba Island, which consists of East, Central, West, and South West Sumba)	Rambu K. A. Praing	PAN	2
5	East Nusa Tenggara III (Sumba Island, which consists of East, Central, West, and South West Sumba)	Oktaviana Lyet Vinsiana Kaka	Perindo	3
6	East Nusa Tenggara IV (Manggarai, West Manggarai dan East Manggarai District)	Yeni Veronika	PAN	1
7	East Nusa Tenggara IV (Manggarai, West Manggarai dan East Manggarai District)	Jimur Siena Katrina	PAN	4
8	East Nusa Tenggara V (Sikka, Ende, Ngada, Nagekeo District)	Angela Mercy Piwung	PKB	5
9	East Nusa Tenggara VI (East Flores, Lembata, Alor District)	Ana Waha Kolin	PKB	1
10	East Nusa Tenggara VIII (South Central Timor)	Inche D.P. Sayuna	Golkar	1
11	East Nusa Tenggara VIII (South Central Timor District)	Emelia Julia Nomleni	PDIP	1
12	East Nusa Tenggara VIII (South Central Timor District)	Reny Marlina Un	Demokrat	1

Source: processed from KPU East Nusa Tenggara Province, 2019

During the 2019 elections, there were 12 women, four of which were re-elected for the second time. From eight electoral areas in East Nusa Tenggara, there is only one area that does not have female representation. However, women have represented each of their electoral areas in East Nusa Tenggara. With regards to the sequence number, other than the social and moral capital possessed by these women, being first or in the top sequence is one of the major factors that contributed to their election.

This article uses a case study on four female candidates that were elected in 2019. First, Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth from PDIP, listed first in the sequence, and was the administrator for East Nusa Tenggara's regional elective body and a candidate in the 2004, 2009, and 2014 elections. She was first elected in 2019. Second, Kristien Samiyati from Nasdem, listed first in the sequence, was an incumbent member. Third, Ana Waha Kolin from PKB, listed first in the sequence, was the Head of East Nusa Tenggara Province's Women Political Caucus from 2009 to 2024, and was a candidate in the 2009 and 2014 elections. Fourth, Inche D.P. Sayuna from Golkar, listed first in the sequence, was Golkar's secretary for the East Nusa Tenggara Province and a representative in East Nusa Tenggara Province's 2009 elections.

The area of election is of particular importance because East Nusa Tenggara consists of four major islands, namely Flores Island, Sumba Island, Timor Island, and Alor Island. Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth is from the electoral area of East Nusa Tenggara 1 (Kupang District). Kristien Sumiyati is from electoral area III (East, Central, West, and South West Sumba District). Ana Waha Kolin is from electoral area VI (East Flores, Lembata, Alor District). Inche D.P. Sayuna is from the electoral area of East Nusa Tenggara VII (South Central Timor District). The choice of electoral areas is important in assessing how the culture and perspectives of the people of each area views women and politics.

3.2. Social Capital: The Support of the People Towards Female Representative Candidates

In "Social Capital, Economic Growth and Regional Development" by Sriya Iyer, Michael Kitson and Bernard Toh, which is published in the *Regional Studies Journal* (2015), it is mentioned that social capital is defined as institutions, relationships, attitudes, and values that facilitate interpersonal interactions in order to increase welfare through economic development and the people itself (Iyer, Kitson, & Toh, 2005). Additionally, there are several figures that have a role in introducing the concept of social capital, such as Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam.

Bourdieu, a French sociologist, defined social capital as resources, whether actual or potential, connections and relations that are attentive. The actors involved in the connection yearns for social relations that can be utilized as a resource that could bring about economic or social gains. Social capital, according to Bourdieu, is social relations that can be utilized by an actor to achieve his interests. Hence, social capital can become a tool for class struggle. Bourdieu defines social capital as a resource that is owned by an individual or group by utilizing interrelated networks or relationships, and the members acknowledge one another.

Robert Putnam, a political science expert, shows that social capital is inherent in social relations. Social capital is built through a social network that encompasses: 1) trust or positive values that appreciates development or achievements; 2) social norms and obligations; 3) social networks that becomes a platform for social activities, especially in the form of voluntary associations. Putnam believes that voluntary associations has a vital role in the development of social capital. Not only is it effective for flow of information, it is also an event where the actors can interact and make transactions.

Bourdieu and Putnam mentioned that social capital is an actor's individual asset, which could later develop into a group or collective asset. The closeness of a relationship is vital in identifying social capital because it signifies trust, norms, and a reciprocal relationship. With regards to its function, social capital functions as an agent of change and could support an individual actor or group in achieving their goals and fulfilling their interests.

Social capital that takes on the form of network, norms, and trust is possessed by the four female representatives. It consists of interpersonal relationships, norms that applies in East Nusa Tenggara on women in politics, and trust

that there are potential benefits that could arise between the four female representatives and the members of the network. The social capital possessed by the four women has realized their familial relationships and social organizations. The interaction that is conducted by these women and public figures gave rise to trust on the basis of common values. There are factors that affect the victory of these women in the use of their social capital, namely their proximity with the networks. All four had built a relationship with social groups from far before their candidacy. When they were campaigning, it was much easier for these women to socialize their candidacy.

These four women entered politics because they received the support of their husbands, fathers, and extended family. The political parties of each of these women supported them by giving them a choice to select their area of election: Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth in Kupang City, Kristien Samiyati in Sumba Island, Ana Waha Kolin in Flores Island, and Inche D.P. Sayuna in South Central Timor District.

The support of the constituents towards these four women originated from the male members of their families, which is social capital based on trust. It means that the support they gained is a result of trust that is gained through the extended family of their husbands and fathers, who are public figures in each of their selected electoral areas, as stated by Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth from PDIP:

“I was fully supported by my husband’s family and my siblings. I also have a lottery gathering and groups of friends there. There are also other lottery gatherings that supported me” (Interview with Adoe Yuliana Elizabaeth, 27th October 2021).

Kristien Samiyati from Nasdem also received the support of the people, which mainly originates from her father’s family who is a senior politician, a Sumbanese, and a public figure in Sumba:

“I entered politics and received support because my parents and extended family are from South West Sumba. So, it was not difficult for to socialize” (Interview with Kristien Samiyati, 15th October 2019).

Ana Waha Kolin from PKB also received the full support of her extended family and the alumni of the school in Lembata District where she was raised:

“My parents and family were very supportive. They told me to come back to my electoral area because they are all retired and are ready to assist me. So, my family and alumni formed a team that would be my counter path in the field so I could be successful in 2019 elections. I also had social capital because I was in the same organization as my friends. Our organizations became a strong capital in achieving my success in the 2019 elections” (Interview with Ana Waha Kolin, 24th August 2021).

Inche D.P. Sayuna from Golkar is a senior politician that already possesses social capital because she joined Golkar from a young age and was elected as legislative member at the age of 31, and the support she received came from her parents’ extended families in the South Central Timor District, as well as the church where she was a religious figure in:

“I come from my electoral area, and it is also where my extended family lives. Furthermore, I am known as a key figure in Timor’s Church of Masehi Injili, which has the largest congregation in East Nusa Tenggara. I am also a lecturer in the faculty of law and have many students from South Central Timor, so they voted for me” (Interview with Inche D.P. Sayuna, 24th August 2021).

The social capital owned by these four women is reciprocal and cooperative in nature and is conducted through a network of social bodies. This article shows that trust between the four women and their constituents resulted from their husbands, fathers, extended families, friends, and communities. The trust of the constituents is the reciprocity of the common values, tribe, organization, and church communities they have. As a social capital, trust is based on their husband’s and father’s figures. For example, Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth utilized her husband’s family’s lottery gathering (people from Manggarai Flores that resides in Kupang City); Kristien Samiyati is the child of a renowned politician and public figure in Southwest Sumba; Ana Waha has an extensive network that encompasses her father’s extended family, alumni, community, and organizations in her parents’ hometown; Inche D.P. Sayuna had joined Golkar from a young age and was elected as a legislative member by her extended family, her students, and her church community.

Aside from the constituents’ support she gained from her family (the status and influence of their husbands and fathers), these women also have capital in the form of their political party’s elite’s trust and support.

PDIP, through an interview with Emanuel Kolfidus, the vice secretary of PDIP's East Nusa Tenggara Province's Regional Representative Body, states that the party supports women in politics, from when they were first trained and recruited:

"After the 30 percent quota was enacted, the party continuously searched, recruited, and trained women as a response to the affirmative action on quota. This was done on a national level. Back then, there many challenges in female candidacy. I know that female representative candidates had to start from from the bottom" (Interview with Emanuel Kolfidus, 16th October 2019).

Nasdem made sure to provide space for all citizens, including women. as mentioned by Kasimirus Kolo, the party's efforts to increase female participation in the elections were conducted according to the law:

"Nasdem is a political party that is open. It means that when we face a political event every 5 years, we are open to all citizens that have capacity, integrity, and electability. This party accommodates all citizens to participate in the elections, including women, especially because the law requires a 30 percent quota for women in the parliament. For us, it is very reasonable" (Interview with Kasimirus Kolo, 22nd October 2019).

Yucundianus Lepa, an elite in PKB, mentions that the party encourages women in politics because women, as citizens, must actively participate not only for herself but also her family:

"In principle, we encourage women in NTT to participate actively. This means that if they want women and children to be taken care of and have their interests fought for, women are the most suitable for it" (Interview with Yucundianus Lepa, 30th July 2019).

Ince D.P. Sayuna, who is also the Secretary General of Golkar's East Nusa Tenggara's Regional Representative Body, states women, as citizens, are a political asset because they have a certain appeal in society:

"Women are a political asset for their political parties and have a certain appeal to the public. Golkar sees that in order to garner the support of the people, we must focus on women and young children. Golkar's 2019 political campaign's tagline was "Women and young children." As a result, almost all women are key administrators of the party. However, in order to become a candidate in the elections, they have to undergo training to prepare their mentality and skills as a politician. Furthermore, there is a sub-organization in Golkar called Golkar's Women's Union, so there are always female representative candidates" (Interview with Ince D.P. Sayuna, 25th July 2019).

The social capital of women in their respective political parties can be seen from the trust of the elite's political parties (most of them are men) who placed women in the top sequence. In the 2019 elections, Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth, Kristien Samiyati, Ana Waha Kolin, dan Inche D.P. Sayuna were all in the number one sequence. The sequence is important because it reflects the party's trust towards women and that they have a high electability rate. This shows that these women have loyal constituents and that the political party trusts that they will be elected.

3.3. The Moral Capital of the Four Female Representative Candidates

After explaining the social capital owned by the four female candidate, we will discuss about moral capital from the perspective of Derichs, Fleschenberg and Hustebeck, where moral capital for female politicians is an asset and strategy for victory. In many cases, female politicians have the ethics to serve because they are more sensitive towards the gender issues in their areas. The reason is that female politicians are assumed to be more caring and are ready to nurture and serve. The concept of 'care' becomes a potential strategic tool for female politicians in gathering support (Dewi, 2019).

Other than social capital, the success of these four female candidates can be contributed to moral capital arising from their professions as teachers, advocates and activists. These professions are seen as honorable and has deep connections with the people. This can be seen from their campaign, where they portray themselves as mothers that provide comfort and do not deceive. These women took advantage of their image in order to approach the people. Even after being elected, they returned to their respective areas to assist and listen to the aspirations of their people. Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth is an activist and is used to social empowerment activities (including those involving cultural groups and women's empowerment). During the campaign, she socialized by directly visiting the people from one house to another:

“During the campaign, our socialization was only by way of visiting the people’s home from door to door. Of course, it was challenging because it was time-consuming. There were 10 to 15 people in one point and I was assisted by my family’s lottery gathering” (Interview with Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth, 27th October 2021).

Kristien Samiyati was a teacher in Manggarai District’s High School and returned to her father’s hometown in Southwest Sumba. With her background as a teacher, she brought up issues relating to women’s education and health:

“During the campaign in Sumba District, I brought up issues on health and focused on mother and children. Because I come from the educational field, I am very socially inept, so I utilized various medium in my campaign. Lately, I have been raising awareness on reproductive health for girls because they are our true capital. They should understand its importance because they are the future mothers of our generation” (Interview with Kristien Samiyati, 15th October 2019).

Ana Waha Kolin is an activist that advocates humanitarian works and she also works as a consultant who conducts various social empowerment activities:

“It was not difficult for me because I communicated with my connections, such as organisations, alumni, and my extended families in Larantuka, Alor, and Lembata. So, I campaigned in areas where I was deeply connected and received support from my family, friends, and public figures” (Interview with Ana Waha Kolin, 24th August 2021).

Inche D.P. Ayuna also conducted similar activities. As a senior politician, law school lecturer, and lawyer, she did not face many challenges during her campaign. She received support from her extended family, students, church, and the people she has assisted and advocated for:

“I was active in my church community and GMIT. They had the largest congregation in East Nusa Tenggara, which boasts almost all of the citizens of East Nusa Tenggara. Secondly, I was active as a lecturer in the faculty of law. The students in my faculty are mostly from South Central Timor, and they were the ones who voted for me” (Interview with Inche D.P. Sayunda, 24th August 2021).

All four women were successful in the campaign and could influence the people to vote for them. With the professions that they have, they are able to gain the trust of their constituents, especially because their profession is deemed to be “honorable” and were role models for the people of East Nusa Tenggara. Teachers, lawyers, and activists have deep connections with the people and are their asset in achieving victory. Furthermore, these women are very consistent. They returned to their electoral areas after being elected in order to hear the aspirations of their constituents.

4. Conclusion

The success of these four female representative candidates in the 2019 elections in East Nusa Tenggara originates from the social capital, namely the trust of their constituents, which has been built by men (husbands and fathers). This trust arises because of commonalities in values and tribe (Manggarai, Sumba, Larantuka/Lembata, and Timor Tribe). Adoe Yuliana Elisabeth utilized her husband’s tribe through the family’s lottery gathering in Kupang City; Kristien Samiyati made use of their father’s extended family in Southwest Sumba; Ana Waha Kolin took advantage of her father’s extended family in Larantuka/Lembata and Inche D.P. Sayunda used her father’s and husband’s family in South Central Timor. Additionally, their proximity to various organisations (church communities, social organizations, and schools), as well as their close relationship with cultural and public figures in their electoral areas is also a major contributor.

Other than social capital, moral capital is also a key to these women’s success. Their professions as teachers, lawyers, and activists are deemed to be “honorable,” enabling them to form deep connections and assist the people. This is also evident in the fact that they returned to their respective electoral areas after being elected in order to assist the people.

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