

## The dynamics of women's representation in legislative body of Tasikmalaya City, West Java Indonesia

### *Dinamika keterwakilan perempuan di DPRD Kota Tasikmalaya, Jawa Barat Indonesia*

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#### Abstract

Women's representation in the legislative body has a significant role in increasing democratic quality. This is because democracy necessitates the equality between men and women in political spheres, including in the legislative body. This article aims to critically analyze women's representation in the legislative body in Tasikmalaya City and examine the implementation of affirmative action through 30% quota for women. The method used in this research is content analysis accompanied with political approach. As for the data, this article utilizes primary and secondary data collected through in-depth interview and library research, respectively. In addition, the data were analyzed through the concept of representation proposed by Pitkin as well as an integrated model of women's representation used by Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler. This study reveals that women's representation in a political position, such as parliament, does not merely depend on affirmative action through legal rules, it is also influenced by political, socioeconomic and ideological-psychological factors. This study concludes that women's underrepresentation in parliament of Tasikmalaya City is caused not by a single factor, but by various factors such as education, religious and patriarchal beliefs as well as competencies of women candidates.

**Keywords:** affirmative action; DPRD of Tasikmalaya City; dynamics of women representation; legislative body

#### Abstrak

*Keterwakilan perempuan dalam lembaga legislatif memiliki peran yang penting dalam meningkatkan kualitas demokrasi. Hal itu karena demokrasi meniscayakan persamaan antara laki-laki dan perempuan dalam bidang politik, termasuk dalam lembaga legislatif. Tulisan ini berupaya menganalisis secara kritis keterwakilan perempuan dalam lembaga legislatif di Kota Tasikmalaya dan mengevaluasi implementasi 30% kuota bagi perempuan melalui affirmative action. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah analisis isi yang disertai dengan pendekatan politik. Adapun data yang digunakan dalam tulisan ini adalah data primer dan data sekunder. Data tersebut dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan studi pustaka. Di samping itu, data yang terkumpul dianalisis melalui konsep representasi Pitkin dan model integrasi keterwakilan perempuan yang dikemukakan oleh Schwindt-Bayer dan Mishler. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa keterwakilan perempuan pada jabatan politik, seperti parlemen, tidak hanya bergantung pada tindakan afirmatif melalui aturan hukum, tetapi juga dipengaruhi oleh faktor-faktor politik, sosial-ekonomi dan ideologis-psikologis. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa ketakterwakilan perempuan di Kota Tasikmalaya tidak disebabkan oleh faktor tunggal, tetapi sejumlah faktor seperti pendidikan, keyakinan keagamaan dan patriarkal, di samping kompetensi calon legislator perempuan.*

**Kata kunci:** affirmative action; DPRD Kota Tasikmalaya; dinamika keterwakilan perempuan; lembaga legislatif

## Introduction

The position of women from time to time increases higher in democracy in different parts of the world along with the provision of a specific quota for them in parliament. This provision is regarded important since democracy necessitates equality between men and women. Moreover, the involvement of women in decision-making will increase the quality of democracy. At the same time, the underrepresentation of women in parliamentary indicates a democratic deficit (Sawer et al. 2006) in that system.

There are some arguments why women should have ample representatives in the legislative body. First is the justice argument. According to this argument, the absence of ample representatives in the legislative body implies direct or indirect discrimination of women. In fact, Article 25 of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Article 7 of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) consider such discrimination is baseless and should be avoided. Second is deliberative argument. This argument states that diversity of legislators' background will contribute to an inclusive meaning of democracy, since democracy ends at inclusive society. Therefore, women's representation at parliamentary level in an ample number will lead to a civilized politeness and support a non-confrontational approach in decision-making (Sawer et al. 2006).

Third is symbolic argument. According to this argument, women's representation as legislator can serve as a symbol of honor for women outside parliament, and at the same time can function as a symbol of equality between men and women. Furthermore, women's representation at legislative body can also inspire other women that they can carry out some meaningful endeavors as do men. Above all, women's underrepresentation may indicate that such a legislative body is basically less legitimate, since it does not cover ample representatives. Fourth is agency argument (Sawer et al. 2006). This argument in general states that women's need is different from men's, so that the former cannot be merely represented, they also necessarily decide their own interest.

Since women's involvement in parliament is very important, many countries in the world adopt quota provision for women in parliamentary bodies. According to Inter-Parliamentary Union (Sawer et al. 2006), when the provision was issued in 1995, only several countries adopted it. But 20 years later, no fewer than 120 countries adopted it with different models (Tripp & Kang 2008, IPU 2018).

Indonesia has issued Act of General Election of the House of Representatives, Regional Representative Board, and Regional House of Representatives Number 12 in 2003 (UU RI No. 10 Tahun 2006). It is in that act that quota provision for women was mentioned for the first time. The implementation of this act was evaluated and then empowered through Act Number 2 in 2008 on Political Party. It is mentioned in this act that every political party participating in a general election should necessarily propose women candidates as legislators no less than 30% of its total number of candidates. However, in practice, this quota is not easily met.

In 2004, for example, when quota provision for women was implemented the first time, the 30% quota for women was not met. Previously, women's parliamentary representation reached 9.6% of the total number of legislators, while in 2004 it increased to 11.1% or it increased only 1.6% from 9.6%. Five years later, in the 2009 election, a significant increase occurred where women's parliamentary representation reached 17.86% of the total number of legislators. This means that there was an increase of 6.76% from 11.1% of the total number of legislators. Unfortunately, this development decreased in the 2014 election from 17.86% in 2009 to 17.36% (Hillman 2018). The main causes why the quota is not met are cultural, structural and institutional barriers, as well as women's competencies, such as educational background and social activities (Aspinall et al. 2021). Cultural barriers include traditional attitudes of society to leadership of women. It is believed, for instance, that men are leaders for women and not vice versa. Structural barriers, on the other hand, cover social position of women in society where they are often subordinated to men's role, whereas, institutional barriers include the position of women in political and socio-religious organizations where the position of men is dominant.

Quota provision for women cannot be met also at provincial level throughout Indonesia, including in West Java in the 2014 election. Basically, there are 100 seats provided for the Regional House of Representatives in West Java province. However, the 30% quota for women is only met by 19 women legislators. This means that only 20% of 30% has been met. On the other hand, at district or county level in West Java, the 30% quota for women has been reached differently and dynamically (Soetjipto et al. 2010). In Bandung City, for example, from a total 50 seats, it was met only by three women

legislators. Whereas, in Tasikmalaya City, from a total 45 seats available, only five seats were filled by women. Again, in Pangandaran County, from 35 seats available, only four seats were achieved by women (Arifianto 2019).

Studies on women's representation at legislative body level have been done by a number of scholars from different perspectives. Bush (2011), for example, studied that quota for women in parliament cannot be divorced from the influence or pressure of international politics. On the pretext of democratic empowerment, the developed countries put some pressures on the developing countries that economically depend on the former to adopt quota provision for women in their parliamentary system.

Contrary to Bush, Tremblay (2012) analyzes relation between quota provision for women and electoral system adopted by 15 countries in the world. The general conclusion is that the influence of the electoral system on women representatives in the parliaments of these countries is significant. However, the electoral system is not the one and only factor determining the result of election, since cultural, socioeconomic, political dimensions and other factors are also of great significance in electoral results.

Schwindt-Bayer and Squire (2014) analyze women's representation in legislature body around the world and come with conclusion that quotas provided for women remain unfulfilled because of the lack of resources. They suggest that women candidates should be well-trained so that they can compete in electoral arenas. On the other hand, Iwanaga (2008) analyzes women's political participation and representation in Asia showing the obstacles and challenges faced by women. He argues that women in Asia are underrepresented because of a number of reasons, such as institutional, contextual, legal, electoral, political and cultural facilities.

Another relatively similar study has been conducted by Rahayu and Adisti (2014) that examines the factors leading to the success or failure of women's representation increase in parliament. Focusing on some Southeast Asian countries, the study concludes that different electoral systems will lead to different women's representation in parliament in those countries. Moreover, this study continues, quota provision for women in parliament cannot be met merely by the electoral system, but also by the patriarchal system in society and so on.

On the other hand, Wängnerud (2009) explains theoretically women's representation from a descriptive and substantive perspective. The former refers to quantity and number, such as quota, the latter refers to consciousness of society on the importance of women's position in totality. Therefore, the study concludes that the increase of women legislators contributes significantly to the important position of women.

A number of studies have been done by some scholars in certain countries. Atiyat (2017), for instance, analyzes that quota provision for women in the Jordanian parliament cannot be met, although it was issued. This is because the role of men is very significant in both family and religious affairs. Based on this, she suggests the educated women to be involved and participate in campaigns of legislative election.

Latif et al. (2015) analyzes the Pakistan case of women representation in parliament and concludes that religion, economy and patriarchal mindset are important factors that hinder women in political affairs, including in the legislative body. A similar study was done by Halder (2004) with a specific reference to Bangladesh. They conclude that quota and seats provided for women in the legislative body cannot run effectively, especially in Bangladesh. New regulations in terms of quota provision for women will be effective only if those regulations are also applied to other related spheres, such as political party, electoral system and so on.

For the Indonesian case, Purwanti (2015) analyzes the implementation of quota provision for women in parliament. She concludes that political parties cannot merely meet the provision when a general election

will be held. They should prepare a clear program for increasing women representatives in parliament whether through preparation of cadres, political education, or recruitment of membership. However, such attempts are not enough since patriarchal culture in society is so influential that political literacy toward women is necessary and significant. Hillman (2017) also examines the same case, focusing on how some attempts have been conducted to increase women's parliamentary representation in Indonesia and how such attempts come with a result. He concludes that political dynamics in Indonesia influences significantly women's representation in parliament.

Studies on the quota for women's representation in legislature in Indonesia have also been researched by some other scholars. Aspinall et al. (2021) analyze patriarchal attitudes as one significant barrier as well as structural disadvantage for women's underrepresentation. Moreover, they consider that such a situation is not brought about by a single reason, but because of such factors as women's willingness and capacity to be involved in competition, the attitude of political parties to women candidates and the electorate sentiment. On the other hand, Hillman (2017) analyzes the result of implementation of women's quota for legislature in Indonesia from 2009 to 2014. He argues that there was a decline from 17.86% in 2009 to 17.32% in 2014 due to lack of women candidates' competencies. Therefore, he suggests the government and international agencies to provide programs that can increase the quota's impact for the representation of women in the Indonesian parliament. Similarly, Hillman (2018) acknowledges that cultural factors remain a barrier for women's representation in parliament. However, for him, institutional factors—such as political parties—have been a more formidable challenge. Perdana and Hillman (2020) analyze the implementation of women's quota in parliament based on the 2019 election. They conclude that although there is gradual progress in women's representation, the 30% quota is hard to be achieved. One important factor for this slow increase is not only candidates' competencies, but also the attitude of political parties in listing women candidates. Agung and Yuliwati (2014) analyze women's representation in the political sphere in Tasikmalaya City, but do not focus on the legislative body. Moreover, they do not include the result of the 2019 election.

Those studies so far are concerned with women's representation in general areas ignoring how this representation occurs in local or district areas. Hence, this study attempts at analysis of women's representation at local area with a specific reference to Tasikmalaya City, in West Java. There are several reasons why this study is conducted there. First, Tasikmalaya is popularly known as "kota santri" which means that the majority of citizens in this city are devoted Muslims. It is assumed that they will consistently hold up religious values which, to some extent, posit a patriarchal system in their social life. This will, in turn, lead to underrepresentation of women in the legislature. Second, Tasikmalaya City has for a long time been a base for the Islamic parties, especially the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP). This party has dominated the Regional House of Representatives in that city in previous elections. However, this domination changed in the 2019 election by the domination of the Gerindra Party. Third, the number of women candidates elected in this election decreased significantly to only three persons. This dynamic raises a question on women's representation in the legislative body in the city. The main issue raised here is what factors are influential to success or failure of quota achievement for women in this legislative body.

## **Research Method**

This study is based on research conducted in 2019. The method used in this research is content analysis followed with political and theological approaches. This method basically attempts to draw a conclusion by identifying characteristics of collected data (Lune & Berg 2017) with the following steps. First, to collect data through observation at the office of DPRD and in-depth interview with some officials at the DPRD office, such as secretary, as well as with some members of DPRD.

Second, the collected data were reduced to those which were significantly relevant to the question of this research. Third, the relevant data finally were analyzed through content analysis method. A general conclusion was then drawn. On the other hand, a political approach is used to analyze political aspects

of women's representation while a theological approach is utilized to see theological aspects of this representation. This means that this research will consider also religious aspects in the representation of women candidates.

## Results and Discussion

### Women legislators in Tasikmalaya City

Tasikmalaya City started to elect the members of the Regional House of Representatives on 5 April, 2004. Followed by 24 political parties, this election finally resulted in 45 elected members of the Regional House of Representatives in Tasikmalaya City. The number was distributed between Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP, United Development Party), Partai Golongan Karya (Golkar, Functional Group Party), Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN, National Mandate Party), Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB, National Awakening Party), Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDI-P, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle), Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS, Prosperous Justice Party), Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB, Crescent Star Party), Partai Bintang Reformasi (PBR, Reform Star Party), and Partai Demokrat (Democratic Party). Thus, 15 political parties which participated in that 2004 election have no representative at the Regional House of Representatives in Tasikmalaya City. The elected candidates were then decided as members of the Regional House of Representatives on 3 September, 2004, by the Governor of West Java through decision letter Number 171/Kep. 856-Dekon/2004 for a five-year term, 2004-2009 (DPRD Kabupaten Tasikmalaya 2004).

In the 2009 general election, the seats of the Regional House of Representatives remained the same, that is 45 seats. Nationally, this election was followed by 44 political parties. However, the seats available were distributed only to 10 parties, as follows: (1) Partai Persatuan Pembangunan eight seats, (2) Partai Demokrat eight seats, (3) Partai Amanat Nasional seven seats, (4) PDI-P five seats, (5) Golongan Karya four seats, (6) Partai Keadilan Sejahtera four seats, (7) Partai Bintang Reformasi four seats, (8) Partai Bulan Bintang three seats, (9) Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa one seat, and (10) Partai Gerindra (the Great Indonesian Movement Party) one seat. This data showed that there was dynamics in terms of political parties that were elected to the Regional House of Representatives, from 9 to 10 political parties (as shown in Table 1). This is because Gerindra entered the Regional House of Representatives for the first time.

**Table 1.**  
Distribution of DPRD seats of 2009 Election

No.	Parties	Seats	Percentage
1	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP)	8	17.8
2	Partai Demokrat	8	17.8
3	Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN)	7	15.5
4	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan (PDI-P)	5	11.1
5	Golongan Karya (Golkar)	4	8.9
6	Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS)	4	8.9
7	Partai Bintang Reformasi (PBR)	4	8.8
8	Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB)	3	6.7
9	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB)	1	2.2
10	Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya (Gerindra)	1	2.2
	Total	45	100

Source: KPU Kota Tasikmalaya (2019)

It is clear from the data that PPP is the dominant political party in Tasikmalaya City. However, its position is basically the same as Demokrat since the latter also has eight seats in the Regional House of Representatives. Furthermore, there are only three women legislators at this institution, Ai Popon Purwati (PPP), Epi Guspitawati (PDIP) and Ratnawulan Adil Darmawan (Golkar). This means that women's representation is only 6.66% from the total number of Regional House of Representatives in

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Tasikmalaya City. Certainly, this percentage looks very low since the quota provided for women is 30% from the total number of Regional House of Representatives members.

The next general election for legislative body was held on 9 April, 2014, with 12 political parties as participants. The number of seats of the Regional House of Representatives in Tasikmalaya City remained the same, 45 seats. However, not all political parties participating in that election have representatives at this political body. Rather, only 10 political parties were elected to the Regional House of Representatives. Those seats are distributed to the following political parties: (1) PPP ten seats, (2) PDI-P seven seats, (3) PAN five seats, (4) Golkar five seats, (5) Gerindra four seats, (6) Demokrat four seats, (7) PKS four seats, (8) PBB three seats, (9) PKB two seats, and (10) Nasdem one seat. The elected candidates were then decided by the Governor of West Java Province through Deciding Letter Number 171/KEP.1173-PEM.UM/2014 and were promoted on 3 September, 2014 (Rizaldi 2019).

That data showed that there was a dynamic of seat distribution at the Regional House of Representatives in Tasikmalaya City in the 2014 general election. PPP affirmed itself as the winner in that election with ten seats, whereas, Demokrat, which was the runner-up after PPP in the previous election, lost four seats, and was surpassed by PDI-P with seven seats. Moreover, Nasdem as a newcomer in this election, had one seat, while PBR has no representative at the Regional House of Representatives in Tasikmalaya City.

Of the 45 members of the Regional House of Representatives, male legislators are still dominant. This is because women legislators are only five persons, Yoke Yuliantie and Sindy Wijayanti (PPP), Sri Puspitawati, Eti Guspitawati, and Imas Farmawati (PDIP). This number shows that there is an increase in the number of women legislators, since previously women legislators were only three members. In other words, there is an increase 2.2%, to 6.66%, which makes up 11.11% from the total number of legislators. This increase, however, is not of great significance since the quota provided for women is 30% of the total number of legislators at the Regional House of Representatives.

In the 2019 general election in Tasikmalaya City, the number of seats at the Regional House of Representatives remained the same, 45 seats. In this election, 496 candidates participated, but finally only 495 candidates took part since one of them resigned. The composition of the candidates showed that 310 were males, while the other 185 candidates were female (KPU 2019). This means that, in terms of candidacy, women candidates represented 37% of the total candidates. Moreover, this percentage shows that women representation in candidacy was relatively high and over the 30% provision for political parties to participate in the election. However, as will be shown, women's representation in candidacy is not automatically in line with the result of the election, as indicated by seats reached by each political party.

Followed by 20 political parties, the 2019 general election was held on 17 April, 2019, and the result was issued by the General Election Commission of Tasikmalaya City on Saturday, 27 July, 2019 (Zalal 2019). Based on the decision issued by the commission, not all political parties participating in the election had seats at the Regional House of Representatives of Tasikmalaya City. Only 10 of the 20 political parties passed into the Regional House of Representatives. They are as follows: (1) Partai Gerindra ten seats with 80,871 votes, (2) Partai Persatuan Pembangunan nine seats with 8763 votes, (3) PDI-Perjuangan five seats with 43,233 votes, (4) Partai Amanat Nasional five seats with 40,875 votes, (5) PKS four seats with 37,848 votes, (6) Partai Golkar five seats with 30,350 votes, (7) Partai Kebangkita Bangsa three seats with 29706 votes, (8) Partai Demokrat two seats with 20,054 votes, (9) Partai Bulan Bintang one seat with 13,818 votes, and (10) Partai Nasional Demokrat (National Democratic Party) one seat with 13,395 votes (Noor 2019).

From the data, there is a dynamic change in distribution of seats to political parties. PPP, the winner in two previous elections, won only nine seats in the 2019 election, surpassed by Gerindra which got 10 seats. In fact, in the previous election, Gerindra attained only four seats. On the other hand, PDIP previously got seven seats, but in this election got only five seats, or lost two seats.

It seems that Prabowo's candidacy of president influenced the increased number of this party in Tasikmalaya City. Prabowo at the same time became winner in this Muslim populous city. So there is a correlation between his candidacy and the increase of Gerindra's vote. Moreover, PAN, a supporter of Prabowo, remained stable with five seats, like PKS. In contrast, PDIP and PPP—supporters of Jokowi—decreased in attaining seats at the Regional House of Representatives of Tasikmalaya City. PPP's decrease in attainment of seats cannot be divorced from elites of this party who are suffering from corruption issues. It is well-known that the chairman of this party, Romahurmuzy, was imprisoned by the Corruption Eradication Commission for his corruption. The same issue occurred to the Mayor of Tasikmalaya City, Budi Budiman, who is the chairman of PPP in Tasikmalaya City (Arifianto 2019). Thus, there can be seen a dynamic shift in distribution of seats at Regional House of Representatives in Tasikmalaya City.

It is clear that of 45 members, there are only three women who sitting as legislators at the Regional House of Representatives. They are Hj. Ai Ellah Rohilah, Hj. Nurjanah (PPP) and Eti Guspitawati (PDIP). DEW (Head of DPRD budgeting and service) states that:

“The first two are newcomers, while the last is an incumbent. In addition, there is a decrease of women's representation at Regional House of Representatives in Tasikmalaya from 5 seats to 3 seats. In other words, there is a decrease from 11.11% to 6.66% of total members of Regional House of Representatives in Tasikmalaya City. Furthermore, what is interesting is that although Gerindra is the winner in this election, but it has no women representative in Tasikmalaya parliamentary. It is also worthy to note that PPP and PDIP are relatively consistent parties in placing women legislators at Regional House of Representatives.” (Informant DEW).

### Factors of failure

As described previously, to increase women's parliamentary representation in Indonesia, many efforts have been made through affirmative action, in the forms of regulations as well as campaigns. However, this policy does not automatically come with a significant result, as can be seen from the 2014 general election, when women's representation nationally decreased slightly. This implies that affirmative action is not the one and only factor in increasing women's parliamentary representation.

As suggested by Shvedova (1998), in general there are three factors leading to hinder women passing to parliamentary status: (1) political obstacles, (2) socioeconomic obstacles, and (3) ideological-psychological hindrances. The first refers to the masculine political model, less support from political parties, weakness of women's network with women organizations and political systems. On the other hand, socioeconomic obstacles include social status, education, social stratum, and so on. As for the third, it refers to gender ideology, cultural pattern, socio-traditional role of women, less confidence of women and so on. Of course, there are many more factors if we spell it out in more detail. However, the three main factors above are influential to women's representation in the legislative body, especially in the Regional House of Representatives of Tasikmalaya City, as will be discussed.

As previously described, women's representation in the Regional House of Representatives of Tasikmalaya City is relatively low. One of the factors leading to this condition is a lack of regeneration for women in political parties participating in the general election. DEW states:

“Generally, women deserve a serious attention from political parties only when the political parties want to register to take a part in general election of legislative members. Consequently, women who were registered as legislator candidates are not popularly known by society. Moreover, they are not generally figures or activists in either social organizations or political parties. Therefore, women candidates are considered incapable by society since they have no good track record in any activity.” (Informant DEW).

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This statement indicates that political parties are not seriously concerned with their women candidates for legislative election. At the same time, they do not consider women capable to be elected as legislators, such as their popularity, electability and so on.

Tasikmalaya is known as a city with pious Muslim citizens (santri), who tightly embrace Islamic doctrines and values so that they consider women are not suitable to be public leaders, including as legislators. As ETI—one of the elected candidates—states, "the majority of women in this city remain hold a classical gender perspective that places women as subordinate to men. For them, election of legislators should be in line with the husband's choice and they will follow this choice."

At the same time, she continues:

"A number of priests and religious scholars (ulama) hold the same perspective of women, and they campaign for women to be housewives or play their roles in domestic sphere. Moreover, they also consider that public affairs should be submitted to men or males. They argue that if women play a role in public affairs they will possess dual burdens, since they are also housewives at the same time." (Informant ETI).

However, as she states "Certainly, not all priests and scholars hold the same view. However, this view firmly grows in the majority of Tasikmalaya society." In other words, the lack of women's representation in the Regional House of Representatives of Tasikmalaya City cannot be separated from socio-cultural obstacles. This, in turn, leads to low bargaining power of women as legislator candidates in this parliamentary district (Amalia 2012).

Another important factor for women's underrepresentation in the legislative body in Tasikmalaya City is the lack of candidates' educational background and competencies. According to DEW:

"Most women who were registered by political parties as legislator candidate are not of good educational background. It is not surprising that basically they are not well prepared for this position and therefore they are lack of effort and endeavor. It is often, therefore, political parties registered some women as legislator candidates merely to meet regulation of 30% quota for women in order that they pass requirement of election." (Informant DEW).

Again, women legislator candidates do not belong to a strong network with social and religious organizations, including women's organizations. Most of them are not activists of social organizations so that they are not well-trained in social affairs. According to NUR—one of the elected candidates—"Women who were registered by political parties are not activists of organizations so that it is not easy for them to be known by people. On the contrary, those who are activists of organizations—including women's organizations—are not interested in and feel suitable to serve in the political arena." This is supported by Masitoh (2017) who argues that organizational background of women candidates is very low so that they cannot convince the voters to elect them.

According to Margret (2019) and others, the order of candidate placement is also relatively influential. This can be seen from the fact that the women legislators candidates at provincial level number one, two and three in order. Those who have ordinary number one are successful to be legislators and reach 41%, while who have ordinary number two reach 20% and those who have ordinary number three reach about 24% (Margret 2019, Yumasdaleni et al. 2020).

Different from this data, in the Regional House of Representatives of Tasikmalaya City there are three women legislators who were elected, but not all them have ordinary number one. Only Eti Guspitawati of PDI-Perjuangan has ordinary number one, while Ai Ellah Rohilah from PPP has ordinary number six and Nurjana from PPP number 10. This shows that the order of candidate placement of women legislators in the Regional House of Representatives of Tasikmalaya City is not influential factor for their election (Kapol 2019).



In addition, social background of candidates plays an important role in getting votes from the constituents. This is true for the three elected candidates mentioned above. The last two of them are activists of youth organizations so that they had been popularly known, especially among the young constituents. The first one is also an activist of a political organization, i.e., PDI-P where she started as a member and then as an officer of this political party. It is not surprising that she was elected as a member of the legislative body after the 2004 election. This substantiates once again that social involvement of candidates is very important for women to be elected (Masitoh 2017).

In terms of educational background, DEW mentions the elected candidates are not superior in education. This because not all of the elected candidates are graduates of higher education. The last two, for instance, graduated from senior high school, while the first one graduated from a local higher educational institution in Tasikmalaya City. This means that educational background is less important than social background.

The discussion shows that women's representation in the Regional Houses of Representatives in Indonesia varies and is dynamic, although the regulations are the same. This implies that affirmative action that has been implemented in general elections in Indonesia will not be successful to increase women's representation if social condition and cultural setting do not support this action (Surbakti et al. 2011). In other words, to reach 30% of the total number of legislators in the Regional House of Representatives for women remains difficult if this quota is carried out only for political parties to participate in a general election.

As proposed by Pitkin (1967), there are four types of women's representation: formalistic, descriptive, symbolic and substantive representations. The first is a kind of representation which is based on institutional arrangement. The second implies the representation of the existing groups such as gender, religion, race or ethnicity. The third kind of representation is grounded on psychological or emotional ties and relationship of constituents. The fourth is representation, which is based on the interest of constituencies to which the candidates belong (Pitkin 1967:10-11). Moreover, Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005) argue that the four types above cannot be understood in an isolated manner. Rather, they should be understood in an integrated way.

Based on this theory, the candidacy of women's legislators in Tasikmalaya City can neither be considered symbolic nor substantive representation. This is because the women candidates are nominated in the interest of political parties rather than the interest of constituencies. Moreover, as described previously, the political parties are concerned with the women candidates just for fulfilment of the provision in the act of election. Therefore, women's representation in this city is more appropriate to be considered as formal representation.

Moreover, based on a theory proposed by Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005), women's representation in Tasikmalaya City can be considered as one step toward another. This means that the present representation remains far from the integrated representation, which unites institutional regulations, gender perspective, psychological ties and the interest of constituents.

However, women's underrepresentation in the legislative body is a specific case in Tasikmalaya City. Similar cases can be found in different areas. In Bangladesh, for example, women's underrepresentation in parliament is caused by a number of factors such as cultural and religious values that rigorously place women subordinate to men as well as women's education (Halder 2004, Ferdous 2019). Women's underrepresentation in parliament is also found in Malaysia which, according to Mohammad (2018), reached only 10.4% in 2016. The main cause for this situation is the structural factor in the political party. That is to say that, since men are dominant in the party, they are also dominant in parliament, since they are nominated in a higher position than women.

According to research conducted by Pew Research Center (2019), the number of women in parliament in the world makes up 24% of the total number. However, in most countries, women remain underrepresented. Only Cuba, Rwanda and Bolivia reached gender parity, while Nordic countries reached close to gender parity. Whereas, in North American countries, such as the United States and Canada, women legislators make up 27% of the total number of legislators. This shows that, in general, women's representation is still underrepresented even in advanced countries.

## **Conclusion**

From the discussion, this study concludes that women's representation in the parliament of Tasikmalaya City decreased significantly based on the result of the 2019 general election. This situation is not caused simply by a single factor, but also by other factors, such as the lack of political parties' concern with the women candidates, the lack of educational background of the candidates and patriarchal belief held by society as well as social participation of the candidates in society. Moreover, women's representation in this city can be categorized into formalistic representation which is based dominantly on the interest of political parties.

In short, affirmative action cannot guarantee that the 30% quota provision for women in parliament can be met if other social, economic and ideological factors are not in line with the regulations. Therefore, it is necessary to take into account some factors in order to increase women's representation in parliament. This can be done through some programs such as political education for women emphasizing that politics is of great significant to represent their interest. Mainstreaming gender is also of importance because the patriarchal system will hinder women candidates from success to be legislators. Last but not least is to amend the act which obligates 30% of composition of women legislator in the legislative rather than simply 30% in candidacy.

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