

Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)-Based Political Education as Social Capital for Female Politicians

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze how the contribution of Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)-based political education as social capital that can be utilized by female politicians to increase their participation, influence, and role in politics. The research approach used is qualitative with in-depth interview data collection techniques, focus group discussions with research informants involving female politicians involved in the 2024 election contestation. In addition, literature study documents are also a data collection tool that supports research findings. Data analysis was carried out using coding techniques consisting of three stages, open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The research findings show that the existence of GEDSI political education makes aspects of gender equality, disability inclusion, and social diversity as capital that equips female politicians with the skills to build political strategies, networking skills and overcome structural and cultural barriers in the political system. For female politicians, the implementation of GEDSI political education is used as social capital that distinguishes them from male politicians in advocating policies with a broad perspective in understanding social complexity, thus enabling them to design more responsive and equitable policies. By leveraging the social capital gained from GEDSI education, female politicians can not only strengthen their position on the political stage, but also contribute to creating a more just and representative political governance.

Keywords

Female politicians, Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI), Social Capital

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia through the vision of creating a golden generation in 2045, one of the aims is to create future leaders who not only have intellectual intelligence, but are able to face global challenges. The challenge in achieving the vision of the golden generation in 2045 is that the multicultural Indonesian society is able to work together to overcome existing challenges (Malihah, 2015). In realizing the golden generation in 2045, education is the main capital that is able to develop human resources, so that it indirectly contributes to national development goals. In today's world, integrating the Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) approach to realize sustainable human resource development. The Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) approach is one of the important foundations for carrying out sustainable development. The GEDSI approach can create an ecosystem that promotes equality, disability rights, and fair opportunities for everyone (Pratiwi et al., 2022; van der Vleuten & van Eerdewijk, 2020). Preparing the golden generation of 2045 with the ability of the GEDSI approach is not only about fulfilling rights, but also as a tool to form individuals who have empathy, social awareness to develop and play a role in decision-making that influences the future of the nation.

Sustainable development goals by prioritizing education can strive for human resource development. Human resource development does not only focus on improving the quality of life of individuals, but also on strengthening political participation. Strengthening political participation through the integration of the GEDSI approach has great potential to create an inclusive and equal environment for all individuals. GEDSI not only focuses on gender equality, but also on empowering individuals with disabilities and marginalized social groups, thus providing wider opportunities to contribute to the political space (Malihah et al., 2024) disability and social inclusion (GEDSI). Political education using the GEDSI approach is one of the new approaches that can integrate the principle of equality and develop po-

litical participation for everyone. This makes an approach that does not see gender or certain groups as a prerequisite for the face of democracy today. GEDSI-based political education has not been widely implemented as one of the main approaches in developing political human resources at various levels. This is evidenced by the gap in the participation of politicians, especially female politicians who are involved in politics.

Law Number 22 of 2007 concerning Election Organizers stipulates that the composition of election organizers must pay attention to women's representation of at least 30%. In the 2024 Election, for example, women's electability only reached approximately 22%. This problem shows a political system that has not accommodated women's participation as policy makers at the highest level. The UN Women Asia and the Pacific (2019) study stated that the number of women in parliament should be higher, because women have a stronger concern for women's issues. This is a gap about how women's inclusion in the political system is still limited. In fact, higher representation of women in parliament can strengthen inclusive democracy and promote the interests of various groups in society, especially the vulnerable. According to Sahu & Yadav (2018) in the United States, a politician needs to utilize political education to improve political skills, which ultimately contributes to increasing public political participation. However, the current situation shows that political education is still not interpreted positively.

Data from the Central Statistics Agency (2024) shows a decline in the number of political party cadres who take part in political education, where in 2023 it only reached 54.02%, a decrease compared to 2021 which reached 73.45%. This shows that political education has not become a forum that politicians use as social capital. Several previous studies have shown that women who become political cadres are often seen only as a form of affirmation in achieving the 30% quota (Malihah et al., 2020). The problem that arises is that female political cadres are considered to have weak political knowled-

ge and skills (Prihatini, 2020; Lefkofridi et al., 2018). They are often faced with social cultural barriers. The assumption of female politicians as inferior, feminine, and gentle figures, and as a result, are considered unsuitable for leadership roles in organization (Nurbayani et al., 2019; Malihah et al., 2020). This is a reflection regarding the need for political education that needs to be a differentiator for female politicians that is in accordance with their capacity and potential to play an effective role in politics.

Women's participation in politics provides a new face on how politics is not identical to men. Women's representation needs to be seen as individuals who are able to compete in political contests. Women's participation in politics can contribute to efforts to create an ecosystem of participatory, responsive, fair, inclusive decision-making processes, and can advance the status of women by catalyzing broad and long-term impacts (Varghese, 2020; Wasi, 2020). Women's political participation in feminist ideology emerged as a reaction to the misguided gender roles in society. Men hold supremacy and women are subordinate in almost all societies. The beginning of women's involvement in the political sphere openly in the second wave of feminism fought for gender equality in various fields, including politics. One of the feminist thoughts put forward by Simone de Beauvoir revealed that women have been treated as "other" in a patriarchal society, meaning that women are considered a subordinate group that only has value in relation to roles or functions related to men (Schoonheim, 2023). This gender gap has challenged the "mobilization bias" that has traditionally operated in political thought. Previously, women did not have the freedom to express themselves, which led to the birth of the feminist movement until the current contemporary era. The influence of this second wave of feminism has emerged until today when the contemporary era has made it possible for women to be actively involved as political subjects in parliament, the executive, and other important positions at all levels of government.

Women have now been given the op-

portunity to become political subjects who can decide and influence public decisions. Women's representation must be in line with the mandate of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Women's representation in parliament and women's political participation in elections are not just complementary, because women can pioneer the initiation of advocacy for policies that support, empower and contribute to real change and are felt by women. Women need to be equipped with political knowledge and skills that can be done through involvement in political education. Political education for female politicians is an important element in preparing them to take strategic positions in government and political organizations, so that they can contribute significantly to national development.

This study will examine how GEDSI-based political education can be a social capital for female politicians, who play a role as one of the pillars in creating better and fairer governance. The need for political education for female politicians is an effort to build dominant values of power consisting of indicators such as knowledge, abilities, skills, and capacities. When connected to efforts to build the golden generation of 2045, women also have the right to play an active role in creating an inclusive and sustainable future. For female politicians, the GEDSI approach to political education can be used to improve knowledge and communication skills that are useful for their social capital. Some of the skills that can be obtained from GEDSI-based political education can also build civil collaboration and negotiation skills, and acquire bureaucratic and organizational skills that are useful for political activities (Azorín, 2020; Reynolds et al., 2019) assisting students to become global citizens, equipped to deal with global issues. This article investigates how civics and citizenship education is addressed in curricula; in particular, to what extent the ongoing issue of supporting a critical citizenry, locally and globally, is addressed. Using Australia as a case study, we present an analysis of selected Australian primary school (ages 5–12) assis-

ting students to become global citizens, equipped to deal with global issues. This article investigates how civics and citizenship education is addressed in curricula; in particular, to what extent the ongoing issue of supporting a critical citizenry, locally and globally, is addressed. Using Australia as a case study, we present an analysis of selected Australian primary school (ages 5–12. GEDSI-based political education needs to be used as an opportunity by female politicians to provide the ability to increase visibility in society. Visibility in society as social capital for female politicians so that they are considered worthy of occupying parliamentary seats (Cerqueira et al., 2024). The GEDSI approach helps female politicians not only in improving their political knowledge and skills, but also in building their confidence to compete in a political space that is often dominated by gender biased views. GEDSI-based political education can be a social capital to strengthen understanding of inclusiveness issues, such as eliminating social barriers and strengthening wider networks, thus enabling female politicians to play an active role in decision-making that has a significant impact.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques used through in-depth interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and literature studies. This study was conducted in the context of political contestation in West Java with female legislative politicians as informants. The determination of informants in this study used a purposive sampling approach, which focuses on individuals who are able to provide information related to the problems of this study. In addition, the snowball sampling approach was also used to collect information from other parties who were indirectly involved in the legislative election process in West Java. The informants in this study involved female politicians who were running in the 2024 West Java Election political contest. Data analysis used coding techniques. The first process is open coding, where research

findings are grouped from the results of in-depth interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and literature studies referring to one theme finding. The second is axial coding, where the findings of each theme are connected to each category, which is then used to identify each relationship between different themes. The final analysis process is selective coding, making research findings compiled from each pattern that can provide in-depth insight into how GEDSI-based political education becomes social capital for female politicians in political contestation in West Java.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Practical Challenges of Equality Issues for Female Politicians

Understanding how women participate in politics, it is necessary to see the foundation as a determining foothold to better understand the extent to which various formalities of obstacles affect their awareness and historical journey. In Sundanese culture, women are more directed towards domestic activities. This phenomenon occurs in many cultures and has become part of a tradition passed down from generation to generation. Several Sundanese proverbs do reflect this view, such as “*Sapi anut ka banteng*”, which means “a woman (wife) must obey a man (husband)”, then the Sundanese proverb “*Awewe mah tara cari ka Batawi*”, which means “no need to go far, women (wives) are tasked with taking care of men (husbands)” (Zulaikha, 2019). Women on the one hand are required to take responsibility for development and on the other hand they are also required to develop themselves as whole human beings. The desire and ability of women to participate in development, and especially the political decision-making process, have shown encouraging things, but this desire sometimes clashes with various other interests, so that it experiences obstacles. One of the obstacles to women's participation is the existence of socio-cultural constructions in society, including the media, which also reinforce gender inequality (Thesen & Yildirim, 2022) but our un-

derstanding of the variation in the degree of bias across systems is limited. A recent meta-analysis reveals how, in countries with proportional representation (PR).

Based on research findings, it shows that female politicians are faced with the reality of these socio-cultural constructions which are obstacles to entering the world of politics (especially practical politics). This makes female politicians considered to have deviated from their philosophical basis on why they play a role in development activities and decision-making, and deviated from various women's issues that are the responsibility of all citizens, including men and women. Party regulations that ensure gender equality in nominations have a positive influence on the proportion of women elected to the legislature. However, it may take two elections or more for there to be significant progress in the proportion of female representatives, after the introduction of these regulations. Voters must see how the party is committed to advancing the interests of the nation and state, so it seems that it is not necessary to establish a women's party, if the existing party opens up equal opportunities for women and has a program that is friendly to women's interests (Fraile & Sánchez-Vitores, 2020) this article shows that there is a persistent gender gap in declared political interest over the life cycle. Using evidence from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS).

Party ideology often adheres to a socially progressive ideology and is more likely to support female political representatives. The idea of egalitarianism and their support, in general, for those outside the traditional power structure (Schemmel, 2021). The challenge of equality faced by female politicians is that political parties are often pressured to include female candidates without first involving them in party organizational activities. Based on research results, female politicians are often neglected from the party cadre process. This makes the issue of inequality in women's political participation even more complex. Challenges for female politicians' participation began to emerge ahead of the election. Based on re-

search findings, female politicians felt that they were only used as campaign tools, without further understanding the intent and purpose of the campaign itself. This indication emerged when women in their nominations were only a formality to meet the 30% nomination target from political parties, so they were placed in a sequence number that was unlikely to be elected.

When female politicians also managed to enter the nomination, in an open proportional system, access and capacity to compete with male candidates also became a problem, because often female candidates were not well prepared by political parties (Diogo et al., 2021) considering their significant presence and rapid growth in HEIs. Nevertheless, and despite efforts to minimise gender gaps, women are still underrepresented in top management and leading positions, contributing to increment the phenomenon of vertical segregation. Based on the reality of the Portuguese academia, and focusing on an in-depth case study of a Portuguese university, this paper analyses if and how the way decision-making bodies are constituted, influence the gender balance of their members. Recently, within the New Public Management (NPM). Political parties do have the opportunity to round out their role in political stages while also coloring the accentuation of the ruling class. Based on research findings, female politicians have not been prioritized in the political system. Although the legislation explicitly states a 30% quota, this does not yet indicate that female politicians are able to be equal to male politicians. The political arena for female politicians is considered not inclusive and fair, because women's political participation as politicians is not yet fully intact.

Political Education for Female Politicians Today

Politics becomes an art and science to gain power, both constitutionally and non-constitutionally. Political power is able to dominate the country's political decisions, so understanding politics requires knowledge and skills to understand the political system, political behavior, political legitimacy,

political participation, and others (Weiss, 2020). Political education is a strategy carried out to gain political knowledge and skills. Political education is often considered as part of political socialization in education and political science. The importance of political education is a forum for understanding how the government system works in forming a democratic government. Political education is also interpreted as a forum that teaches how interest groups pursue their goals, especially in gaining power (Veugelers & Groot, 2019). The goal of political education needs to encourage every individual without exception to be able to participate as a political subject who fights for advocacy so that people's rights are fulfilled fairly.

In the era of the contemporary feminist movement, women are given the opportunity to actively participate as political subjects. The representation of female politicians not only plays a role as a symbolic actor who fulfills the quota, but also as a leader who has expertise, insight, and commitment to issues that are relevant to society (Barnes & Beaulieu, 2019). The representation of women who enter politics in West Java is often constrained by cultural perspectives. The characteristic of Sundanese women is that women must advance together and family is the main thing, they view domestic roles and public roles as something that must be carried out proportionally and functionally.

Women's representation basically has the potential to change the world by maximizing their role and potential in politics. In Sundanese culture, women have a highly respected role in maintaining social balance and customs, but women's political participation is often limited. In fact, there will be no political activity or development without women's participation, also without men's participation, therefore gender-perspective development gives joint responsibility to all citizens regardless of gender (sexist) (Mansell et al., 2022; Bankert, 2020). This makes political education a social capital for female politicians to maximize their role and potential in politics. Political education not only plays a role in developing knowledge related to political vision and strategy, but

can build awareness of political supremacy and dynamics in politics. Sundanese culture is certainly not used as a limitation for female politicians to be involved in politics. This is an opportunity that can be utilized by strengthening Sundanese cultural values.

Based on research findings for female politicians in West Java, the implementation of political education integrates values such as Sundanese, "*silih asah, silih asih, silih asuh*". This value shows that in political education it is necessary to prioritize knowledge, skills, and attitudes to continue learning and improving political abilities, having an empathetic attitude, the importance of social responsibility. This is a form of political education that not only strengthens personal competence, but also strengthens solidarity and social networks that can strengthen their political competitiveness. In Law Number 2 of 2008 is "the process of learning and understanding the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of every citizen in the life of the nation and state (*proses pembelajaran dan pemahaman tentang hak, kewajiban, dan tanggung jawab setiap warga negara dalam kehidupan berbangsa dan bernegara*)". Therefore, political education is often seen as part of political socialization which aims to encourage everyone to become responsible participants in political life. Female politicians in West Java who believe in Sundanese cultural values as part of their political skills are one of their social capitals. Sundanese cultural values are not only interpreted as efforts that play a role in strengthening cultural identity, but also in building inclusive communication and harmony as leaders (Jamaludin & Novari, 2022). The comprehensive capacity of female politicians does not only focus on formal aspects but also on social values that strengthen relationships between individuals and groups. Sundanese culture is very closely related to the political education values of female politicians.

How GEDSI Issues Are Integrated into Political Education for Female Politicians?

Political education for female politicians is their social capital to participate in a political contest. Women's participation and role in politics must first be given education so that they can become political actors, who understand political strategies and actions to contribute to political policies (Asmorojati, 2019). Political education activities for women aim to form and foster political orientations in individuals. It includes conceptual beliefs that have political content, including political loyalty and feelings, as well as political knowledge and insight that cause women to be aware of political issues and political attitudes. It aims for every woman to be able to provide active political participation in their society. The implementation of political education for female politicians that leads to the GEDSI approach poses various challenges but also creates opportunities. In terms of gender, many efforts are currently being made to be part of political education materials. However, for the inclusive social and disability aspects, it is considered to have limitations in terms of supporting facilities and human resources. It is undeniable that vulnerable groups and disabilities are still considered as parties whose rights and obligations have not been voiced practically. This is an input on how women need to have the competence to understand the inclusive social and disability aspects as differentiators of competence with men.

The integration of GEDSI-based political education complements the Sundanese cultural values of *silih asah*, *silih asih*, and *silih asuh*. *Silih asah* emphasizes the importance of increasing understanding of various aspects of socio-political life, including issues of gender equality, disability, and social inclusion. *Silih asih* emphasizes empathy and concern for others, ensuring that all individuals, including those with disabilities, are treated with respect and their rights are respected. *Silih asuh* teaches social responsibility to support each other in creating an inclusive environment, where all individuals feel accepted and empowered. These three values are integrated into GEDSI-based political education into technical skills in terms

of decision-making and political strategy, but also strengthen their commitment to Sundanese cultural values that are oriented towards social harmony, thus creating holistic and sustainable social change. Political education can be used as an effort to form and grow political orientation in female politicians. In practice, the implementation of GEDSI-based political education practices carried out by female politicians fundamentally aims to create a more equal and just governance. The values of *silih asah*, *silih asih*, and *silih asuh* are believed to be able to form a framework for political education that prioritizes equal and just democratic values. The implementation of GEDSI is considered not only a fundamental aspect of human rights and social justice but also a necessary condition for improving the development process. By committing to the principle of "leaving no one behind", GEDSI places social concerns at the forefront of development efforts (Rahmadhani & Sholeh, 2021).

Political education provided to female politicians needs to understand that being part of the political space in West Java requires adapting the GEDSI approach based on local cultural values. The GEDSI principle supported by Sundanese values in political education for female politicians in West Java. Social capital in participating in a political contest provides meaning about how GEDSI-based political education becomes a place of education so that they can have soft skills such as leadership, personality, communication and negotiation skills that are transformed into political education, which understands political strategies and actions to contribute to political policies (Asmorojati, 2019). Political education for women in various aspects of socio-cultural and community life is very urgent in order to increase the political role of women. Political education in the form of political education for female politicians encourages women to contribute to equal and democratic policy regulations. Political education for female politicians needs to boost political strategies that lead to women's democratic capabilities and are far from dirty politics (Bardall et al., 2020). Women need to be mediators who

voice aspirations for fair political decision-making for all parties. Aspects of political strategy can be implemented with a certain approach. The approach taken can be implemented formally and informally. Understanding political education for female politicians can be implemented by building a women's strategy that theoretically and practically understands political ethics and culture in a tiered and sustainable manner. GEDSI is used to highlight the importance of addressing the various sources of discrimination faced by different people and groups, including those arising from gender and disability. The GEDSI aspect can be one of women's political strategies where female politicians can become political representatives who are considered fair and inclusive. The direct involvement of women as parties who play a role in making public decisions can show that women have qualified capabilities (Allen et al., 2019). Political accountability begins with increasing the number of women in decision-making positions, but the aspect needed is governance reform that is sensitive to GEDSI issues.

CONCLUSION

The current practice of political education provided to female politicians can be implemented on how to create knowledge related to inclusive policies as part of a political strategy. The practice of political education for female politicians in West Java integrates the values of *silih asah*, *silih asih*, and *silih asuh* as a foundation for creating inclusive policies that favor vulnerable groups. These three values have an important role in building the capacity of female politicians to become policy makers who are responsive to the needs of the community without eliminating the essence of Sundanese cultural values. This is related to how GEDSI is present as an opportunity that differentiates female politicians from male politicians. By understanding GEDSI, female politicians have strategic social capital to become agents of change. Women can be catalysts for targeted development resources effectively and fairly, and that any nega-

tive impacts of development interventions take into account the interests of all parties, including women, people with disabilities, or marginalized groups. GEDSI-based political education can strengthen the existence of female politicians as advocates for gender-equitable policies. The social capital of female politicians who understand GEDSI can have an impact on them because it is able to encourage more accommodating and substantial political decision-making. In addition, it can also strengthen democracy which always provides ideas related to pro-women and children legislation in the public space.

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