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Leveraging Communication Technology in Managing Diverse Communities

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Gender Political Empowerment in Aceh (Study at North Aceh)

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Abstract

This research has been seeing the problem of gender marginalization in Aceh, particularly at North Aceh. Not only the problem on economy but also in social and political turbulence. The indication can be found within gender political participation and their involvement in political institution were low in quantity. There might be something wrong with the gender political communication and political marketing, the recent opinion in particular was to obtain and articulate the interest of gender political perspective. This research was aimed at identifying the gender voter characteristic in Aceh and which was related to structural and influence in the level of gender political understanding in Aceh and North Aceh in particular. The research informant was done and considered purposively and intended due to the need of this research. The data collection technique was based on observation, interview and documentation in analysing the available reference. The data technique analysis with model interactive was done on data reduction, classification, verification and conclusion.

Keywords: *Political Communication, gender, empowerment, Aceh*

Background

While the state territorial conflict was ended, the priority issue should be placed is peace building by preventing the future possibility conflict through the support of democratization endeavour and capacity building for the institution. Democracy is the only model of government which is offering space for justice, empowerment, legitimacy and equity.

Gender is over populated in all over the world, it means that gender is half solution which is arising in society? In Aceh case of peace and transation, this has similar meaning by questioning where, the role, opportunity, and gender involvement within recent existing process.

The gender political empowerment is needed in order to articulate the interest and it is perspective. In this matter, whoever gender is involved in decision makers in many institutions not only act as carrier message delivery, but themselves acting as message. This behavior is at

the same time can avoid the systemic willingness to marginalize the gender role. This fact has brought gender position at the lower level, and gender is needed to be returned into the Aceh political space. The gender empowerment becomes important while convincing that the gender is a dominant group within society and not left behind and mischieved in the peace development and development transition.

The 2014 Aceh Legislative Election has given the first picture where the gender has failed in world politics. Although, every political parties must propose at least 30% gender delegates in every election places, but the fact indicates that gender just won the election by getting 8.8% from 650 seats. Similarly to Aceh situation, where in the Aceh parliament, gender just getting 14.8% or in the other words, gender just winning 12 seats from 81 available seats. Unfortunately, 4 seats of Provincial Delegation Council (DPD) and 13 seats in the Indonesia National Parliament (DPR RI), no any single gender represents Aceh. Ironically, if looked at members of Acehnese voters, in which gender voters is more than 50% or 1.679.086 voters in comparing to 1.635.288 men voters. So, the indicated number is still not represented the gender delegation that obligated by the Indonesian Election Law (Undang-undang Pemilu). Moreover, in the county and city local parliament (DPR Kabupaten/Kota), which represented by 8.8% seats by gender. The government's program and paradigm just focused exclusively on gender empowerment and wealthfare rather than political equality (Stiftung, 2005).

The gender empowerment in politics was a part of Acehnese identity in the past. At present, the gender empowerment in politics more possible by entering the open space and political opportunities, structural and cultural change within society (Table 1).

Conceptual Frame Work

Feminism

Feminism issue is always related to the equality right and gender equality, but feminism has raised feminism more than the both above issue. In the contemporary theory, the concern is no more focused on the gender life, but expanded to the gender analysis. How the gender impact is in the human social life, if we able to clearly see; International politics and international relation is hold by men. Gender is not more involved in taking decision and political making. According to Sadli (2002) feminism is a political movement which is know as suffrage movement, which aims to progress gender as their propriare life, their status as well as their role. Feminism is an awareness, abduction and exploitation over gender. Feminism is a gender movement which demands on full equality right between men and women (Najmah and Khatimah Sa'ida, 2003; Mazdafiah 2004; Maharani 2004). Further, the definition of feminism can changed because of understanding or feminist's view which is based on historical and cultural reality, level of awareness perception and behavior.

Research Methodology

The research location is done at North Aceh county (Aceh Utara) chosen based on one gender number (2.2%) from 45 seats which was provided in North Aceh Parliament. This condition becomes an instrument in searching the leading cause factors and gender, weakness in the political understanding structurally by showing the gender's inability in deciding their delegation in the parliament, in which the voters data indicates that female voters more than 50% from male voters. While total voters 389.061 by number of male voters 189.915, and female voters about 199.146).

Table 1: Percentage of Gender Legislative Candidate which getting seat in county/city local parliament (DPRK) di Aceh

No.	County/city	Gender Delegation in DPRK (%)
1	Sabang	25
2	Banda Aceh	3,4
3	Aceh Jaya	5
4	Aceh Barat	8
5	Aceh selatan	0
6	Singkil	8
7	Pidie	17,5
8	Pidie Jaya	4
9	Aceh Barat Daya	4
10	Sabulussalam	5
11	Gayo Lues	10
12	Aceh Tenggara	13,4
13	Bireuen	2,5
14	Lhokseumawe	8
15	Aceh Utara	2,2
16	Aceh Timur	10
17	Langsa	8
18	Aceh Tamiang	33,3
19	Aceh Besar	2,9
20	Benar Meriah	4
21	Aceh Tengah	6,7
22	Nagan Raya	16
23	Simeulue	10

Resource: Harian Serambi Indonesia tanggal, 24 April 2014

The research method that used in this research is descriptive by using the ququalitative approach. To obtain the needed data as well as information, the data collection way as under: The primary data is found based on observation result by in depth interview and structured interviewed which is already prepared before, for female and people individually. The researcher was deciding himself the informan that based on purposive technique. For the secondary data, data was collected from the library, books, magazines, journals and others.

Gender Empowerment

In the gender empowerment context, according to Nugroho (2008: 164) the objectives gender empowerment program are improving the gender ability to involve themselves in development program as an active participant (subject) as well as not becoming as a development object. Second is to improve gender ability in leadership, in order to improve bargaining position and involvement in every management system as planning, executing, monitoring and evaluating activities, third is improving gender ability in managing small or big

scale of self productive work. Fourth is improving gender organization role and and function at locally as gender empowerment instrument.

Further Nugroho (2008) offers gender empowerment program, consist of strengthening gender organization group at village and national level. Institutional strengthening is aimed at improving institutional ability to be more active as a planner, executor, and controller. Second, increasing the role and function of gender organization in marketing and empowering social program. This has put into account that imaging the existng empowerment program is less socialization and less involvement of social role. Third is, gender group involvement in planning, executing and monitoring all developing agenda. The gender involvement covers physical development, human resource development and public knowledge development. Fourth is, gender leadership skill development, in order to get bargaining position and access and chance. Fifth is, developing gender group ability.

Empowerment becomes important strategy in progressing role and gender opportunity participating in their politics and kind of will development and self potential actualization. This research done is by conducting indepth interview upon 36 informans with 3 informans spreaded over 12 villages at North Aceh County, which covers 7 districts in 6 election areas which was grouped by the Election Independent Committee (KIP) of North Aceh. That is are : Dewantara district, Kuta Makmur, Samudera, Nibong, Tanoh Jambo Aye and Lhoksukon district.

Voter in Candidate Legislative Election year 2014

Table 4.1: Voter Number per District

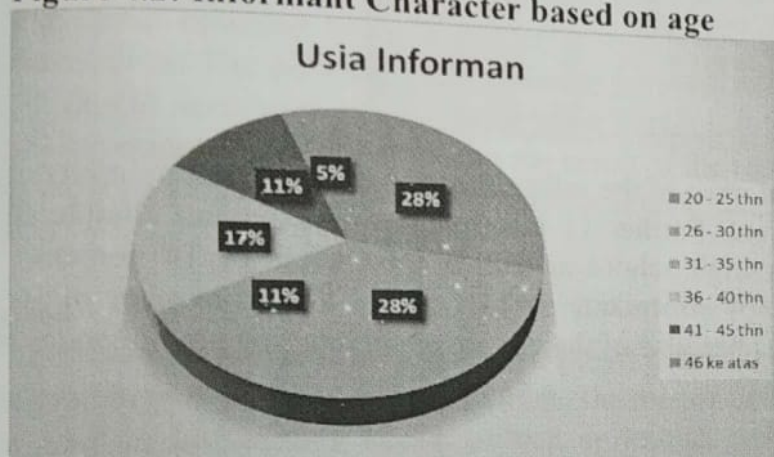
No	District	Village	TPS	Male	Female
1.	Baktiya	57	79	11.570	12.178
2.	Baktiya Barat	26	38	6.028	6.376
3.	Banda Baro	9	18	2.865	3.149
4.	Cot Girek	24	41	6.958	7.089
5.	Dewantara	15	79	16.967	17.429
6.	Geuredong Pase	11	12	1.704	1.707
7.	Kuta Makmur	39	52	6.606	7.009
8.	Langkahan	23	43	7.369	7.630
9.	Lapang	11	20	3.014	3.288
10.	Lhoksukon	75	105	15.926	16.113
11.	Matang Kuli	49	523	5.598	5.868
12.	Murah Mulia	50	54	6.474	6.852
13.	Muara Batu	24	48	8.670	9.355
14.	Nibong	20	27	2.722	2.949
15.	Nisam	29	41	6.257	6.622
16.	Nisam Antara	6	20	4.254	4.373
17.	Paya Bakong	39	40	4.065	4.368
18.	Pirak Timur	23	23	2.466	2.586
19.	Samudera	40	59	8.824	9.334
20.	Sawang	39	69	11.710	12.594
21.	Seunuddon	33	50	7.928	8.374

22.	Simpang Kramat	16	21	2.747	2.764
23.	Syamtalira Aron	34	41	6.061	6.449
24.	Syamtalira Bayu	38	49	7.020	7.072
25.	Tanah Jambo Aye	47	80	10.114	10.810
26.	Tanah Luas	57	65	7.428	7.963
27.	Tanah Pasir	18	21	2.911	3.228

Source: KIP Aceh Utara 2014.

The above data indicates number of whole villages about 852, and election places (TPS) about 1.248, and number of total male voters around 189.958 and total whole voter in North Aceh is 388.688.

Figure 4.2: Informant Character based on age



Informant character selection is done based on a lot of number of female voter in a particular village and refers to the age, job, and educational level. This qualification is regarded as part of factor that influences gender orientation in the election.

Figure 4.3: Informant Character based on job

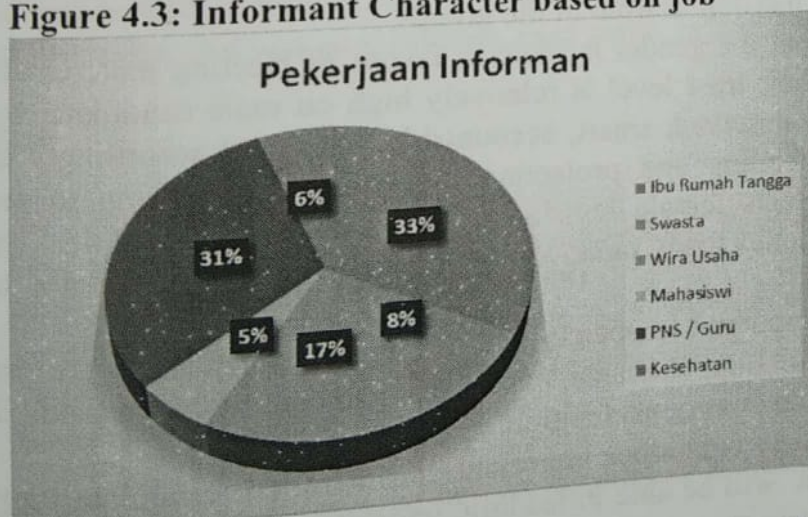
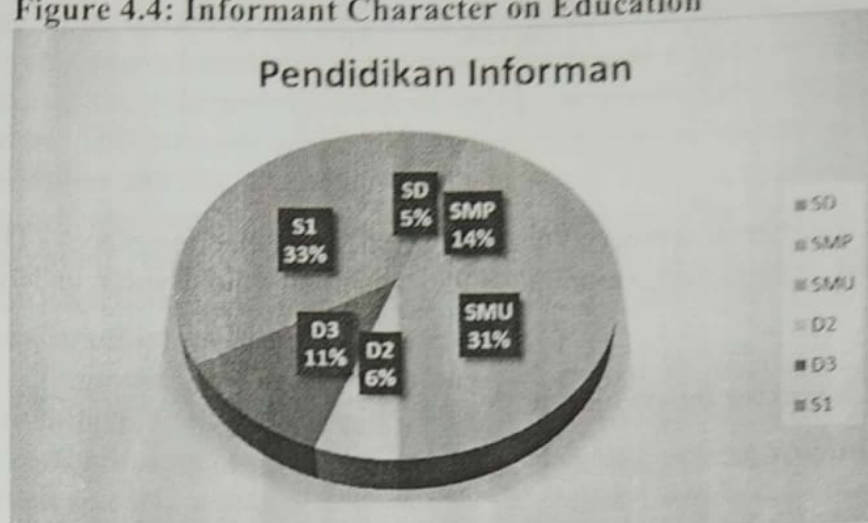


Figure 4.3 shows that from 36 interviewed informants, one third or 33 percent (12 people) work as house worker, does not have other jobs. 11 persons or 31 percent works as teacher or government civil servant (PNS), 6 informants or 17 percent work as entrepreneur, 5 persons or 14 percent work as student, 8 persons or 22 percent work as private sector, and 6 persons or 17 percent work as health sector.

informants, 8 percent as private sector, 2 informants or 6 percent as health worker and the two rest or 5 percent are college students.

Figure 4.4: Informant Character on Education



The above figure can be seen that most of the informants are graduated from university first degree, 12 informants or 33 percent. Further 11 informants or 31 percent completed from senior high school. From junior high school around 5 informants or 14 percent. Those who graduated from diploma is 4 informants or 11 percent. Lot of number of university final year student informants because of their more understanding about gender role and politics affair.

Structural Characterisite Reason

Gender segmentation is one of the strategy in managing the female voter heterogently. Female voter is very strategical target, due to their large number in compiring to male voter at North Aceh. Therefore, in 2014 legislative election, female voters became a target from legislative candidates. Observation result says some of legislative candidates were trying to obtain gender sympathy by arranging meeting with groups of gender within society and delivering the candidates vision and mission in front of the groups.

From the social opinion is that the gender is more in favour of electing male candidate rather than female candidate, and their trust level is relatively high on male candidate, by the reason that male candidtate is more deserved, smart, accountable, hard, and accordingly to the religion and more effective in defending and protecting the country, compiring to female candidate. In different side who elects female legislative candidate has argued that female candidate is more understandable amongs them, more communicated with female and alert to the gender situation.

Social status is not always important in society and not merely accepted by the people. This because personal character, hospitality, charisma, experience and communicative skill in the social is more good and become indicator as consideration.

Educational factor for candidate is another important consideration, candidate who will be elected said that having education will be able in leading, understanding society, can change and develop the environment. But some may say that the richness is more considerable factor for legislative candidate. Social relation that existed in social character also can took place at educational level in society in which who has higher education can be more explaining coorelation between theory, logic and reality. Although, richness is another social structure

phenomena which can influence voters. For the example, Siti Arafah (27 years) from Nibong district says "For female, richness can influence candidate to win the seat in the parliament....".

Informant who does not believe in female candidate, by seeing their daily social activity in their society cannot protect the interest and fight for their constituent in the Aceh parliament. "I don't trust to female candidate, because they are more likely comfortable staying at home and in politics (Zea Noviana, 25 years, Samakurok district).

Susiana (27 years) from Meunasah Tutong said "...I am less trust in female legislative candidate, because most of them is not expert in politics..."

In reverse to that, there are some arguments which support the interference of female in politics. Like Eli Farida, 50 years age from Paloh Lada district. Saying that "it is good, but female....who has education and high wisdom". In addition to that Karmila, 41 years old, from Tambon Baroeh district, says "so far I know the role of gender in politics is good, because they can be an example for child and young teenagers".

The social opinions towards gender is regardless of their political communication skill among themselves. The political party must be very carefully in selecting its candidates from female, it should scrutinize the potential one. Bargaining politics with the society should be prioritized as equipped instrument. From the result of the research that found, there is lackness of lobbying done by gender, in the other words the female candidates did bargaining less with their constituent.

Conclusion

The role of internal family has been playing structural condition in deciding vote election, nevertheless, there is chance and possibilities, the role of external can also play another structural function, such as intellectual, higher officer, colleague, environment and media. Many reasons said that male is more suitable to be leader and to be elected, due to the stigma that male is smart as leader, accountable, charming, brave and more deserved. By seeing female reputation of legislative candidate at North Aceh, female still less confident as they are inadequate as their daily life to be reference for aspiration. Political understanding for candidate in Aceh is low, by looking at their involvement in political party. Reason came up that gender much better staying at home rather than joining politics. Female candidate is not direct touch to the society during political campaign and just used brochure, card name, calendar as their political communication.

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