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The External and Internal Barriers to the Political Leadership for Minangkabau Women in West Sumatera

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ABSTRACT

Minangkabau is an ethnic group in Indonesia with a matrilineal system, which places women (Bundo Kanduang) equals even higher than the males. But in reality, the position of Minangkabau women in parliament was very low compared to the men. The purpose of this paper was to examine what factors were inhibiting them to get a political position, focused on the external and internal barriers that the women were confronted with thus far. The approach used here was the Verstehen (understanding from the point of the research subjects) and interpretive hermeneutics (interpretation of the cultural symbols). This research was focused on understanding the phenomenon in a rational way (common sense) by basing the information on a variety of sources. The results demonstrated that the barriers faced by women were so complex and there was no causal relationship between equality and the votes in the general election because the rules indicate that the nomination of men and women was equal.

Key words: external barriers, internal barriers, bundo kanduang

The electoral laws and the provision of quota 30% as stipulated in general election 2009 in fact cannot step up the Minangkabau women's position in political leadership. The increased position for women in political world, including in parliament, may still be a dream since they stay being confronted with many hurdles, obstacle, and barriers namely environmental factor, the limited opportunity and no explicit laws and regulation regarding the quota 30%. For example, act No. 12/2003 with respect to the general election in the article 65, the word "can" connote "no obligation" for the political party to fulfill the quota 30% and no the rigid sanction for failure of the quota fulfillment.

Those barriers are external pertaining to political culture. That is, the political system in associated with the election is still inadequate as it doesn't offer wider access to women in the political world. To accomplish the political position, the women have to engage in the general election and participate actively in political parties. Because the political party becomes gate keeper through which the women can enter the political world. Thus, only the political party reserves the rights to nominate women.

And the internal factor represents serious obstacle for the women, namely the self of the woman who is commonly less sensitive to politics, bringing about

the low interests, political capability, and political awareness, as well as suboptimal efforts. This is closely related to some social and political factors, including the marginalization and isolation of the women from public domain that have lasted for along the time but undisclosed yet.

Research Method And Approach

Regarding the given facts, this research particularly places an emphasis on the external and internal barriers in recruitment process. In the research, we used qualitative, interpretative and constructive approaches. It also employs hermeneutic or *verstehen* approach. Here, we find it necessary to investigate the culture and customary conventions of the Minangkabau women using such approach. 'The qualitative research is an interdisciplinary and sometimes counter-disciplinary field. It cross-cuts the humanities and social sciences. Qualitative research is many things at the time. It is multi-paradigmatic in focus. Its practitioners are sensitive to the value of the multi-method approach. They are committed to the naturalistic perspective and to the interpretive understanding of human experience. At the same time, the field is inherently political and shaped by multiple ethical and political positions'

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(Denzin & Lincoln 1998:7). According to Denzin & Lincoln (1998:3), in this qualitative research, we can collect and use various empirical materials, such as case studies, personal experience, introspection, life history, in-depth interviews, observations, historical texts, interactional and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments and their meanings in the individual and collective life.

Consequently, no hypothesis is proved or rejected in the study, but the research is directed to the conceptual framework that has been proposed as a source of theoretical assumptions to be critically examined when we analyze the data.

The research was carried out in four cities in three *Luhak* (region in Minangkabau, West Sumatera), including Padang (capital city of West Sumatera province), Batusangkar (capital city of Tanah Datar District), Bukittinggi (capital city of Agam District), and Payakumbuh (capital city of Lima Puluh Kota Batusangkar). Thus, *Luhak* Agam, *Luhak* Lima Puluh Kota, and *Luhak* Tanah Datar are the districts of Minangkabau Kingdom.

The barriers are figured out by analyzing the data derived from interviews with the figures, namely those who have been elected and not elected yet; those who are competent intellectually but don't want to engage in politics; *niniak mamak's* attitude (the elders' attitude against women political leadership), and interviews with those who are elected and not elected yet (Nurwani 2007:38–39).

Results and Discussion

The Social and Political Construction of Minangkabau in Matrilineal System

Before the Dutch colonized the Indonesia there are three traditional rulers of Minangkabau Kingdom, one of them is called *jangdipatusan basa*. He is recognized as the Great King. The three kings altogether are known as *rajo nan tigo selo*, a term refers to *jangdipertuan* (the honorable king), or *rajo alam* (king of universe), *rajo adat* (king of tradition), and *rajo ibadat* (king of prayer) are furnished with different authorities. *Rajo Alam* (king of universe) is the local government chief, while *Rajo Adat* deals with the laws and legal matters, and *Rajo Ibadat* holds a role pertaining to religious matters. *Raja Adat* and *Raja Ibadat* are also known as *Rajo Dua Sila*. A leadership of the *Rajo Tiga Sila* is in the hand of *Rajo Alam*. And one called *Rajo Alam* is the King of Minangkabau universe; mother's of the

king becomes the advisor of the king as stipulated by custom and tradition (Navis 1984:57–58).

This *kaba* (legend) provides an understanding on the matrilineal system originated in the conception that both women and men have equal role. The kinship system describes that Minangkabau is greatly democratic and egalitarian in nature as each decision is made based on deliberation and consensus where the final decision is on the hand of woman (*Bunda Kanduang*).

She does her sincere service to the country and establishes an integration of Minangkabau universe as the one whole universe. Besides the king is a strong and wise woman called *Bundo Kanduang*. She is an advisor, consultant about government. There is no political decision without her approval.

Another author describes *Bundo Kanduang* as a wise woman. As narrated in *tambo*, *Bundo Kanduang* serves as a leader with very strong role in running the government machineries. As the woman, she demonstrates soothing atmosphere in some meetings not only as *limpapeh rumah nan gadang* (the pillar of big and particular house). In Minangkabau clan the big family stay in a big house under leadership of the *Bundo Kanduang*, but she also has the same position as the man, so that her opinions are significantly considered in policy making by the kingdom. Quotation from the following *tambo* tries to account for a role that *Bundo Kanduang* may carry out in making decision at Pagarruyung kingdom level.

Even though *Bundo Kanduang* serves as the source of wisdom, but she doesn't occupy any position in the power hierarchy. In the term of modern management, she doesn't have position in organizational structure, but she is determinant and power controller. In modern management, she is an expert having enormous influence in accomplishing the organizational goal, in this case, the state's goal.

Furthermore, Taufik Abdullah says that even if *Bundo Kanduang* doesn't possess formal power, but her approval is always required and sought in confirming any decision (Abdullah 1972:135).

Minangkabau women prior to the Dutch colonialism as narrated in *kaba cindua* Mato (Dt. Majoindo 2003:10, Abdullah 1985:9) regarding the social and political events, the woman may take a role as the king advisor. When Dang Tuanku is appointed as *Rajo Alam*, he is accompanied by *Bundo Kanduang*.

Traditional women in Minangkabau are also described as vibrant, strong and brave as seen in *kaba*

sabai nan aluih (Sati 1990). *Sabai nan Aluih* refers to a young woman who is educated as *limpapeh rumah nan gadang*, but when her dignity and self-worth are violated, she will resist forcefully to such insulting action.

This *kaba* shows that Minangkabau women are physically powerful, being capable of engaging in hard work and robust enough to carry out anything as the men do.

According to the Minangkabau history, the women are actively involved in many public activities, but in the last three decades their participations in the public sphere begin to decline to a large extent, even may disappear at all as the result of the protracted and long-term marginalization processes, starting from the Dutch colonialism and the old order regime, and then continue to exist in the new order until the recent reform era. Now in the modern era, they have not experienced significant changes. It can be explained in some point below.

External Barriers

The external barriers may derive from public environment, political, social and cultural factors which are not favorable to the women empowerment in the politics; or the women are devoid of adequate opportunities for attaining the political leadership. These external barriers encompass: a) political-cultural barriers, consisting of: 1) the woman marginalization from the public domain, taking the form of the marginalization processes which have been occurring since the Dutch colonialism; 2) the framing of meaning for Minangkabau people related to women freedom; 3) government program in the new order regime; and 4) the changing role of Minangkabau women in society; b) the women's competence; c) recruitment system; d) political party rule; e) bureaucratic barrier; f) economic and educational barriers and; h) agency barrier.

All those barriers are shortened into cultural, political and religious barriers made up of (a) structural barrier; b) cultural and religious barriers; c) agency or intermediate organizational barrier; and d) institutional barrier.

History of the Women Marginalization in the Politics

By and large the Minangkabau women have been excluded from public sphere. This cannot be parted from historical processes placing them in

marginalization. Minangkabau women used to be the power controller prior to the Dutch colonialism.

A power representation gap in society in Minangkabau custom results from the complex government ideology. The Dutch colonial intervention also plays an essential role in marginalizing and isolating Minangkabau women from public sphere.

In addition, the Dutch colonial also has changed social system present in the custom such as formation of male *penghulu* superiority. The Dutch government identifies with and strongly supports *penghulu* as a head of extended family who has traditional power (Kahn 1976 in Blackwood 1993:174), but ignores the same role held by senior women.

The Dutch government places *penghulu* at the highest position as village chief and supports male power through a formation of formal judicial system. The need for the male representation in dispute resolution among extended families is interpreted by the Dutch in a meaning in which only the head of male extended family is allowed to represent family in district court, while a woman is not allowed to represent her at the district court (Brenda-Beckmann 1984:56 in Blackwood 1993:175). As noted by Sanday, in the course of the Dutch colonial government, it is man, not woman, who is identified and formally recognized by the Dutch as representative who can represent the household/family affairs (Sanday 1990:143 in Blackwood 1993:175).

As the result of such discrimination, the Minangkabau women have very low participation in political activity or in any activity that may be identified by the Dutch as political or related to the power.

However, the marginalization of women process in Minangkabau had transpired since the collapse of Pagarruyung kingdom at Dutch colonialism period in nineteenth century. The last woman in Pagarruyung royal, Princess Reno Sumpu as the king advisor doesn't have a function anymore as said by Panghulu M. Rasjid Manggis (1971:247–248).

An effect of the patriarchal culture is mainly characterized by a presence of the very sharp dichotomy between roles of women and men in domestic and public domains respectively, which are highly gender stereotypical in which such dichotomy is still existing in local act of West Sumatera. Since then, Minangkabau women are mostly involved in domestic domain. Although it is traditionally recognized that women do not have both formal and structural authority but in general they become

power controller in which all decisions in Nagari are to be made through their approval. Culturally, Minangkabau women are identical to home and even in daily term a wife or a women is often called as home person or kitchen person. As the result of the Dutch colonial policy, a separation of productive and reproductive roles between women and men (or between husband and wife) is very stringent, accompanied by serious social sanction in which this rule has not been changed or abolished by our government and until now still takes force effectively despite the independence of our nation. Thus, it is not surprisingly that such injustice and gender-stereotyped division of labor remain workable effectively in Minangkabau until now and then continued by new order regime.

Framing of Meaning for Minangkabau People Related to Women Freedom

In Minangkabau the custom highly heightens women dignity as commonly expressed in metaphor, “woman is *limapeh rumah nan gadang, amban puro, unduang-unduang ke Madinah, pai tampek batanyo, pulang tampek babarito*”, while as *limapeh rumah nan gadang* (as pillars of the big house) she must consistently stay at home, bearer of generation, keeper of inherited property; she must be protected; the hard and harsh works are not be suited to them; and they serve as power controller. However, the women power is of informal characteristic causing them unenthusiastic to engage in public sphere.

The framing of *alur* and *patut* for Minangkabau people, *niniak mamak*, *alim ulama* or political parties or local/regional government may become a trap for Minangkabau women, which hegemonies them with precepts and meanings of *alur* and *patut*. The precept takes the form of freedom which may result in trap for women.

A determination of barriers resulting from this interpretation can also be analyzed using Gramsci perspective (Gramsci 2000). According to Gramsci, a structure of daily thinking regarding “concept of everything” contains various hidden rules and power; what is regarded obvious and certain actually consists of hidden power legitimacy or other social activity. The ruling elite doesn’t need to account for anything since such anything is already obvious. When there is a desire to change anything in society, then there must be effort or desire to do so, namely changing the structure and content of thought and relevant image related to the concept (Foucault 1972–1977–2002:175).

Therefore, political parties can use such frame in slight different way. They attempt to provide different solutions to some problems but they look similar. Using widely accepted cultural values such as freedom, justice, social equality, they propose their own alternative policies. By providing the self-interest laden-solution within commonly accepted frame, they actually “steal” their constituency’s preferences.

Government Program in the New Order Regime

Even though *nagari* becomes a centre for social life and social activity for centuries in Minangkabau villages, but since the second half of nineteenth century the *nagari* has experienced a range of changes as consequence of the forced intervention from both Dutch colonialism and Indonesian government. Except for revolution period, the main objective of this regulation is to make *nagari* as the device to execute policy from central government, namely from the colonial government and post-independence Indonesian government. Even if such a change has reduced *nagari* autonomy and causes *nagari* to be the lowest governmental unit in the centralized state, but *nagari* still maintains traditional characteristics as autonomous government unit, for example, as economic and cultural units. Thus, in the first years of the new order regime, the *nagari* is considered to have great potential for national development, and local leaders discuss the way in which their institution can be organized to carry out the central government’s plan. In 1974, governor Harun Zain tries to sustain democratic *nagari*, make the *nagari* chief as government executor and Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Nagari (DPRN) as legislative body at the lowest level of the local government (Kahin 2005:406–407).

These efforts work in vain since at the time the autonomy is undertaken through governmental system based on act No. 5/1974 regarding regional government principles with three principles: deconcentration, decentralization, and co-management (*pembantuan*). The use of the three principles altogether has blurred the regional autonomy significance and, in practice, the central government places more emphasis on deconsentration principle. This is seen apparently in the fact that: a) President is authorized to appoint the governor, while minister of internal affair is authorized to appoint mayor and regent. On the contrary, DPRD (regional legislative assembly) only recommends any candidate for appointment by government; b) it

doesn't regulate an implementation of village-level government unit.

In this respect, the deliberation system in Minangkabau goes through rigorous restraint in which women don't hold role as the power controller in *nagari*, and *Bundo Kanduang* develops into an institution which the central government uses as its legitimating means. In addition, some non-government organizations dealing with the women issues also suffer from restriction.

Exposed to many events in Minangkabau, including the Dutch colonialism, the women's position and role have shifted very drastically. According to Taufik Abdullah's opinion (Abdullah in Navis 1999:xi-xii), the social changes have occurred in Minangkabau due to the weakening traditional values and modernization which questions cultural values they adhere to so far, and they intentionally make a distance to those values. Those changes, as said by Taufik Abdullah, bring about positive and negative effects, including women position.

The Dutch colonialism has perpetrated colonization more totally and systematically. The Dutch has dominated whole Minangkabau areas with military forces and shut down Pagarruyung kingdom. *Nagari* (village) traditionally represents "small republic" under the collective leadership of *penghulu*, which is organized as the lowest government organ. Furthermore, the existence of *penghulu* as the informal leader must get endorsed in writing from the government. Since then, the deliberation-based *kerapatan adat* has changed to autocracy-based deliberation.

To help *penghulu* executing their power in West Sumatera, the Dutch takes an advantage of the traditional system present in Minangkabau community by introducing radical changes in the characteristics and the form of the traditional institutions as required by the Dutch. Consequently, *kerapatan nagari* is made as the lowest governmental institution. Several *penghulus* who previously led *nagari* on collective base, now they are required to appoint one among them to be *nagari* chief (*nagari hoofd*). By appointing a person as the *nagari* chief, the Dutch introduces much greater authoritarian government into the *nagari* because in the previous system, or in Koto Piliang *nagaris* which are known hierarchical, the *nagari* chief is respected merely as other similar leaders. Additionally, the Dutch colonialism has changed federation of *nagaris* (*laras*), which previously represented a loose alliance of several *nagaris* in line with mutual principle, now corresponds to subdistrict-based governmental

institution under leadership of *laras* chief (*larashoofd*) who is appointed from *nagari* chiefs present in the *laras* (Graves 1981 in Kahin 2005:10). Thus, the resulting government is highly hierarchical of in characteristic, suggesting that the power lies down in the hand of the highest government level at West Sumatera and the Dutch Resident, not in the hand of *nagari*.

Thus, regarding description given above, the drastic changes in the matrilineal system situation produces a great impact on the women's role and functioning as the result of the state policy made under the patriarchal culture, which doesn't provide wide opportunity to women as the equal human beings as they have in the past tradition.

As for explanation as mentioned above, we can conclude that the prolonged marginalization processes significantly influence the women's selves: a) being insensitive to politics; low self-esteem, and hesitance to show themselves in the political world; and b) the protracted marginalization process make them devoid of great potentials, such as their potentials as power controller, being independent and hardihood, and as women with leadership competence. Their great potentials have been buried deeply so that they need long time and exceptional endeavors to revive their political interests; c) the social changes happening in associated with the their position don't influence their decision to choose politics; and d) the decision to opt for what they should do is merely dependent on their self; if they deem the politic as advantageous and attractive for them, they would choose the politics.

Minangkabau Women's Position Change in Society

Taufik Abdullah explains an intervention of the Dutch in Paderi war; this war results in significant transformation from cultural upheaval to colonialism war which produces new definition about Minangkabau universe where it is not only based on custom and Islam but hierarchy concept in custom and Islam is also elucidated. Since then, custom and Islam are not utilized altogether, but *adat bersendi syarak, syarak bersendi Kitabullah* is implemented in Minangkabau. Thus, a structural reflection of this cultural definition represents power and authority from such cultural formulation (foreword in Navis 1999:xi-xii).

The Dutch performs colonization in more total and systematic way. The Dutch establishes control over all Minangkabau areas using military forces and

abolishes Pagarryung kingdom. *Nagari* (village) traditionally constitutes “small republic” under collective leadership of *penghulu*, becomes the lowest government organ which is led by a *nagari* chief.

Whether matrilineal system will change or is not effective anymore to sustain equality of dignity between women and men, of course depends on to which extent Minangkabau people stick to custom of inheritance.

From description above, we can draw conclusion that marginalization processes have substantial effect on their selves: women are insensitive to politics; have no strong confidence and often feel doubt causing them reluctant to nominate their selves in politics; Prolonged marginalization processes cause their potentials to fade away, including their potentials as the power controller, as self-reliant person and hard-worker and women with leadership talent; thus it may take longer time and hard efforts for them to revitalize their interests in politics; although Minangkabau women have experienced significant social change but this doesn't influence their decision to choose politics as their career. Decision to choose what they will do, is highly dependent on their selves; when they find that politics is easier to pursue and more advantageous for them, of course they will choose politics; and indeed this research is designed to investigate such issue. History of marginalization processes among Minangkabau women has not been exposed adequately; even no researches investigate women position within the historical processes.

Barriers from Political Culture

The section below tries to figure out barriers from political parties which may prevent men and women from achieving position in legislative body are few factors.

Women's competence in politics

Women's competence in politics is already apparent. In the favor of democratization interests, human rights and obligation under religion, women as human beings and caliph on the earth are obliged to uphold the truth and preclude any crime.

Puti Reno Raudatuljannah Thaib (interview in Padang February 2003, see Idris, 2007:231), gives comment below:

“I won't nominate again since I am required to make option between Civil Servant and Politics; it takes much money to nominate in politics; after holding elected office, there is no clear-

cut program for members of parliament (MP) to overcome serious problems of the destructed *nagari*. Obviously, they attempt to recover funds they spend for reaching political position.”

An experience of Rauda Thaib, member of provincial legislative assembly in West Sumatera province during the new order regime. The new order period much differs from current period where members of parliament are appointed, not elected directly by people; and there is no regulation on general election. There are no formal rules saying that women can become leader; Provincial Legislative Assembly (DPRD) is not functional at all as state is organized and carried out in centralistic and authoritarian manner; thus, provincial legislative assembly is only symbol. Laws or regulation specializing women's rights and authority are required. In new order regime, such law is still non-existent. Minangkabau women have not understood that they are competent to participate in politics (Idris 2007:230–231).

Recruitment system

Those who want to become Member of Parliament must nominate or must be nominated by political party through which they will be selected according to the rules as defined in electoral laws. In election 2004, there is a provision of quota 30% for women, including women in West Sumatera. Several female legislative candidates reveal their experiences during recruitment as follows:

Elok Suarni's rage (interview in Padang 2004, see Idris 2007:232–233). We may still remember when one of the private televisions, SCTV, televised a woman in Pariaman city who raged violently by tearing down attributes of “Bulan Bintang Party”, one of the contestants in Election 2004. This beautiful woman greeted friendly and showed some data she prepared before. She narrated her rage chronologically when destroying the office of “Bulan Bintang Party” in South Pariaman in Jawi-Jawi Area, Pariaman city.

She revealed her dissatisfaction because her number one is changed to number three where such change is not consulted with her, including the change of priority numbers for her friends who have struggled for the party.

From Elok's experience, we can draw conclusion. The change of priority number as done by political party shows that recruitment system in political party is not transparent yet. There is no firm sanction for leaders of political parties who make mistakes

in recruitment process. When we see how Elok expresses her rage, it appears that she has less political maturation. She must spend much money to mobilize supports in campaign although the relevant political party has sources of funds but she doesn't receive the fund. Thus, education is closely related to political maturation and their interests on the politics.

Political Party's Stipulation in Recruitment Process that is More Advantageous to the Party Elites

Those who are nominated first are the political parties' leaders, while the party leaders are generally men rather than women; no political parties have high good will to place women in the first priority although they are not party elites. Even though they make approaches or lobbying with some parties and improve their competence and personality, but it is political party that has dominant decision to determine anyone as candidate. To be nominated in an election, they need much money, for instance, for buying party attributes, socializing with public particularly in their electoral areas in order to be recognized publicly (Idris 2007:237).

Sastri Yunizarti Bakry (interview in Padang 2005, see Idris 2007:237), says that according to her experience and observation, barriers facing women in achieving political position and leadership lie down in an execution of general election; leader of political party is not merely determined by his intellectual capacity and accessibility, but also by funds provided and accessibility of decision maker.

Likewise, Susi Elya Roza (interview in Nagari Tiga Batur, Sungai Tarab, Tanah Datar 2004, see Idris 2007:237–238), argues that political parties are less transparent in which the system they run is ambiguous; political party is in dilemma where in one side it must identify with women and but it also must pay attention to the seniority factor; however, the final choice is on the men because the latter on average is senior than women. It is true as said by proverb *bajanjang naiak, batangga turun*, meaning that we cannot jump to go up because we will fall on the ground, so we must start from bottom.

Furthermore Nurhayati (interview in Payakumbuh 2004, see Idris 2007:238), says that she has actively participated in political party for seven years; she finds it difficult to shift men's position as they always become committee or leader in party, while women invariably lose votes because of their few number.

From Nurhayati's experience above, we can draw conclusion that those who are more likely to be nominated are president of party, vice president of party, treasurer and head of BPD (Badan Permusyawaratan Desa) in which this becomes a norm in party and now it is still difficult for women to be the party elite. Nurhayati doesn't want to nominate again unless the electoral rules or recruitment process have changed significantly, for example, when there is an explicit *local act* allowing women to be accepted.

From several interviews above, we find important points: those more likely to be nominated first are president of party, vice president of party, chief of BPD or treasurer.

Thus, nomination is not based on their capability or eligibility; no political parties have good will to place women in good priority number; political parties are less transparent in which the system they run is ambiguous; political party is in dilemma where in one side it must identify with women but it also must pay attention to seniority factor. However, the final choice is on the men because the latter on average is senior than women; in general women find difficulty to shift men's position which is already established enough in party.

Mass media, local government and political party don't provide adequate support to them; NGOs (*non-governmental organization*) commonly have no direct access to politics which can open a path or channel to access the politics (*intermediate organization*).

Many women won't nominate again; it appears that politics is dirty, replete with intrigues and conspiracy, game of power and of money; they won't regret when they are not elected because the condition doesn't provide women with opportunities, in the sense that the opportunity for women is very scant; actually Minangkabau women don't need to nominate for legislative member when regulation of regional autonomy is taken into force effectively, namely *Bundo Kanduang* institution is activated from *nagari*, district and province as the controller of decision making; It is not important who will become a leader as long as every decision which regional/local government makes is always consulted with *Bundo Kanduang*; Political party by no means helps women in politics, since they must struggle on their own side.

In conclusion, women are generally reluctant and hesitant to enter organization or bureaucracy whose regulations or rules are mainly made by the men in which political world is closely related to bureaucracy.

The Majority of the Parties Places More Emphasis on Party Elite in the Recruitment System

Someone who is nominated first is the party leader, while the party chairman is the man; no parties in Indonesia have high good will to place women as the first priority although they are not the party elite.

Many women are reluctant to enter organizations or bureaucracy replete with policies arranged by the men while the political world must relate to the bureaucracy.

Women and bureaucracy

Referring to the women and bureaucracy, Giddens argues that until the last two decades, some studies on organization don't pay much attention to gender position. Additionally, theories of Weberian bureaucracy are always developed by the men focusing their attention mainly on the men who become the focal point in the organization and bureaucracy (Giddens 2001:359).

Feminist sociologists not only investigate gender inequality in the organization but also claim that firstly, women and men are separated in the bureaucracy. The woman is employed in a department with lower salary while working the same hours in the department. Woman is employed in such way so that their position cannot be promoted or their position may be subordinate to the men. Furthermore, the women work as supplement for the men where what they have done can promote and build up the men's career. Second, in the bureaucracy, the women always hold tasks supporting and sustaining the men's career, such as, working as administrative staff, secretary, office manager (homosociability) in which their tasks facilitate the men's tasks. Hence, the men can fully concentrate their efforts on tasks likely promoting their position.

In domestic domain, the women's tasks are also favorable to the men career as household chores and caring for children have been being carried out by the women. Thus, the male bureaucrats have plenty times to undertake their official tasks till the night, official travel outside the city, and others to which the women cannot do those tasks.

Kanter in *Men and Women of the Corporation* says that women's position in the corporation has no significant power. Their tasks are much concentrated on homosociable tasks where their position causes their counterparts to successfully seize powers, while

the women are automatically not allowed to hold power in the bureaucracy (Kanter 1977 in Giddens, 2001:359).

Economic and Education Factor

Dyni Herawati Fajriah (interview in Bukittinggi 2005, see Idris 2007:246) says that she has no funds required for financing the political campaign and very-high party contribution; she is very confused between the choices of politics and civil servant; thus, she decides not to nominate; actually her friends and family members provide favorable support to her, but she is not brave to start as she doesn't get information about nomination from the party.

According to Fajriah, the main barrier for her is fund since she works as civil servant with modest salary. Her desire to nominate is totally impeded since she is not prepared financially to do so. From interviews with several women above, we can infer that economic factor becomes significant barrier for nomination.

In *nagaris* from three *luhaks* including Lima Puluh Kota, Tanah Datar and Agam, women with higher education are still few. However, they commonly have modest knowledge on politics since television has incorporated into *kampong* or *jorong*. Thus, it is understandable that one of women in Bukittinggi becomes member of the local legislative assembly; she derives from *jorong* (dusun), namely Jorong III Sangkir Lubuah Basung Bukittinggi, located far from city but they cannot take an advantage of the television for recruitment purpose, for example, for introducing themselves in order to be recognized publicly.

According to Iriana (interview in Payakumbuh 2005, see Idris 2007:247), barrier might also emanate from political party's regulation in which those who are nominated first are president of party, vice president of party, party treasurer and Chief of DPRD (local/regional legislature); barriers of political party may include political party system, nomination system, electoral areas and seats available not equal to the candidates number; and their political interests.

This problem is associated with nomination system and consequence of multi-parties. Because there are many political parties, seats available for candidates become smaller. Iriana is fully supported by her husband and *niniak mamak*, *alim ulama* in Nagari, but nomination system factor in the party is more significant than cultural and religious factors.

In conclusion, beside economic factors, thus, in general education is showed to influence women's desire to participate in politics. Formal education at school would expand people's skills and cognitive capacity useful for understanding complex issues and political controversies, for gathering relevant information pertaining to party policy and party leader from mass media and for conducting political debate. Membership in political party or NGOs, being activist or holding position in political party enable us to gather and process information, communicate better and convene meeting, conduct training and learning on how to manage people in which all of these will be facilitated by our skill and knowledge made available by education (The Electoral Commission 2004:36).

Agency Factor (Intermediate Organization)

Agency barrier represents the shortage of organizational experience such as self-introduction to public.

To enter the public sphere, it is impossible for the women to reach political leadership directly; a leader is not born, but shaped by extensive experiences beyond their brain capacity through a social process as said by Mead (1934/1962:267 in Ritzer 2000:350). According to Mead, *mind* doesn't exist in human's skull but represents social phenomena. Mind emerges and develops within social process and becomes an integral part of the process. Social process precedes mind; social process, as believed by many people, is not the result of the *mind*. Thus, the mind is defined in functional sense rather than in substantive way. The mind is characterized by the individual's capability to strengthen her/himself, not only response, but also response from overall communities. This is called as strength of mind. Certain response may result when we do anything. When a person has a response to his/her self, then he/she has mind, and will be sensitive to everything, including to politics.

In a nutshell, agency (social organization) as intermediate organization plays very essential role in introducing women to political arena. Social organization is a place where women can train their political capability; make them sensitive to issues related to people, mainly to women interests; social organization also becomes a place by which women can introduce themselves to voters in general and female voters in particular by placing emphasis that they deserve to be elected, as the way to generate culture of "women vote for women."

Cultural and Religious Barriers

Concepts of cultural and religious barriers are formulated from cultural and religious factors which are acquired from *niniak mamak's* (the elder's) outlooks on women's leadership in three *luhaks* investigated here since in Minangkabau, *niniak mamak*, *alim ulama* (Muslim intellectuals), *cerdik pandai* (Intellectuals) and *Bundo Kandung* would serve as *nagari* legislative to whom people ask for opinions and determine political attitude.

Generally, the elder has no an objection against women involvement in politics as long as they always rely on Adat *bersendi syarak, syarak bersendi Kitabullah*.

M. Hatta Dt. Mangkuto Maradjo (interview in Nagari Manggilang 2004, see Idris 2007:253), gives argument below:

"A woman who becomes leader must be able to implement her dreams. For what purpose she involves in politics. Politics deals with the state. She has to understand her obligations instead of demands her rights only, like corrupt leaders recently. However, I see that on average no female legislative members commit corruption as occurs in a male legislative member who is now involved in lawsuits, and sent into jail (case of DPRD Chief 1999–2004), but women from Manggilang until now have not occupied legislative position yet or become *nagari* Chief or *wali nagari*".

This interview explains that *niniak mamak* or the elder has agreed with woman who becomes leader, namely leader who always abide by moral and religious values, *adat bersendi syarak, syarak bersendi Kitabullah*; who is able to allocate her times between domestic and leadership tasks and doesn't ignore her function as housewife; wife and husband should help one to another, they are equal according to custom and religion.

Religious strengths are dependent on inseparable relations between religious views and religious groups. Group socialization, group ritual and group order will create capacity to believe and drive to agree. To Durkheim, a moral authority represents society's projection against its needs for order, stability and predictability in social interactions. Through religious ritual, people interact with anything they deem sacral; anything they regard exists at center of the interacting communities. In other words, culture and religion will always influence human (actors) in defining their choices (Durkheim 1965:261).

To put it briefly, the results of this study show that the domestic tasks in cultural and religious aspects in general don't prevent Minangkabau women from engaging in any activism. However, by taking consideration of the domestic roles, which are usually not proportional to the men's roles, many women working outside home have less time to participate actively in political party. This is because women must take care of their dependants which may indirectly be the obstacles for women in which political leadership is accomplished through protracted social processes in shaping mind, namely the individual's capability to strengthen her/his self in response to politics. The barriers may include:

Political-culture and religious barriers, consisting of the women marginalization in public domain; competition; recruitment system; political party's rules; bureaucratic barriers; economic and educational barriers; and agency barriers.

Those barriers are summed up into political-culture and religious barriers which are then summed up again into four barriers: *structural barrier*; *cultural and religious barriers*; *agency barrier* and *institutional barrier* referred to as the external barriers

Cultural and religious barriers have slackened significantly, but don't much influence women's motivation to engage in public sphere.

To come to the point, some explanations above demonstrate that Minangkabau women representation in parliament is fairly low. This may be caused by the fact that they are less competent (absence of resources); they are not willing to engage in politics (not interested in politics); no political parties invite them to participate in politics (no network); and institutional rules inhibiting them to participate in public sphere.

Thus, external barriers are composed of political-culture and religious barriers; structural barrier, cultural and religious barriers and institutional barrier. All of these external obstacles have great impact on women's selves, namely their interest, desire and activity to nominate for accomplishing political leadership, summed in internal barriers.

Internal Barriers

Internal barriers derive from the self of the women whether they decide to actively participate in politics or not (political personal decision). In this case, there are two major barriers which most Minangkabau women confront with, which may likely influence their political interests: difficulty to decide whether

they engage in political world or not and the low political interest in associated with their motivation, competence and political awareness. Internal barrier comes from the women's selves regarding their personal decision whether or not to participate actively in politics are could be clarify below:

Political Interest

Their political interests are generally low due to being insensitive to politics. The political interest will inspire the women to nominate in parliament, making them try hard to pass in the recruitment system. This may then encourage them to boost their political competence. Simply put, if the political interest is low, then the political competence will be low too. Some Minangkabau women have adequate resources (both financial and intellectual resources), but they are not willing to engage in politics. On the contrary, some women have strong desire to participate in politics, but they have no adequate resources.

Political Competence

Political competence is greatly required to nominate in legislative post. The political competence represents comprehensive knowledge and understanding on politics or political issues which they can deliver to the public with the purpose of attracting the voters. The competence should be higher than that of the men, as said by Aisyah Aminy (2002).

The low political competence is caused by the low political interests. The political competence or comprehensive knowledge on politics is absolutely required in order to pass in the recruitment system. Additionally, the women must compete with the men; try to attract the voters; use the existing opportunities; actively participate in social organization or women empowerment organization or any other organizations which can be put into use for introducing her to the public with the final goal of being elected in legislative post. The women also must have real concepts to help other women reaching the welfare where such concepts should be delivered to the public, particularly women with the objective of campaigning "the women vote for women". This can be accomplished successfully through high political competence and consciousness.

Political Consciousness

The political interest will surely have an effect on political competence and political consciousness

where the consciousness is affected by the women's *mind* and *self*. The *mind* and *self* will motivate the women to enter the political world in which the mind and self are influenced to a great extent by their attitude and outlook on the politics and how they make a sense of the politics.

Furthermore, the political consciousness is extremely affected by the political interest and political competence. On the whole, Minangkabau women have modest political consciousness, as seen in the general election 2009 in which only few women with full consciousness nominate in the legislative post. Majority of the women are nominated by the parties to fulfill the quote 30%. Self-consciousness is defined as having thorough and exhaustive understanding of the *self* that furnishes the individuals with broad opportunities to engage in any activity as they desire to do so and in accordance with their competence and political consciousness. In Mead's opinion (Mead 1934/1962:139 in Ritzer 2000:351), the consciousness has two different meanings namely to which the actor alone has access, that which is entirely subjective. Mead is less interested in the first meaning than the second meaning which is related to the reflective intelligence.

The consciousness must be taken into account or explained in the social process. Contrast to most social researchers, Mead argues that the consciousness doesn't stay within the brain: "The consciousness is functional but not substantive. According to terminology, the consciousness lies down in the objective world rather than in the brain the consciousness refers to characteristics of the environment to which we find our selves" (Mead 1934/1962:139 in Ritzer 2000:351).

The Consciousness is also affected by the Attitude and Outlook of the Politics.

The women make the sense of the politics in different ways. Some women consider the politics as good and Minangkabau women should need to take significant part in the decision-making organization and have to nominate in legislative body; and some women in line with the field-based survey, don't want to nominate because the politics is the man-domain; they don't take care who will be the leader.

Moreover, Etna Estelita (interview in Padang, 28 Februari 2003, see Idris 2007:266–267) argues that to help community or women, we don't necessarily participate actively in politics; the women's position is same as the men. According to her, the politics

should be tackled and managed by the men as long as it is administered properly and honestly. *Bundo Kanduang* should be positioned as the power controller. Hence, it is expected that women's interests and issues can be overcome as it should be. Many women don't want to engage in politics for they deem it dirty. The politics is recently regarded full with dishonesty, dirty games and money politics of the party elites who wish to seize power. Majority of the elites don't give good exemplary to the public. They are involved in and commit corruption where some legislative members are sentenced to jail because of the corruption. It doesn't matter who will become a leader as long as they can carry out the tasks and obligation in responsible manner.

Thus, we can conclude that the *self* of the women is closely related to their political interest, competence, and consciousness. In the recent study, the *self* is intimately correlated with decision to participate in politics. In this respect, Mead says that the *self* materializes through certain development and through social activity and social relationship. To Mead, the *self* unlikely comes out without the preceding social experiences. Once the *self* has developed adequately, an individual will usually attempt to accomplish the *self* (Mead 1934/1962:139 in Ritzer 2000:350).

A general mechanism through which individuals can develop the *self* is the reflexivity or capability to integrate them themselves unconsciously into other people's place and undertake anything as other people may do. Consequently, people could look into themselves as other people can look into them. Mead says:

"Using *reflexiveness*—the reversal of the individual's experiences into his *self*—the whole social processes are brought into the individual's experience with same vehicle, making the individual being able to bring other people's behavior into his *self*. The individual can consciously adjust his *self* to the process, and then modifies the resulting process in certain social action in line with his adjustment to the process" (Mead 1959:184–185 in Ritzer 2000:352).

To have the self, the individual must go beyond his *self* so that he can evaluate his *self* and becomes the object of his own *self*. To this end, people usually place their selves in the same experience field as they place other people. Each person becomes the important part of the experience, and people must see themselves whether they can act rationally in certain situation. Having done this, they look into themselves impersonally and objectively without emotion.

Conclusion

Hence, the results show that the *self* of Minangkabau women have significant impact, causing them to have less interest in politics, hesitant to enter the political world and have scant struggle of pursuing the political world. In the first place, the women's involvement in politics absolutely requires the political competence, interest, and consciousness which must be accompanied by wide social network and higher education. Second, the women's involvement in politics is affected by structural, cultural and religious factors, agency (intermediate organization) and constitution. These factors are then truncated into cultural, political and religious barriers (are external barriers), which significantly influence the women's selves and then form their minds.

Third, the results suggest that the *self* is also affected by: a) attitude and perception of the politics. It doesn't matter anyone who would be a leader. They don't take care of it; and b) some women commonly consider that politics represents game of power which is always accompanied by the dirty games, money-politic, and other negative stigma. Quite the opposite, the men regard politics as important and urgent, and they generally have trust in political organizations. Fourth, the resources which women require to engage in politics are already available, but they still cling to opinion that the politics is not their domain. To them, it doesn't matter who would be a leader. They don't take care of it as long as they can live peacefully and harmoniously in agreement with the principle "*alam takambang jadi guru*" (the universe becomes valuable teacher). If this is the case, then the women representation in politics will not change significantly. In this research, we discover that there is a gap between equality and representation. In fact, there is no causal relation between equality and how much she is getting voted in general election. Thus, the Minangkabau woman who wants to be a politician, she has to meet the requirements of the recruitment, similar to the man.

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