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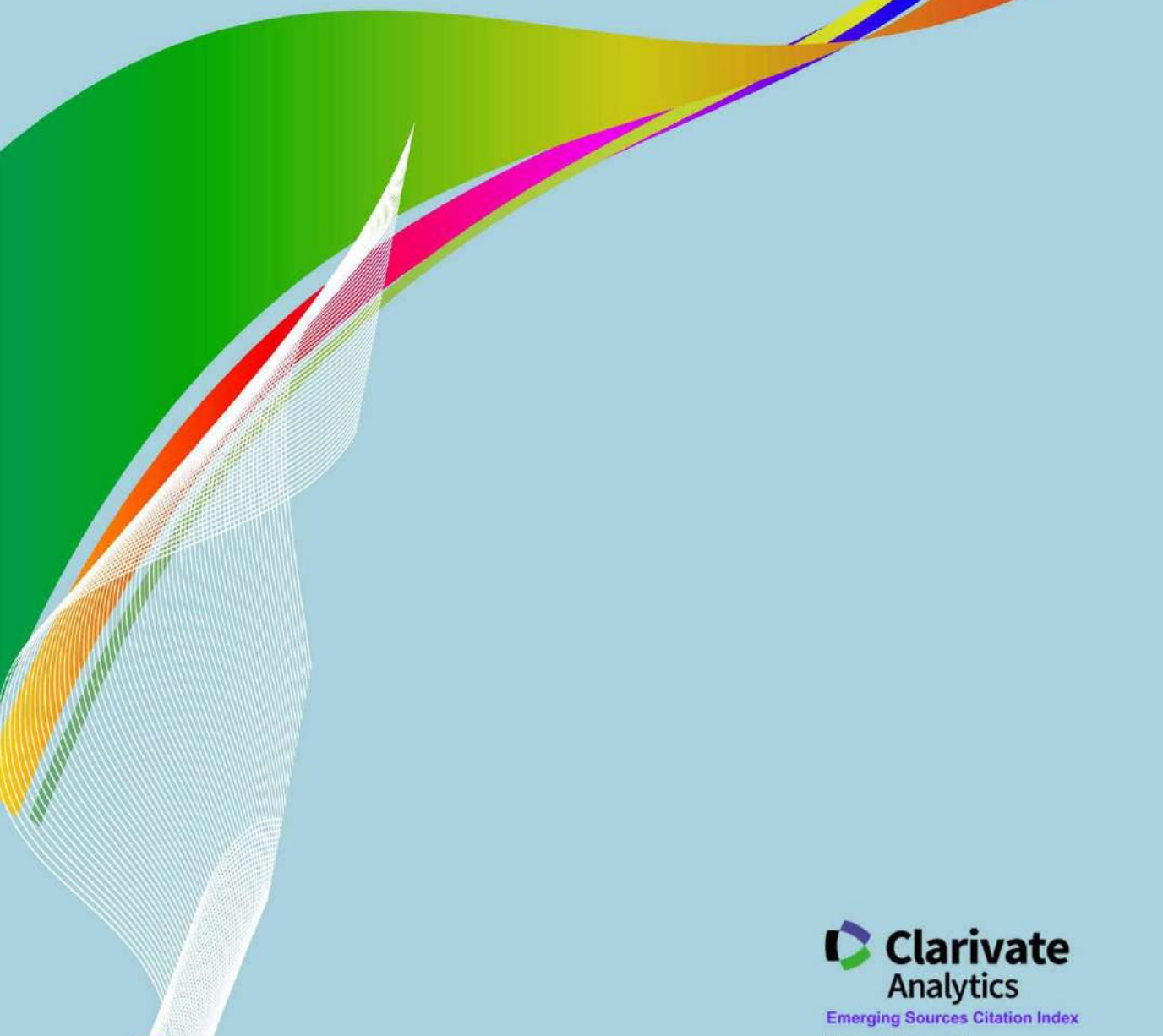
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**Acehnese Women in Public Spaces: Theirmovement and Political Participation**

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## ACEHNESE WOMEN IN PUBLIC SPACES: THEIR MOVEMENT AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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### Abstract

*Aceh has the most enduring legacy of successful female leaders in the world. The situation has changed during the past few decades, as fewer women hold crucial government positions. This paper traced the history of women and their role in Aceh through colonial and post-colonial contexts from the early years of this century to the present day. This study also examined the role and contributions made by the Acehnese women through the women's movement and their participation in political life, as well as the reasons for the lack of women appointed as policymakers, as indicated by multiple studies on this topic. A qualitative library research method was employed, and the data from text documents were analyzed using critical discourse analysis. The research showed that women in Aceh continued to play an essential role in the public domain and made significant contributions through the movement. However, The lack of opportunity for women to occupy their position as policymakers were influenced by diverse issues ranging from the patriarchal culture in Aceh, the inability of a political party to cadre women, to the misconception of people in interpreting religious belief that women should not be allowed to be a leader.*

**Keywords:** *Women's Movement; Politics; Public Space; Patriarchy Culture; Religious Interpretation.*



## A. Introduction

Several studies have examined the public role of women in Aceh nowadays, yet those studies mainly focus on the historical aspect (Alfian, 1994; Ibrahim, 1996; Mernissi, 1994; Said, 1981; Talsya, 1982; Zainuddin, 1961; Zentgraaff, 1983). Historically, women rulers had existed long before the Taj al-Alam Safiatuddin (1641-1675) reigned as Sultanah in the Kingdom of Aceh Darussalam and the Islamic kingdom of Samudera Pasai. She was also titled as Nihrasiyah Rawangsa Khadiyu (1400-1428). Then, in the mid-17th century, a row of four queens ruled in the kingdom of Aceh Darussalam (Said, 1981), namely Sultanah Safiyyat Taj al-Alam al-Din Shah (1641-1675 AD), Sultanah Nur al-'Alam al-Din Shah Nakiyyat (1675-1678 AD), 'Inayat Syah Zakiyyat al-Din Syah (1678-1688 AD) and Kamalat Syah (1688-1699 AD).

Once, Acehnese women held important positions in the national government and simultaneously possessed influential roles in the battle against the invader. Cut Nyak Dien is one of the Acehnese women who fought against the Dutch after her husband died in the war. The critical role of Cut Nyak Dien as a warlord has also been described in several history books (Denys Lombard, 2006; Ibrahim, 1996; V.A. Lanzona & Rettig, 2020).

Although Aceh has made the most indelible history of successful female leaders, the situation has changed in recent decades as the number of women holding important positions in government has decreased. Hasan (2008) confirms that Acehnese women who occupy decision-making (executive) positions are still very few. Similarly, the representation of women in the legislative and judicial institutions still needs to be improved. Acehnese women, to some extent, had little opportunity to occupy strategic positions in public institutions. For instance, at the end of 2010, there was a rejection from a member of the District Representative Council for the appointment of a female sub-district head in one of the districts in Aceh province. He believes that a woman is not allowed to be a leader according to Islamic teachings (Srimulyani, 2011).

Another example is Illiza Sa'aduddin Djamal, who registered as a candidate for Mayor of Banda Aceh in 2017. Unfortunately, her electability was dwindling as many people switched their votes to the male candidate,

motivated by the argument that women were not allowed to be leaders. Again, these incidents indicate the difficulty faced by Acehnese women in pursuing public leadership positions and gaining trust from a society that women possess the same quality as a man to be a leader.

Generally, women's movements were established to realize their aspirations. According to (Blackburn, 2004), the existence of the women's movement is inseparable from the presence of women's organizations. In this case, women's organizations are the initiators of forming a women's movement. The women's movement can also be interpreted as a group of women who act together to achieve the desired goals (M. A. Dewi, 2001).

The concept of a women's movement is similar to that of social movements. Both can be understood as a collective action by a group of people or individuals to make a difference in the social order. Commonly, the women's movement did not arise suddenly, but it emerged as a response to unexpected situations in society. This situation has encouraged individuals who want to change society to join the movement (Suryochondro, 1995). The crucial moments recorded in the history of the Republic of Indonesia shows that the women's movement participated in the fight for Indonesian independence. The participation of the women's movement can be seen through the emergence of various women's movements before independence was proclaimed.

Historically, in the early 20th century, organized women's movements were inseparable from the Dutch ethical-political policy, which provided opportunities for indigenous people to obtain education even though the opportunities given were limited to specific groups. As a result of the application of ethical politics, many women have successfully attained western-style education, which triggered the establishment of women's organizations in various regions in Indonesia. The first women's organization founded was Poetri Mardika in Java in 1912, based on the initiative and assistance of Boedi Utomo (1908) (Blackburn, 2004).

After the Poetri Mardika organization, other women's organizations were established with the support of male organizations or those formed



independently by women themselves, including Pawiyatan Wanito in Magelang (1915), Mother's Love to Her Children (PIKAT) in Manado (1917), Purborini in Tegal (1917), Aisyiyah for the assistance of Muhammadiyah organizations in Yogyakarta (1917), Wanito Soesilo in Pemalang Surabaya (1918), Wanito Hadi in Jepara (1919), Poetri Boedi Sedjati in Surabaya (1919), Wanito Oetomo and Wanito Moeljo in Yogyakarta (1920), Kaoem Ibu Soematra Union in Bukit Tinggi (1920), Wanito Katoliek in Yogyakarta (1924) and many other organizations emerged in the next following years (Suryochondro, 1984). The emergence of this women's association was inseparable from the spirit of nationalism that grew together in Indonesian women. This spirit of nationalism also encouraged them to hold the first Indonesian Women's Congress in Yogyakarta on December 22, 1928. This women's congress finally formed a federation between women's organizations called the Association of Indonesian Women's Associations (PPPI). This federation focuses on promoting education for women and ensuring women's equality before the law, especially those relating to marriage law (Blackburn, 2004).

Japanese military officials directed women's organizing efforts to win the war during the Japanese occupation. For Java and Bali, the women's organization formed by the Japanese government is called Fujinkai, whereas, in Sumatra, it is known as Hahanokai. This Fujinkai organization sees the role of women only as wives and mothers. Most writers state that the Fujinkai organization inspired the formation of the organization of employee wives during the New Order (Blackburn, 2004). Then, during the Old Order regime, the women's movement was developed independently. Most women's organizations established at this time are committed to supporting the new government. Thus, women's organizations provided emotional and physical support and encouragement in the early days of Indonesian independence.

Then, During the New Order period, the ruling government focused the women's organizations on several aspects, such as maintaining community stability, implementing development programs and reducing birth rates. At this time, the government has reduced the role of women only as wives and mothers. Where the government often uses the term "nature",

the role of women is as an educator for their children and to support a husband's career. Even the concept of governance during the New Order was dubbed the "concept of ibuism" by Djajadiningrat and Nieuwenhuis (1992). Furthermore, Julia Suryakusuma (1996) expanded this concept into a "state ibuism concept".

After the collapse of the New Order regime in 1998, women's organizations sprang up like mushrooms in the rainy season, especially in areas where only a few women's organizations were in the past. Furthermore, the government in the reform era contributed significantly to the development of gender ideology and allowed anyone to create an organization independently. Also, the number of women's NGOs increased with their interests. However, the NGOs carried out various activities based on "empathy", according to women's reports. Among the activities carried out by women's NGOs are assisting women victims of sexual violence, offering political education and advocacy for women's rights, enhancing gender equality, and so on (Wulan, 2008).

The women's movement in Aceh during the conflict period was similar to that in other regions. Women's organizations in Aceh at that time must follow the regulation set by the government. Women's organizations growing at this time were the organizations for the employee's wives, such as Dharma Wanita and Dharma Pertiwi, whose main activity is conducting government-sponsored Family Welfare Coaching (PKK). Besides, women's organizations at this time are women's organizations that are part of religious organizations, such as Aisyiyah and Nasyiatul Aisyiyah, which are part of the Muhammadiyah, Muslimat, and Fatayat NU organizations which are part of the Nahdatul Ulama organization. This religious organization is much more engaged in religion and education.

Meanwhile, the prolonged conflict in Aceh that has lasted for more than ten years - since Aceh was designated a Military Operations Area (DOM) from 1989-1998 to Martial Law (DM) in 2003-2004 - has destroyed life and civilization in Aceh (Aspinall, 2002; Sjamsuddin, 1990; Sulistiyanto, 2001). The majority of groups receiving the consequences of the conflict were women. They had to be ready to become "shields", receive a new position as single parents and simultaneously experience multiple layers of violence (Djohar, Zubaidah, 2009; Lamoureux, 2003; Miller, 2008; Rabasa, A., & Chalk, 2001).



During the conflict, women in Aceh carried a weighty burden. They may experience violence directly because their position as women were used as strategic tools to 'conquer' the opposing party. Various kinds of crimes and sexual violence experienced by women during the conflict raged in Aceh (Djohar, Zubaidah, 2009; Sulistiyanto, 2001; UNFPA, 2005). In addition, they must also be the successors of family life after their husbands, sons, fathers, and brothers are killed or abducted. Women are responsible for caring for their family members during the conflict, including providing supportive services, such as cooks, since the loss of husband/ men's income. Shortly, it has been a long time since Acehnese women have "financed" and managed family life on their own. The conflict, undeniably, has increased the emotional burden on women.

Then around 1989 women, NGOs that deal with women's issues started to emerge, namely, Flower Aceh, which handles women's issues; The Aceh Gender Transformation Working Group (KKTGA), which is committed to upholding gender justice True Partners of Indonesian Women's (MiSPI) which handles gender equality and justice issues in development policy; and other women's organizations (Maryati, 2007). However, women's organizations at this time were still limited in number. The emergence of women's organizations at this time can be said as the pioneer of the women's movement in Aceh, particularly after the resignation of President Soeharto (Coppel, 2006).

The change of the Republic of the Indonesian government from the New Order regime to the Reform Order was a new chapter for Aceh in the enforcement of Human Rights after the establishment of the Military Operation Zone (DOM) was revoked on August 7 1998. In this case, the women's movements from the centre of Indonesia and Aceh try to take various actions to fight for the enforcement of human rights, especially for women victims of conflict (Tan, 2006). Then, other women's movements were gradually established and primarily concerned with particular issues such as conflict resolution in Aceh. There were the Concerned Islamic Students Solidarity for Aceh (SMIPA), whose members consisted of female students spread across all tertiary institutions in Aceh; Women's Solidarity for the People of Aceh (SPuRA), whose members consist of women with different professional backgrounds (Maryati, 2007).



Furthermore, several organizations paying attention to the issue of women organize and provide psychosocial assistance to women victims of conflict by conducting regular discussions and training conducted in various districts/ cities in Aceh province. This assistance effort succeeded in the establishment of a women's organization called SeIA (Serikat Inong Aceh) in July 2000. According to (Suraiya Kamaruzzaman, 2008), this organization comprises hundreds of rural women from districts/cities who want to strengthen and fight for the rights of its members, including pursuing scholarships for children of SeIA members who were victims of the conflict. Furthermore, since 2001, 44 PEKKA community organizations (Women Heads of Families) have been founded, with a membership of over 1000 women-headed homes. This group is spread over 43 villages, six sub-districts, and five districts in Aceh (East Aceh, Bireun, Pidie, Aceh Besar, and Southwest Aceh).

After President Soeharto resigned, the political situation in the Republic of Indonesia underwent a very significant change. In this situation, several Aceh women's groups and organizations, such as Flower Aceh, MiSPI, KKTGA (Aceh Gender Transformation Working Group), and other women's organizations took the initiative to gather Acehnese women in a large congress of Acehnese women. The idea of a women's congress throughout Aceh received support from the Women's Organization Coordinating Board (BKOW) institution (Blackburn, 2004).

In the end, the idea of a women's congress throughout DPIA was successfully implemented on February 19-22, 2000. The meeting was attended by 437 women representing various districts/ cities in Aceh Province, except for Singkil District, which the delegation could not attend due to security reasons. The participants consisted of multiple components, such as housewives, lecturers, farmers, lawyers, informal sector women workers, nurses/ doctors, NGO activists/ women's mass organizations, female students, fishermen, oyster takers, women as victims of violence/ conflict and refugees, scholars, informal leaders, teachers, business people and others (S Kamaruzzaman, 2006). Duek Pakat Inong Aceh I was the first Acehnese women's congress held in Banda Aceh. The congress's agenda is to



discuss issues relating to Acehese women, conflict, and peace. The topics discussed at this congress revolved around Islamic Shari'ah and customary law, women and social change in Aceh, the role of women in bringing about peace in Aceh, their access to the economy and human resources, and the role of women in politics and decision making (Blackburn, 2004).

Duek Pakat Inong Aceh I was the first women's consolidation to embrace all elements of women's organizations. But it was unfortunate that intimidation wanted the cancellation of this congress. The oppression addressed to prospective participants, and the committee happened because of differences in purpose: one party wanted the outcome of the DPIA I to support peace in Aceh, while another party wished women to support the referendum (Drexler, 2006).

The glory of Acehese women organizing the DPIA I congress can be seen as the revival era of the Acehese women's movement after DOM. With limited circumstances and finances, all women in Aceh have been successfully gathered in this event. The recommendations from this congress not only discussed peace-related matters but many other recommendations were then submitted to the local government. Furthermore, the influence of this congress was that more Acehese women were involved in several non-government women's organizations. The Syura Center Ureung Inong Aceh (BSUIA) established a women's network group to preserve the results of the congress agreement (S Kamaruzzaman, 2006).

Furthermore, Balai Syura Ureung Inong Aceh (BSUIA) is mandated in DPIA I as an organization that can be a home for women's organizations and individuals in their journey to become women's organizations like other women's organizations. However, in times of conflict, BSUIA has once made a phenomenal contribution in initiating and advocating for direct local elections (Pilkadasung) and the formation of the Pilkadasung Qanun.

## **B. Method**

The data was analyzed through several cycles. The data analysis cycles consist of managing and organizing data, reading and noting emerging concepts, characterizing and classifying codes into themes,

producing and evaluating interpretations, and representing and visualizing the data (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Then, the critical discourse analytical method (CDA) was used in this qualitative library-based study. CDA requires describing, explaining, and interpreting data (Chiluwa, 2019).

Information for this study came from articles and papers published online that covered the history of the women's movement and women's representation in government. It was gathered via Google Scholar searches of online resources. In addition, critical discourse analysis was used to interpret and explain the data through a peace-building perspective. This involved the following steps: (1) describing the text to identify the features of the text, such as vocabulary, sentence structure, or grammar, that are present in the texts; (2) classifying the data according to the research problems; (3) analyzing the relationship between the text and its context (such as the structure of institutions, political situations, or social institutions); and (4) interpreting and explaining the data. The writers double- and triple-checked the data and references they utilized to confirm their accuracy.

## **C. Result and Discussion**

### **1. Result**

After the Tsunami hit Aceh, much of the area's infrastructure was heavily destroyed. Homes were washed away by the waves of the Tsunami. While many Tsunami victims were lost, dead, and were injured. The condition of Aceh, which was destroyed and ravaged, has made national and international institutions mobilize aid to Aceh, providing material support and encouragement during rehabilitation and reconstruction. The ongoing rehabilitation and reconstruction process is recognized as having a positive value on social recovery. However, it will have a negative impact if this recovery is not carried out in a participatory manner by the involvement of women. This has motivated women activists and organizations to hold the second Aceh women's congress to unite their views and wishes to be involved in decision-making related to the rehabilitation and reconstruction process. The Aceh Women's Congress II activities were supported and facilitated by the international donor agency UNIFEM (Enarson, 2009). The



second Aceh Women's Congress, known as Duek Pakat Inong Aceh II, was held on June 16-19, 2005. The congress was attended by around 400 women from across sectors, geographies, ethnicities, and religions.

Among the objectives of the Second Aceh Women's Congress was to raise issues and needs of women victims of the Aceh conflict which had been neglected. Furthermore, it is hoped that through this congress, women will be involved in the peaceful resolution of the Aceh conflict and all activities related to Aceh's recovery and reconstruction program. This congress has succeeded in formulating some recommendations, which in essence every reconstruction program undertaken by the Aceh government must include women. The results of this recommendation were submitted to BRR, the President of Indonesia, and other parties involved in the Aceh reconstruction process (Suraiya Kamaruzzaman, 2008).

In addition, the tsunami disaster in Aceh accelerated the two conflicting parties in Aceh to sign a peace agreement between the Republic of Indonesia and GAM authorities on August 17, 2005. This agreement was known as the Helsinki MoU peace agreement (Schulze, 2007). Unfortunately, women were not playing an essential role in the process of the ongoing peace agreement, even though Duek Pakat Inong Aceh I, had initiated and recommended conflict resolution in Aceh that could only be resolved through peace. This is indicated by the absence of a women's organization to be invited formally to the peace negotiation process report (CMI, UNIFEM, 2006).

Meanwhile, the parties' agreement to end the conflict in Aceh has created a conducive atmosphere for implementing the post-tsunami recovery and reconstruction program, followed by the Aceh reintegration program. This has stimulated women activists and organizations to include a gender perspective in every program created by BRR and BRA so that the program implemented will benefit all groups of Acehnese people. In addition, the existence of donor agencies from Indonesia and other countries in the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction has encouraged the emergence of women's organizations. During this time, new women's NGOs appeared like mushrooms growing in the rainy season, such as the Bungong Jeumpa Foundation, Beujroh, Sri Ratu, Annisa Center, and many other women's

organizations. The emergence of women's organizations in this phase is likely due to many gender perspective programs offered by donors. Even non-female NGOs have included gender issues in their organizational program activities. Therefore, Rasyidah, one of the women activists, insisted that as many women's NGOs appeared at that time, it was necessary to coordinate among fellow women's organizations so that the rehabilitation and reconstruction activities could be carried out correctly.

At this time, women's organizations and activists were not only actively involved in the rehabilitation and reconstruction program. However, they were also proactive during the drafting of the Draft Law on the Governing of Aceh (RUUPA), which was an implementation of the Helsinki MoU peace agreement so that women's issues were included in the bill. They held a meeting with the RUU-PA makers and conducted escort, so women's issues were included in the RUU-PA draft. For this reason, Acehnese women activists held meetings with several local non-governmental organizations to form the Women's Policy Network (JPUK) in October 2005, whose task was to fight for women's issues in the RUU-PA (Rasyidah, 2008).

Women, who contribute through the movement, continue to play an active role in the public sphere in Aceh. The public can see the success of the Acehnese women's movement when holding an extraordinary women's congress throughout Aceh known as the Duek Pakat Inong Aceh I (DPIA), which has issued a recommendation stating that the conflict that has been engulfed for decades in Aceh can only be resolved by peace (Drexler, 2006). In addition, the activities of the Acehnese women's movement in the post-conflict era in Aceh are developing rapidly, where the Acehnese women, through social networks, have succeeded in promoting women's issues in the law on the Governing of Aceh (UUPA/ LOGA) and Qanun (local regulation). The success of the Acehnese women's movement in fighting for the issue of gender justice can be used as a momentum which shows that Acehnese women's public activities still exist.

Unfortunately, the conflict has led to the decline of the women's movement from the political world. However, women today have a greater chance to



participate fully in the governmental sector and politics (Masrizal et al., 2020). It is believed that a growing number of women participating in government or decision-making positions will influence the policy and regulations that favour women (Firdaus, 2019; Masrizal et al., 2020) as well as increase the activities carried out by women (Mohd Nor & Inayatillah, 2011).

However, the direct local election since 2005 has expanded broader opportunities for all women in Indonesia, regardless of their background, to be elected. Nevertheless, the effort of women in Aceh to take part in government still becomes an issue. Women with sufficient experience in the movement should also anticipate suffering a crushing defeat in the elections, mainly when they compete with male candidates. This, in fact, has led to the lower composition of women in the Acehese parliaments from year to year.

In addition, Irwanti (2016) and Dewi (2017) postulate that most female figures that emerge in public are born into politicians' families. Dewi (2017) studying Javanese women and their political leadership through in-depth interviews reveal that 'familial ties' becomes the prominent factor contributing to the rise of female politicians. This is acceptable primarily when we refer to the historical figure of Sultanah Safiatuddin, a famous female figure in Aceh. Sultanah, the oldest daughter of Sultan Iskandar Muda, was able to maintain her power in the patriarchal kingdom of Aceh for 34 years and, at the same time, became the first female ruler in Aceh. Banu (2009) reveals that her leadership style and attitude as Queen, as well as her policy, has allowed her to strengthen the position for quite a long time. However, disagreement still existed at that time, especially among those who believed that women were not allowed to be leaders according to Islamic law.

## **2. Discussion**

The inability of Acehese women to occupy strategic positions in government institutions at present has been used as an indicator of the deterioration of the role of Acehese women in the public sphere. The political system's failure to empower women as one of the marginalized

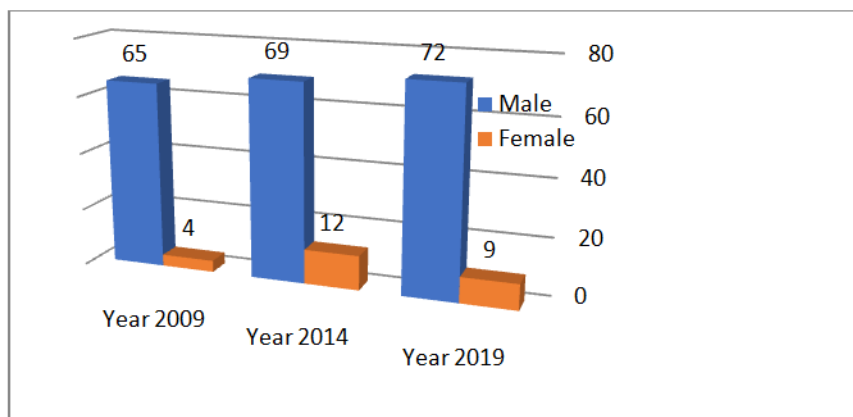


groups, particularly in politics and the decision-making process, is not entirely associated with the existence of the patriarchal culture, as suggested. Based on Article 55 of Law 8/2012 on General Elections, Women's representation is allowed to reserve seats up to 30% in the parliament, although the realization is far below the available quota. Furthermore, to some extent, women in Aceh are given the same chance as men to participate in politics (Afrianty, 2016).

In the contemporary period, women's struggle to gain more involvement in public policy-making nevertheless turns out to be more challenging. We can learn from the famous female figure in Aceh, Illiza Sa'aduddin Djama. After serving as deputy mayor from 2007-2012, Illiza, the granddaughter of a notable Acehnese Ulama, then served again in the following period until the death of the mayor of Banda Aceh, Mawardy Nurdin. Then, Illiza becomes the first female mayor of the city. In 2017, she regained the mayoral election, but this time she lost. Although she was very popular for showing her commitment, particularly in the implementation of Sharia law in Aceh, her electability was gradually lower by that time when she fought for a second-five year term as mayor candidate. Nevertheless, her passion for politics did not end there. Currently, Illiza, who is familiarly called 'Bunda', has become not only a member of the house of representatives of the Republic of Indonesia but also the first female representative in the Indonesian Parliament from Aceh province after 15 years.

Undoubtedly, drawing from Illiza's experience, women have a more incredible opportunity and power to contribute to a women's movement. However, they will face some obstacles in fighting for public positions even though their participation is increasing along with the stipulation of the General Election Commission (PKPU) Number 07 the Year 2013 and the Political Parties Act No. 12 of 2003 Article 65, paragraph 1 that must include at least 30 per cent of women in the candidacy. Nevertheless, the number of women participating in government is still low. Somehow it can be seen from the graph showing the representation of women in the House of Representatives of Aceh Province (DPRA) in numbers (Years 2009 – 2019):





Graph 1. The representation of women in the DPRA in years 2009 – 2019

The bar chart shows lower participation in women's involvement in the legislative body. In the 2014-2019 period, the women elected in the legislature made up only 14.8 per cent, yet it increased from the previous period. Unfortunately, the percentage then decreased again to only 11.5 per cent in 2019-2024. The same thing has also happened in the election at the district level. Even though women have the same opportunities as men in terms of employment opportunities at the grassroots level (Ahmad, 2015), women need to be more satisfyingly showing their participation at a higher level, particularly when it comes to a political career.

According to Shvedova (Ballington, J., & Karam, 2005), there are some obstacles to expanding women's participation in parliament. The barriers are categorized into political, socio-economic and ideological psychological hindrances. In the latter categorization, patriarchal value as traditional roles is interestingly becoming a subject (Balingto & Azam, 2005). Looking at Illiza's case and other female figures born from the grassroots movement, it can be concluded that their candidacy might have been hindered not only because of patriarchal values but also religious issues. The flexible interpretation of religion was used many times to shape public opinion. In 2016, a different view emerged in several newspapers in Aceh discussing the prohibition of women leaders according to Islamic law. The moment unsurprisingly coincided with Illiza's candidacy as a candidate for Mayor of Banda Aceh. Undoubtedly, the





issue, to some extent, has affected voters not to vote for female candidates and might be the main reason for the swing voters phenomenon in which the voters turn to support other candidates, as reported (Izar & Hasan, 2018).

The parliamentary election in 2019 elections was also dominated by gender issues rather than the candidates' achievements. A female politician from the national party admitted that the presence of women in a party is merely a complement as a condition to fulfilling the quotas. Thus, even though women have the competencies required by the party, women sometimes need more support from their party or society.

Shortly, it might be true as what has Pinni (2011) elaborates early in her work that marginalization against women might be reduced through the implementation of law and regulation. However, they need to be more. Women candidates require support and encouragement when participating in a political election, especially from other women. At the same time, as we have learnt from Eliza's case, gender and religious issues are often used to 'attack' women with political careers and ultimately reduce their electability in their candidacy (Coulson, 2017; Izar & Hasan, 2018). In addition, this condition is exacerbated because obtaining data on female cadres in Aceh is not accessible (Husna, 2018).

Later, Husna (2018) presupposes that Aceh has gradually lost female figures who become a source of knowledge and who can mobilize other women like once in the past due to the weak regeneration of female cadres to voice their aspirations in the government and public spaces. Therefore, as Dewi (2017) suggested, more female figures from lower-class groups or leaders in the community must be encouraged to participate in a political career as they will be able to pay more attention to other women in the community. Moreover, contribute to substantial change towards other women's life.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The knot that can be drawn from the preceding description is that the Aceh women's movement that emerged after the conflict differs from previous women's movements in that the emergence of the Acehnese women's movement was not only driven by Acehnese women's awareness



to fight for their destiny but was also heavily influenced by issues that emerged at the time.

In addition, according to research, women now have more significant opportunities to participate fully in government and politics and have the same opportunities as men to take part in the public sphere, even though there are some factors which led to the decline of women's movement in the political realm; these are categorized into a political, socio-economic and ideological psychological hindrance. In the latter classification, patriarchal value as traditional roles becomes an intriguing topic. Therefore, efforts are required to strengthen the capacity of women both from the organization and party so that they have a greater chance to participate in politics. Hence the movement must be able to map and prepare female cadres who will occupy more seats in decision-making positions based on recommendations from the DPIA. Participation in politics is deemed essential to address women's needs as well as to ensure gender equality; meanwhile, the women's movement should also support women to fill strategic positions at local and national levels.

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