Structural analysis of Sundanese women's participation in legislative institutions

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ABSTRACT

This study examines Sundanese women's participation in legislative institutions through a structuration theory approach. The purpose of this study is to understand how Sundanese women navigate and challenge socio-political barriers that hinder their political engagement. We used a qualitative phenomenological approach to collect data through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis, aided by NVivo 12 software for data reduction and coding. The research findings reveal a complex dynamic in which structural factors significantly shape political participation, but individual agency plays an important role in challenging and changing these structures. This discussion contributes to the broader debate on gender, politics, and empowerment in the Indonesian context. To enhance women's political involvement, we require policies and initiatives that tackle systemic obstacles while also fostering personal autonomy.

Keywords: structuration theory, Sundanese women, women's participation

INTRODUCTION

Currently, various public forms of access can be enjoyed by everyone, including women. Not only do women play a role in domestic affairs, but access to education, careers, networks, and politics also allows them to play an important role in the public sphere. However, the perception of women as the second sex persists. For example, in the political field, the participation of women's roles is very minimal, especially compared to men because there is often still a view that politics is a man's business (Kiftiyah, 2019). From a political sociology perspective, this phenomenon is referred to as a patriarchal culture where society prefers male leaders over female leaders (Malihah et al., 2020). Patriarchal culture can be an obstacle that hinders women's political participation (Wayan et al., 2020).

Article 173 paragraph (2) letter e of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections says that there must be at least 30% women in the management of political parties at the central level for candidates for members of the DPR, Provincial DPRD, and Regency/City DPRD to be able to run in the general election. This is meant to encourage more women to join political parties and legislative institutions. According to the law's affirmative policy, the list of prospective legislative candidates and political party management must have a minimum of 30% female representation. In the 2019 general election, female representation in legislative seats reached 20.9%, which had increased from the previous general election, although political networks and financial resources were the determining factors in women's electability (Aspinall et al., 2021). Despite the implementation of the affirmative policy, the actual representation of women in legislative institutions remains below 30%. This shows that women's leadership in politics in Indonesia is still low when compared to men.

Patriarchal culture is a challenge faced by women in their involvement in political dynamics (Nurcahyo, 2016). Sundanese culture has noble values that have the potential for women to be involved as leaders. The Sundanese people, in their attitudes as leaders, embody the philosophy of *cageur, bageur, bener, pinter,* and *tur singer*, which translates to "healthy, good, right, smart, and self-aware" (Sudaryat, 2014). Sundanese society, which has a parental kinship system, implies an equal position between men and women, but the mixture of Sundanese culture, the spread of Islam, and the influence of Javanese culture constructs the domestication of women's roles (Istianah, 2020). Thus, patriarchal culture in Sundanese society is reflected in placing men as more dominant than women (Amanah et al., 2023).

Sundanese society has struggled to break free from the patriarchal cultural perspective that portrays public space as a domain dominated by men, while private space is primarily occupied by women. Women often build this social construction themselves. Women themselves are often less confident in speaking up in the public sphere and prefer men to occupy strategic positions in public spaces. The minimal role of women in public spaces as a cultural construction is a form of a structure that limits individual actions, such as the concept of structure from Anthony Giddens, who considers structure not to be restrictive, but to limit and also liberate (Chatterjee et al., 2019). Structures, such as regulations, restrict or complicate the agency of individual action (Chatterjee et al., 2019). Thus, the patriarchal culture inherent in Sundanese society poses a challenge to Sundanese women's involvement in practical politics.

Indeed, the ancestral values of the Sundanese people are genuinely egalitarian. The values of the Baduy community, which remain closely linked to those of their Sundanese ancestors, demonstrate this. The Badui community is familiar with the concept of *Ambu*, or women who have already had children. The Baduy community has a noble concept called *Ambu*, whose roles, duties, and functions place women in an honorable position (Setiani, 2006). Women are highly respected, upheld, and have an important role in preserving the values of local wisdom in the Baduy community (Komariah et al., 2024). In the Baduy community, men and women coexist harmoniously, dividing tasks equally to prevent any dominance or subordination (Permana, 1999).

Women face obstacles to advancing as leaders or becoming people's representatives. Obstacles in social construction have led to the perception of women as possessing empathy, gentleness, caring, affection, nurturing, and a sensitive nature, whereas men are portrayed as firm, aggressive, rational, and capable of logical and analytical thought, making them deemed deserving of leadership roles (Sulastri, 2020). Patriarchal culture, conservative theological principles, and state hegemony through its restrictive policies also hinder women's contestation in politics (Nurcahyo, 2016). Then, cultural and ideological barriers can hinder the gender equality movement by encouraging policy preferences and voter behavior that reflect a patriarchal attitude (White et al., 2023). The Baduy community, reflecting Sundanese values, ensures a balanced role for both men and women, without any subordination (Komariah et al., 2024). However, for the general Sundanese community today, the political obstacles that limit women are commonly referred to as *pondok lengkah*, a term that signifies the inability to progress due to various constraints.

Women's less-than-optimal political participation compared to men demonstrates that there are still obstacles and challenges for women to participate equally in the public sphere. Women have not been able to fully appear confident in the political arena. This problem cannot be separated from the perception and paradigm of society itself, which leads to gender stereotypes. This shows that women are second-class citizens, where there are still perceptions that put women second, who consider men more worthy of being in certain political positions, while women's participation in the public sphere is considered against the nature of women (Nimrah & Sakaria, 2015).

Implementation issues also plague women's involvement in politics. Obstacles for women in voicing their aspirations in legislative institutions are caused by the number of female members being less than that of male members, the representation of women's education is still low, and the initiative of female members themselves in proposing regulations that regulate women's interests is still lacking (Sukriyanto et al., 2020). The election pattern that relies on accumulating

votes is also detrimental to women's representation. With the importance of every vote to win a seat, political parties rarely promote female candidates so that candidates from elite and celebrity circles become practical choices that are less representative of women from various circles (Aspinall et al., 2021). Subsequently, the implementation of a 30% quota incentivizes elected female politicians to participate in activities aimed at enhancing their visibility among male counterparts, thereby undermining the intended role of female politicians as advocates for women's political ambitions (Priandi & Roisah, 2019).

Dewi & Shalisa (2020) conducted a study on Sundanese women's participation in politics due to two motives. The family environment influences Sundanese women's involvement in politics, creating a distinct incentive for them to participate. Sundanese women who engage in practical politics also aim to elevate women's voices within legislative institutions. Despite being a majority ethnic group, Sundanese Muslim women in practical politics face subordination due to strong male dominance. However, Sundanese women can carry out a sympathetic political communication strategy to gain support from the public.

The various studies above highlight how important women's representation is in practical politics to produce a democratic and gender-responsive governance system. Individual roles as agents of change can, in fact, change the limited role of women in practical politics, which is caused by the hegemony of the state through its policies or the culture constructed in each society. Anthony Giddens' Structuration Theory states that actors must have the power to create differences (Chatterjee et al., 2019). This implies that we can alter the existing patriarchal framework, which subjugates women, by enhancing their involvement in practical politics. Although structural rules tend to limit Sundanese women's involvement in practical politics, Sundanese philosophical values notes can serve as a structure that encourages them to speak up in parliament.

Thus, women's power in practical politics can foster change. Women's representation in the political realm is essential for building a democratic life. In the parliamentary arena, women with representation hold a crucial role in the decision-making process, which benefits their group (Priandi & Roisah, 2019). Women from diverse groups, including Sundanese women, can contribute, symbolize, and unite in their aspirations, thereby sustaining the fight for gender-based policies.

Women's representation in the political sphere is crucial for fostering a more democratic society. Women's participation plays a crucial role in making decisions that are not only more accommodating and substantial but also serve to specifically represent women and promote an equal life. For Sundanese women, although patriarchal culture is now constructed in Sundanese society, the philosophical values of the society, which contain egalitarian values, can be an encouragement for Sundanese women to take part in practical political contests to become representatives of women's aspirations in Indonesia. Based on the description, this article will examine how Sundanese women engage in practical politics using structuration analysis.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative methodology and a phenomenological approach. We employ the phenomenological approach, understanding that the anticipated data will delve into the experiences of Sundanese women involved in practical politics, particularly in legislative institutions. The study will produce findings in the form of experiences accompanied by amazing details and charm, expressed authentically and originally through phenomenology (Van Manen, 2018). This study also seeks to explore the meaning of Sundanese women in carrying out practical politics based on the attitudes, characters, and experiences shown. Six Sundanese women with the status of legislative members and two political observers are willing to be research informants. Boddy (2016) considers the informative and meaningful sample size in qualitative research, along with theoretical saturation and a relatively homogeneous population, to be relevant and worthy of publication. We used purposive sampling to obtain research informants with their consent. We narrowed down the informants for this study based on the following criteria: 1) female legislative members who have Sundanese ancestry; 2) female legislative members who are in the electoral district of West Java; 3) political observers, from men and women. Six informants, representing various political parties in the legislature, agreed to participate in the interview. We interviewed

two political observers who served as commissioners of the West Java General Election Commission under a private research institution.

We conducted the interviews in an unstructured and open format to explore the informants' answers, while adhering to interview guidelines to maintain focus. The interviews took place at a place and time determined based on the results of a face-to-face agreement. The researcher used a variety of methods to interview the informants, securing permission and recommendations from the DPR public relations team or individuals who were close to the informants. The researcher then personally approached the informants to request their approval to participate in this study.

To fulfill the validity of the data, the researcher not only obtained data sources from interviews but also supplemented them with observations and document studies so as to fulfill the concept of triangulation of data sources. The researcher conducted direct observations. The researcher gained permission to engage in his duties as a legislator. We documented the informant's track record as a member of the legislature by scrutinizing his social media posts.

We recorded, transcribed, and analyzed the interviews. We anonymized all informant names to protect their confidentiality. We used the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 12 Pro to capture prominent concepts and interesting themes for discussion. The resulting algorithm aims to discern the underlying meaning of the data by taking into account the contextual information of the node (Zamsiswaya et al., 2024). The coding process generates abstracted concepts as it executes the first cycle and second-cycle coding stages simultaneously. We analyzed the concepts from the interview transcripts thematically to identify three themes in this study: the motivation behind Sundanese women's practical political participation, the challenges they encounter in their political endeavors, and the role of Sundanese women in practical politics.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Motivation for the practical political participation of Sundanese women

The involvement of Sundanese women in practical politics, particularly in legislative institutions, reveals intriguing insights from their backgrounds, which can shape their political motivation and the goals they aspire to achieve in the political arena. The informant's background before entering politics is the basis for understanding the informant's interest in politics.

Three of the six informants have a background as activists who are active in various organizations, namely informants B, D, and E. Informant B is a singer, presenter, and writer. She was known as an activist in her youth. Informant D is accustomed to the political environment because both of her parents have been involved in practical politics. Informant E also has a family background and is active in politics. Informant A is a film actor and singer who has also served as an honorary lecturer. Informant E has also worked as a teacher in Bandung Regency. Informant C previously worked at a company in Jakarta but then had a career in agriculture with the residents of Sukabumi. Meanwhile, informant F has a background as a santri who a descendant of the owner of is also one of the large Islamic boarding schools in Tasikmalaya.

Table 1 shows the motivations and goals of Sundanese women in politics. Sundanese women's motivations and goals in politics are the driving force behind their advancement as legislative members.

Table 1. Motivation for the practical political participation of Sundanese women

Motivation and Purpose	Explanation
Motivation	Community encouragement
	Desire to improve regulations
	Opening space for women's aspirations
Purpose	Voicing justice and welfare
	Representing the image of women
	Representing community aspirations
	Becoming a role model

Farmers encouraged informant C, who has joined a farmer organization, to run as a legislative member. The policy, which allocates 30% of the legislative quota to women, inspired informants A and E to seize the chance to represent women. Informant A and Informant B encouraged Sundanese women to participate in politics by advocating for improved regulations, which paved the way for the aspirations of marginalized women. Meanwhile, women's motivation to engage in politics stemmed from the encouragement of their supportive families. According to F, the encouragement she received from her family, who supported her in politics, made her even more courageous in her decision to engage in practical politics. Based on the motivation above, the goal of Sundanese female politicians in politics is related to their status as women who are sensitive to the community environment. First, women's involvement in politics is crucial for advocating for justice and welfare. Informant A believed that women's voices are crucial in shaping policies that serve the interests of women, children, and society. Informant B wants the presence of women to bring about just policies, as expressed by informant B, "*if we voice women's issues from the perspective of injustice, the victims of which happen to be women and children*." Second, Sundanese women want to appear in the world of practical politics with the aim ofrepresenting women in their region. This was expressed by the experience of informant C:

"*When in Jakarta, I always heard the stigma of Sukabumi women being bad. So, I feel I have a responsibility to change that and represent good Sukabumi women*".

Thirdly, the purpose of women's presence in the legislature is to represent the aspirations of the community. Informant D wants women to have the ability to represent the community's aspirations. Here is an informant D's perspective on the aspirations of the community:

"*I also often hear several complaints from the community, such as the roads are not good, and then also from education, there are classrooms that are not suitable. If I assist, the number may not be insignificant, and my position on the council will undoubtedly facilitate my ability to assist the community with the policies I support.*"

Fourth, the desire to become a member of the legislature for Sundanese women aims to be a good role model in society. We hope it can alter the perception and discrimination against women who are solely responsible for household chores, thereby serving as an inspiration to other women. Informant B shared his experiences and thoughts.

"*Of course, legislative members act as people's representatives as well as role models in society. In terms of teachers, they are 'digugu jeung ditiru' who can carry out their roles as wives, mothers, children, and members of society well because it also relates to self-image or branding, so it must be right*".

Obstacles faced by Sundanese women in political participation efforts

Table 2 illustrates the challenges women encounter in politics, which stem from their socialization within society and the broader political landscape. Patriarchal culture, religious interpretation, and women's mindset pose challenges to Sundanese women's cultural construction. Meanwhile, women encounter political obstacles associated with resources, patron-client culture, and egoism.

Table 2. Obstacles faced by Sundanese women in political participation efforts

Obstacles	Description
Social Construction Culture	Patriarchal culture
	Religious interpretation
	Women's mindset
Political Obstacles	Resources
	Patron-client culture
	Egoism

Sundanese women involved in politics feel and experience patriarchal culture firsthand. Informant B considers the role of women in politics to be crucial because it is difficult for women to gain equality. *"Women are marginalized because women find it difficult to gain equality between the roles of women and men, who are sometimes marginalized and so on"*. Informant B believes that the presence of women in policy roles is essential. Meanwhile, informant D felt that patriarchal culture hindered women's participation in politics because of the difficult-to-change perception of society. *"Patriarchal cultural values, which then influence the perceptions of society that tend to be consumed by issues that politics is a man's domain"*.

The next impediment to women's role in culture stems from religious beliefs that discourage their participation in politics. Observer G observed that this religious view influenced society's perception of the need for women's involvement in politics. Observer G articulated the following concerns about the barriers faced by women in politics:

> *"Religious interpretations often stigmatize women by forbidding them from participating in politics. If we study it properly, the Koran is a text that must be read contextually, namely by understanding the historical and political context in which the Koran was revealed ... so women must be smart in understanding it.*"

Society's ingrained cultural construction creates barriers to women's perspectives in politics, contributing to women's hesitation to enter the political arena. Informant B expressed her interest in pursuing a career in politics, citing her courage in facing various obstacles.

> *"The main obstacles for women are: one, mindset; second depends on women's choice whether to be involved in politics. Therefore, I believe that the most crucial factor to consider is our own identity as women, and whether we choose to participate in politics or not. That's a choice. Then there are other internal aspects, such as if you have a husband, you must have the husband's permission, for reasons of sharia, patriarchal cultural traditions, agreements with your husband, or whatever; each person has their thoughts, perspectives, traditions, and principles in family life."*

Egoism, resources, and patron-client culture are the political obstacles faced by Sundanese women in politics. Egoism among women in politics arises due to a political culture that renders women's voices ineffective. Informant C articulated how egoism can impede women's productivity in politics.

> *"Women may tend to stand out on their own, which can lead to arguments and gossip. It would be better if women collaborated and worked together. Unfortunately, some individuals in politics prioritize their ego over collaboration and teamwork. Especially when I first entered the West Java DPRD, women in parliament did not guide each other; instead, many felt as if they were the best. In addition, politics is always associated with dirty work and lots of intrigue, so it is not suitable for women."*

The next resource problem, a common obstacle to practical politics in Indonesia, is resource availability. The strength of resources is critical to individual political success. Without adequate resource support, developing political communication skills or empathy for the community can be challenging in politics. Informant F discovered that winning a general election comes with significant political costs.

> *"The challenge lies in the scarcity of funds. Even visiting relatives requires funds, at least for transportation. Like the previous period, our financial situation was dire, and when we were elected to the council, things were only marginally better. When offered to run again as a provincial legislative member, there were only around 40,000 remaining votes that could be taken, so Lahaula (no power) because there was no money. We could only visit*

relatives in several places, to the kyai asking for prayers, not to gather the masses, not for support, because if support is usually using envelopes."

The patron-client culture, where proximity to the political party elite significantly influences a person's success in politics, is the final barrier that Sundanese women face in practical political participation. Informant E felt that the patron-client culture was an obstacle.

Sundanese women in the legislative institution

Men typically carry out practical politics, which gives rise to certain characteristics. When Sundanese women participate in practical politics, they reflect the character of a woman and someone who embodies Sundanese culture. These characteristics serve as an advantage for Sundanese women in fulfilling their roles as representatives of the people. The advantages that Sundanese women bring to the dynamics of practical politics include emotional bonds that can bring them closer to the community, a female perspective in every view, a bias towards women, the ability to encourage gender-responsive policies, and a meticulous attitude, as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Sundanese women's practical politics characteristics

Character	Description
Characteristics of Sundanese Women in Politics	Forming emotional bonds
	Biased towards women
	Attitude of meticulousness

The advantage of women in politics lies in their ability to form emotional bonds with their community, fostering a sense of closeness. The map of political competition in Indonesia considers this emotional bond as social capital for Sundanese women. Observer H believes that the political world cannot underestimate the power of women who resonate deeply with their people. Informant A believes that her performance is optimal due to the unrestricted communication style of Sundanese women with the community, which in turn makes the community happy to have her presence. Informant B believes that her closeness to the community and empathetic attitude can support the community. Informant F believes that women are more sensitive to situations, so they can resolve conflicts well.

Women's perspectives are crucial in the world of politics. Formulating a policy requires a woman's perspective. The socio-cultural conditions that construct women as second-class citizens are the reason for the importance of women's roles in policy formulation. Informant B expressed the need for women to strengthen the existence of women in society.

"The role of women stems from the phenomenon of marginalized women, or because women find it difficult to get equality between the roles of women and men, who are sometimes marginalized, and so on. So, it is hoped that when women play a role in the world of politics, they can be involved in policy formulation, so that the resulting policies are expected to accommodate women's interests, so they understand the bias towards women."

The presence of women in political structures that bring women's perspectives is related to the formulation of policies that can side with women. A woman who can contribute to politics is known for her thoroughness. Informant C believed that women's precision enabled them to complete tasks in detail. Furthermore, policy matters necessitate precision, particularly so that the resulting policies can be gender responsive.

Discussion
Structure-agency interaction in Sundanese women's participation in legislative institutions

According to structuration theory, the participation of Sundanese women in practical politics is important to understand the interaction between structure and agency. Individual

agencies and social structures interrelate and influence each other. Giddens' structuration concept which emphasizes the duality of structure with agency, elaborates the structural nature of social systems as the result of human action and activity practices that are continuously recreated (Chatterjee et al., 2019).

The informant's background shows how social structures shape their motivations and actions. The 30% quota policy for women in the legislature involves a structural dimension in the form of regulations that open opportunities for women to be involved in politics. This policy encourages Sundanese women to engage in politics, demonstrating the power of structure in promoting women's participation. In addition, family support, such as in informant F, and community encouragement, such as in informant C, reflect the role of social structure in facilitating individual agency. Thus, the relationship between structure and agency is interrelated. Processes bind agency and structure, causing them to occur dynamically (Greener, 2008). The existence of structures, such as regulations governing women's political participation and family institutions, can encourage women as actors to participate in practical politics.

The diversity of informants' backgrounds demonstrates how diverse experiences and knowledge shape their agency. Informants with activist backgrounds (B, D, E) bring different perspectives and networks compared to informants with business or santri backgrounds (A, C, F). Informants from family backgrounds who have been involved in politics have encountered a variety of experiences and constructs shaped by their family environment. This diversity enhances political participation and demonstrates how complex interactions with various aspects of social structure shape individual agencies. Actors who have active and practical awareness of using the structural components of society in their lives can effectively shape society (Chatterjee et al., 2019). The informant's background is a practical awareness of how their motives and motivations drive informants as actors who want to be involved in practical politics.

Sundanese women demonstrate agency through their aspirations to represent their people. Women try to take advantage of existing opportunities to achieve their political goals. Informants B and A, who aim to enhance regulations and create opportunities for marginalized women, suggest that women in politics not only embrace the current social structure but also actively strive to alter it, thereby demonstrating the dynamics of structure-agency interaction. This means that actors have practical and discursive awareness that allows them to play an active role in shaping the structure. Actors have practical awareness in the form of the potential to make a difference with their ability to act with the goals they have, while performers also have discursive awareness that individuals are agents who can be held accountable for every action based on their knowledge (Greener, 2008). The participation of Sundanese women in practical politics reflects the dynamic interaction between structure and agency. Social structures, such as quota policies and family support, provide a framework for individual action. However, Sundanese women's agency plays a key role in utilizing these opportunities to achieve broader changes in the social structure. Agents must make a difference by utilizing the structural resources generated by knowing relevant actions (McPhee, 2004). The presence of Sundanese women in practical politics, particularly in legislative institutions, serves as an agency that can actualize their intentions and motivations by devising clear political goals, such as advocating for women's rights and advocating for justice and welfare. This analysis emphasizes that significant social change can occur when individuals actively interact with and shape existing structures. Human actors enable the creation of societal structures through the creation of accepted values and norms, but at the same time, human actions are also limited by social structures (Lamsal, 2012).

Structural barriers faced by Sundanese women in legislative institutions participation efforts

Sundanese women face a variety of structural barriers in practical political participation efforts related to social and political construction. Structure, as a set of rules and resources made real through human actors' implementation, creates complex barriers for women in the political realm. Structure persists as a set of rules and resources, action procedures, and other practical aspects that are made socially real through the continuous implementation of human actors so that structuration is understood as a process that will experience change (Chatterjee et al., 2019).

Patriarchal culture is the main obstacle that dominates society. The public's perception of politics as a domain and work of men prevents women from being involved in practical politics. A structure that contains a set of rules and resources means that rules can be interpreted as forming meaning, and also as giving sanctions to ways of social behavior (Chatterjee et al., 2019). This patriarchal culture places women in a marginalized position. The rules of the community environment constructed by patriarchal culture provide meaning that women do not need to be too involved in public spheres. Thus, it is difficult for women to gain equality and roles in public policy.

Religious views are also a barrier for Sundanese women in politics. Patriarchal culture constructs religious interpretations that forbid women from actively participating in politics, even though contextual interpretations of religious texts can encourage women's participation. Structure, rules, and resources as inseparable concepts show how forms of domination and power can hinder women's access to politics. Rules and resources are inseparable concepts where structural properties show forms of domination and power (Chatterjee et al., 2019).

Women's mindsets also pose a barrier to their participation in politics. Women's lack of courage and personal choices often hinders their interest in entering politics. Existing structures, including patriarchal cultural traditions and family policies, often restrain women, showing how structures are universal but can change. This change requires women's awareness and courage to fight these obstacles. Structures are universal, but can change (Lamsal, 2012). Internalized patriarchal cultural values make women's mindsets an obstacle to moving into politics. Women who aspire to participate in politics and government will not receive support from society unless political parties strive to alter the prevailing patriarchal mindset. The assumption that regards women as unequal and less important than men in the political arena hinders the community's efforts to encourage women to have representation in local politics (Amirullah, 2016). In addition to cultural obstacles, political obstacles include egoism, limited resources, and patron-client culture. Egoism among female politicians impedes women's political collaboration and productivity. In the context of women who are already in politics, the egoism of women in legislative institutions hinders the potential of women in political institutions to succeed in their agenda as women. In terms of resources, a lack of financial support is a major obstacle. High political costs make it difficult for women to compete without adequate financial support. Resources are structured properties of social systems that are reproduced by agents in interactions as a medium for exercising power (Chatterjee et al., 2019).

Patron-client culture is also a barrier, and closeness to political party elites is very important for success. Patron-client relationships can limit women's access to strategic positions in the party. In a political context, resources can be used as a form of authority, which often means access to power and influence. Resources can be used as a form of authority (Lamsal, 2012). Access to the power elite implies that resources are a form of power that, for women who have various obstacles in politics, becomes even more challenging because the path to power and strategic positions becomes very difficult. The structural obstacles faced by Sundanese women in practical political participation are very diverse and complex. Patriarchal culture, religious interpretation, personal mindset, as well as limited resources and patron-client culture, all play a role in preventing women from fully participating in politics. Changes in social and political structures require strengthening women's agencies at the practical political level.

Sundanese female politician agency in the dynamics of socio-political education structure

Sundanese female agency in practical politics shows their ability to take meaningful and coordinated actions in the context of existing social and political structures. Various models of internal actor dimensions from Giddens consist of three characteristics in the form of discursive awareness, in the form of facts that we learn, practical awareness of implicit knowledge, and the subconscious. These three features are sufficient to explain a person's ability to act (McPhee, 2004).

Sundanese women use rationalization to monitor social, physical, and contextual aspects. Actors routinely monitor social, physical, and contextual aspects through the rationalization of actions to maintain a basic understanding of their activities (Chatterjee et al., 2019). Sundanese

women's actions in politics show how women use a communication style that is close to the community, reflecting aspects of discursive and practical awareness. Emotional closeness to the community becomes strong social capital that allows women to gain broad public support. In this context, the emotional ties and social sensitivity of Sundanese women are advantages in politics, following Giddens' view that actors routinely monitor and maintain a basic understanding of their activities.

Partisanship on women's issues also reflects the agency of Sundanese women. The inclusion of women's perspectives in policy formulation is crucial as it caters to the interests of often marginalised women. Women in politics need to strengthen their presence in society and ensure that the resulting policies are gender responsive. This shows the reflexivity between the goals and actions taken by Sundanese women in politics, where they strive to change the existing social structure to be more inclusive and just. Being human means being an agent who has reasons for their activities, with continuity that has reflexivity between the goals and actions taken (Chatterjee et al., 2019).

Sundanese women's characteristics, such as thoroughness and empathy, also play an important role in politics. Women's thoroughness enables them to complete tasks in detail, a crucial aspect of policy making. This thoroughness ensures that the resulting policies are not only accurate, but they also consider gender aspects in depth. In the context of social power, this precision shows how Sundanese women use available resources to exercise power effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, complex social interactions also influence the role of Sundanese women in politics. Power in a social system has a regular dependence between actors or collectivities in the context of social interactions, as expressed by Giddens. The presence of women in political structures, with unique perspectives and approaches, can create more inclusive and representative dynamics. Women's ability to adapt and overcome challenges in a dynamic political environment is demonstrated by their sensitivity to situations and their ability to resolve conflicts effectively.

Sundanese women's agency in practical politics shows their ability to adapt and innovate within existing social structures. Through discursive and practical awareness, as well as the use of their unique characteristics such as social sensitivity and thoroughness, Sundanese women can contribute significantly to the dynamics of socio-political education structures. Power in a social system has a regular dependence between actors or collectivities in the context of social interaction (Chatterjee et al., 2019). Their role not only strengthens women's presence in politics but also helps create fairer and more inclusive policies, changing social structures to support broader women's participation.

Women's participation in politics can open women's awareness to become independent, confident individuals and have an identity with their advantages in "feminine politics," which is empathetic, full of gentleness, care, affection, politeness, and thoroughness in educating and advancing women. Furthermore, mainstreaming gender issues through women in legislative institutions will increase awareness among both men and women, emphasizing the importance of women's issues and their ability to effectively participate in these institutions.

Therefore, it's crucial to foster an environment that encourages women to utilize their skills in identifying social issues, enabling them to take action and make strategic decisions for their lives (Amirullah, 2016). Empowerment also provides opportunities for women to participate in the public sphere through their ability to access economic resources and power, become part of decision-making, and enjoy the results of access to resources and decision-making. With their unique advantages and characteristics in the practical political environment, Sundanese women can serve as role models for younger generations, providing them with political education that enables them to participate in and contribute to practical politics.

Indonesia continues to search for the most suitable general election system, particularly as the number of political parties shapes the political dynamics (Sunarso et al., 2022). Thus, the presence of women in legislative institutions is an opportunity to improve Indonesia's political system. Political education aimed at promoting women's involvement will serve as an effective tool in mitigating future gender biases.

CONCLUSION

Sundanese women's participation in practical politics demonstrates the dynamic interaction between social structures and individual agency. Legislative quota policies and family support drive women's motivation, while women's agency is evident in their efforts to fight for women's issues and change gender-responsive regulations. Structural barriers such as patriarchal culture, conservative religious interpretations, personal mindsets, and limited resources hinder women's full participation in politics. Sundanese women can adapt and struggle within existing social structures. Sundanese women approach the community and gather public support by demonstrating discursive and practical awareness. Characteristics such as thoroughness and empathy help Sundanese women exercise power effectively. The role of Sundanese women strengthens women's presence in politics and creates more inclusive policies, changing social structures to support broader women's participation.

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