

Politics and Gender Development: Dynamics of Women's Representation in Legislative Institutions in Tuban Regency

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ABSTRAK

Women's representation in legislative institutions is an important indicator in measuring political progress and gender development in a region. This study focuses on the development of women's representation in the legislative institution of Tuban Regency, as well as the political dynamics that influence the process. The main objectives of this study are to analyze changes in the quantity and quality of women's representation in legislative institutions and to identify factors that support and hinder women's political participation. Using a mixed approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, surveys, and document analysis. The results show that although there has been an increase in the number of women elected, they still face challenges in actively participating and influencing policy. Local political culture factors, party support, and political education were found to have significant influences on women's success in politics. This study suggests the need for systematic efforts to overcome these obstacles and strengthen support for women, to achieve better gender equality in legislative institutions. These findings have important implications for policymakers, political parties, and the community in formulating more effective strategies to encourage women's political representation.

INTRODUCTION

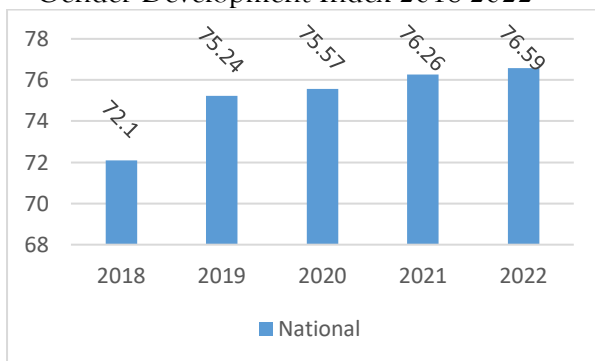
Gender development is one of the fundamental aspects of creating a just and equal society. Gender equality contributes to achieving social justice and plays an important role in promoting economic growth and political stability. (Allwood, 2020). Gender development issues have become a major concern in various development policies and programs in Indonesia. The government is also committed to achieving the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs), especially the fifth goal, which focuses on achieving gender equality and empowering women.

Globalization has driven institutional changes that support gender equality in developing countries, which in turn has significantly increased women's political participation, following similar trends in developed countries (Hessami & da Fonseca, 2020). Nonetheless, challenges in achieving gender equality are still genuine in Indonesia, especially in the regions,

including at the provincial and district/city levels. Data shows that although the Gender Development Index (IPG) at the national level continues to increase, gender disparities are still quite significant, especially in areas that are lagging in aspects of education, health, and women's economic participation (Aini, 2021).

Graphic 1. Development of the National Gender Development Index 2018-2022



Source: (Pemerintah Kabupaten Tuban, 2024)

The graph shows the development of the Gender Development Index (IPG) at the national, East Java Province, and Tuban District levels from 2018 to 2022. In general, it can be seen that the national and East Java IPGs have increased consistently over this period, with relatively stable values that continue to approach or exceed 75. In 2022, the national IPG will reach 76.59,

This graph illustrates that despite improvements in gender equality at the national and provincial levels, Tuban district still faces challenges in achieving gender equality equal to national and provincial standards. More focused policies and appropriate interventions are needed to encourage an increase in the IPG, to catch up with gender development.

The government's commitment to implementing sustainable and inclusive development requires the involvement of all levels of society in the decision-making process (Iswanto, 2023). Decision-making that involves all levels of society can reflect the diversity of views and interests, thus creating policies that are more relevant and

acceptable to the community at large (Alim, 2024). However, in the context of involving community participation, the role of women often receives less attention, although women play a vital role in families and communities, their presence in political decision-making positions is often limited (Dahlia, 2021).

Women's representation in legislative institutions in the world is still very low, only reaching 25.2% (Baskaran et al., 2024; Hinojosa, 2021). In Indonesia, the situation is not much different, where the country is ranked seventh in Southeast Asia regarding women's representation in parliament (Permatasari, 2022). This low representation rate has a significant impact, as it means that the interests and issues relevant to women also receive less attention. In some cases, women are often not adequately represented in political decision-making forums, resulting in their voices and perspectives often being overlooked. (Larasati & Noviani, 2021).

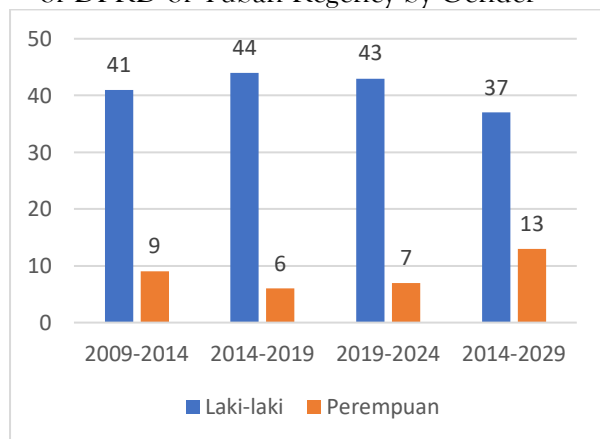
Since the passing of Law No. 68 of 1958 on the Ratification of the Women's Political Rights Convention, which regulates the realization of equality without discrimination, including guarantees of equal rights to vote and be elected, guarantees of participation in policy formulation, opportunities to occupy positions in the bureaucracy, and guarantees of participation in socio-political organizations, there have been efforts to increase women's representation. This effort was further strengthened by the ratification of Law No. 12/2003 on General Elections, which stipulates that political parties participating in the elections must pay attention to women's representation of at least 30% in the submission of candidates for members of the DPR, DPD, and DPRD (Dahlia & Warjiati, 2024).

Although regulations have been in place for a long time, the implementation of women's representation in politics, especially since the 1955 elections in the

DPR, has still not reached the expected 30 percent quota (Sibarani, 2024). This shows that despite the existing regulations, the challenges in realizing adequate representation of women in the legislature are still quite significant. Factors such as structural barriers, a political culture that is not yet fully inclusive, and suboptimal support from political parties contribute to the target not being achieved (Imeliana & Maulia, 2024; Ramadhanty et al., 2023). Thus, more intensive and targeted efforts are needed to encourage increased representation of women in politics, so that the goal of gender equality in political representation can be achieved.

One of the regions that faces dynamic problems in women's representation in politics and the substantial development it represents is Tuban Regency.

Graphic 2. Development of the Proportion of DPRD of Tuban Regency by Gender



Source: (DPRD Kabupaten Tuban, 2009, 2020, 2024)

Based on the data above, it can be seen that women's representation in the DPRD of Tuban Regency is still below 20% in each period, although there has been an increase from the 2009-2014 period to the 2024-2029 period. The proportion of female members in the 2009-2014 period was 9 people out of a total of 50 DPRD members, which then decreased to 6 people in the 2014-2019 period. In the 2019-2024 period, the number of women increased slightly to 7, and is expected to reach 13 in the 2024-

2029 period. Despite the increase, this number is still far from the minimum 30% representation target as mandated by law.

This phenomenon shows that there are still significant challenges in increasing women's representation in the legislature, both in terms of nomination and election. Factors such as patriarchal culture, structural barriers within political parties, and lack of support and capacity building for female candidates often prevent women from actively engaging and succeeding in politics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concepts and Dimensions of Representation: Exploring Formal, Descriptive, Substantive, and Symbolic Aspects

Hanna Fenichel Pitkin defines parliament as a process of representation in which a representative acts in response to the interests of those he or she represents (Angin, 2021). According to Pitkin, throughout history, representation has not always been associated with democracy, and the two are not even identical. Democracy is thought of as government by the people, while representation is an attempt to make the absent present. Democracy in Ancient Greece differed in principle from representative democracy, where representative democracy originated from the monarchical tradition in Britain. The two are considered unrelated and even contradictory (Marpaung et al., 2024).

Modern states are inseparable from the representation model, given their vast territories and larger populations compared to the city-state era in Ancient Greece. Therefore, the concept of representation is considered as a solution to maintain the continuity of democracy, which is often referred to as the real form of procedural democracy. Hanna F. Pitkin was the first scholar to seriously examine political representation and its typology. Pitkin proposes four main pillars in her representation model, namely the

representative, the represented, the situational context, and the political setting. Each pillar has its own space, where representation is divided based on the existing space. Representative is related to who represents, while the represented is the party being represented. The other two dimensions, namely the interests represented and the political setting, determine how patterns of representation can emerge and develop in that space.

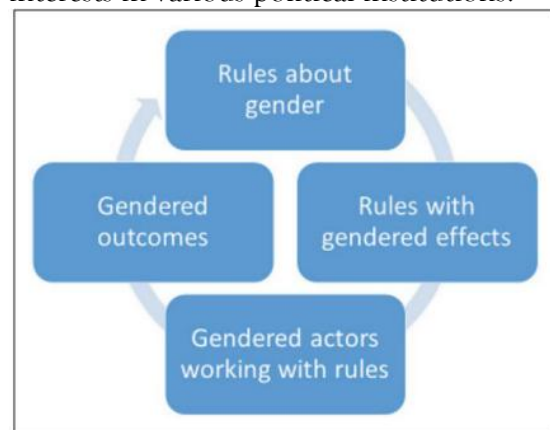
In addition, Pitkin also identifies four different views on representation, namely:

- a. Formal Representation, refers to the institutional arrangements that take place before and during representation, with two main dimensions of authorization (the way a representative obtains his or her position) and accountability (the ability of constituents to judge and punish their representatives if they are unresponsive).
- b. Symbolic Representation, focuses on how a representative defends or acts on behalf of their constituents, where a symbol can represent something even if it is not present.
- c. Descriptive Representation, based on the similarity or resemblance between the representative and the represented, where the representative acts as a reflection or image of the group he or she represents.
- d. Substantive Representation, the representative acts on behalf of the interests he or she represents, without taking into account geographical or other forms of grouping usually used in formalistic representation.

Pitkin also emphasizes that in talking about representation, two important things to consider are responsibility and authority. A representative must have the authority to act on behalf of the group he or she represents and, at the same time, must be accountable to them. Representation aims to accommodate diverse interests within

institutions that represent the interests of the people or initiatives of the representative, with each action having to be relevant to the situation at hand.

Models of women's representation in politics adopt these principles by paying attention to how rules, both those that explicitly mention gender and those that have gender effects, interact with gendered actors in the political system. In this context, it is important to understand how existing policies-such as gender quotas can strengthen women's position as responsible and authorized representatives so that they can effectively advocate for women's interests in various political institutions.



Picture 1. Model of Women's Representation in Politics

Source: (Lowndes, 2020)

Lowndes' model of women's representation in politics shown in this diagram identifies four sets of interrelated variables, namely:

1. Rules about Gender: refers to rules, policies or norms that explicitly regulate or differentiate based on gender. These can be laws or policies designed to encourage or regulate women's involvement in politics, such as gender quotas in elections or other affirmative policies aimed at increasing women's participation.
2. Rules with Gendered Effects: While these rules may not explicitly mention gender, their effects are heavily influenced by gender. This means that these rules or policies may affect women and men differently. For example, rules

relating to working hours or leave may impact women more due to their responsibilities in domestic work.

3. **Gendered Actors Working with Rules:** This variable refers to individuals or groups working within the framework of established rules. These actors can include women politicians, activists, or policymakers who try to navigate and utilize existing rules to promote women's representation in politics. Their role is important in how the rules are applied and understood in the context of gender.
4. **Gendered Outcomes:** This refers to the end result of the interaction between rules, gender effects, and gendered actors. These outcomes can be seen in the form of increased representation of women in political institutions, policy changes that are more inclusive of women, or changes in political culture that are more supportive of women's participation.

Overall, the model illustrates how rules, both those that explicitly mention gender and those that have gender effects, interact with gendered actors to produce gendered outcomes. In the context of women's representation in politics, the model demonstrates the complexities involved in achieving gender equality, as well as the importance of considering how existing rules and structures can be utilized or changed to support that goal.

Women's Representation in Politics: Respect, Fulfillment and Protection

Respect, fulfillment, and protection are the three main pillars that are intertwined in strengthening women's representation in politics (Kirby & Shepherd, 2021). Respect means more than just formal recognition of women's rights, but a commitment to eliminate discrimination and structural barriers that often prevent women's participation in politics. In this context, respect also means

providing a supportive and inclusive environment where women can participate without fear of harassment or social stigma. Fulfillment, on the other hand, demands more than the mere presence of women in political positions. It requires concrete measures to ensure that women are not simply "represented" but empowered to function effectively in political roles, including access to the training, resources, and support necessary to enable the represented group to become influential decision-makers. Protection complements the previous two principles by ensuring that women are protected from various forms of political violence, intimidation, and other barriers that may hinder participation in various fora (Onditi et al., 2021). This calls for firm policies and strong protection systems to ensure that women can participate in politics safely and equally.

In a broader context, the struggle for respect, fulfillment and protection of women in politics is in line with the principles of feminism. Feminism emerged from an awareness of the oppression and exploitation experienced by women in various aspects of life, whether in the family, workplace or society. The feminist movement aims to fundamentally change these conditions, by advocating for equal rights between women and men in all fields. In the political context, feminism pushes for true representation of women, where women are not only given a place at the decision-making table, but also given the power to influence the direction of policy. Thus, feminism becomes an important cornerstone in efforts to achieve women's representation that is not only symbolic but also substantive, ensuring that women's rights are recognized, fulfilled, and protected in all aspects of political life. (Saidah & Khatimah, 2003)

METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to understand and

describe the mechanism of gender development in politics through women's representation in the legislature in Tuban Regency. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to provide in-depth insights into the perspectives and experiences of various stakeholders as well as the social context that influences the political process. Secondary data analysis techniques were used to process information from various relevant sources, including official reports from government agencies, statistical data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), and previous studies from various scientific journals and books related to gender and political issues in Tuban Regency. This approach allows the researcher to verify the results by using the same data set and comparing with findings from other studies in similar fields. The research was conducted from data collection to analysis, ensuring that the entire process was systematic and thorough. The timing of the research was also carefully considered to cover the election and campaign periods, so that the information obtained could provide relevant context. By using this method, it is hoped that researchers can explore accurate and in-depth data, and produce reliable findings to provide recommendations for improving inclusive political policies. This qualitative approach is also supported by expert opinions in the social and political fields, which emphasize the importance of understanding individual perspectives and experiences, as well as the need for comprehensive data for informed decision-making.

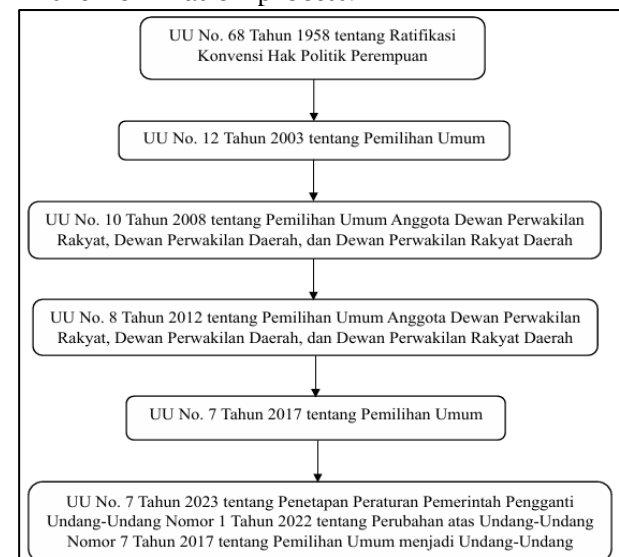
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In analyzing the dynamics of women's representation in the legislature in Tuban Regency, it is important to refer to the four types of representation introduced by Hanna F. Pitkin in her book *The Concept of Representation*, namely formal, descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation (Fenichel Pitkin, 1967). These four concepts

will provide a comprehensive analytical framework to understand how women are represented in politics at the regional level.

Formal Representation of Women in Legislative Institutions

Formal representation relates to the procedures and legal rules that ensure that representation occurs through legitimate and recognized mechanisms. In the context of Tuban Regency, women's representation in the legislature is largely regulated by electoral laws and regulations that require a quota of women in nominations. However, while these rules exist, their implementation often faces challenges, such as resistance from political parties and communities that are still influenced by patriarchal culture. Various regulations, ranging from the Election Law to internal political party regulations, require women's participation in the nomination process.



Picture 2. Evolution of Election Policy and Women's Representation in Politics in Indonesia

Source: Author's Process (2024)

The development of policies on women's representation in politics in Indonesia has taken place gradually, reflecting the government's commitment to promoting gender equality in the political sphere. Starting with Law No. 68 of 1958 which ratified the Women's Political Rights

Convention, Indonesia officially recognized women's political rights, including the right to vote and be elected in general elections. This step was the initial foundation for women's involvement in politics.

Law No. 12/2003 introduced a more concrete legal framework for elections in Indonesia, marking the initial stage in a systematic effort to increase women's inclusion in the national political process. Prior to this law, women's participation in politics was often sporadic and not regulated by clear provisions (Iswanto & Pamungkas, 2023). Law No. 12/2003 directed attention to the importance of women's representation, although it did not explicitly set specific quotas. The passage of this law reflected formal recognition of women's role in politics and began to create a more solid legal foundation to ensure that women have equal opportunities to participate in policy-making through legislative institutions.

The concrete implementation of this policy was seen in the 2004 elections, where Article 65 paragraph (1) of Law No. 12/2003 stipulated that each political party participating in the elections was required to pay attention to women's representation of at least 30% in the list of candidates for members of the DPR, Provincial DPRD, and Regency/City DPRD in each electoral district. This clause marks a significant step forward in efforts to encourage women's participation in politics, because for the first time, there are clear quantitative requirements regarding women's representation in the list of legislative candidates. Thus, Law No. 12/2003 not only introduced procedural changes, but also set a new norm in Indonesian politics that is more inclusive, paving the way for increased women's participation in the legislature at all levels of government.

A significant development came with the passage of Law No. 10/2008, which established a stronger basis for women's representation on legislative candidate lists. The law introduces a stricter provision

regarding the minimum percentage of women's representation, which is 30%, in the list of legislative candidates submitted by political parties. This regulation is designed to ensure that women's participation in politics is not only symbolic, but also substantial, by giving women a greater role in policy-making at the national and local levels.

This regulation was implemented in the 2009 General Elections, where Law No. 10/2008 specifically stipulates that the list of candidates for election to the DPR, Provincial DPRD, and Regency/City DPRD submitted by political parties must contain at least 30% women's representation. In addition, this law also requires that the placement of women on the list of candidates must be done fairly, with at least one woman placed among every three candidates. These provisions mark a step forward in efforts to achieve gender equality in Indonesian politics, providing greater space for women to engage directly in legislative and policy-making processes.

Progress continued with Law No. 8/2012, which affirmed the 30% quota for women on legislative candidate lists, signaling a significant step forward in encouraging women's participation in politics. Law No. 7/2017 then updated the previous electoral regulation, maintaining and clarifying provisions on women's representation, showing that this issue remains a priority in political reform.

Finally, Law No. 7 of 2023, which validates Perppu No. 1 of 2022 on the amendment of the 2017 Election Law, reflects the government's commitment to adjust and update electoral rules to be more inclusive. While the details of women's representation in this latest regulation still need to be explored further, the policy as a whole demonstrates Indonesia's ongoing efforts to strengthen women's position in politics—from the recognition of political rights to the implementation of more representative quotas. One method of

increasing descriptive diversity in political bodies is by implementing quotas that mandate a level of female representation in voting or decision-making bodies (Barnes & Holman, 2020).

Descriptive Representation of Women in Legislative Institutions

In Tuban Regency, as in many other regions in Indonesia, male dominance in political parties is still very strong. The number of women who hold positions as administrators or leaders of political parties is still relatively minimal, reflecting the gender inequality that is a major challenge in local politics. Although there have been efforts to increase women's participation, including through the implementation of a 30% quota for women's representation, its implementation in Tuban Regency is far from optimal.

One of the negative impacts of this situation is the lack of commitment of political parties in valuing women's political participation. Women are often only included in the list of candidates to fulfill formal requirements, without any seriousness in considering women's

representation as an important element in political decision-making (Sibarani, 2024). This reflects that women's presence in political structures is often treated as a mere fulfillment of quotas, rather than a real step towards greater equality and inclusion. Without a genuine effort to actively involve women in politics, parties risk losing diverse perspectives and the ability to produce policies that truly represent the entire population.

In the concept of descriptive representation, an institution can only be considered representative if its members are selected through a process that ensures its composition reflects precisely the composition of the population it represents. In this context, women's representation is not just a number, but also reflects similarities in characteristics or relationships with the group being represented. This approach is often held by proponents of proportional representation systems, who argue that true representation can only be achieved when legislatures directly reflect the demographics of society.

Table 1. Comparison of Tuban Regency DPRD Proportion by Gender for the 2019-2024 and 2024-2029 Periods

2019-2024 Period				2024-2029 Period			
Political Party	Gender		Total	Political Party	Gender		Total
	Male	Female			Male	Female	
PKB	15	1	16	PKB	9	2	11
Golkar	7	2	9	Golkar	13	7	20
PDIP	5	-	5	PDIP	4	1	5
Demokrat	3	2	5	Demokrat	2	1	3
Gerindra	3	2	5	Gerindra	2	2	4
PAN	3	-	3	PAN	3	-	3
PPP	2	-	2	PPP	2	-	2
Nasdem	2	-	2	Nasdem	4	-	4
Hanura	1	-	1	PAN	1	-	1
PKS	1	-	1	DPRD Tuban	37	13	50
PBB	1	-	1				
DPRD Tuban	43	7	50				

Source: (DPRD Kabupaten Tuban, 2020)

The table 1 above explains the dynamics of change in women's representation in the Tuban Regency DPRD between the two periods, 2019-2024 and 2024-2029. In the period 2019-2024, the number of female members is very limited, with only 7 out of a total of 50 members. This reflects a significant imbalance between men and women in political representation. However, in the 2024-2029 period, there was an increase in the number of female members to 13, indicating a shift towards greater gender equality. Although men still dominate, this increase in the number of women shows a positive step in improving women's representation in the Tuban legislature. This change can be seen as an indication of increasing awareness and efforts to encourage women's participation in politics, although there is still room for further improvement in achieving a more equal balance.

The total population by gender in Tuban Regency in 2023 was 1,258,368 people, consisting of 630,258 men (50.09%) and 628,110 women (49.91%). From this number, women's representation in Tuban in parliament is reflected in 13 female parliamentarians who occupy 13 seats out of a total of 50 members of parliament, which is equivalent to 24% of women's representation in parliament. The lack of women's representation in the legislative membership shows the weak position of women in the decision-making process, even though the aspirations and demands for women are not small (Martini et al., 2021). The lack of women's representation in the legislature of Tuban Regency indicates the relatively weak position of women in local politics. This raises concerns that interests and issues important to women may not receive adequate attention in public policy and legislation. This low representation could be due to various factors, including structural barriers, patriarchal culture, and lack of support from political parties to nominate more women in elections. As a

result, women's voices that should have an equal share in policy formation are often marginalized.

Overall, the challenges in achieving genuine descriptive representation for women in Tuban Regency are still great. Stronger commitment from local political parties and more effective policies are needed to support increased participation and representation of women in political structures, in order to create a better balance in policy-making and decision-making at the district level.

Substantive Representation of Women in Legislative Institutions

Substantive representation focuses on the actions and policies taken by representatives in fighting for the interests of the groups they represent. In this case, it is important to assess the extent to which women legislators in Tuban Regency can champion issues relevant to women's interests, such as reproductive rights, gender equality in access to education, and protection from violence. This research shows that existing women legislators are often limited to roles that are considered "traditional" for women, and rarely lead significant policy initiatives.

Substantively, the role of women legislators can be evaluated through their impact on the environment that has the potential to produce significant changes in the sectors they represent. This analysis is based on two main indicators, the Gender Development Index and the Gender Empowerment Index, which together reflect the contribution and influence of women legislatures in championing issues of gender equality and empowerment within the development framework.

The Gender Development Index (IPG) and Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) are two important indicators used to measure the gender gap in the context of human development (Urbaningrum, 2023). The IPG serves to assess the extent to which development has successfully

accommodated gender issues by comparing the Human Development Index (IPM) of women with the IPM of men. Indikator ini mengukur kualitas pembangunan manusia berdasarkan aspek-aspek yang terpilah gender, termasuk kesehatan, pendidikan, dan ekonomi. This indicator measures the quality of human development based on gender-disaggregated aspects, including health, education, and the economy. Thus, the IPG provides an overview of the achievements of inclusive and fair development in providing equal opportunities for men and women.

Meanwhile, the IDG focuses more on gender equality in terms of women's

active role in politics, decision-making and the economy. The index assesses women's participation in these sectors by measuring gender inequality. The IDG provides insight into the extent to which women can participate equally with men, especially in strategic and influential areas such as politics and decision-making. As such, both indices-IPG and IDG-serve as important tools in analyzing and understanding the substantive impact of women's legislative roles in bringing about positive change in the sectors they represent.

Graphic 3. Development of National Gender Development Index, East Java and Tuban Regency 2018-2022



Source: (Pemerintah Kabupaten Tuban, 2024)

The graph clearly shows the development of the Gender Development Index (IPG) at various administrative levels, namely the national level, East Java Province, and Tuban District, throughout the period from 2018 to 2022. In general, the graph depicts a consistent upward trend in the IPG at the national level and East Java Province over the period under review. The IPG values at both levels show relatively high stability and continue to approach or even exceed 75, indicating positive progress in gender development. Particularly in 2022, the national IPG was recorded at 76.59,

which reflects a significant achievement in terms of gender equality at the national level. Meanwhile, the IPG for East Java Province stands at 74.42, indicating that despite significant progress, the province is still slightly below the National IPG figure, but still shows a positive upward trend in the context of gender development in the region.

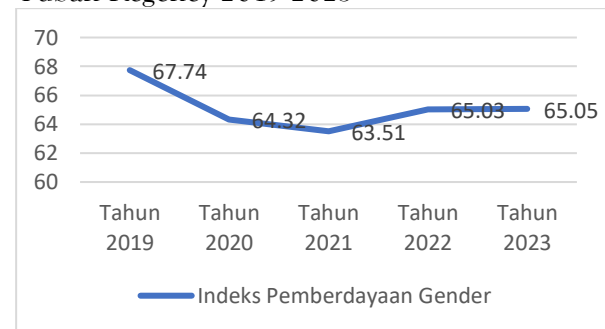
On the other hand, Tuban District shows a more fluctuating development trend of the Gender Development Index (GDI) and tends to be lower than the GDI figures at the national and provincial levels. In 2018, Tuban's IPG value was recorded at

67.74, reflecting a relatively lower starting position in terms of gender equality. Although there was an increase in 2019 and 2020, where there were efforts and initiatives that may have had a positive impact on the IPG, the trend did not last long and Tuban's IPG value again experienced a significant decline, reaching 63.51 in 2021. However, in 2022, Tuban District showed improvement with its IPG increasing to 65.03. Nonetheless, this figure is still far behind the IPG recorded at the East Java provincial and national levels, indicating that despite the improvement, Tuban still faces major challenges in achieving a level of gender equality equivalent to the standards set at the provincial and national levels. This graph clearly illustrates that despite progress in gender equality at the national and provincial levels, Kabupaten Tuban still needs to face various challenges and obstacles. Therefore, more focused policies and appropriate and effective interventions are needed to encourage the improvement of the IPG in Tuban, to catch up and accelerate progress in gender development in the region.

On the other hand, the gender empowerment index in Tuban Regency is still very low, reflecting that despite progress in certain aspects of gender equality, women in Tuban still face significant barriers in terms of access to resources, leadership opportunities, and economic participation. This low index highlights the still considerable gap in women's empowerment, where many women in Tuban do not have equal access to participate in various sectors of life, whether in terms of the economy, leadership, or access to services and support needed to advance themselves. This emphasizes the urgency for the local government to not only focus on increasing women's representation in politics as a first step, but also to strengthen and expand policies that thoroughly empower women. This includes implementing policies that

support women's access to education and training, equitable employment opportunities, and better access to health services and social support. These efforts are critical to ensure that women in Tuban can contribute more to the regional development process, and have equal opportunities to advance themselves and improve their living conditions. With comprehensive measures and integrated policies, it is expected to create a more inclusive environment that supports women's empowerment to the fullest.

Graphic 4. Gender Empowerment Index in Tuban Regency 2019-2023



Source: (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024)

The data presented above shows that the Gender Empowerment Index in Tuban Regency experienced significant fluctuations throughout the period from 2019 to 2023. In 2019, the gender empowerment index in Tuban was recorded at 67.74, which shows a relatively high level of gender empowerment and indicates a positive effort in improving welfare and opportunities for women in the region. However, in the following two years, there was a fairly drastic decline, where the gender empowerment index slumped to 64.32 in 2020, and reached its lowest point in 2021 with a value of 63.51. This significant decline signals greater challenges and possible barriers affecting gender empowerment in Tuban District during this period. Factors contributing to this decline may include policy changes, lack of implementation of effective empowerment programs, or other constraints affecting women's ability to gain equal access to resources and opportunities.

The significant decline in the Gender Empowerment Index in Tuban district indicates the challenges faced in gender empowerment efforts during this period. These challenges may involve various factors, such as a lack of effective policy implementation, structural barriers, or limitations in the resources available to support women's empowerment initiatives. Entering 2022, there is a recovery in sight, with the gender empowerment index increasing to 65.03, indicating an improvement and response to the issues. This improvement continued, with the index reaching 65.05 in 2023, reflecting some positive progress and recovery in the context of gender empowerment. However, this still falls short of the level reached in 2019 of 67.74 and suggests that there is still significant room for further improvement. This signals the need for continued attention and efforts to improve gender empowerment policies and programs that are more comprehensive and effective, in order to consistently support and advance the welfare of women in Tuban District.

Women's representation has been shown to substantially increase development, as seen in India where women legislators are more effective in promoting economic growth (Baskaran et al., 2024). (Baskaran et al., 2024).. In addition, it was found that constituencies that elected women experienced an increase in economic performance of about 2.3 percentage points per year higher than areas led by men. Female legislators are also more effective in overseeing the completion of infrastructure projects, such as road construction, and tend to be less corrupt (Arvate et al., 2021).

Gender equality and justice are often interpreted as a condition where the position of men and women is equal and balanced. The meaning of gender equality is not only a matter of achieving equal status and position between women and men, but it can also mean a matter of achieving equal roles. Women are expected to have a

proportional role in terms of decision-making processes both in politics, governance and economic life, especially women's contribution to household income. These elements of role equality are the components/indicators included in the measurement of the Gender Empowerment Index (IDG).

Symbolic Representation of Women in Legislative Institutions

Symbolic representation relates to the meanings and messages conveyed by the presence of representatives in politics, and how it influences public perceptions and aspirations. Symbolic representation of women in Tuban Regency is important to raise awareness and aspirations for other women to engage in politics. However, if this representation is only symbolic without any real changes in policy or substantive roles, then it will not be enough to drive the social transformation needed.

Symbolically, Tuban Regency has had its first female regent, Mrs. Haeny Relawati Rini Widyastuti, who serves as an important representation for women's involvement in politics. In addition, since 1997, Tuban Regency has also had a female member of the DPRD occupying the position of Vice Chairperson of the DPRD, although to date no woman has served as Chairperson of the DPRD. This suggests that despite progress in symbolic representation, there is still work to be done to ensure women's substantive role in political leadership in Kabupaten Tuban.

Table 2. Dynamics of the Development of the Proportion of DPRD Leaders in Tuban Regency from 1972-2019

No.	Period	Gender	
		Male	Female
1	1972-1977	3	-
2	1977-1982	3	-
3	1982-1987	3	-
4	1987-1992	3	-
5	1992-1997	4	-
6	1997-1999	2	1

No.	Period	Gender	
		Male	Female
7	1999-2001	3	1
8	2001-2002	3	-
9	2002-2004	4	-
10	2004-2009	3	-
11	2009-2014	4	-
12	2014-2019	2	2
13	2019-2024	4	-

Source: (DPRD Kabupaten Tuban, 2020)

The data in Table 3 shows the dynamic development of the proportion of DPRD leaders in Kabupaten Tuban from 1972 to 2019. From this data, it can be seen that women's representation in DPRD leadership positions is still very limited. Although there have been several periods where women have managed to occupy the position of Deputy Chairperson of the DPRD, the number remains very low compared to men. The 1997-1999 period marked the beginning of women's involvement in DPRD leadership, but since then, women's representation has been inconsistent and has not managed to reach the top position of DPRD Chairperson.

The impact of women's representation on symbolic representation is increasingly important to examine, especially whether descriptive representation of women results in more women in office and proves that the presence of women in office results in better representation of women's interests (Denny, 2020). This confirms that while there has been progress in the symbolism of women's representation, it has not been strong enough to create significant change in the political leadership structure in Tuban Regency. To achieve deeper social transformation, a stronger push is needed for women to not only be symbolically involved, but also to play a substantive role in political decision-making. An increase in the proportion of women in leadership positions in the DPRD could be one indicator of success in this endeavor. (Hinojosa, 2021).

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of the dynamics of women's representation in the legislature in Tuban Regency by referring to the concepts of formal, descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation, there are several policy implications and recommendations that can be taken. First, on the aspect of formal representation, although regulations such as Law No. 12 of 2003 and Law No. 7 of 2023 have set a minimum quota of 30% for women in the list of legislative candidates, its implementation at the local level still faces significant challenges. The low number of women elected, as well as resistance from political parties that are still dominated by a patriarchal culture, point to the need for stricter enforcement and more effective monitoring mechanisms. New policies could include stronger sanctions for political parties that do not meet the quota, as well as incentives for those that actively encourage women's participation.

Secondly, in terms of descriptive representation, despite an increase in the number of female members in the Tuban Regency DPRD from the 2019-2024 to 2024-2029 period, the representation of women is still not proportional to the composition of the local population. Therefore, political parties in Tuban Regency need to be encouraged to conduct more inclusive recruitment and provide leadership training to female candidates. True women's participation in politics can not only be seen from the numbers, but also from their involvement in the decisionmaking process.

Third, from the perspective of substantive representation, the findings show that women legislators in Tuban are still limited to traditional roles and have not been able to lead significant policy initiatives, especially regarding issues relevant to women's interests. To increase substantive impact, strengthening the

capacity of women legislators through training and mentorship programs that focus on gender policy advocacy is needed. Local governments can also consider introducing gender discussion forums involving legislators, civil society organizations, and academics to encourage discussion of strategic issues.

Finally, in the context of symbolic representation, the presence of women in the legislature should be viewed not only as a fulfillment of quotas, but as a real step in realizing gender equality. Local governments and political parties in Tuban need to be more active in promoting the role of women in the public sphere, including through campaigns that educate the public about the importance of gender equality in politics. All of these recommendations are expected to strengthen the role and contribution of women in local politics, and encourage the creation of policies that are more inclusive and responsive to the needs of all communities in Tuban Regency.

CONCLUSION

In terms of descriptive representation, although the number of women in the Tuban Regency DPRD increased from 7 in the 2019-2024 period to 13 in the 2024-2029 period, this representation still does not reflect an equal proportion to the female population in the area. Male dominance in political parties and leadership structures remains a major obstacle. Substantive representation assesses the extent to which women legislators champion issues important to women, such as reproductive rights and gender equality. In Tuban, women legislators are often limited to traditional roles and rarely lead significant policy initiatives. The Gender Development Index (HDI) and Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) show progress, but Tuban still lags behind national and provincial standards.

In terms of symbolic representation, Tuban has made progress with its first

female regent and female DPRD members occupying key positions. However, this representation has not been followed by real changes in policy and the substantive role of women in political leadership. Despite symbolic achievements, women's representation in top positions such as Chairperson of the DPRD is still very limited. Overall, despite progress in various aspects of representation, significant challenges remain. Stronger commitment from political parties, more effective policy implementation, and more serious efforts are needed to improve the substantive role and leadership of women in the legislature in Tuban Regency.

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