

## Factors that Influence Women's Political Participation in the Mayoral Election in Bhayangkara Subdistrict, Jayapura City

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*Political Participation;*  
*Gender Equality;*  
*Regional elections.*

**Abstract:** The primary focus of this research is to identify factors that influence women's political participation in the region. The method used is qualitative, with analysis and problem formulation based on field data. The research informants were the heads of the neighborhood units (RW) in Bhayangkara Village. Data were obtained through three methods: first, data collection from interviews and observations recorded in field notes, including official documents and photographs; second, data reduction involved summarizing and selecting important information; and third, data analysis and conclusion. The results of the research indicate that women's political participation is influenced by several factors, including: (1) An increasingly less dominant patriarchal culture; (2) Lack of systematic political education despite good understanding; (3) Minimal structural barriers, but there are internal factors such as low interest; (4) Double burdens managed with family support; (5) Low violence and intimidation, although there are cases of verbal violence; (6) Affirmative policies hampered by socialization and funding; (7) Growing gender education and awareness despite lingering stigma; (8) Limited support from non-governmental organizations; (9) Positive but uneven social change; and (10) Unstructured mentorship networks. Based on these findings, the study recommends promoting socialization on gender equality, strengthening political education, enhancing women's capacity, and developing mentorship programs and institutional support to enhance women's political participation at the local level.

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### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a democratic country that involves the public in political planning and participation. In this context, political participation refers to the active involvement of individuals or groups in various aspects of politics, from electing leaders to influencing public policy. This definition includes not only the right to vote in general elections but also active participation in political discussions, civil society organizations, and various forms of advocacy aimed at social change. According to Lindo (2016) and Priandi & Roisah (2019), political participation is crucial in ensuring that people's voices are heard and taken into account in the decision-making process. Within the legal framework, Election Law No. 7 of 2017 affirms that every citizen has the right to participate in politics, which includes the right to vote and influence government policy. This demonstrates that political participation is not only a right but also the responsibility of every citizen to contribute to national development.

Gender equality is becoming an increasingly important issue in the context of democracy in Indonesia. Women are expected to participate more actively in politics, not only as voters but also as decision-makers. Putri & Putri (2021) noted that despite progress in women's rights, challenges remain. For example, although the 1945 Constitution and Law No. 39 of 1999 guarantee voting rights as part of human rights, women still face various barriers to full political participation. This inequality is often caused by entrenched social and cultural norms that confine women to traditional roles, limiting their freedom of movement.

RA. Kartini, a prominent figure in the struggle for gender equality, became a significant symbol in the women's emancipation movement in Indonesia. She inspired many women to fight for their rights and participate in various aspects of life, including politics. Along with the reforms underway in Indonesia, there have been notable improvements in women's political participation. One concrete example is the law requiring a minimum of 30% female representation in political

parties (Yuspita, 2020). Despite this, women's participation rates in politics still lag far behind those of men. This is often due to factors such as women's traditional roles, which require them to fulfill domestic demands before engaging in political activities (Muawanah, 2009: 157).

Since the reform era, women's involvement in political decision-making has become increasingly important. Kiftiyah (2019) points out that increasing women's participation in politics benefits not only women themselves but also society as a whole. When women are involved in decision-making processes, their perspectives and needs can be effectively represented, leading to more inclusive and equitable policies. However, although the 1945 Constitution guarantees the right of every citizen to participate in government regardless of gender, Indonesian women still struggle against stereotypes that limit their roles (Nimrah & Sakaria, 2015).

Currently, of Indonesia's 131.9 million women, only 97 sit in parliament, reflecting persistent gender inequality (Priandi & Roisah, 2019). This data is striking and demonstrates that despite efforts to increase women's representation, much remains to be done to achieve true equality. Women are expected to contribute to development, but are often trapped by demands to fulfill traditional roles that prevent them from actively participating in politics (Hadis & Eddyono, 2005).

Female voter participation is crucial in elections, as it allows them to elect leaders who support gender equality and policies that favor women (Vinora, 2017). Awareness of the role of female voters must be increased, including equal access to information and political education. In this context, the Indonesian Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection emphasized that women's participation in elections is an investment in the nation's future. This demonstrates that the government views women's participation not only as an obligation but also as a strategic step towards achieving sustainable development.

The Papua Province Election Supervisory Agency (BKPU) also encourages women to actively participate in the democratic process and unlock their untapped potential. This is a positive step in creating a supportive environment for women's participation. The Head of the Jayapura City Election Commission (KPU) reported an increase in the number of voters, including first-time voters, indicating the potential for greater political participation in the future. This demonstrates the promise of increasing women's political involvement, provided there is adequate support from various parties.

Participation, in its theoretical context, refers to an individual's mental and emotional involvement in decision-making. Literally, political participation refers to a citizen's involvement in the political process, such as supporting or opposing government policies and initiatives. If people follow policies without actively engaging, it can be considered a form of political mobilization. In this sense, political participation refers to the voluntary activity of people in participating in the selection of leaders, either directly or indirectly.

Examining data from Bhayangkara Village in North Jayapura District for 2024 provides a clearer picture of women's political participation. The data show that the participation rate in Bhayangkara Village in 2024 was 8,449; meanwhile, the number of voters in Bhayangkara Village was 13,523. Of the total 13,523 voters, there were 7,077 men and 6,446 women. However, of these female voters, only 4,109 actually exercised their right to vote. This data demonstrates the low participation of women in exercising their right to vote, which is an indicator of gender inequality in politics.

This situation prompted the author to delve deeper into the factors influencing women's political participation in the mayoral election in Bhayangkara Village, Jayapura City. It is essential to comprehend the various factors that influence women's decisions to engage in politics, encompassing social, economic, and cultural aspects. For example, are there adequate political education programs? Do women have sufficient access to information about candidates and policies? Is there support from family and community for political participation? These questions need to be addressed to formulate effective strategies for increasing women's political participation.

Women's political participation in Indonesia is a complex and multidimensional issue. While progress has been made, challenges persist, particularly in relation to gender equality and

entrenched social norms. It is crucial for all parties, including the government, civil society, and individuals, to collaborate in creating an environment that fosters women's active participation in politics. By increasing awareness, access to information, and political education, we can encourage more women to participate in democratic processes, ensuring their voices are heard and included in decision-making. This is not only about justice for women, but also about creating a more inclusive and sustainable society for all.

More broadly, women's political participation in Indonesia is also closely linked to global developments regarding women's rights and gender equality. Many countries around the world have adopted policies and measures to increase women's representation in politics, demonstrating that this issue is a global challenge that requires serious attention. Through international cooperation and the exchange of experiences, Indonesia can learn from best practices implemented in other countries and adapt strategies that are appropriate to its local context.

One approach is through more inclusive and accessible political education for women. Training and educational programs specifically designed for women can help increase their knowledge of the political process and equip them with the skills necessary for active participation. Furthermore, the media also plays a crucial role in supporting women's participation by disseminating relevant information and providing a platform for women to share their experiences and views.

Women's involvement in civil society organizations can also strengthen their voices in the political process. By joining groups that advocate for women's rights, women can build support networks and advocate for issues that matter to them. These organizations can also serve as channels for conveying women's aspirations to decision-makers, resulting in policies that are more responsive to women's needs and aspirations.

In efforts to increase women's political participation, it is also important to involve men as allies in this struggle. Raising awareness among men about the importance of gender equality and the active role of women in politics can help change views and attitudes that may hinder women's participation in the political sphere. Constructive dialogue between men and women can foster a better understanding of the challenges women face and encourage men to support and facilitate women's political involvement.

Ultimately, achieving true gender equality in political participation requires a strong commitment from all parties, including governments, communities, and individuals. Supportive policies, inclusive education, and cultural changes that support gender equality are essential steps. With collective efforts, we can create an environment that supports women's active participation in politics, which in turn will contribute to the development of a more just and sustainable nation for all.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses a qualitative approach to describe the current situation. The researcher collected, analyzed, interpreted data, and formulated the problem at hand. According to Sugiyono (2017: 9), qualitative research focuses on objects in their natural state, with the researcher as the primary instrument. Data is collected through triangulation, analyzed inductively, and emphasizes meaning over generalization. The focus of the research aims to clarify the scope to maintain direction and is usually formulated in the form of questions or objectives. This study focuses on factors influencing women's political participation in the mayoral election in Bhayangkara Village, Jayapura City, with indicators such as patriarchal culture, political education, and NGO support. The key informants were 12 individuals selected based on relevant knowledge or experience, including the neighborhood unit (RW) head and female election participants.

Data collection techniques included observation to obtain accurate data, interviews for direct interaction, and relevant documentation. Primary data were obtained from observations and interviews. The data analysis method employed was an interactive analysis, which continued until data saturation was achieved. This process included data collection through interviews and

observations, data reduction to summarize key information, data presentation in narrative or diagram form, and drawing tentative conclusions until supported by substantial evidence.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This discussion is based on an analysis of data and facts collected by researchers from the field, which has been adjusted to align with the references used in this study regarding the factors influencing women's political participation in the mayoral election in Bhayangkara Village, Jayapura City. In this context, it is important to explore various aspects that contribute to women's political participation, including patriarchal culture, political education, structural barriers, double burdens, violence and intimidation, affirmative action policies, gender education and awareness, support from non-governmental organizations, social and cultural changes, and networking and mentorship.

### **Patriarchal Culture**

Interviews with neighborhood association (RW) heads and female residents in Bhayangkara Village revealed that patriarchal culture is not a dominant barrier to women's political participation in the region. The majority of informants, both RW heads and residents, stated that women play an active and valued role in the political sphere. Most areas (RW 001, 003, and 005) noted that there are no cultural norms or values limiting women's involvement, and some traditional leaders even provided positive support. However, there is an exception in RW 007, where traditional Papuan customs still influence political dynamics, although they do not altogether hinder women's participation.

From the perspective of female residents, political participation is seen as a means to voice aspirations, promote gender equality, and make a positive contribution to development. Female figures, such as Ribka Haluk and Yohana Yambise, are cited as inspirations that strengthen women's motivation to engage in politics. These findings suggest that while patriarchal structures may still exist in some aspects of society, in Bhayangkara Village, values of gender equality and support for women in politics have begun to take root. This aligns with gender modernization theory, which posits that social change and women's increased participation in politics can reduce the dominance of patriarchal culture. However, it is worth noting that in RW 007, customary influences remain strong, suggesting that local cultural factors can moderate the level of gender equality across regions. Thus, while women's political participation in Bhayangkara Village is generally quite good, efforts are still needed to strengthen the understanding of gender equality in areas that are still firmly rooted in traditional, customary values.

### **Lack of political education**

Interviews with neighborhood association (RW) leaders and women living in Bhayangkara Village revealed that patriarchal culture does not pose a significant barrier to women's participation in politics in the area. Most informants, both RW leaders and community members, stated that women play an active and valued role in politics. In several areas, such as RW 001, 003, and 005, no cultural norms or values were found that limit women's involvement in political activities. In fact, several traditional leaders expressed positive support for women's participation. However, it should be noted that there is an exception in RW 007, where the influence of traditional Papuan customs remains exceptionally strong, affecting the political dynamics in the area, although this does not completely hinder women's participation.

From the perspective of women, political participation is viewed as a means to express their aspirations, promote gender equality, and make a significant contribution to development. Several female figures, such as Ribka Haluk and Yohana Yambise, have been identified as sources of inspiration that can strengthen women's motivation to engage in politics. These findings indicate that although patriarchal structures still exist in some aspects of society, in Bhayangkara Village, values of gender equality and support for women in politics have begun to gain a stronger foothold. This aligns with gender modernization theory, which states that social change and an increase in women's roles in politics can help reduce the dominance of patriarchal culture. However, it is essential to note that in RW 007, customary influences remain very strong, suggesting that local cultural factors significantly impact levels of gender equality across regions.

Thus, while women's political participation in Bhayangkara Village has yielded positive results overall, further efforts are needed to deepen the understanding of gender equality, particularly in areas still firmly tied to traditional, customary values.

### **Structural Barriers**

Based on the results of in-depth analysis and interpretation of the data conducted, the researcher presents important information regarding the research findings obtained from interviews with several informants. From interviews conducted with the heads of the Residents' Association (RW) and female residents in Bhayangkara Village, it can be concluded that, structurally, there are no significant obstacles hindering women's political participation in this area. All informants, both from the RW heads and female residents, consistently stated that there are no policies or regulations that explicitly limit women's involvement in the political sphere. In fact, in several RWs, such as RW 001 and RW 003, there is hope and positive support to encourage increased political participation among women. RW 005 specifically emphasized that the principle of gender equality in politics has been guaranteed through various applicable laws and regulations.

In terms of access to political resources, the research results indicate quite encouraging conditions. Women in this area have adequate access to various political resources, including funding, political networks, and support from political parties. In RW 001 and RW 003, many women actively participate in activities organized by political parties and in election campaigns. RW 005 reported that women have access to funds from the General Elections Commission (KPU) in the form of honorariums and supervisory duties. In contrast, in RW 007, women are involved in various organized political activities. However, an interesting observation from RW 005 suggests that, despite access to political resources, women's interest in participating in politics remains relatively low.

From the perspective of women residents, these findings further strengthen the argument that no significant structural barriers are hindering their participation. All female informants stated that there are no discriminatory policies, and they also acknowledged that access to political resources is widely open. Some areas even noted the existence of supporting programs, such as the Family Hope Program (PKH), that contribute to facilitating political participation. However, in RW 007, it was revealed that women's participation may still be conditional, depending on the existence of specific goals or interests that motivate them to get involved.

### **Double Burden**

Based on the analysis conducted and the interpretation of the data obtained, the researcher presents research results that demonstrate the complexity related to the issue of the double burden faced by women in the context of political participation in Bhayangkara Village. In general, responsibilities related to domestic affairs remain a significant factor influencing the level of women's political involvement, although their influence can vary depending on the region.

In neighborhood units (RW) 001 and 007, many informants felt that the household burden was quite heavy, especially for married women. Some acknowledged that the combination of domestic duties and political involvement often led to significant fatigue. Interestingly, however, the majority of women in these areas demonstrated the ability to develop effective time management strategies, enabling them to balance both roles effectively.

Furthermore, family support, particularly from husbands, emerged as a key factor in enabling women to overcome this double burden. In neighborhood units (RW) 001, 003, and 005, family support was quite strong, with some families even providing full support as long as the political activities did not disrupt household harmony. However, the situation was different in neighborhood unit (RW) 007, where support for women's political participation was more variable. Approximately half of the families in this area showed little support, which in some cases led women to choose not to participate in the electoral process.

An interesting finding also emerged from RW 005, where the dual burden faced by women was not considered a significant problem. Informants in this area stated that effective time management enables women to easily balance their dual roles as both housewives and political actors. This suggests that an individual's ability to adapt and systemic support from the family are crucial determinants in addressing the challenges associated with the dual burden. Thus, the results of this

study highlight the importance of family support and time management skills in helping women overcome the dual burden they face in political participation, and suggest that different social situations and contexts can influence the experiences and challenges faced by women in each region.

### **Violence and Intimidation**

Based on in-depth analysis and data interpretation, the researchers present the findings of this study. Interviews with several informants indicate that the situation regarding violence and intimidation against women in the political context in Bhayangkara Village shows quite positive indications. Most informants, including heads of neighborhood associations (RW) and women living in the area, stated that they had not encountered any cases of gender-based violence or intimidation in their neighborhood.

This favorable condition is supported by the existence of a fast and effective response system from the security forces and local government, who are always ready to handle problems if they arise, as reported in RW 001, 003, and 007. However, it should be noted that in RW 005, there were records of verbal violence, such as sarcasm thrown by the community, which indicates that although there is no significant physical violence, challenges in non-physical forms are still possible and need to be watched out for.

In terms of freedom of expression, women in this area generally feel safe expressing their political opinions in public spaces. This sense of security stems from several factors, including legal guarantees stipulated in the Women's Protection Law and specific regulations, such as the 2021 Special Autonomy (Otsus) applicable to RW 003. Furthermore, the active role of security forces in maintaining order and security also contributes to this sense of security.

Existing protection mechanisms are quite diverse and include formal legal protection, oversight by security forces during the election process, and government involvement in promoting political programs. All of this aims to prevent misinformation that could trigger conflict, thereby creating a more conducive environment for women's political participation. Thus, while there are some challenges to be overcome, overall, the situation in Bhayangkara Village demonstrates positive developments in terms of women's protection and freedom to participate in the political sphere.

### **Affirmative Action Policy**

Based on the data analysis and interpretation, the researchers present key findings. Interviews with several informants revealed significant support for the affirmative action policy, which establishes a 30% quota for women's representation in parliament. This support came from various segments of society in Bhayangkara Village. Neighborhood association (RW) leaders and female residents themselves considered this policy crucial for ensuring gender equality and opening up opportunities for women's aspirations in the political sphere.

However, despite this support, the implementation of this policy at the local level still faces several challenges. At the sub-district level, there is currently no specific policy that effectively encourages women's political participation. Although the Rukun Warga 007 (Regional Community Association) has made several efforts to increase this participation, significant challenges remain.

One of the main obstacles revealed by the interviews was women's low interest in political involvement. This low participation is driven by various factors, including a lack of understanding of the importance of political involvement, stemming from limited public awareness of political issues. Furthermore, limited funding for political activities is also a barrier, compounded by women's own doubts about their ability to compete in the political arena. This funding issue is a significant concern, particularly in relation to campaign and registration costs, which are further exacerbated by a lack of financial support from political parties.

An interesting finding also emerged from RW 005, where a 20% quota for women's representation is still in effect, considered more realistic than the proposed 30%. Informants in this area revealed a significant gap between the idealism of existing affirmative action policies and the reality of women's political capacity at the local level. Nevertheless, optimism remains, with the hope that the Special Autonomy Law (UU Otsus) can serve as an effective instrument for realizing the 30% quota in the future. Thus, despite the various challenges and obstacles that must be faced, hope for increasing women's representation in politics remains, and concrete steps are needed to overcome existing obstacles.

### **Gender Education and Awareness**

The research results show that the level of understanding regarding gender equality in the Bhayangkara Village area has experienced significant development. Most informants, including neighborhood unit (RW) heads and female residents, stated that awareness of gender issues has spread evenly throughout the community. Interestingly, in RW 001, approximately 95% of women understand their political rights. Formal education has been shown to play a crucial role in improving this understanding. This is evident in RW 003, where a positive correlation exists between a person's level of education and their understanding of politics and gender equality. However, in RW 005, it was found that despite a pretty good theoretical understanding of gender equality, many women still feel hesitant to participate in politics directly.

Regarding the socialization programs implemented, research findings indicate that systematic efforts by the sub-district government are still minimal. Only RW 001 and RW 007 reported socialization programs organized by the General Elections Commission (KPU), while in other areas, there were no specific programs addressing gender equality and women's political participation. Ironically, although RW 005 reported socialization programs conducted by the sub-district, women's interest in participating in these activities was very low. This situation suggests that current gender awareness is primarily developed through formal education and individual self-awareness, rather than through structured programs provided by the local government.

In the context of the stigma that politics is a male domain, this study found that this stigma is beginning to fade in most areas. Informants from neighborhood units (RW) 001, 003, and 005 firmly stated that this view is no longer relevant, and women are now recognized as having the ability to play political roles on an equal footing with men. However, in RW 007, there were reports that some residents, particularly the older generation, still maintain this traditional view. Nevertheless, the existence of legal protection and regulations has provided women in this area with the confidence to express their opinions more freely. These findings indicate that although social change has begun, the transformation of gender values in society is still gradual and uneven across the region. Thus, it can be concluded that significant progress has been made in understanding gender equality in Bhayangkara Village; however, challenges remain, particularly regarding women's participation in politics and the development of more effective government outreach programs.

### **Non-Governmental Organization Support**

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, the researchers present the findings of this study, obtained through interviews with several informants. These findings suggest that the support provided by non-governmental organizations for women's political participation in Bhayangkara Village remains limited and uneven across the region.

In neighborhood units (RWs) 001, 005, and 007, no non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or community organizations were identified that focused explicitly on women's political empowerment. The activities of these organizations were more general in nature, such as those of Church's's organizations, the Family Welfare Development Program (PKK), integrated health posts (posyandu), or cooperation activities, which were not directly related to increasing women's political participation.

This situation differs from RW 003, where religious-based organizations such as Fatayat NU and Srikandi HK-NU actively motivate women to participate in the political process, particularly in the context of the mayoral election. Informants in this area reported that these organizations have provided training and outreach on the importance of political participation for women.

Meanwhile, in RW 005, there is a Women's Organization Association (GOW), which comprises various organizations, including Darma Wanita, Bhayangkari, and Persit. However, this organization's Effectiveness remains relatively low due to the minimal response from its members. Most of this organization's focus is directed at the wives of members of the armed forces, rather than the female community as a whole. In RW 007, informants stated that although efforts have been made to form women's political discussion groups, the number of members is minimal, resulting in a less significant impact of these activities.

From these findings, the role of non-governmental organizations in promoting women's political participation in Bhayangkara Village appears to be sporadic. There is no structured and sustained movement to support increased women's involvement in politics. This indicates the need for

further attention and collaborative efforts to create a more supportive environment for women's political participation in the region.

### **Social and Cultural Change**

Based on the analysis and interpretation conducted by the researcher, the results of this study are presented by referring to interviews conducted with several informants. From the results of these interviews, it was found that local customary norms and traditions in Bhayangkara Village did not significantly hinder women's political participation. Most informants, including the RW head and local female residents, stated that although customs still exist and are highly respected in the community—especially in RW 001 and 007—this does not prevent women from actively participating in the political world. This situation stands in stark contrast to many other regions in Indonesia, where customary norms frequently serve as a significant barrier to women's participation in politics.

In RW 003, although traditions that relegate women to the domestic sphere persist, their influence is diminishing over time. This is evident in the increasing number of female legislative candidates appearing in recent elections. In the context of changing societal attitudes, this study found that, in general, the public displays a neutral attitude toward women's involvement in politics. In most areas, such as neighborhood units (RW) 001, 003, and 005, there has been no significant change in attitudes in recent years. The public tends to accept women's participation in politics without showing an overly enthusiastic response or openly rejecting it. However, in neighborhood units (RW) 005 and 007, there are indications of positive change, where women's political participation is considered increasingly dynamic. This change is driven by increased access to political information and knowledge among women.

An interesting finding also emerged from RW 007, where a shift in community attitudes is beginning to view politics as a realm that women can enter. While this change is still in its early stages, it suggests hope for increased women's political participation in the future.

### **Networking and Mentorship**

Based on the data analysis and interpretation conducted by the researcher, the results of this study reveal several important points obtained from interviews with several informants. These findings suggest that although several female figures can serve as inspiration in Bhayangkara Village, the networking and mentorship system for women in the political field remains underdeveloped. In all areas that are the focus of this study, namely RW 001 to RW 007, informants acknowledged the existence of role models such as Mrs. Ribka Haluk, who serves as Acting Governor in RW 003 and Mrs. Sarce Soreng from the Hanura Party in RW 005. Additionally, several women are actively involved in campaign success teams. However, the interactions that occur with these figures are more incidental, typically taking place during campaign activities or through the media, rather than through a structured and ongoing mentorship program.

In terms of network support, the situation in Bhayangkara Village shows inequality. Neighborhood Associations (RW) 001 and RW 005 reported the formation of informal forums through PKK activities and social gatherings (*arisan*), which are then used for political coordination. Meanwhile, RW 007 has a collaborative group between the village and the community. However, the majority of women living in all RWs reported that they lack a dedicated group or forum that consistently brings together women interested in politics. The interactions that do occur tend to be temporary, particularly during election periods through campaign teams, without any effort to build sustainable networks. Therefore, the results of this study underscore the importance of developing a more structured and sustainable support system for women in Bhayangkara Village, enabling them to participate more actively in politics and fully realize their potential.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on research on factors influencing women's political participation in the mayoral election in Bhayangkara Village, Jayapura City, it was found that various interrelated aspects influence participation. This study identified key factors, including patriarchal culture, political



education, structural barriers, double burdens, violence, affirmative action policies, gender awareness, support from non-governmental organizations, and networking and mentorship. Although patriarchal culture is not a significant barrier, challenges remain, especially in more conservative areas. Lack of political education is another factor affecting women's participation. Although political understanding among women is quite good, systematic education is still lacking. The General Elections Commission (KPU)'s outreach activities do not reach all levels of society, and various obstacles such as low digital literacy contribute to low participation. Structural barriers were not found to be significant; however, women's participation is still hindered by internal factors, such as a lack of interest in the issue. Double burdens in the domestic sphere also affect participation, although many women manage their time and receive family support. Violence and intimidation in the political environment are relatively low, but verbal abuse and family conflict remain challenges. Affirmative action policies, such as a 30% quota for women in parliament, are supported, but their implementation is hindered by women's lack of interest in participating. Gender education and awareness show progress, but self-doubt still hinders participation. Support from non-governmental organizations is limited, and social changes indicate that customary norms do not hinder women's participation. Networking and mentorship are important, but a structured system is not yet in place. This study recommends promoting gender equality, continuing political education, enhancing women's capacity, and establishing a forum to monitor and address political violence. Through planned and collaborative efforts, it is hoped that women's political participation will increase, fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. These efforts must involve various stakeholders to create a supportive environment for women in politics

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