# ANALYSIS OF GENDER ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY ON WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS

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### *Abstract*

This research analyzes existing literature regarding women's involvement in politics from a gender anthropology perspective. This study aims to understand the dynamics, obstacles and progress faced by women in carrying out political roles in various social and cultural contexts. Using a qualitative approach, this research examines findings from various sources such as books, journal articles and previous research reports. The analysis shows that women still face significant structural inequalities in politics, which are exacerbated by traditional gender norms and systemic discrimination. However, affirmative policy initiatives such as gender quotas have seen an increase in women's representation in legislative councils. Additionally, the importance of social networks, mentorship, and political education are recognized as key factors that can increase women's participation in politics. In the digital era, information technology offers new opportunities for women's political participation, although challenges such as online harassment are also a serious concern. In conclusion, this research confirms that increasing women's involvement in politics requires a holistic and collaborative approach. Change must occur at structural, social and individual levels, supported by just and sustainable policies. In this way, a more inclusive and representative political future can be realized.

**Keywords:** Anthropology of Gender, Women, Politics

## INTRODUCTION

Women's involvement in politics has long been an important topic in discussions about gender equality and democracy. History shows that women are often marginalized from political and decision-making processes, which ultimately results in low representation of women in various positions of power. In many societies, traditional cultural and gender norms place women in domestic roles, thereby limiting their participation in the public arena, including politics. Gender anthropology offers a unique perspective for understanding how social structure, culture, and gender normativity influence women's political participation (Choi, 2022).

Gender anthropology focuses on the ways in which gender differences are constructed and controlled in various cultures, as well as their impact on the access and opportunities available to women. This approach allows us to dig deeper into how the interaction between gender and power operates in a political context (Fahrati, 2023). For example, in some cultures, women who become involved in politics may be seen as deviating from accepted gender norms, causing them to face significant stigma and barriers. On the other hand, there are also cultures where women have an important role in political decision making because of a more egalitarian social structure.

In many parts of the world, various other obstacles also reduce women's participation in politics, including lack of access to education and resources, systemic discrimination, and gender-based violence. Gender anthropology can help identify specific factors that hinder women in various local contexts, and how they navigate these challenges (Richey, 2022). Additionally, by understanding the role of social and political institutions and cultural norms, we can see how structural changes can encourage greater political participation for women.

The study of women's involvement in politics is not only important for achieving gender equality, but also for strengthening democracy itself. Greater participation of women in politics can bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the decision-making table, potentially leading to policies that are more inclusive and responsive to the needs of all members of society (Parasiei-Hocher, 2024). Therefore, through analysis from a gender anthropology perspective, this research aims to explore further the obstacles and opportunities for women's involvement in politics, as well as effective strategies that can be implemented to encourage more significant participation.

The anthropological study of gender examines the ways in which gender identity interacts with political and social power. This analysis helps us understand that women's involvement in politics is not a homogeneous phenomenon, but is influenced by various factors such as social class, race, and ethnicity (Oluwatosin, 2024). For example, women from minority groups often face double discrimination in their efforts to engage in politics. This study also looks at how women build networks and strategies to overcome these obstacles.

Apart from that, women's involvement in politics also has a significant positive impact. The presence of women in politics has been proven to bring a more inclusive perspective and fight for issues that are often overlooked, such

as human rights, child welfare and gender equality. Research shows that parliaments that have higher female representation tend to produce policies that are more responsive to the needs of the wider community. This underscores the importance of fighting for gender equality in politics to create a fairer and more effective government (Feng, 2023).

However, achieving equality in politics is not an easy task and requires efforts from various parties. Both governments, non-governmental organizations and society at large must work together to create an environment that supports women's participation in politics. This includes designing affirmative policies, providing leadership training, and eliminating harmful gender stereotypes (Nguti & Njuguna, 2023). Thus, the analysis of anthropological gender studies serves not only as an academic tool, but also as a practical guide for more inclusive actions and policies.

Concluding this analysis, we can conclude that women's involvement in politics is a complex issue that requires a multidisciplinary approach to fully understand it. Anthropological studies of gender provide an important framework for exploring the various dynamics that influence women's political participation. With a deeper understanding of the obstacles and opportunities that exist, it is hoped that concrete steps can be taken to increase women's involvement in politics, thereby creating a more just and equal system.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

The study in this research is qualitative with literature. The literature study research method is a research approach that involves the analysis and synthesis of information from various literature sources that are relevant to a particular research topic. Documents taken from literature research are journals, books and references related to the discussion you want to research (Earley, M.A. 2014; Snyder, H. 2019).

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Cultural and Social Factors that Influence Women's Participation in Politics**

Women's participation in politics is influenced by various cultural and social factors that play an important role in shaping their involvement in this public arena. One of them is gender norms that are still strongly embedded in many cultures. In many traditional societies, women are often expected to focus on domestic roles such as taking care of the household and children, while men are encouraged to pursue careers in the public sector, including

politics. These norms limit women's space and reduce their opportunities to participate in politics (Muller, 2023).

Apart from gender norms, social support also plays an important role in determining women's participation in politics. Social networks, including family, friends, and community organizations, can influence women's decisions to become involved in politics. Support from family and community can provide the moral and material encouragement needed to face challenges in the world of politics. Conversely, a lack of support may prevent women from taking further steps in their political careers (Johana et al., 2023).

Education and access to information are also important factors influencing women's participation in politics. Higher levels of education tend to give women the confidence and skills necessary to participate in politics. In addition, access to mass media and other information platforms allows women to better understand political issues and their rights (Kanval et al., 2022). Therefore, increasing access to education and information can be the key to increasing women's political participation, leading to more inclusive and equal change in society.

In addition to the cultural and social factors already mentioned, political structures and policies also have a major influence on women's participation in politics. Countries with inclusive political systems and affirmative policies, such as gender quotas in legislatures, tend to have higher levels of women's political participation. This affirmative policy helps overcome structural obstacles that have previously prevented women from obtaining important positions in politics. This policy creates a more supportive environment for women to be involved in the political decision-making process (Ramadhan & Nurrohman, 2023).

However, women's involvement in politics is also often hampered by discriminatory practices and gender-based violence. Women who try to advance in the world of politics often face various forms of violence, whether physical, verbal or psychological, aimed at intimidating and hindering them. This insecurity can weaken women's enthusiasm and intention to pursue a career in politics (Shabshai, 2023). Therefore, efforts are needed to create a safe and fair political environment for all genders, including by implementing protective policies and changing discriminatory political cultures.

The role of the media is also very significant in shaping public perceptions about women in politics. The mass media often highlights female politicians with a different focus than men, such as their physical appearance or personal life, which can obscure their professionalism and competence

(Spierings & Geurts, 2023). Therefore, media that is responsible and fair in its coverage can help build a positive image of women in politics and encourage society to accept and support the role of women in this field. With positive media support, women can be more encouraged to be actively involved in politics and contribute to the formation of more inclusive and representative policies.

**Gender Roles in Political Structures and Institutions**

The role of gender in political structures and institutions plays a very crucial role in determining the dynamics of decision making and policy making. Inclusive political structures, which provide space for women's active participation, tend to be more representative and responsive to the needs of all levels of society. The inclusion of women in political institutions such as parliament, cabinet and various other government institutions can produce policies that are fairer and more equal. This is not only about social justice but also about improving the quality of policy, as women often bring different perspectives and highlight issues that may be overlooked in male-dominated policies (Oden et al., 2023).

However, structural challenges often hinder women's access to reach strategic positions in political institutions. These obstacles include a patriarchal culture, gender stereotypes, and lack of institutional support (Carlson et al., 2023). For example, in many cases, women face difficulties in gaining political party support for their candidacy, and if elected, they may be faced with an unsupportive or even impersonal work environment. Policies adopting gender quotas or other affirmative action have proven effective in reducing these barriers and increasing the number of women in decision-making positions.

A safe and fair political environment is also an important factor in encouraging women's participation. Gender-based violence and harassment are often experienced by women who are trying to advance in their political careers, which can result in a decrease in the number of women who dare to enter politics (Breckling, 2023). Apart from that, the mass media has an important role in shaping public perceptions about female politicians. Fair and gender-free reporting can help promote a positive image and encourage public acceptance of the role of women in politics. By overcoming these obstacles and creating a supportive environment, women's roles in political structures and institutions can be expanded, making the political system more inclusive and effective.

Apart from policy efforts and a supportive environment, women's education and empowerment are also key factors in strengthening their role in political structures and institutions. Equal education and access to leadership development programs can increase women's capacity to participate actively and effectively in the political arena. Leadership training, seminars on political rights, and mentoring initiatives targeting young women can help overcome the psychological and structural barriers they face. Moreover, civil society organizations that focus on gender issues play an important role in advocating for policy changes and providing moral and logistical support to aspiring female politicians (Mergaert et al., 2022).

In addition, it is important to recognize that gender dynamics in politics not only affect women, but also men. Inviting men to become allies in the fight for gender equality can help create more sustainable change. Men in positions of power are expected to be pioneers in promoting gender equality by supporting inclusive policies and opening up more space for women (Napier et al., 2023). Examples can be seen in initiatives in several countries that involve men in gender awareness campaigns and programs that encourage them to challenge traditional norms that hinder equality.

The role of gender in political structures and institutions is about how we create a truly democratic and representative system. Inconsistencies in gender participation and representation can lead to policy making that is unbalanced and does not reflect the needs and aspirations of all society (Kretschmer, 2024). Therefore, efforts to increase the role of women in politics cannot be limited to surface policies, but must involve a larger paradigm shift, including in social, cultural and educational values. Only then, can we ensure that our political institutions truly serve and represent all people, regardless of gender.

**Women's Experiences in Politics in Different Cultural and Geographical Contexts**

Women's experiences in politics vary widely across cultures and geographical contexts, often influenced by social norms, traditions and existing power structures. In a number of Scandinavian countries, for example, there is a fairly high representation of women in politics thanks to proactive policies such as gender quotas and strong support for gender equality. Countries such as Iceland, Norway, and Sweden are often considered models for women's political participation, with many women holding high positions and being active in decision-making processes. This success cannot

be separated from systemic efforts in the fields of education, family support, and the vital role of community organizations that promote gender equality (Noriega, 2022).

In contrast, in several Asian and African countries, women often face significant challenges in engaging in politics. Traditional gender norms, which often view politics as the domain of men, as well as economic barriers and lack of access to education, are major barriers. In some places, women who dare to take on public roles often face threats and intimidation. However, there are inspiring examples such as Rwanda, which after the 1994 genocide, has made great strides to increase women's participation in politics, so that it now has one of the parliaments with the highest proportion of women in the world (Nel & Govender, 2023).

In Latin America, women's experiences in politics also show a combination of successes and challenges. Countries such as Argentina and Chile have made significant progress with female presidents such as Cristina Fernández de Kirchner and Michelle Bachelet. Despite this, they still have to deal with issues such as endemic sexism and gender-based violence. In this context, social movements and women's organizations have played a critical role in advocating for women's political rights and pushing for more inclusive policy changes. Successes in various parts of the world show that although major challenges remain, progressive measures and community support can make a real difference to women's political participation (Xu, 2023).

In the Middle East region, women's experiences in politics are quite complex and varied. While some countries face criticism for low representation of women and limited political rights, others such as the United Arab Emirates and Tunisia have shown significant progress. The United Arab Emirates, for example, has established quotas for women in the Federal National Council, and Tunisia is known for its progressive constitution that emphasizes gender equality (Hoxmeier et al., 2022). Despite this, women in some countries still have to fight cultural stereotypes and regulations that limit their participation in the public sphere.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, despite diverse economic and social challenges, several countries have demonstrated a strong commitment to women's empowerment in politics. Ethiopia, under the leadership of Abiy Ahmed, has made significant changes by appointing a cabinet consisting of 50% women (Chirikure, 2023). In addition, Liberia became the first country on the African continent to elect a female head of state, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who became a symbol of women's struggle and empowerment in the region. Efforts in these

countries are often supported by local and international organizations fighting for education, economic empowerment, and increasing women's participation in politics.

Likewise in South Asia, countries such as Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan have a long history of women's leadership at high levels despite facing significant social challenges. Leaders such as Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh and Indira Gandhi in India stand out as important figures who inspired a new generation of women to participate actively in politics. Despite facing challenges such as political violence, discrimination, and rigid social norms, women in the region continue to struggle for an equal place in power structures. Community support, inclusive policies, and strong efforts from women themselves show that greater involvement in politics is possible and can bring significant positive change (Sediqe, 2023).

**Recommendations for Increasing Women's Participation in Politics through a Better Understanding of Existing Structural and Cultural Barriers**

To increase women's participation in politics, a better understanding of existing structural and cultural barriers is an important first step. Structural barriers such as inequalities in access to education, employment opportunities, and domestic gender roles make it difficult for women to actively engage in politics. Equal education and leadership training directly targeted at women can equip them with the skills and confidence necessary to participate in the political sphere. Governments, non-governmental organizations and international organizations can work together to develop gender-responsive education and training programs (Bessant, 2022).

Apart from structural barriers, cultural barriers also play a significant role in limiting women's participation in politics. Social and cultural norms that dictate traditional gender roles often prevent women from entering public and political spaces. To overcome these obstacles, public awareness campaigns that emphasize the importance of women's participation in politics need to be encouraged. Mass media can also play a role in changing public perceptions about the role of women by presenting women in leadership and political positions in a positive way. Community dialogue and the involvement of men as allies in promoting gender equality are also important in creating cultural change that supports women's participation (Dezhamkhooy, 2023).

Inclusive policy reforms are needed to create a conducive environment for women's participation in politics. Adopting gender quotas in political parties and legislatures can be an effective strategy. This has proven

successful in several countries where it has been implemented, bringing more women into decision-making positions (Adamu, 2023). Additionally, policies that support work-life balance, such as maternity leave and child care policies, can help women balance their domestic responsibilities and political aspirations. A combination of policy reform, education, and cultural change can create a more inclusive environment and encourage women to participate actively in politics.

To strengthen efforts to increase women's participation in politics, there needs to be an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism. Governments and civil society organizations can work together to monitor the implementation of policies that support gender equality in politics. Data collected from this monitoring process can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of policies that have been implemented and identify areas that require improvement. Transparency and accountability in the monitoring process are also important to ensure that the efforts made really have a positive impact on increasing women's participation in politics (Ara & Northcote, 2022).

In addition, it is important to build networks and strategic alliances between women in various sectors, both at the national and international levels. This network can be a forum for sharing experiences, strategies and resources that can support women in facing challenges in the world of politics. Alliances with international women's organizations can also provide moral encouragement and advocacy at the global level, bringing world attention to issues of gender equality in politics (Siswantari et al., 2024). By supporting each other and building solidarity, women can strengthen their position in the political arena and break down existing barriers.

No less important, empowering young women and introducing them to the world of politics from an early age must also be a main focus. Youth programs that educate and involve young women in political activities can help foster the interest and skills needed for a career in politics. Guidance from experienced mentors and access to extensive political networks can provide significant support for young women to achieve their aspirations in the political field (Burke, 2022). With continued investment in young people, we can ensure that the future of politics will be more inclusive and representative.

**CONCLUSION**

Women still face significant structural barriers in politics. These include traditional gender norms, lack of access to political education, and systemic discrimination within the political system itself. Culture and social norms greatly influence women's involvement in politics. In some societies, women's traditional role as household caretakers limits their participation in the public sphere, including politics. Affirmative action policies, such as gender quotas, have shown success in increasing women's representation in various legislative councils. However, the existence of quotas alone is not enough without broader policy support to overcome other obstacles. Partnerships and support from social networks, as well as guidance from political mentors, have proven vital in advancing women's political careers. Political education and gender awareness play an important role in empowering women to participate more actively in politics. Education and training programs designed for women can strengthen their political skills and knowledge. Digital technology and social media provide new opportunities for women to participate in politics. However, this also brings new challenges, including online harassment and the spread of disinformation that can harm women politicians.

From this analysis, it can be concluded that increasing women's involvement in politics requires a multi-dimensional and collaborative approach. Efforts must involve changes at the structural, social and individual levels, as well as strengthening policy frameworks that support gender equality. Apart from that, there needs to be a sustainable strategy to empower young women and introduce them to the world of politics from an early age, so as to create a more inclusive and representative political future.

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