

## **FACTORS THAT AFFECTING WOMEN'S STRUGGLE IN ACHING ECHELON POSITIONS IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES OF NORTH SULAWESI PROVINCE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Every civil servant has the same opportunity to get a position to improve their career, including employees in the North Sulawesi Provincial Government Office. The structural position is a very strategic position for anyone who can reach the position. However, it is not uncommon to find gender inequality in a community group that can affect every employee in reaching the position. As for this study, it can be understood that there are several factors that cause an imbalance in occupying echelon positions. The existing factors are divided into internal factors that come from within the employee, and external factors that come from outside the employee and influence them to develop themselves, especially for female employees. All of these factors are expected to create gender equality in the Regional Government of North Sulawesi.

**Keywords:** Women's struggle, Minahasa culture, local government.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The existence of women in the government environment is an opportunity for the realization of a strong bureaucracy because the involvement of women can help issue a policy that supports women. However, struggles in life cannot be avoided, this must occur as a form of one's self-defense in his environment. Currently, women's struggles occur because of competition between men and women from the point of view of competence, professional, organizational managerial, and leadership. With advances in technology, information, openness, equal rights, women are not underestimated because women are also able to do the work done by men. This situation leads to see what factors influence

women's struggles in occupying echelon positions in the North Sulawesi Provincial Government Office?

### **The Position of Women in Minahasa Culture**

Seeing the cultural history in Minahasa, religion is the priority above all else, God is called "Si Empung", they do not worship statues but make an altar from bamboo without using a roof so that prayers go straight to the sky. The community leader is called "Tu'ah Umbanua" who is determined by holding a public election to become king in his own territory, and his wife becomes queen as well as religious leader. When it comes to work, men cultivate the land for farming, and women are close to the coast to make salt, raise pigs and dogs, pound rice and make clothes for bark from certain trees. In community organizations, the Minahasa community leaders consist of two groups, namely Walian, from the word Wali, which means to deliver like a mother hen and protect her chicks. Second, Tona'as from the word Ta'as which means hard. In the Walian position, the Walian Tu'ah group if held by an old woman will be called Walian Mengorai or the leader of the fertility dance, because Walian Tu'ah also leads religious and traditional ceremonies, this can also be called Walian Peposanan. Furthermore, Mapalus, the mutual assistance organization underwent changes, namely work was carried out by men and women with several working time requirements and the provision of consumption food and food provided by the garden owner (Wenas, 2007).

The occurrence of the creation of the Minahasa earth, serves as a medium for the identity of the Minahasa tribe which was received by the ancestors in the myths of Toar and Lumimuut. The role of women from young to old can always mix with men inside and outside the house, in the fields, or during parties in every effort and result. Therefore, education and development as a woman is completely free. She is not timid, and clumsy; and women also do not show a secretive attitude, as is generally found in women experiencing an isolated life. If you look at the existing culture, it can be seen that from the beginning, men and women in Minahasa have not experienced discrimination, because all can participate in work, in the organizational system, or in the existing arts. Minahasa women are not the type to be strongly restrained by custom and resistance to foreign elements. Even the traditional Minahasa customs are basically not placed at a subordinate level. Since the pre-Colonial era, Minahasa women have been in a dominant position, and have realized the need for men as part of a unity.

### **Motivation of Women in Achieving Echelon Positions**

Motivation is one of the important factors for someone in achieving a position. The formation of women's motivation to struggle is also assisted by the existence of a struggle arena that supports women to perform and success. The obstacles faced will affect the level of one's motivation to achieve and have a career (Partini, 2013; Alexander Aur, 2005). The motivation of women in facing the struggle to achieve a position plays a role in helping women to carry out their duties and responsibilities without having to be influenced by external pressures that can become an obstacle in competing in the work environment.

When looking at the work tradition of civil servants in North Sulawesi Province, men and women do not experience too many obstacles in motivating themselves to carry out a given job task. This can be attributed to the existence of a mutual assistance culture, where men and women help each other to complete work. This proves that gender equality is very much needed in building women's motivation to work productively and make a contribution that can support the bureaucracy to be more effective because of the involvement of women in efforts to build government performance in public services.

The government of North Sulawesi Province has implemented a merit system in accordance with Law No. 5 of 2014 so that in competence every civil servant has the opportunity to improve his competence. But under certain conditions there are also female civil servants who do not have the desire or motivation to increase their career path, this can be influenced by the personality of the woman herself. They will find it difficult to work if they have to be away from their families if the female civil servant is married. This situation also often makes women's performances look less prominent. Another condition that causes a decrease in women's motivation in reaching positions is being afraid of the public's view that women who work find it difficult to pay attention to their husbands and children. Women's achievement motivation in work is determined by their self-confidence, knowledge, work environment and supportive family to achieve success. Haryatmoko 2003: 17 said that the realm of struggle cannot be separated from the habitus and strong capital possessed by Minahasa women.

Civil servants must have logical ambition and motivation, not slack when faced with obstacles and be able to give their husband an understanding of his position. All family planning must involve the husband as the head of the family and the wife when making decisions with the children in mind. Especially those who are married, women are faced with a choice of roles starting from taking care of school children, making family meals, handling sick children, and so on. For those who are single who are just starting

their careers, they can be passionately motivated to reach high positions, but when they are married and have children their motivation begins to decrease because the focus on work has been divided. The motivation of female employees in achieving echelon positions in the Regional Government Office of North Sulawesi Province, becomes a driving force for them in doing their work as a form of self-satisfaction with the results of the tasks and work carried out. This satisfaction is related to the basic needs of humans for their form, which are physiological needs, to have a sense of security and comfort, to feel accepted in the environment or in a group, to have social status, and to increase work capacity.

### **Human Capital**

Human resources have an important role in an organization. Human resources who have good morals, discipline, loyalty and productivity will assist the implementation of these government programs. These human resources are required to be responsive to new innovations so that they can be productive to have a commitment to self-actualization. Employees must be developed as much as possible to be able to carry out their duties and responsibilities properly in accordance with the development of science and technology. Human resource management for an organization, including in government, must be considered, to assist in the process of increasing employee competence (Sedarmayanti, 2017: 4-5).

Competencies that must be possessed by civil servants are very supportive in pursuing a career which consists of: first, technical competence, which has knowledge, skills and attitudes/behaviors that can be observed, measured, developed specifically related to the technical field of office. Second, managerial competence, having knowledge, skills, and attitudes/behaviors that can be observed, measured, developed to lead and/or manage organizational units. Third, socio-cultural competence is knowledge, skills, and attitudes/behaviors that can be observed, measured and developed related to the experience of interacting with a pluralistic society in terms of religion, ethnicity and culture, behavior, national insight, ethics, values, morals, emotions. and principles, which must be fulfilled by every position holder to obtain work results in accordance with their roles, functions and positions (Source, Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2017).

All civil servants who are within the scope of the Regional Government of North Sulawesi Province have the same opportunity to develop themselves within the local government environment. This opportunity must be utilized as well as possible by all

employees without exception, because the current government supports the establishment of a merit system government. In existing positions, it should be noted that the placement of employees needs to pay attention to their qualifications and competencies in order to achieve the desired goals. For this reason, every employee needs to improve their quality to meet the requirements in order to achieve the desired position.

Bureaucratic development currently focuses on the performance that is required for professionals in public services, then leaders are also selected based on the ability of their achievements. race, religion, gender, marital status, age and disability. Human capital has an important role in determining employee performance, this is related to the abilities possessed by each individual starting from his way of thinking, knowledge, skills, experience in work, all of which are related to the formation of one's ability to order self-qualification.

### **Family Support**

Female civil servants desperately need family support, especially from their husbands and children. If there is no support from the family, then a career to reach a good position may not be achieved. Helping each other, dividing tasks in the household is a shared responsibility. Then also have to build good communication thus that they can concentrate or get calm in doing work in the office. Family support is an important element in helping someone in dealing with a problem. Female employees who are supported by their families will help build trust and increase motivation. This family support can be given starting from the support of parents, in-laws, husbands and children.

An interview with an Echelon III civil servant in the field of Women's Empowerment said "Inequality will be reduced, so to occupy a position there must be strong encouragement from the family. Roles and responsibilities in the household are shared tasks. If people know that cooking, washing, and caring for the household are women in the household, why can't it be done by men? Guiding and educating children is the duty of husband and wife. When I'm at home, my husband can cook, and boys are taught to practice gender understanding starting at a young age. Everything has to work together."

In the above expression it is noted that women must have an open and critical mind and must be able to work together with their husbands for household work. Cooperation between husband and wife can make homework easier and in raising and educating children as well. In other words, women also have the right to have space to develop themselves, including in developing a career. And the family does not have to be

a weakness but must be a positive strength for women to progress and develop.

Another study conducted at the Lamandau District Government showed that women have the same opportunities to occupy structural positions as men. Normatively, if there is a vacant position, all employees are intervened in accordance with the existing assessment requirements. But in reality, inequality occurs because there are requirements that have not been met. One of the inhibiting factors for women is from the family, because women have the nature and obligation to reproduce which is often protested by children if they are too busy working outside the home. And there are husbands who have the characteristics of not giving their wife permission to pursue a career outside the home for household reasons or other reasons. (Ummah, et al. 2014).

The cultural and social system that is formed in the family also forms a pattern of power, where the husband is considered the ruler because he is the breadwinner and also the head of the household. This condition of power in the family dominates women, because men place women as second-class humans in the family. The patriarchal culture that is formed in the family does not stop there, it becomes a culture also in society and the state, the problems experienced by women are considered to have been completed because of the representation of their husbands or men. (Bakti Foundation, 2020:3-4).

The cultural system that is formed in the family is not only influenced by social life, but the level of education obtained from an educational environment can also influence the pattern of thinking in family life. The learning process currently taking place in educational institutions at school and outside of school is still not gender-oriented, if there is discriminatory behavior in the learning process it will last a long time because it has been built which assumes that women are inferior to men. The low level of education of women in the family causes women to often experience domestic violence.

### **Culture in The Community**

The community environment of North Sulawesi is of course not only influenced by one culture, but Minahasa culture is the most dominant culture that can be known, because the majority of people in North Sulawesi are from Minahasa land and the majority are Christians. Therefore, the teachings that exist in Minahasa culture and Christianity are often found in the community. It has been known previously that Minahasa culture shows an egalitarian culture, namely in that culture all are in the same position, including between men and women. Thus the positive impact of the influence of Minahasa culture helps women to be able to escape from thoughts that feel they are hegemonized by existing parties, or can even help women escape the patriarchal culture that forces women to only

do domestic work. The culture created in the community can also affect a person's behavior. Research conducted by Palar (2015) that the community environment can affect a person's attitude as in a positive attitude will form fresh thoughts, like to help, and also help each other. But the environment can also influence and shape a person's negative attitudes, such as only talking a lot and lacking in action, having a negative view of the environment, and not forming new competencies.

The influence of religion and culture in the Minahasa community is quite strong, therefore it will dilute the patriarchal culture. Strong self-confidence from women is needed in their abilities because they are given equal opportunities for women and men. Everything is regulated in laws that support the life of the state and society. Traditions that influence a person's habit of thinking that labeling women can only work in the domestic sector, must be changed by positioning women and men on the same rights thus they have equality as human beings. The existence of the influence of Minahasa culture and history from the involvement of women in collaborating with men from the past in doing domestic work, as well as in working to improve the family economy, which makes women who work in the North Sulawesi Regional Government office have a work ethic to struggle in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

The involvement of women in working who not only do household chores, but also in working to produce well-being for themselves in improving their self-economy can also help them avoid violence and can also make them empowered. Although in the work environment can also be found the influence of patriarchal culture where the culture prioritizes the existence of men more than women, so that in some cases in the work environment makes women hegemonic by men.

However, not all women in the work environment of the Regional Government of North Sulawesi Province are affected by patriarchal culture, this can be seen from the existence of women who still have a fighting spirit in contesting for positions even though they compete with men, because they know that both historically, culture, and the constitution give them the opportunity to have the same position as men, namely the existence of gender equality in all spheres that exist both in the social environment and in the work environment.

Gender equality in Minahasa has existed for a long time, which can be seen with the establishment of the Association of Mothers to Hereditary Children (PIKAT) by Maria Walanda Maramis. Women are seen from the perspective of Minahasa culture and Christianity are in a high position, have influence and respect, women in the family also take part in deciding something that is negotiated together. The province of North

Sulawesi is famous for various slogans such as, "Torang Samua Basudara" which means we are all brothers/sisters. There is also "Torang Samua Ciptaan Tuhan" which means that we are all God's creation.

The last slogan that has been passed down from generation to generation comes from Mr. Sam Ratulangi with the Minahasa regional language "Si Tou Timou Tumou Tou" which means humans live to humanize other humans. The slogan is a reflection of the attitude of the people of North Sulawesi who live side by side with a sense of love for each other regardless of differences in religion, race, and so on.

### **Work Environment**

To achieve echelon positions related to bureaucratic life, women need to show their existence in accordance with the description above. Relation theory states that knowledge of power has a reciprocal relationship. The administration of continuous power will create knowledge entities, and vice versa, the administration of knowledge will cause the effect of power (Eriyanto, 2003: 65). Seeing the efforts made by the central government which seeks to establish a conducive work environment and uphold equality, the Bureaucratic order in the North Sulawesi Provincial government office is made effectively and efficiently and has good governance quality as a prerequisite for achieving regional development targets in the long term. In the Mid-Term Development Plan of North Sulawesi Province Page 65, Chapter 4 describes that the implementation of good governance is consistently marked by the development of aspects of openness, accountability, effectiveness, efficiency, rule of law, justice, and community participation.

In terms of strengthening government capacity (bureaucracy), the local government of North Sulawesi continues to strive to strengthen the quality of the implementation of national bureaucratic reform (RBN) in all areas of targeted change, be it policies, institutions, human resources of the apparatus, as well as changes to the mindset and culture set. Bureaucratic reform is expected to create a bureaucracy with a high-performing service mentality so that the quality of public services will increase so as to contribute to increasing competitiveness and successful development in various fields. An effective and efficient bureaucracy must have good governance quality as a prerequisite for achieving long-term regional development targets.

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## **CONCLUSION**

All civil servants have the same opportunity to improve their respective positions, including the desire to achieve echelon positions in local government, this is also in accordance with the mandate in Law number 5 of 2014. This situation forms a sphere for all employees, including female employees, therefore that all vying to compete in reaching a position in the government. Looking at the customs, traditions, and lifestyle of the people in North Sulawesi, it can be found that both men and women have the same position in society because they are supported by an egalitarian culture. North Sulawesi, which is dominated by Minahasa culture which adheres to an egalitarian culture, causes a great influence in social life in North Sulawesi Province.

However, the existence of an egalitarian culture that is formed does not rule out the possibility of a struggle for women who work in the realm of the North Sulawesi Provincial Government. From this study, it can be seen that the factors that influence the occurrence of women's struggles in reaching echelon positions are internal factors, that are women's motivation and well managed of human capital, then external factors that are family support, culture in the community, and culture in the work environment.

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