

INFORMAL POLITICAL COMMUNICATION OF WOMEN IN LOCAL DEMOCRACY (STUDY AT BPD BALIUK VILLAGE, BARITO KUALA)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine how the informal communication strategy is used by women to achieve their political position in government villages. The essence of informal communications is not to follow any specific rules and procedures. The studies of informal communications have remained the question cause there is not a clear form of informal communication. This study has been contributed to the women's informal political communication in Baliuk village to fulfill the gap of informal communication studies. There are three strategies that women used to dominate political representatives in Baliuk Village Government. First, the women have dominated the political issue in Village, second, women's have dominated the informal channel, second women dominated the informal political communication channels, and the third, women have dominated the informal campaign for BPD's election. The main factors from those strategies are how the women do the interpersonal conversation and how they made gossip in every aspect and access of communication itself for their political interest. The women have a concern about how to use an alternative way of communications to gain power in a political position, then they have to succeed dominated Badan Permusyawaratan Desa or BPD as the representatives' institution for village people.

Keywords: village government, informal communication, political communications, women.

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INTRODUCTION

Political practice has changed, at before the world of politics has been owned by men but now has been asked women's role. Women have a long history in political practice, from suffragettes to modern feminist, women have to fight with men for right to vote and hold office. The progress of women participation in political functions and positions of influence is one of the most significant developments of the current decade in the

political arena (Fracchiolla, 2011, Grebelsky-Lichtman, 2015).

Several countries are led by females and some countries, such as Finland, also have a cabinet dominated by women. Women studies have shown that they are still underrepresented in politics, parliaments and public life. The stigma against women in politics is still alive and well. They continue to face structural, socioeconomic, institutional and cultural barriers that made women political progress is slow and uneven. Studies on women in

politics have highlight lack of women in politics and more concerned in national and international politics. Communicative political participation becomes a vital part of the scholarship of critical democracy and power studies (Blaug, 2002; Van der Donk et al, 2004; Peretti & Micheletti, 2004).

The current study aim to contributes another perspective about women political existences in local politic. The way of women's do the communication for their political participation in local democracy is a meaningful manifestation of the involvement into political activity such as join the elction, be a leader or representatives for the decision-making in public institutions and legal entities. Even most of studies has shown that there's so many barriers that create unequality condition among men and women in politics and bring difficulties form women to do political communication in society rather than used formal way, this study has shown that how women could manage their limitation to achieve their political interest. In this study, women in rural area are prefer to choose the informal access to send the message for their political campaign in society.

This study has take the case in Baliuk Villages which located in South Kalimantan Province, especially in Barito Kuala Regency. Indonesia village governments are now provided with far-reaching autonomy to take decisions and implement policies. The reformed village government has provides for a separation of powers. The village head is responsible to the village population through

Badan Permusyawaratan Desa or BPD (Representatives Village People). The BPD is nothing short of a village parliament, the community-level legislative body, with all the democratic expectations that come with such a function based on site (Antlöv, 2003). That's why the studies of women political participation which struggle with local election to become BPD as necessary as women's which compete for represenatives house in national level.

This study has shown informal political communication has succeed make the women to dominated political representation in village level. That's why its necessary to discuss about how does informal political communication was work for women in local democracy, especially in Baliuk village.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this study is qualitative study with case study approach. Case studies are used to delve deeper information about the case of informal political communication of women in local democracy.

The research corpus is the 5 females of BPD in Baliuk village and the aparatus of village. Informant research amounted to 10 people. Data collection was conducted by doing depth interviews with key informants and additional informants.

There are three steps in finding data which used desk study, in depth interview,

and according archives. The multiple sources of evidence aims to give researchers the opportunity to focus on broader historical issues, attitudes, and observations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

There are numerous attempts to analyse the term of women in political communication. This study has explained about women has used informal political communication to achieve their political interest in local election at village level. Interpersonal communication channel as a tool of women to do their informal political communication in society.

There are six elements that makes women interpersonal politics has works in society, they are as follows first, the communicators which refer to the sender and the receiver. Second, the message that conveyed through speech, facial expression, body language, tone of voice, gestures and other verbal and non-verbal means. Third, noise that refers to any sort of distortion causes to the message while it is sent. fourth, feedback which refers to the respond of the receiver, it comprises the message he sends back. Fifth, context which means how the message is being interpreted is mostly depend on the context he receives the message. Sixth, the channel that the means through which communication happen.

This study has explained the three types of interpersonal communication (Schmitt-Beck & Lup, 2013, p. 515) with the first types

is about casual political conversation that creates women's dominated political issue at village, second women taking place in formalized setting that creates women's dominated political informal channel, and the third women's put their self into procedural conversation that creates women's dominated BPD members.

Women's Political Issue at Village

Women and politics are the discourse that is talked about, even the most studies of politics' have been defined as something negative (bad), cause political word affiliation is always connected with those in power, men. Those studies has shown the fact that puts women outside when politics are placed in public areas are pretty contradict with the women in this study. In Baliuk, patriarchy culture has existed in private territory such as family and especially for economic issue. Those culture has asked the man to be the leading actor for economic in family, that makes man obligated to have job and regular income as their dignity as man. Because of those patriarchy culture that required the man as dominant actor in financial which made the most of the men in Baliuk has no time for politics.

Women as second actor for family finance has the main job as housewife but also freely to choose either get to work or not for salary. Even as housewives or career woman they already have to fulfill patriarchy demands as women itself for taking care their family. Their activity as women mostly have to do in public area such as goes to market, school, public health center, and do social gathering

likes *yasinan*, *arisan*, *masak-masak*, etc. By those activity, women as communicator are usually do conversation interpersonally with other women and sharing their knowledge or problem. Mostly, the issues that they're talking are likes taking care of children, protect the elderly, health services, basic needs, family nutrition and many others.

Existing studies offer people's conceptualizations of politics include a public dimension that relates to governmental functions. For those who supply a governmental definition, it seems straightforward to expect that they will view something as political to the extent that government is involved in it. This implies that people who live in countries where government responsibilities are expansive will have broader views of the political than do individuals living under more constrained governments particularly if they draw on a governmental-institutional interpretation of the political. Such findings signal the women in baliuk has focused on the conceptual issues relating to the program-the transfer of power which control the health, poor, food, nutritions, and social conflict. Those women has concerned for their family needed which they should get from public area. Cause of their similar concerned about how to protect and manage about the basic needed of family and society in general, it have created routinity interpersonal discuss then those political messages has known as women issue.

Baliuk Village women issue have been discussed interpersonal political communication with types casual,

unstructured, spontaneous, and free-flowing political conversation occurring between members of core discussion networks in private or semiprivate contexts. Their daily activity makes them have met each other, such as in market is a place for their daily casual meeting in the morning, in *yasinan* and *arisan* is a space that regularly schedule which consist of their spontaneous and unstructured talks which have more intimate than in market, PAUD (*Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*) or early childhood education programs, POSYANDU (*pos pelayanan terpadu*), POSBINDU (*pos binaan terpadu*) are areas where women have more free flowing political conversation which related to government program that related with their activity. Those routinities that womens do regularly have creating mass discourse about women issue and dominated political issue in Baliuk Village.

Informal Political Communications

The term "informal politics" essentially refers to patterns of political behavior between and among individuals and groups in any given society. Informal political communications usually represented by political discussion which also positively related to political participation. The Baliuk women have doing so many political activities, their dedication into social organization made them politically active and meet more people with whom they can discuss politics. Within organizations, the women got some information, which cannot be imparted through formal system of communication, therefore, the members need to communicate in terms of it through alternative system.

Informal system is regarded as the alternative systems, which conveys various types of information among the members.

Women informal communication has taken place in social organizations, they communicate with each other in terms of other areas. These may be related to home, family, health, well-being and so forth. In Baliuk there are so many organizations which facilitated women to do public activities, such as PKK (*Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga*), PAUD, POSBINDU, POSYANDU for elderly and for the toddler. All of those organization has become their channel to do informal communication to achieved their political interest.

First, PKK is a well-known women community in Indonesia. PKK was formed from national level to neighborhoods association level or *Rukun Tetangga* (RT) and usually has a regular event and several activities. This community was formed based on the need of activity container and efforts to increase family welfare.

Those activities has created strong bond between PKK members and women who actively join PKK activities. The woman who actively in PKK have wider network with government officer from village until regency and also they have created a social capital with people who get empowered by PKK. Not only has so many activities, PKK also have authority to select the member of POSYANDU, POSBINDU, and POSYANDU for elderly. The members are vested with the power and authority of exercising control on the informal systems of communication among women

which contested to get elected as cadre for PAUD, POSYANDU for toddler and elder, and POSBINDU. So, PKK is the lead of informal political channel that women are struggle by using informal communication.

Second, PAUD or early childhood education and development. Baliuk people only have one access to early childhood education caused there is only one PAUD which located in the center of village. PAUD has facilitated children to get early education and women to be facilitators and to do organizations who manage the PAUD itself. Beside that, the parents which mostly the women who bring their children have to wait and gather, when they get to take a break from work and chores and can chat with neighbors, while keeping an eye on the child inside. From the gossip routinity and spontaneous talk of women in PAUD has created informal communications network among PAUD committee, facilitators, and also the parents who waiting their children day by day in PAUD. Those networks has making strong bounding and trust each other among women, and it makes women political interest are easier to achieved.

Third, POSBINDU is a form of public participation to conduct early detection and monitoring of risk factors for non-communicable diseases (NCD), and where it was carried out in as an integrated manner, routine and periodic event. In Baliuk, POSBINDU were deemed to merge with geriatric social health care, as the major user was the geriatric population. Posbindu has run by community participation or community

base program to control risk factors of major NCDs, and it has significant contribute for women participation into POSBINDU activity. A community developed based on trust, common interest, and strong friendship which we can find among women in Baliuk. Baliuk was a small village with only two RT (neighbourhood), so it makes the people have strong engagement and the women relationship are like family which care each other not only in social life but also for healthy life. Posbindu community is not only form for public health but also as regular media for women to meet with informal communication which is the unplanned and unauthorized form of communication, wherein the information like gossip is exchanged spontaneously without conforming to the formalities and chain of command.

Fourth, POSYANDU or integrated service post in Indonesian, is a monthly clinic for children and pregnant women, providing vaccinations and nutritional supplements. Posyandu is a thrust to increase the availability and accessibility of health care. In order to achieve organizational goals, it is vital for the members to work in co-ordination and integration with each other. Hence, in order to promote mutual understanding, informal communication is indispensable. Therefore, improving relations is regarded as one of the important advantages of informal communication.

Informal Campaign for BPD's Election

BPD is an institution that which carry out government functions whose members are representatives of village residents based on

regional representation and determined democratically. BPD is a deliberative body at the village level that also discusses and agree on various policies in the administration of village government. BPD and the village government facilitates the holding of the village consultative held in an effort to improve institutional performance at the village level, strengthen togetherness, and increase participation and empowerment public.

Women in Baliuk Village already actively join the village deliberation itself as community elements with the BPD and village government which organized by BPD to discuss and agree on strategic matters in village administration. Judging from the definition of BPD above, then it becomes clear that the BPD is a representative institution whose members are representatives of the villagers includes the women itself. Then, Baliuk women has realized how important BPD as representatives of people village to protect their interest and they have choose BPD's as become new channel to keep women existences and protect the purpose of their organizations needed.

BPD membership are filling democratically which based on regional representation. The number of BPD members in Baliuk are five members, Organizationally, the BPD is led by a chairman, vice chairman, and secretary. In 2020, the Barito Kuala Regency has held simultaneous election for BPD in the whole of village. Baliuk become the only one village which having all of candidates were women. There are six women

candidates that struggle to be the member of BPD for Baliuk Village. From six candidates, there are two candidates which from RT 1, two candidates from RT 2, and there are two candidates which from women representatives, but only two women which from women representatives that should compete cause there is only one seat for women representatives to be BPD's member. four candidates from RT 1 and RT 2 are automatically get elected but they still have to through election to know how many vote they got to decide who's gonna be the leader of BPD in Baliuk Village.

In Baliuk, patriarchy culture are only work on economy matter, when the man has main responsibility to earn money for their family. In politics there are no significant differences among man and woman in Baliuk. Women have freely to show their existences in public, and openly to active doing social organization and take crucial part in village governments.

Since the environment doesn't give any barriers to women having political carrier, it was motivated them to join as BPD's candidates. Then, Baliuk's BPD have elected and there are five women which have dominated BPD's member. The woman which get the most vote is Jumaidah and she become the leader, second most votes getter in BPD's election is Noraenah which become vice chairman, then Lufiatin who became Secretary, Eliyani as member and Yusmiati who is women representatives candidate became a member.

Those five women who become member of BPD Baliuk are the women who actively to do organization and also informal communication in some place like traditional market, school, and groceries. Those five members have said that BPD is the most significant channel for us to protect women issue especially about the budget of government village for PKK, PAUD, POSYANDU, and POSBINDU.

They need to keep their organizations still existing and get support from village government. In order to make women's organizations keep running they have to join the political practice and take over the representatives institution for village people which have balance power with the chief of village government.

The women political communication is influenced by the context it occurs. They have played with emotional climate and expectations of the people, the place of occurrence, and social, political cultural and environmental conditions comprise context. Those five member of BPD are never did formal campaign such as make some poster, banner, or even campaign their vision and mission, but they already have political campaign since they're join at some organization and they like to do informal campaign which making some gossip a market to make people like them and support for their political activity.

Their political communication is not instant, they already build the connection with people in long time. When women have take over the BPD, people village would not

complained cause the political message of women has already insisted in people minds. The women's dominated in baliuk BPD have showed that their informal communication has bring them to the equity of political power in village government.

CONCLUSIONS

Many questions about informal political communication that were seemingly answered need to be revisited. Women informal communication in political fields which analysed in this study wants to distributed another perspective to the informal communication studies.

The conclusions from this study could have meaningful practical implications for women in local politics especially in village level to maximized their informal political communication to get political authority in government office. Mrs. Jumaidah, Mrs. Noraenah, Mrs. Lufiatin, Mrs. Eliyani, and Mrs. Yusmiati are the Baliuk women who could dominate BPD as the representatives of village people.

There are three way of informal political communication which applied on those five women that makes them succeed dominated the representatives institution at the village government. First way, those five women have dominated the political issue in society. They have dominated conceptual issues relating to the program-the transfer of power which control the health, poor, food, nutritions, and social conflict. Second way, the women have dominated the informal political communications channels.

They have taken over all social organizations which makes them communicated each other that related to home, family, health, well-being and so forth. All of those organization has become their channel to do informal communication to achieved their political interest.

Those three strategies were not simultaneously happen but they have interrelationship each other. The first strategy which dominated the political issues have created the bigger opportunity for them to enter the formal and informal organization which become their interpersonal communication channel.

The women who already having strong influence on political business in government village having more confident to be the representatives people village than men. Those five women which dominated BPD's institution are the most of competent individu which having so many experienced in social and political organizations before are giving them the advantage with the high electability. Those electability made them have not to do formal campaign with needs so many effort, money, and thought.

Those five women prefer to do informal communication for their campaign to make Baliuk people giving trust for them as their representatives. This study has conclude that women political communication is about send the message and received which used powerless access of communication to get powerfull role in local politics especially as representatives for village people.

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