

The Building Gender Balance: Reviewing the Capacity Enhancement of Women Legislators in Lumajang Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the importance of enhancing the capacity of women before running as legislative candidates in Lumajang Regency by analyzing the Women's Empowerment Index, Gender Index, and educational status of female legislators. The identified problem is that although parties meet a 30% quota for female candidates, this is often viewed as a formal requirement without strong support to ensure their election. The study aims to highlight the need for capacity-building prior to candidacy and propose concrete steps to improve it. Using a descriptive approach with secondary data analysis, the research reviews journals, statistical data, and media reports on women's legislative capacity in Lumajang. The Likert scoring method (1–5) assesses capacity in political knowledge, education, diplomatic skills, and concern for development. Results indicate gender-responsive planning is fairly well implemented but reveal significant gaps in education and institutional support. Female legislators' capacity is adequate but needs improvement, especially in education, diplomacy, and development knowledge. Only two of five female legislators hold bachelor's degrees; the rest have only high school education, showing an educational gap that hinders effectiveness. Recommendations include increasing access to higher education, continuous training, optimizing empowerment programs, and ensuring that female candidate quotas come with concrete support. This study's implications strengthen women's representation and promote gender balance in local politics, contributing to more inclusive and effective governance in Lumajang Regency.

KEYWORDS *gender; women; legislative; capacity; Lumajang*



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INTRODUCTION

Women's representation in the political world is one of the important indicators of an inclusive and gender-fair society. In Indonesia, significant steps have been taken by implementing a scheme to include women in the list of legislative candidates from each political party. However, the implementation of these rules still faces considerable challenges, especially in achieving the 30% representation target (Nurwahidah et al., 2023).

Since its passage, Article 65 paragraph (1) of Law Number 12 of 2003 concerning the Elections of the DPR, DPD, and DPRD has set a minimum quota of 30% female legislative candidates from the total number of members. The aim of this rule is to reduce gender inequality in government seats and provide greater opportunities for women to be involved in decision-making processes at the legislative level.

However, in reality, the achievement of this target remains far from satisfactory. BPS and CEIC noted that women's participation in parliament in 2021 only reached 21.89%, despite an increase from the previous year. This shows that efforts to increase women's representation in politics still require more concrete steps (Nurwahidah et al., 2023).

One of the main challenges faced is the limited capacity of women legislators to carry out their roles effectively. Many women who are elected often face structural barriers, such as a lack of political training, limited access to strong political networks, and gender stereotypes that are still embedded in society. This situation demands a capacity-building program that is strategically designed to empower women in the political world.

In addition, women's participation in politics is not only influenced by internal factors such as individual capacity, but also by the support of the social, economic, and cultural environment (Alfiyanti Scott, 2022; Suciptawati et al., 2020).

There needs to be synergy between the government, civil society organizations, and political parties to create an ecosystem conducive for women to play a more active and significant role in the world of politics. Thus, women's representation is not just a statistical figure, but also the quality of participation that has a real impact on the policy-making process at various levels of government.

The main problem is that the presence of 30% female legislative candidates in the party is often seen only as the fulfillment of a formal quota, without providing strong support to help them win the election. Too often, women are placed in less strategic positions on the candidate list, reducing their chances of being elected. In addition, the social stigma that considers women to be "not ready," either qualitatively or mentally, to be involved in politics is still a significant obstacle.

The urgency of this research stems from the critical need to understand and address the capacity gaps among women legislators in Lumajang Regency, particularly given the region's below-average Gender Development Index compared to East Java province. With only 21.89% women's participation in parliament nationally, there is an urgent need to examine local-level factors that contribute to this underrepresentation.

Previous research has examined women's political participation from various perspectives. Nurwahidah et al. (2023) focused on the legal implications of quota implementation, while Martini et al. (2021) studied women's representation in Central Java. However, limited research has specifically examined the capacity-building needs of women legislators at the regency level, particularly in East Java regions with lower gender development indices.

According to Martini et al. (2021) and Squirt et al. (2021), the very low political representation of women in the public sphere in Indonesia is related to four main issues: (i) the commitment of political parties that are not yet gender-sensitive, so they do not provide adequate access for women's interests; (ii) constraints from cultural values and interpretations of religious teachings that are gender-biased; (iii) the bias of patriarchal values; and (iv) the low interest, desire, and willingness of women to enter the political scene. However, for this last issue, a more in-depth study is necessary.

The fact that several provinces in Indonesia, including Java, have still not achieved the target for women's representation shows that these challenges are not only national but also related to local dynamics in each region. In this context, the purpose of the study is to review the need to increase the capacity of women before they run as legislative candidates, particularly in Lumajang Regency. The indicators of the Women's Empowerment Index, Gender Index, and the status of women's legislative education in Lumajang Regency were

analyzed to better understand the condition of women's representation in local politics. From the research and secondary data, the training and capacity-building programs for the legislature and female legislative candidates carried out by various parties were summarized. In addition, the results of secondary data analysis will also be considered from the perspectives of feminism and community culture (Prihatini, 2018; White, 2017).

The research gap this study addresses is the lack of comprehensive analysis linking women's educational backgrounds, political capacity, and the effectiveness of existing empowerment programs specifically in Lumajang Regency. Most previous studies have focused on national or provincial levels, leaving a gap in understanding local dynamics and specific capacity-building needs.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrated approach to analyzing women's legislative capacity through multiple indicators (the Women's Empowerment Index, Gender Index, and educational status) while simultaneously evaluating the effectiveness of existing capacity-building programs in meeting local gender mainstreaming agendas.

The objectives of this research are to (1) analyze the current capacity level of women legislators in Lumajang Regency across four key dimensions; (2) evaluate the effectiveness of existing capacity-building programs in meeting gender mainstreaming goals; (3) identify specific gaps in women's political capacity; and (4) propose concrete recommendations for enhancing women's capacity before they become legislative candidates (Aspinall et al., 2021; Katur & Pesak, 2025).

The benefits of this research include providing evidence-based insights for policymakers to design more effective women's empowerment programs, offering a framework for assessing women's political capacity that can be replicated in other regions, and contributing to the broader understanding of gender mainstreaming implementation at the local level. The implications extend to strengthening democratic governance through more inclusive and effective women's participation in the legislative process.

Finally, the results of the analysis of capacity indicators and training programs were used to propose several concrete steps to overcome the challenges faced, including through the implementation of training and political education focused on increasing women's capacity in politics. Thus, this research is expected to make a meaningful contribution to strengthening women's representation in the political process in Lumajang Regency and encouraging the creation of a better gender balance in the legislature.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a secondary data approach involving the analysis of previous research journals, statistical data, and electronic mass media reports relevant to the capacity of women legislators in Lumajang Regency. This approach enabled the collection of comprehensive and representative information regarding women's representation in local politics.

The research employed a descriptive approach to detail the characteristics and conditions of women's political representation in Lumajang Regency. It analyzed various aspects related to women's capacity in politics, including political knowledge, educational background, diplomatic skills, and concern for development issues.

Data were collected from relevant research journals, official statistical records, and media reports pertaining to women's participation in political institutions in Lumajang, such as the number of seats held by women in the local legislature.

Data analysis was conducted descriptively, focusing on mapping and understanding the status of women's political representation. The Likert scale (1–5) was used to assess the capacity of women legislators and legislative candidates across the competency components mentioned above. The scoring results evaluated the adequacy of existing capacity-building programs in addressing identified gaps. The research findings were discussed in relation to social phenomenological theory, exploring how women's capacities develop within the political context of Lumajang Regency and their roles in local governance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Women in Lumajang Regency Politics

The Gender Development Index (IPG) in Lumajang Regency showed a gradual increase from 2018 to 2020. In 2018, Lumajang's IPG was at 87.88 and increased slightly to 88.04 in 2019, and reached 88.09 in 2020. Despite the increase, this figure is still below the average of the East Java IPG, which in 2018 was at 90.77, rose to 90.91 in 2019, and reached 91.07 in 2020. This data shows that although Lumajang has made progress in gender development, it is still lagging compared to the average of East Java province. A complete summary of the data is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Gender development index in Lumajang, compared to East Java

Region	Gender Development Index		
	2018	2019	2020
EAST JAVA	90.77	90.91	91.07
LUMAJANG	87.88	88.04	88.09

Source: <https://lumajangkab.bps.go.id/indicator/40/47/1/indeks-pembangunan-gender.html>

This increase in the gender development index is consistent with the data on the decrease in the Gender Inequality Index (see Table 2). The development of the Gender Inequality Index (IKG) in Lumajang Regency shows a fluctuating trend but tends to improve overall from 2018 to 2023. In 2018, the CPI was at 0.542 and experienced a significant decrease to 0.503 in 2019 and continued to decline to 0.436 in 2020. However, there was a slight increase in 2021 with the CPI rising to 0.482 before declining again to 0.472 in 2022. The most significant decline occurred in 2023, where the CPI dropped drastically to 0.322. The change in the CPI showed the largest decline in 2023 by -0.15, signaling significant progress in reducing gender inequality in Lumajang. (Central Agency Statistics Regency Lumajang, 2023)

The decline in the Gender Inequality Index (IKG) reflects the improvement of more inclusive social welfare in Lumajang Regency. According to the theory of human development, development should be seen as the process of expanding human freedom to live the desired life. In this context, the decline in GI shows improvements in key dimensions of gender development, such as better access to education, health services, and economic participation for women.

The theory of structural functionalism popularized by Talcott Parsons is also relevant in understanding this phenomenon. Parsons emphasized the importance of social harmony and order, where a more equal role between men and women in different sectors of life would create a more stable and prosperous society. Thus, the decline in IKG indicates the restructuring of gender roles in the Lumajang community towards fairer conditions.

According to a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report, the CPI is measured based on key dimensions such as reproductive health, empowerment, and economic participation. The decline in IKG in Lumajang suggests that the local policies implemented may have strengthened maternal and child health services, increased women's school participation rates, and opened up more equal economic opportunities.(United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2022)

Table 2. Development of the Gender Inequality Index (IKG) in Lumajang (2018-2023)

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
IKG	0,542	0,503	0,436	0,482	0,472	0,322
Change		-0,039	-0,067	0,046	-0,01	-0,15

Source: BPS (2024)

The data in Table 1 and Table 2 look at the general population of Lumajang district. This study also tries to analyze in more detail the level of members of the Lumajang Regency DPRD, from the source of the official website of the Lumajang DPRD. A summary of the profiles of Lumajang Regency DPRD members from several factions is presented in the following table.

Table 3. The level of education of women legislators in the Lumajang Regency DPRD

Name	Commission	Field	Education	Faction
Nur Fadillah, S.Ag	A	Law & Government	Bachelor of Agriculture	Gerindra
Eka Tri Oktavia, S. Pd	A	Law & Government	Master of Education	MCC
Siti Qomaria	B	Economy & Development	SMA	PKB
Umi Kulsum	D	People's Well-Being	SMA	PKB
Hj. Sujiarti	B	Economy & Development	SMA	Democrat

https://dprd.lumajangkab.go.id/index.php/Live/dewan_fraksi/12

As presented in Table 3 above, in the Lumajang Regency DPRD, there are a number of legislative members from women's groups, spread across various commissions with different fields. Nur Fadillah, S.Ag from the Gerindra Faction and Eka Tri Oktavia, S.Pd from the PKS Faction, both in Commission A in charge of Law & Government, have higher education with a bachelor's degree, respectively in the fields of Agriculture and Education. Meanwhile, Siti Qomaria from the PKB Faction and Hj. Sujiarti from the Democratic Faction, who are in Commission B in charge of Economy & Development, and Umi Kulsum from the PKB Faction in Commission D in charge of People's Welfare, have a high school level education.

The interpretation of the data shows that the capacity of female legislators in Lumajang Regency varies in terms of education. Two out of five female legislators have a bachelor's degree, which indicates they have a higher education background and are likely to have more in-depth knowledge in their field. In contrast, the other three members had only a high school-level education, which may indicate limitations in terms of formal academic knowledge compared to their counterparts with a bachelor's degree.

In conclusion, there is a gap in education levels among female legislators in Lumajang Regency. This can affect their ability to understand complex issues and participate effectively in the legislative process. To strengthen their capacity and effectiveness, additional efforts may be needed in the form of training and continuing education, especially for those with lower educational backgrounds.

In the context of feminist theory, the liberal feminist approach can be used to analyze these gaps. Liberal feminism emphasizes the importance of equal access to education and training to empower women in the political world. The educational inequalities seen in the composition of the Lumajang Regency DPRD reflect the need for affirmative policies that ensure that women not only can be elected, but are also equipped with adequate skills and knowledge to carry out legislative functions effectively.

Classical feminist theories are also relevant in this context. Classical feminism focuses on the struggle for legal and political equality for women. This theory argues that equal access to education and the world of work are key elements to achieving gender equality in politics. Women must be given equal opportunities in the decision-making process in order to influence policy effectively. (Mill, 1869)

In the perspective of Islamic feminism, gender equality is understood in the framework of social justice according to Islamic values. Islam encourages education for women as part of their spiritual and social responsibilities. Therefore, the improvement of women's education and political capacity is in line with the principle of justice in Islam, where women have equal rights to participate in public and political life.

Efforts to Increase Women's Capacity in Politics

Women's capacity in politics includes the ability, knowledge, skills, and other resources that women have to engage in the political process as well as play an effective and meaningful role in political decision-making. More specifically, these capacities include the ability to understand political issues, participate in political activities, communicate effectively with voters and political colleagues, and influence the political agenda. The importance of increasing women's capacity in politics cannot be ignored. Women are half of the population who are entitled to be represented in the political decision-making process. By increasing the capacity of women in politics, a more inclusive and gender-equitable space will be created in political decision-making. In addition, increasing women's representation in politics can also bring different perspectives and enrich the resulting discussions and policies.

According to Rahmi (2022), citing Longwe and Clarke in Nurlina Tarmizi (2003), one way to increase women's empowerment in any field, including politics, is to increase human capital factors such as education, economic health, and others. If the human resource factor has low capacity, then their participation in politics and development will be low, which in turn

results in low productivity and efficiency and low feedback received. This condition will continue if empowerment is not carried out optimally, effectively, and sustainably.

Women's Legislative Views on Politics and Development Issues

Five references from various sources with the theme of women's capacity building, both in general and in the context of politics and development, are input materials to assess the extent of the gap in the views of women legislators, on political and development issues. The results of the study on women's legislative capacity on political and development issues are summarized as follows: (Asiyah et al., 2021 Kiftiyah, 2019; Martini et al., 2021; Niron & Seda, 2023; Nurwahidah et al., 2023)

1. There is a view that the 30% quota for women in political parties is still often seen as just a formality to meet election requirements, rather than a real effort to fight for women's representation in politics. (Nurwahidah et al., 2023) (Martini et al., 2021)
2. There is a perception that women are often placed at a disadvantage on the list of legislative candidates, which can reduce their chances of being elected. (Niron & Seda, 2023)
3. There is still a view that women are considered "unprepared" or lack the ability to compete healthily in politics, which affects public support for women as potential leaders. (Kiftiyah , 2019; Solanke, 2017)
4. There are concerns that women's representation in politics is still not adequate enough to fight for development issues relevant to women and children. (Asiyah et al., 2021)
5. Increasing women's representation in politics is considered an important step in realizing gender equality in development, especially in terms of incorporating ethical and civilized values related to women's roles in education and family upbringing. (Martini et al., 2021)

A review of the literature on factors influencing women's involvement in politics highlights the various aspects that influence women's political participation. These factors include internal aspects such as education level, political awareness, and self-confidence, as well as external aspects such as social norms, political culture, and existing political institutions.

Bari (2005) explained that the pattern of women's political participation is influenced by several main factors, namely: (a) political structures and institutions, (b) social and political discourse, and (c) socio-cultural and functional limitations that limit women's individual and collective agency in political involvement. This theory emphasizes the importance of understanding how these three factors interact with each other to shape the landscape of women's political participation.

Theoretical approaches to increasing women's representation in politics include a variety of strategies and interventions aimed at addressing the barriers faced by women. This approach includes political education, leadership training, advocacy for policy changes that support gender equality, as well as the promotion of an inclusive political culture that supports women's participation. Gioh et al. (2023) added that in winning political contests, it is important to have an effective strategy, including offering a clear vision and mission to potential voters, utilizing family closeness, and providing political education to the public. The programs

offered, such as anti-corruption, anti-discrimination, and women-friendly, can also be a key factor in increasing women's political involvement.

Agenda and Targets of the Lumajang Regency Government Related to Gender Mainstreaming

Based on the Lumajang Regent Regulation Number 3 of 2023 concerning the Regional Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming for 2022-2024, the main agenda for gender mainstreaming (PUG) in Lumajang Regency includes institutional strengthening, PUG socialization, gender-responsive planning and budgeting (PPRG), PUG implementation, as well as monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. Institutional strengthening includes the establishment and strengthening of PUG Working Groups and PUG Focal Points in each regional apparatus to ensure the existence of a forum for consultation and the main driver in the implementation of gender-responsive policies. PUG socialization is carried out continuously to raise awareness about the importance of gender mainstreaming in all aspects of development. In addition, PPRG aims to integrate gender perspectives in the planning and budgeting process so that development policies, programs, and activities provide equitable benefits for both men and women. The consistent implementation of the PUG strategy across all regional apparatus is also a key focus, along with periodic monitoring and evaluation to measure the effectiveness of PUG implementation.

The targets of PUG in Lumajang Regency include equal access and participation, increased control and benefits, gender-responsive policies and programs, development of gender data systems, and increased cooperation and synergy. Equal access and participation ensure that women and men have equal access in all aspects of development, including education, health, and employment. Increased control and benefits ensure women have equal control over development resources and benefits, as well as a greater role in decision-making at all levels of government. Gender-responsive development policies and programs are designed by taking into account the differences in needs, experiences, and aspirations between men and women. The development of a gender data system aims to monitor and evaluate the implementation of PUG more effectively, while increasing cooperation with various institutions and organizations is expected to support the implementation of PUG and accelerate the realization of gender equality and justice. (Ardhanariswari et al., 2021)

Capacity Building Programs Implemented

Both in Lumajang district and at the national level, capacity building programs for women in general and specifically for candidates and legislatures have been carried out. Five examples of women's empowerment programs are presented in the following table:

Table 4. Capacity building program for female candidates/legislators.

	Indonesian Women's Coalition	Ministry of PPPA	Chakra Wikara Indonesia	Lumajang Regency Government	Ministry of PPPA
Year	2019	2014	2024	2018	2019

	Indonesian Women's Coalition	Ministry of PPPA	Chakra Wikara Indonesia	Lumajang Regency Government	Ministry of PPPA
Purpose	Increase women's readiness and capacity to advance as legislative candidates.	Improving political education and women's representation in parliament	Provide an understanding of the barriers, challenges, and opportunities for women legislative candidates	Improving the quality of women's leadership in regional organizations and development.	Increase the knowledge of female legislative candidates about regulations and campaign strategies
Material	Knowledge of regulations, capacity building to become leaders, and strategies to voice people's aspirations	Debriefing on the election system, election winning strategies, and campaign fundraising	Election sessions, winning strategies, campaign methods, fundraising, and negotiations.	Ethical values, civilization, and gender equality, as well as insight and knowledge about a leader's character	Information from relevant speakers, election winning strategies, and mapping of programs and strategic issues
Expected results	Women who are more mentally and qualified to compete in legislative elections	Women legislative candidates can understand the electoral system in Indonesia and have a strategy to win.	Potential women legislative candidates across political parties understand campaign and fundraising strategies	The Family Welfare Empowerment Team and the Coalition of Women's Organizations in Lumajang increased their capacity in terms of ethics, manners, and insight into the knowledge of the character of leaders	Female legislative candidates increase their knowledge of regulations and campaign strategies.

Analysis of Women's Legislative Capacity

To analyze women's legislative capacity and the effectiveness of training programs in meeting the gender mainstreaming agenda in Lumajang Regency based on Regent Regulation Number 3 of 2023, a Likert scale of 1-5 was used, where 1 indicated "strongly disagree" and 5 indicated "strongly agreed". The question to be tested is: Has women's legislative capacity been considered good referring to Perbup No. 3 of 2023?(São Paulo, 2013)

To assist in the assessment, four assessment indicators were built, namely: (i) knowledge of the world of politics, which will explore how well women legislators understand complex political issues and related regulations; (ii) educational background, related to the level of education possessed by women legislators; (iii) diplomacy, communication and negotiation skills; and (iv) concern for development issues relevant to the community. The results of the study are presented in the following table:

Table 5. Matrix of assessment of women's legislative capacity in Lumajang Regency.

No.	Indicator	Valuation	Score
1.	Knowledge of the Political World	Based on data from members of the Lumajang Regency DPRD, only two out of five women legislators have a bachelor's degree, showing a variation in the level of political knowledge.	3 (adequate)
2.	Educational Background	The majority of women legislators have only a high school level education, which can be considered inadequate to understand complex issues.	2 (inadequate)
3.	Diplomacy Skills	Information on diplomacy skills is less detailed in the available data, but based on their education and roles, there is likely to be a gap.	3 (adequate)
4.	Concern for Development Issues	Commitment to development issues is evident from their involvement in relevant commissions, although specific data on their effectiveness are absent	3 (adequate)
Average score			2.75 (adequate)

Analysis of the Benefits of Training Programs

This analysis discusses whether training programs for legislative candidates, legislators and women's groups in general, are effective in increasing capacity. The analysis was carried out by seeking answers to the question: "Has the exemplified training program fulfilled the gender mainstreaming agenda in Lumajang district?". Assessment indicators are set as many as five indicators, namely: (i) institutional strengthening, which analyzes whether the training program helps to form or strengthen the PUG Working Group and PUG Focal Point; (ii) PUG socialization that looks at whether the training program raises awareness about gender mainstreaming; (iii) Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (PPRG), which explores whether training programs integrate gender perspectives in planning and budgeting; (iv) PUG implementation, which assesses how effective the training program is in implementing the PUG strategy; and (v) monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, to ensure that the training program is monitored for its impact on the female group of trainees. The results of the analysis are presented in the following Table 6:

Table 6. Benefits of training programs for legislative candidates, legislators and women's groups.

No.	Indicator	Valuation	Score
1.	Institutional Strengthening	The existing training program shows efforts to strengthen capacity, but does not specifically mention the establishment or strengthening of the PUG Working Group.	3 (Sufficient)
2.	PUG Socialization	The trainings conducted show an increase in awareness of the importance of gender in politics.	4 (Good)
3.	Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (PPRG)	Not all training programs include the integration of gender perspectives in planning and budgeting	
4.	PUG Implementation	The training program helps in the implementation of the PUG strategy, but it is not comprehensive	3 (Sufficient)

No.	Indicator	Valuation	Score
5.	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting	There are programs that include monitoring and evaluation, but not all of them.	3 (Sufficient)
Average			3.2 (Good)

Perspectives on Feminism and Community Culture

Analysis of women's legislative views on politics and development issues based on references from various sources shows that there are several gaps. First, the 30% quota for women in political parties is often seen as merely a formality to meet electoral requirements, rather than as a real effort to fight for women's representation in politics. Modern feminism criticizes this approach and encourages independent audits to ensure effective implementation of quotas. Second, women are often placed in disadvantaged positions on the list of legislative candidates, which reduces their chances of being elected. In this case, regulations that ensure women are placed in strategic positions are needed. Third, there is a perception that women are considered "unprepared" or lack the ability to compete healthily in politics, which affects public support for women as potential leaders. This demonstrates the need for training and mentorship programs to increase women's confidence and skills in politics.(Umari & Dewi, 2020) (Squirt et al., 2021) (Morningtime, 2020)(Suciptawati et al., 2020)

Furthermore, women's representation in politics is still considered insufficient to fight for development issues relevant to women and children. Modern feminism emphasizes the importance of women's active involvement in the policy-making process, especially on issues that directly impact them. In addition, increasing women's representation in politics is considered an important step in realizing gender equality in development, especially in terms of incorporating ethical and civilized values related to the role of women in education and family nurturing. This is in line with the principles of modern feminism that link gender equality with sustainable development.(Asiyah et al., 2021) (Masnira et al., 2022) (Masnira et al., 2022)

In the cultural context of Indonesian society, especially Lumajang, patriarchal norms are still strong and often hinder women's participation. Therefore, concrete steps that can be taken include carrying out educational campaigns that emphasize the importance of women's participation in politics, holding training and workshops to increase women's capacity, and encouraging regulations that ensure the correct implementation of women's quotas. Social and economic support is also important, such as providing access to funding for campaigns and security guarantees for women who want to enter politics. In addition, ongoing research to identify specific barriers and monitoring and evaluation of policies related to women's representation is also urgently needed. With these measures, it is hoped that the gap in the views of women legislators on political and development issues can be reduced, so that women can contribute more significantly to inclusive and sustainable development.(Squirt et al., 2021) (Priandi & Rosesa, 2019)

CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that enhancing the capacity of women before they become legislative candidates is essential in Lumajang Regency, where progress in socialization and gender-

responsive planning exists but significant gaps remain in education and institutional support. To strengthen women's political participation and their role in development, it is important to improve their education, diplomatic skills, and knowledge of development issues. Recommendations include expanding access to higher education in relevant fields, providing continuous training programs, optimizing practical empowerment initiatives, and ensuring political parties offer substantive support beyond formal gender quotas. Future research could examine the long-term impact of these capacity-building programs on women's effectiveness and representation in local legislative bodies, as well as explore tailored approaches to overcome specific cultural and institutional barriers within different regions.

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