
WOMEN REGIONAL HEADS AND GENDER-RESPONSIVE POLICIES IN TABANAN REGENCY, BALI, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the contribution of women's government heads to gender-responsive policies at the local level. It was carried out due to the increase in the number of women leaders in various countries as heads of government at the national and local levels in the 21st century, which contributed to the realization of gender-responsive policies. This paper argues that the social capital owned by women regional heads contributes to realizing gender-responsive policies. This study was carried out using the focus group discussions (FGD) methodology, with data collected from 19 key informants through in-depth interviews and documents. The result showed that the success of women regional heads in realizing gender-responsive policies is influenced by their social capital in the form of material capital, access to information with organizations and public officials, and the provision of a network capital that is bonding, bridging, and linking. Furthermore, there are other factors, namely personal capacity related to knowledge and understanding of gender-responsive policies, involvement and experience of women regional heads in organization activities, and support politics of the regional parliament/DPRD. This study provides insight for women willing to advance in the election contestation process by considering their previous experience and involvement in political activities as essential factors in realizing gender-responsive policies

KEYWORDS

Gender-Responsive Policies, Social Capital, Women Regional Heads



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INTRODUCTION

This study aims to examine the contribution of women regional heads to the realization of gender-responsive policies by analyzing the case of Ni Putu Wiryastuti, the Regent of Tabanan Regency (Bali), who served for two tenures (2010 to 2015 and 2015 to 2020). This regency was used because Wiryastuti was the first female regent in Indonesia, and during her time, there was an increase in the Gender Development Index (IPG) from 2010 to 2020. Furthermore, this study was triggered by the opinion that the 21st century is often referred to as the century of women. According to Andrea Fleschenberg, countries in the Northern, Southeastern, and Southern parts of Asia have had female political subjects as presidents, prime ministers, and prominent leaders of opposition parties (Fleschenberg & Derichs, 2012). They played a decisive role in political processes in the Asian region and other parts of the world.

In Indonesia, several women have started to take on important roles and positions in local politics since the direct regional head elections (pilkada) were held in 2015. Table 1 shows the data acquired during the regional elections held in 2015, 2017, and 2020.

Table 1
Data on Simultaneous Regional Head Elections in Indonesia

No.	Simultaneous Election	Province	Regency	City	Total
1.	2015	9	224	36	269
2.	2017	7	76	18	101
3.	2018	17	115	39	171

Source: Indonesian General Election Commission (KPU), 2020

The 2015 simultaneous regional elections are the first transitional phase carried out in three stages before the national, scheduled in 2024. Along with implementing this direct electoral mechanism, the involvement of women in local politics has become increasingly evident (Dewi, 2015, p. 192). In 2015, the number of competent female candidates elected during the direct local elections was as follows:

Table 2
Women's Participation and Electability in Elections Contest in Indonesia

Electio n Year	Governor Candidate (person)	Candidate for Regent/Mayor (person)	Candidate for Deputy Regent/Deput y Mayor (person)	Total (person)	Total Selected	
					Perso n	%
1. 2015	1	56	66	123	46	37.10
2. 2017	0	23	21	44	12	26.67
3. 2018	0	49	n/a	49	15	30.69

Source: Document data processed (2020)

This correlates with the analysis of several scholars who elaborated on the emergence and involvement of Asian women in politics. Jahan, for example,

carried out research in 1987 and mentioned the females who were elected as leaders in South Asia. Although it is undeniable that their involvement in politics is inseparable from dynastic factors, such as Jahan's study, where it was concluded that these female politicians are capable of occupying the highest political positions in their respective countries. One of these attributes is based on the fact that they have strong connections with a male family member, such as a father or husband who is an influential political figure [\(Jahan, 1987\)](#). Moreover, the emergence of female politicians in East Asia is inseparable from their connections with male family members who have strong political power or influence [\(Derichs, Fleschenberg, & Hustebeck, 2006\)](#). Meanwhile, Richter analyzed the determinant factors that made South and Southeast Asia women emerge as political leaders from 1990 to 1991. It was further concluded that family ties or kinship relations with male politicians, whether husbands or fathers influence their political emergence [\(Richter, 1990-1991, p. 528\)](#). Thompson also carried out a similar analysis using the term political dynasties to explain these women's strong kinship relations with male politicians (husband or father). This served as a critical factor that led to the election of female political leaders into power in Southeast Asia [\(Thompson, 2002-2003, p. 538\)](#).

This study does not explain the factors that led to the election of women as regional heads at the local level. However, it analyzes how their presence promotes constructive governance in initiating, realizing, and implementing gender-responsive policies. Indeed, their emergence as local leaders or regional heads through direct election is an achievement, although it need not be interpreted as the ultimate goal. It is even more critical that their presences aid in the realization of gender-responsive policies for both practical and strategic interests; besides this is the significance or importance of this study.

The findings of this study are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the role of women regional heads in realizing gender-responsive policies in the form of confirming the established theory [\(Chattopadhyay & Duflo, 2004\)](#).

RESEARCH METHOD

The primary materials analyzed in this study are gender-responsive policies and, second, social capital realized by women regional heads of Tabanan Regency from 2010 to 2020. Therefore, this led to using a case study methodology defined by as a holistic process to understand contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts. In Yin's opinion, which states that case studies are a methodology for holistically understanding contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts (Yin, 2009, p. 18), the authors argue that this case study is the proper methodology for this study because this study aims to explain in-depth and comprehensively the contribution of women regional heads to the realization of gender-responsive policies which is a reality in local politics in Indonesia. The author cannot carry out this process using the survey method [\(Merriam, 1998\)](#).

This study uses qualitative methods with focus group discussion (FGD) data collection techniques, in-depth interviews, and document/secondary data. According to [\(Rowley, 2012\)](#), those interviews are used in qualitative research to obtain facts and understand opinions, attitudes, experiences, processes, behaviors, or predictions. These are the focus of this study.

This study aims to explain the main contribution of the regions to the realization of gender-responsive policies. The author used FGD and in-depth interviews to obtain primary data, and this was done on critical informants. Key informants in FGD and in-depth interviews using purposive sampling technique, with the author's criteria. The author uses criteria based on the objectives of this study. Therefore, the key informants of this study are the stakeholders involved in developing gender-responsive policies and who are the targets of these policies. The number of key informants is 19 people with the following details:

Table 3
List of Research Informants

No.	Informant	Total (person)	Description
1.	Regent of Tabanan Regency	1	As the executive who formulates gender-responsive policies
2.	Member of the Regional Parliament of Tabanan Regency	5	The authorities approved the draft gender-responsive policy submitted by the regent. The five legislative members represent political parties that have representatives in the Regional Parliament of Tabanan Regency, namely the PDIP (Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle), Golkar, Gerindra, Nasdem, and the Democratic Parties.
3.	Office (Regional Apparatus Organization/ OPD)	4	Institutions involved in the process of drafting and implementing gender-responsive policies made by the Regent
4.	Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	3	Organizations that critically provide input and evaluate gender-responsive policies made by district heads
5.	Public figure	2	Parties who respond to the implementation of gender-responsive policies
6.	Mass media	2	Parties who respond to the implementation of gender-responsive policies
7.	Academics	2	Technocrats who are competent in terms of analyzing gender-responsive policies
Total		19	

Source: Data processed

Rowley (2009) stated that these key informants tend to affect the quality of the research findings. Semi-structured interviews were held with selected and potential participants to explore the information provided in the FGDs (Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti, & McKinney, 2012). In addition, the author prepared ten questions as a guide, and the informants were permitted to provide answers of their accord (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Furthermore, the author interviewed several key informants first. Once most of them were successfully interviewed, the

snowballing technique selected other potential respondents by asking for their contacts or phone numbers or recommendations. The saturation point principle is used to determine when the interview is over, where no new information is obtained (Corbin & Strauss, 2014) or insufficient theme has been obtained to perform data analysis (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). Moreover, it is also known as knowledge saturation.

In addition to FGDs and interviews, documents or secondary data were also used. This comprises articles, journals, and mass media (both printed and online) and reports on gender-responsive policies published by the Tabanan Regency Government.

The information obtained from in-depth interviews and FGDs, as well as secondary data, were qualitatively analyzed. An essential attribute of this evaluation is the validity and reliability of the acquired information. Therefore, it is necessary to confirm these from the informants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). These were also confirmed by carrying out the triangulation process or mechanism (Molyneux, 1985). Interestingly, this procedure involves checking the validity of the data by scrutinizing its sources and other collection techniques, including time (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In this study, the authors carried out a triangulation process by cross-checking the information or data obtained from FGDs and interviews with key informants.

The data analysis stage comprises the following steps, namely reduction or selection of relevant information, categorization based on specific themes, and checking the validity and interpretation of the existing information. These are that the analysis process consists of 3 streams of activities, including data reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This paper argues that the social capital of women regional heads has contributed to the realization of gender-responsive policies. For this reason, the findings and discussions focus on the social capital of women regional heads, gender-responsive policies, and how social capital contributes to the realization of women regional heads' gender-responsive policies.

A. Wiryastuti's social capital as a women Regional Head of Tabanan Regency (Bali Indonesia).

To determine the social capital possessed by Wiryastuti as the Regional Head of Tabanan Regency, the analysis focused on three things, first, material (financial) and non-material capital; second, access to information, organizations, and public officials; and third, bonding of social networks that have close and stable ties, bridging, namely those that are open and heterogeneous, and linking networks between groups and countries.

Wiryastuti, born in Tabanan Bali on December 21, 1975, is the first child of I Nyoman Adi Wiryatama, who served as a Regent in this region for two tenures, namely from 2000 to 2005 and 2005 to 2010, as well as Chairman of the Regional parliament for the Province of Bali from 2014 to 2019. Based on the interview held, Wiryastuti is not a descendant of the Tri Wangsa, rather she is from the sudra or jaba (Wiryastuti E., Latar belakang Eka Wiryastuti, 2020). Furthermore,

it was discovered that her educational background when running as a candidate for the Regent of Tabanan for the first period (2010 to 2015) was Diploma 2 obtained at the Fashion School in Jakarta. Later, she obtained a Bachelor's degree in Social Affairs (S.Sos) from Margarana Tabanan College of Social and Political Sciences in 2013 (Widiasavitri, Lestari, Suarya, & Rustika, 2017). In the FGD forum that was carried out, one of the informants confirmed this and even reported that Wiryastuti was a director at a convection company owned by her father (Rimmer & Subacchi, 2018).

Based on information obtained from one of the informants during the FGD, Wiryastuti has been active in social and political activities since 2007, starting from joining the Marhaen Family in Bali Province to actively participating in the wing of the Indonesian PDI-P Srikandi, which led to her understanding of societal problems (Mahendro, 2016). Daily interaction with her father, who was active in political activities, triggered Wiryastuti's interest in the world of practical politics. This information was confirmed in publications compiled by (Rimmer & Subacchi, 2018).

In the FGD forum, information was obtained from another informant who is the Chair of the Tabanan Regency Regional parliament that by being active in the PDI-P organization, Wiryastuti was encouraged to establish an NGO called the Ekalawlya Educare Foundation to increasingly get involved in solving problems in the community . This foundation was founded by Wiryastuti in 2000 and had a network of NGOs working on women-related issues. It actively carries out various social activities, such as assisting persons with disabilities, awarding scholarships to orphans, etc. Wiryastuti also actively supervised the Tabanan City Forum and other social organizations, such as Galang Hati, which focuses on HIV/AIDS prevention (Kusumaningtyas, 2016). These exposed Wiryastuti to a vast network and got accustomed to interacting with the community, especially women.

Wiryastuti is the principal director of a company called CV Sari Nadi Utama (Dirga, 2020) and was subsequently elected the Deputy Chairperson of the Tabanan PDIP DPC (Branch Leadership Council), Bappilu Department of the PDIP Tabanan DPC, and the Chair of the Bali Province Banteng Muda DPD (Regional Representative Council)(Dirga, 2020). Therefore, to fulfill the 30% quota of women in parliament, Wiryastuti ran as a legislative candidate in the 2009 Legislative Election from the PDI-P. This information was also confirmed through some writings compiled by (Rimmer & Subacchi, 2018). In the interview held, she admitted that before joining politics as a PDIP legislative candidate, Wiryastuti was indirectly educated by observing and analyzing the father's active participation in various political and social activities that led to direct interaction with community members . In the 2009 legislative election, she managed to get the most votes, 5,600, and was given a seat as a member of the Tabanan Regency Regional Parliament and served as Chair of Commission IV. According to an academic from Udayana University who actively participated in the FGD forum, one of her success factors was being elected as a member of the Regional Parliament because Wiryastuti had long invested in various socio-political activities in Tabanan Regency (Dewi, Kusumaningtyas, Izzati, & Ekawati, 2022).

Wiryastuti could not complete the tenure as a Tabanan Regency Regional parliament member. When the direct regional election was held in 2010, Wiryastuti ran for the regent of Tabanan Regency. According to an interview with

a community leader, one of the factors that prompted Wiryastuti to compete in the 2010 direct regional election was Wiryastuti's success in becoming a member of the Tabanan Regency Regional parliament . In the 2010 direct election, Wiryastuti received the most votes, as shown in the following table:

Table 4
Legislative Vote Gain in the 2010 Tabanan Regional Head Election

No.	Candidate Pair	Carrier Party	Legitimate Voting	Percentage of Valid Votes
1.	Ni Putu Eka Wiryastuti and I Komang Gede Sanjaya	PDIP	134.441	48,56%
2.	I Wayan Sukaja and I Gusti Ngurah Anom	Golkar	116.153	41,95%
3.	I Gusti Gde Putra Wirasana, MMA and I Putu Oka Mahendra	Demokrat and Hanura	26.258	9,48%
	Total		276.852	100%

Source: Processed from the official report of KPUD Tabanan number 381/BA/V/2010

With the most votes, Wiryastuti was elected the Regent of Tabanan Regency for the 2010-2015 tenure.

After serving as regent for five years, Wiryastuti re-ran for the 2015 direct election and benefited from the father's position, still Chairman of the Bali Provincial Regional Parliament after receiving the most votes in the 2014 legislative election. This shows that Adi Wiryatama's influence is still firmly rooted in Tabanan Regency and Bali Province, indicating that she possessed unparalleled power, which led to Wiryastuti's re-nomination as a candidate for the Regent of Tabanan during the 2015 to 2020 tenure. This was proven by her victory in the 2012 regional head election, where the votes obtained are as shown in Table 5:

Table 5: Votes for the 2015 Regional Head Election in Tabanan

No.	Candidate Pair	Carrier Party	Legitimate Voting	Percentage of Valid Votes
1.	Ni Putu Eka Wiryastuti and I Komang Gede Sanjaya	PDIP	170.428	64,39%
2.	I Wayan Sarjana and Ida Bagus Komang Astawa Merta	NasDem Gerindra Hanura	94.256	35,61
	Total		264.684	100%

Source: Processed from the official report of KPUD Tabanan number 375/BA/V/2015

The findings above show that first, Wiryastuti had material capital because Wiryastuti is an entrepreneur and the principal director of a convection company called CV Sari Nadi Utama. Second, she had access to information from public organizations and officials because her father was the Regent of Tabanan for two tenures (2000 to 2005 and 2005 to 2010) and as Chair of the Regional Parliament

of the Province of Bali from 2014 to 2019. Third, Wiryastuti had network capital (both in the form of bonding, bridging, and linking) because she founded an NGO called the Ekalawlya Educare Foundation, as well as actively participated in the Srikandi Indonesia organization (Sayap PDI-P organization) and was elected Deputy Chairperson of the PDI-P Tabanan DPC, Head of the Bappilu Department, DPC PDI-P Tabanan, and Chairman of the Banteng Muda Indonesia DPD Bali Province.

These findings align with the social capital theory proposed by Bourdieu, Putnam, and Szreter reported in this study, which has been empirically proven to be possessed by Wiryastuti. In conclusion, these findings strengthen their use in this research.

B. Gender-responsive policy for women regional heads of Tabanan Regency (Bali, Indonesia) from 2010 to 2015 and 2015 to 2020

To find out the gender-responsive policies made by Wiryastuti, this study uses the concept of gender-responsive policies from Molyneux, namely gender-responsive policies, to meet strategic gender interests (strategic gender interests) and practical gender interests (practical gender interests). Interestingly, policies to fulfill strategic gender interests are aimed to overcome the backwardness of women in the society by creating a more gender-just and orderly structure, including those that trigger the changes or improve the law on equal pay for the same type of work and others. Meanwhile, policies to fulfill practical gender interests are aimed to optimize the role of women in the social and political contexts, as well as respond to their short term needs, for example, improved standard of living, and health services, provision of job opportunities, and clean water including eradicating illiteracy.

When running for Regent, Wiryastuti and her partner conveyed the vision and mission of Tabanan Serasi associated with prosperity, safety, and achievement, to create a healthy and religious environment with equitable distribution of the populist economy in all fields. They also boosted the potential of the community, especially those in rural areas, maintaining local wisdom such as the rice granary in Bali, as well as practical, efficient, and transparent public services. Based on this vision and mission, it is evident that Wiryastuti was not explicitly concerned with the issue of strategic and practical gender interests. However, after being appointed as Regent, Wiryastuti showed concern for gender issues both strategically and practically.

At the beginning of their tenure as Regent, Wiryastuti strategically issued Regent Regulation Tabanan No. 39/2018 on gender Mainstreaming in Regional Development. It mandates policies, programs, and development activities based on a gender perspective strategically outlined in the work plan of regional apparatus organizations (OPD) (Wiryastuti, PUG in Tabanan Regency, 2020). This was also confirmed in the interview held with the community leader, who stated that Wiryastuti also raised female legislative candidates for Tabanan Regency by adhering to the principle that they need to attract women. To implement the Regent Regulation, the Tabanan Regency Social, Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office issued the Tabanan Regency Gender Profile in 2018. This regulation can be the basis for developing gender-responsive planning, both in education, health, economy, and government (Tabanan Regency

Government & Center for Women's Studies and Child Protection UNUD, 2018). The two general policies aim to meet the strategic interests of gender, which aim to create a more gender-just order and structure between men and women.

Furthermore, for the practical gender interest, Wiryastuti also issued specific policies. *First* is the Cervical Cancer Free Tabanan program, which already existed when Wiryastuti was a member of the Tabanan Regional Parliament. This program collaborates with the Female Cancer Program from the Netherlands and the Ekalawya Foundation (Wiryastuti, Ibu harus sehat, karena perempuan sebagai tulang punggung keluarga, 2020). This initiative has succeeded in reducing Tabanan the issue of cervical cancer from 8% in 2011 to 1% in 2017. Interestingly, this data is reinforced by the information exposed by the mass media (Tempo, 2017). *Second* is the Tabanan Regional Regulation No. 22/2018 regarding the Implementation Regulation of Regional Regulation No. 11/2016 concerning the Protection of Women and Children Victims of Violence. An Integrated Service Center was formed by the Regent Regulation, collaborating with several legal institutions stationed in numerous villages (Ismanto, 2018). These served to create awareness regarding women's rights. *Third*, the issuance of Regent Regulation No. 2/2019 concerning Child-Friendly Village Indicators in implementing the Child-Friendly Regency (KLA) and Child-Friendly Village (DELA) programs. Fortunately, through this initiative in Tabanan Regency, immunization against inflammatory brain disease was carried out in schools. According to Wiryastuti, this is the child's right, and the government needs to pay attention to it in terms of creating a healthy generation, and in 2018, this activity was 100% performed by the Tabanan Regency Health Office, 2018). *Fourth*, Wiryastuti realized the Women's Empowerment program through Village-owned businesses in human resources training, such as fish processing and development initiatives for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). This is reinforced by the study carried out by Ismanto that 70% of the people's economy in Tabanan is driven by women.

The findings above show that during Wiryastuti's two terms as Regent of Tabanan, she issued general and specific policies for strategic and practical gender interests. General policies for the strategic interest of gender include Tabanan Regent Regulation No. 39/2018 concerning Gender Mainstreaming in Regional Development and Gender Profile of Tabanan Regency 2018. These policies aim to create a more gender-just and orderly structure between men and women. Meanwhile, specific policies for the practical gender interest include the Cervical Cancer-Free Tabanan program, Tabanan Regent Regulation No. 22/2018 regarding the Implementation of Regional Regulation No. 11/2016 concerning the Protection of Women and Children Victims of Violence, Regent Regulation No. 2/2019 concerning Child-Friendly Village Indicators in the context of implementing Child-Friendly Regency (KLA) and Child-Friendly Village (DELA) programs, as well as Women's Empowerment programs through Village-owned businesses in the form of human resources training, such as fish processing and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

These findings align with Molyneux's theory relating to the gender-responsive policy adopted in this study. Wiryastuti empirically proved this as the

Regent of Tabanan Regency. In conclusion, these findings strengthen the theory adopted in this research.

C. Social capital and gender-responsive policies for the regional head of

Tabanan Regency (Bali, Indonesia) from 2010 to 2015 and 2015 to 2020.

Interestingly, when Wiryastuti ran for the Regent of Tabanan Regency in 2010, her vision and mission statement did not explicitly show Wiryastuti's alignment with the strategic and practical gender interests. During her two terms in office, two policies were issued for strategic gender interest and four for that practical. However, when Wiryastuti officially became the regent, she was concerned about gender-related issues.

Several social capitals support Wiryastuti's success in establishing this gender-responsive policy. *First*, she has social capital in the form of material capital as an entrepreneur. *Second*, having access to information from organizations and public officials because her father was the Regent of Tabanan for two previous terms and the Chairman of the DPRD for the Province of Bali from 2014-to 2019. *Third*, Wiryastuti also had network capital due to her active participation in the NGO Ekalawlya Educare Foundation, Srikandi Indonesia organization (PDI-P wing organization), Deputy Chair of the PDI-P DPC Tabanan, Head of the Bappilu Department DPC PDI-P Tabanan, and Chairman of the DPD Banteng Muda Indonesia, Bali Province.

For the achievement of the realization of this gender-responsive policy, Wiryastuti in 2018 received various awards, including *Anugrah Parahita Ekapraya*, which is an award for ministries/agencies, provincial governments, and district/city governments which have succeeded in implementing the development of empowering women and children (Ismanto, 2018). Moreover, under the leadership of Wiryastuti, from 2015 to 2017, Tabanan Regency received an award for the Best Immunization Program Performance in Indonesia and nine other regencies or cities (Tabanan Regency Health Office, 2018). This award is proof that this district has satisfactorily achieved some of the indicators for the Child-Friendly Village program.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with empirical evidence, this study succeeded in resolving the problem associated with the initiation of gender-responsive policies by empirical evidence. Based on this context, the success of women regional heads in realizing these regulations depends on their social capital, usually in the form of material resources, access to information from organizations and public officials, and networking capital such as bonding, bridging, and linking. Theoretically, this study also made some contributions by offering empirical evidence. Additionally, other factors also triggered the realization of gender-responsive policies for women regional heads. This includes personal capacity related to knowledge and understanding of these laws, involvement and experiences of women regional heads in organizations or institutions that analyzed female-related issues, and political support from the local, regional parliament. This research failed to examine other factors; therefore, it is recommended that future studies need to examine them. Practically, this study suggests to women who will come forward

in selecting regional heads to consider their experiences in activities that deal with women's issues—also considering the political support of the local parliament.

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