



Forms of Official Women's Struggle in Aching Positions: Case at the Local Government Offices of North Sulawesi Province- Indonesia



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Abstract

This research is a qualitative descriptive study using cultural, political, and historical approaches. Ethnographic and genealogical methods were used to understand the phenomenon of North Sulawesi- Indonesian women in the government offices. Data were collected by observation, in-depth interviews, and document studies. Data analysis was done by reducing data, presenting data, and inferring or verifying data. The results of the study are as follows. The struggle in reaching positions starts from the existence of self-quality in each employee, which is shown from the competencies possessed, the involvement of female employees in supporting existing work productivity, social relations between employees and between leaders, and the views of family as well as view of society.

1. Introduction

Struggle, universally, is a common thing that happens in human life. The struggle in cultural studies occurs between ideals and expectations. This reality is basically from a cultural point of view that men are considered hard workers, so they control all sectors of work that women should do. This thinking is based on old habits that have formed into a culture today, namely patriarchal culture.

This form of struggle is an attempt by women to be equal with men in government jobs. It is a manifestation of their struggle, influenced by the egalitarian culture that has been formed for a long

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time in North Sulawesi-Indonesia. This struggle was born from women's desire to succeed in their work, and reaching this position was strengthened by an appreciation of their hard work.

2. Materials and Methods

The theory used to discuss the form of women's struggle in reaching echelon positions in the regional government office of North Sulawesi Province is the theory of the discourse of power and knowledge relations. This theory was born from the inspiration of Foucault's view of discourse, power, and knowledge, especially regarding how discourse and knowledge can become tools of authority. According to Foucault (Suhartika et al., 2021), power and knowledge are two things that cannot be separated. Thus, for Foucault, the form of struggle is not only against economic exploitation and domination (ethnic, sexual, religious), but also subjection (i.e., the form of surrender of a person as an individual, such as the relationship between a psychiatrist and his patient) (Cf. Nalenan et al., 2021; Ola, 2021).

Furthermore, Foucault emphasizes the mutually constructive relationship between power and knowledge so that knowledge cannot be separated from power. Wenger et al. (2002) state that knowledge is built up in the practice of power and fosters the development, improvement, and proliferation of new power techniques. Therefore, for Foucault, discourse not only regulates what is allowed and can be discussed under the constraints of social and cultural conditions but regulates who can do it and when and where it can be done (Latupeirissa et al., 2018, 2019; Laksana, 2021).

In connection with this research, the theory of power and knowledge discourse is used to understand the behavior and actions of women's struggle to reach the echelon in the North Sulawesi Provincial Government office, which is not based on the values and norms they profess. However, it only compromises with those who believe in it. They have power, namely husbands and rulers of political parties, because echelon positions are political.

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method that can be used to find and understand what is hidden behind the phenomenon (Hagemaster, 1992). Ethnographic and genealogical methods (Combs, 2003) will be used to understand the phenomenon of North Sulawesi women in the government arena. The research location is in Manado City, the provincial capital, the center of government in North Sulawesi Province. The determination of informants in this study was determined by purposive sampling (Campbell et al., 2020). Data were collected using direct observation techniques, in-depth interviews, and document studies, which were then analyzed through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and data inference or verification.

3. Results and Discussions

The struggle of women in reach positions cannot be separated from the legitimacy role that supports the issue of gender equality as one of Indonesia's national development goals.

Qualification and Competence Competition

The competition in the North Sulawesi Regional Government Office is based on how civil servant will achieve a career to occupy a position. Good performance and professionalism are required in carrying out their responsibilities at work. Foucault says power is related to knowledge, and knowledge is related to power. Their quality and capabilities are reliable. Because in the education and training taken to occupy the echelon, the best assessment is held and proves their achievements. High resources owned by a person will facilitate the opportunity to occupy structural positions.

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To occupy echelon positions, a civil servant needs to meet credit scores—self-improvement by showing good civil servant performance. The length of the civil servant service and a reflection of productive civil servant performance will be promoted according to the mechanism. Education will accelerate the promotion of civil servants. Education level and having a job are one of the considerations for getting a promotion. In addition, having work is also one of the considerations in a career as a civil servant.

Based on the results of the study, it was found that every employee has the right to get the opportunity to get promoted. As long as one has fulfilled the administrative requirements, one has given to the progress of regional development. Fair competition wants to be established by awarding employees who excel. With this, it is hoped that it can foster employee work motivation to build better performance.

Every civil servant must continually improve their competence. The competence includes technical competence, namely knowledge and expertise, conceptual competence to see the ability to test various assumptions and change perspectives, and finally, competence to live in dependence on the ability to interact effectively with others. The ability or capability already exists in everyone and must be developed through education, training, or experience to form adequate competence (Wenger & Snyder, 2000).

Research conducted in the Regional Government of East Nusa Tenggara Province by Meo and Boro (2021: 204—210) illustrate that men dominate in structural positions. It happens because of the lack of human resources owned by women and the lack of self-motivation. Based on the data, there are indications of a lack of female civil servant to register in the selection of structural positions. The recruitment process for civil servant to occupy structural positions in the NTT Provincial Government is based on Law No. 5 of 2014, using requirements that are based on position competence, work performance, and rank level and do not distinguish Ethnicity, Religion, Race (ERR).

Similar to this study, although many women have occupied echelon positions, the dominant ones are still men. There is still a lack of motivation, or even some women do not have the desire to reach a higher position because they feel that they are sufficient for their current position. Some are willing but are closed by a patriarchal culture or feel themselves hegemonized by the leadership, so they do not dare compete in the civil servant recruitment process for structural positions.

Involvement of Women in Doing work

Doneys et al. (2020) state that women can also participate in the development, which often happens when men and women have different roles and powers. The existence of gender interests makes women unable to achieve what they want, so there needs to be a change of thinking to help women be recognized in their environment so that their gender needs are met. By enhancing women's skills, they can take part in their work.

Based on the results of this study, all women can have the opportunity to build a career. In Minahasa, women who were against women staying at home, in fact, during the colonial era, fought for women to have expertise if possible because she was also an educational figure from there women appeared and progressed. Now look at most of the priests or servants are women. A culture that does not compel to follow traditions and a culture that does not differentiate the roles of women and men must be developed. Women in the echelon still follow the mechanism, dare to appear, and are committed regardless of whether they are in a strategic position that requires concentration and calm thinking. The capacity of women in strategic positions is taken into account. There are already many women sitting in strategic positions. To get a position, one must take leadership training and loyalty because if one is intelligent and not loyal, then integrity is the most important thing. Work discipline, how to talk and dress, and attitude can be responsible.

The study results illustrate that the motivation to build oneself becomes even better and is not influenced by unfavorable environmental conditions. It takes an attitude full of integrity, dares to appear, and a high commitment to carrying out tasks. Women also have a qualified capacity if it is developed through education and training. Women can be leaders who can be responsible for any given job. The explanation above shows that no leader is born in an instant. All must follow the recruitment process to arrive at this position. That way, if one has the quality and capable leaders, one can also form good performance.

Looking at the involvement of women in working in the North Sulawesi Provincial Government office, the results show that women have the opportunity to be involved in various jobs. All employees have equal opportunities, but what cannot be avoided is trust by the leadership in assigning these duties and responsibilities. Another thing is seen, namely the experience possessed by every existing employee because the current work will be given to whom the leadership deems capable of doing it.

On another side, Married women find it difficult to do tasks because they have to share time with family. There are obstacles for unmarried women if they lack experience or are even unable to work with so many tasks. However, married and unmarried women often find the idea that women are weak creatures and cannot work as well as men.

Research conducted by Hartati et al. (2020) state that women's internal perceptions of structural promotions in Gunungsitoli City show that internal perceptions have more significant consequences in influencing the chances of female civil servants being promoted. This internal perception is associated with the inherent nature of women, meaning that when women decide to work outside the home, they experience a dilemma because they are also required to be homemakers in the family. Women in the bureaucracy have a role that can assist in voicing opinions related to the conditions faced. With this, they can be allowed to formulate and make decisions. Gender equality in the bureaucracy will result in effective governance.

Women's Social Relations

Promotion is an award for the service of the relevant civil servant to the country. An objective promotion is closely related to education or training. A civil servant highly covets promotions or promotions because they have more power than before, and their income will increase. Attending career-supporting education and training must obtain a recommendation from the head of the relevant agency. Promotion is an award given to civil servant who are diligently and entirely devoted to carrying out their tasks. Leaders should pay attention to the fate of civil servant and their subordinates because promotion is the only hope of increasing salaries.

The results of the study provide the view that everyone has the opportunity to occupy echelon positions. Employee performance appraisal can be seen from the leader's assessment of the position. However, it is unavoidable that the employee's capabilities also need to be seen with the performance of the employee himself. Leaders have an important role in helping employees shape employee motivation to improve performance.

It should also be noted that women in the contestation for positions have obstacles, both from within themselves and external factors. Women who work also have to maintain their relationships both in the community and the work environment because the existing relationships can help improve women's careers. Giving power to women through relationships is not only because the leader knows them but also because their work results are considered. It can be seen that leaders want to work together with people who have good performance to impact agency performance positively.

In this situation, it can be seen that women must also have strong social relations. This relationship is also related to power relations which are not only related to the power in the family but also power relations related to power in the social environment, including in the work environment. In order to achieve this echelon position, women must be able to contest in the social sphere to highlight the qualities that exist in themselves so that in establishing a social relationship, they can be trusted and known by various parties.

It is not uncommon to see the contestation of women in reaching positions in government, including in the work area of the North Sulawesi Provincial Government. The courage of women in struggling to fulfill their ambitions is undoubtedly supported by the opportunities given, especially the adoption of an egalitarian culture that has been formed in the North Sulawesi Regional Government. However, it cannot be avoided that the entry of patriarchal culture can affect women in this kind of struggle process. It makes women feel they have no opportunity to establish more comprehensive social relationships due to the hegemony of those who have power, in this case, men.

The entry of this patriarchal culture does not become a significant obstacle for women in the North Sulawesi Provincial government to keep trying to reach echelon positions. It is proven by the existence of women who can sit in echelon IV, III, and II positions, namely those who boldly show themselves to contest and establish social relations with various parties. They are not marginalized by thoughts that can make them marginalized in the work environment.

Family and Community Views of Working Women

Each social position has its perspective and importance. Everyone's understanding of what is considered correct is also appropriate is always different. The different experiences shared by men and women are often the impetus for having these different views on ideology, which has become a societal belief system. Specific ways of thinking will become general truths if they are not traced to their origins. These thoughts appear too often in everyday life (Davis et al., 2009).

Every female employee must be allowed to develop their professional role in the struggle for a position. The existence of women must be recognized and accepted to work side by side with men. Women can use themselves to utilize their presence in government work and society to develop their potential skills so that they can play an active role in the government sector.

The results of the study indicate that in order to achieve all administrative requirements, competence must be met. There are no differences in gender, race, ethnicity, or religion because it is carried out according to the employment law relating to the competence to sit and carry out work. The interview results show that the phenomenon of women who have challenges in the family, such as children, will affect a woman's existence. Women often consider the words of this child to wrestle in reaching positions. Women as mothers must be able to form attitudes that can support themselves both as mothers and government employees, slowly talking about their work to children to make them understand and understand them. Minahasa women, if seen from history, have dared to appear by taking on men's duties. This shows that they are willing to develop themselves, like challenges to reach positions, and do not give up.

Research conducted on female leaders in the North Bolaang Mongondow Regency (Sorongan et al., 2018) state that there is no difference between men and women in competing for a structural position, as long as civil servant employees have the capacity and competence. Women who become leaders are bound by nature, religion, and customs that make women unable to leave their obligations as mothers and wives related to their functions which are women's nature. Furthermore, it was also explained that the obstacles for women leaders were the inability to manage time, education level, lack of confidence, age, and physical weakness. Other factors influence our family work environment and society, religion, and pressure from other parties.

Judging from the research, women in echelon positions have the opportunity to reach a position one level from their current position with the capital capacity they have. This capital can exist if female civil servant employees desire to increase their skills through various education and training that must be followed to improve their qualifications, so they are not less competitive with men. However, it is unavoidable that it is not uncommon for the dream to achieve a position to be lost due to factors that affect self-motivation and obstacles in reaching a position. The dual role of female workers, as employees and mothers, as well as wives in the family, cannot be separated because it is not uncommon for female employees to be unable to manage the time between developing their careers and taking care of their families.

The current government has also paid attention to the career development of women in the government bureaucracy. The public's view of career women needs to be maintained to avoid the formation of negative labeling of working women. A patriarchal culture cannot prevent obstacles for women in developing careers, but what needs to be paid attention to is that this culture should not influence women because the state has protected all the rights of all citizens. The existence of spiritual and cultural support that prioritizes gender equality helps women to do work and have an income.

A Japanese feminist states that the second world war had been considered a time of women's liberation because women took over the jobs left by men during the war. At that time, women not only worked to take care of the household but also in military weapons factories, made weapons, and worked in various civilian positions (Ueno, 1987).

Patriarchal culture and ideology are socialized in society because they get legitimacy from various aspects of life, religion and belief, and the state. Historically, although many women have held important positions in society and the state, they have not always received appreciation for their roles and abilities. Such conditions push down women's participation in the public sphere. It discriminates against women and results in violence towards women. Moreover, it creates double burdens, marginalization, subordination, and stereotypes that can last long. There is no attempt to change them (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008).

4. Conclusion

This struggle is illustrated by the existence of competition in the qualifications and competencies possessed by women, as seen from the quality of women's human capital itself. Women's struggle can be seen from the involvement of women in work, in which women are required to be professional in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

Women's social relations are required to build a broad social network both in society and in the work environment, which can help improve careers. The following struggle is that women have to face the views of their families and society toward working women. This situation can form a high fighting spirit, or even if an opposing view is formed, it will reduce women's motivation.

The development of women's potential can be carried out thoroughly by involving them in doing work without being influenced by the existence of gender ideology. The strengthening of the Minahasa culture, which holds an egalitarian culture, can provide opportunities for women to advance in fighting for positions where they work. Of course, the education and training should not only focus on the male side but should also be given equal opportunities to women so that all existing employees can contribute to efforts to improve the agency's performance.

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