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Pancasila and the Politics of Representation: From Quotas to Quality in Post-Reformasi Indonesia (2019-2022)

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Abstract: This study examines the multifaceted factors influencing women's political representation in Indonesia, employing a Feminist Institutionalism (FI) and Pancasila fusion framework. It highlights how formal institutions, such as electoral and internal party quotas, have increased women's descriptive representation in parliament but have yet to secure substantial influence on policymaking. Informal institutions, including religious beliefs, cultural norms, political dynasties, and patron-client relationships, continue to reinforce patriarchal structures and limit women's access to leadership roles. These informal dynamics often conflict with Pancasila's foundational principles of justice, equality, and social dignity, which advocate for inclusive political participation. The persistence of masculine norms within political and bureaucratic spheres further hampers substantive gender equality despite formal reforms. The study underscores the critical need for comprehensive institutional reform that integrates legal frameworks with shifts in cultural attitudes to foster genuine political inclusion. Aligning these efforts with Pancasila's ideals offers a pathway toward a more equitable political system that supports women's meaningful participation in Indonesia's governance.

Keywords: *women representation; political parties; gender equality; political culture; feminist institutionalism; Pancasila values.*

1. Introduction

Gender inequality remains a challenge to the integrity of democratic institutions, particularly in parliamentary representation, which should reflect the diversity of society. Although women's political participation is recognized as a human right and a pillar of democracy, women hold only 24.5% of parliamentary seats globally (IPU, 2020). This imbalance not only undermines democratic values but also limits the development of inclusive policies that address women's needs and rights (Sukma, 2018).

In Indonesia, as of 2020, women occupy only 20.35% of parliamentary seats, still below the internationally recommended 30% threshold (IPU,

2020). Although women comprise nearly half of the population, their presence in parliament is limited (Ginting, 2011). Early progress was made during the 1955 election, but under the New Order, women were relegated to domestic roles through state organizations like PKK and Dharma Wanita, significantly weakening their political agency (Ginting, 2011; Zahra, 2014). This reflects ongoing structural and cultural barriers that hinder women's access to political power. Indonesian political culture remains heavily shaped by patriarchal norms, weak institutional support for gender equality, and male-dominated party structures (Rodiyah, 2013).

Indonesia ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1984, signaling formal support for gender equality. However, real political inclusion through legislation or affirmative action was minimal, particularly in the early years of Reformasi (Rajab, 2018). Even in the democratic era, the state failed to implement meaningful reforms to promote women's political participation.

Political parties, as critical gatekeepers, remain one of the most significant barriers. While they are essential for implementing affirmative action policies, many are rooted in patriarchal ideologies that obstruct meaningful participation by women. Often, gender quotas are treated as formalities; women are nominated to meet administrative requirements rather than as a strategy to enhance gender equity (Rodiyah, 2013; Sukma, 2018). Internal party mechanisms—recruitment, cadre development, and decision-making—frequently exclude women, resulting in fewer competent female leaders. Parties also fail to provide adequate political education or leadership training for women. As a result, women politicians often lack influence in lobbying and negotiation, contributing to their underrepresentation (Amalia, 2015). Practices like placing women at the bottom of candidate lists or misusing the “*zipper system*” reflect a superficial commitment to quotas. Parties often claim a shortage of qualified female candidates, resorting to nepotistic selections rather than investing in the long-term development of women leaders (Ardiansa, 2016).

Despite Indonesia's legislated 30% gender quota since 2003, women's political representation remains constrained by multiple structural and cultural barriers. Research shows that while quotas have improved women's descriptive representation, factors such as candidate list placement, incumbency advantages, and the costly open-list proportional system continue to disadvantage female candidates, limiting their electability and access to influential parliamentary committees (Prihatini, 2019, 2021; Ruriana et al., 2023). Moreover, patriarchal norms embedded

within political parties and society perpetuate symbolic roles for women rather than genuine empowerment (Kadriyah, 2023; Vikalista et al., 2023).

Religious and traditional leaders also reinforce gender norms, frequently challenging the moral legitimacy of female candidates during campaigns. Democratization has paradoxically enabled the rise of conservative and exclusionary discourses (Hilman, 2016). High campaign costs and entrenched money politics further disadvantage women from non-elite backgrounds, sustaining male-dominated political dynasties. Religious beliefs and familial political dynasties further reinforce these patriarchal structures, particularly within Islamic mass-based parties, constraining women's political participation and policy influence (Prastiwi & Hakim, 2024).

Social structures and cultural attitudes further complicate the situation. Gender stereotypes, economic disparities, limited access to information, and biased media portrayals diminish women's political capacity. Many women turn to non-political careers like education or advocacy, avoiding the high costs and scrutiny of political life (Ginting, 2011). The "double burden" of professional and domestic responsibilities reinforces societal views that politics is inappropriate for women, who are often stereotyped as irrational or emotional (Amalia, 2012).

On the other hand, legal and policy frameworks affirm gender equality, including international commitments like CEDAW and domestic legislation. However, enforcement remains weak and fragmented, lacking an overarching umbrella law to ensure effective implementation and oversight (Wardhani & Natalis, 2024; Vasandani et al., 2022). Electoral reforms such as the zipper system, which alternates male and female candidates, align with democratic and Pancasila values of justice and equality, but their success depends on proper enforcement, political will, and technical consensus (Pinilih, 2020; Dahlia & Warjiati, 2023). Recent regulations have even threatened these gains by creating legal uncertainties and undermining affirmative action mandates.

Institutional gender mainstreaming within political parties is critical for translating quotas into substantive representation. Parties need to adopt gender-sensitive education, affirmative action in candidate selection, and gender-responsive policies to increase women's access to leadership positions (Soetjipto et al., 2010). Yet, challenges remain as many women candidates are placed in non-electable positions on party lists, limiting the effectiveness of quotas (Monati et al., 2023).

Patriarchal norms remain deeply embedded in Indonesian political culture. Beyond formal mechanisms, persistent masculine norms in political and bureaucratic spheres, supported by informal institutions such

as cultural traditions and patron-client networks, continue to restrict women's substantive political empowerment. These informal barriers often conflict with Pancasila's foundational principles, which advocate for justice, equality, and inclusive participation (Sudarwanto, 2025; Siahaan, 2003). Politics is widely regarded as a male domain, while women are viewed as more suited to domestic or social roles (Ardiansa, 2016). Moreover, Indonesian political participation often hinges on personal networks rather than merit or ideology, reinforcing elitism and transactionalism even within civil society.

While extensive scholarship has addressed legal frameworks, institutional design, and socio-economic factors, little attention has been given to the cultural-political foundations of party behavior. Specifically, the role of internal political culture and ideological norms, how they shape inclusion or exclusion, remains underexplored. While formal gender quotas and legal frameworks provide an important foundation, existing scholarship highlights a significant gap in addressing how informal cultural and institutional practices undermine women's political agency.

This study aims to fill that gap by applying a Feminist Institutionalism framework integrated with Pancasila values, emphasizing the need for comprehensive reforms that combine legal enforcement with cultural transformation to foster genuine political inclusion and substantive gender equality in Indonesia.

Pancasila, Indonesia's foundational philosophy, upholds values of equality, democracy, human dignity, and social justice. However, its relevance to gender equity within party structures is rarely scrutinized. Despite its frequent invocation in political rhetoric, few studies assess whether parties genuinely operationalize Pancasila's values to promote women's political participation. This study addresses that gap by adopting a cultural-institutionalist framework, analyzing how political culture—especially values embedded in Pancasila—interacts with institutional structures to shape women's access to parliamentary representation. By examining party behavior and electoral practices, this research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of gender inequality in Indonesian politics.

What distinguishes this research is its use of *Pancasila* as a normative-theoretical lens. As Indonesia's foundational ideology, *Pancasila* provides a national framework rooted in humanity, justice, democracy, and social equality. The second and fifth principles—just and civilized humanity, and social justice for all—serve as moral benchmarks for evaluating whether political practices align with the nation's commitment to equality. Thus, this study investigates: “How do the values of Pancasila illuminate the

influence of political culture on women's parliamentary representation in Indonesia between 2019 and 2022?"

This study adopts the synthesis between Feminist Institutionalism (FI) and Pancasila values as its principal analytical framework to understand how formal and informal institutions shape the political representation of women. FI provides a powerful lens for exposing how both codified rules (laws, regulations, electoral quotas) and unwritten norms (cultural beliefs, traditions, moral values) are gendered in nature and contribute either to reinforcing or challenging male-dominated political structures. FI contends that applying a gender lens offers fresh insights into understanding institutions, defining them as "the rules and procedures (both formal and informal) that structure social interactions by constraining and enabling the behavior of actors" (Waylen, 2014). With a goal to bring a more robust institutional focus to feminist political science, FI emphasizes the inclusion of women as active participants in the political process and seeks to shift the research agenda towards exploring gender interactions (Mackay, Kenny, and Chappell 2010).

In this context, institutions can either reinforce or mitigate unequal power relations between genders since they are seen as crucial factors in advocating for greater women's participation and influencing constitutional changes for gender equality (Mackay et al., 2010). Political parties, as gendered organizations, play a significant role in this dynamic, often reflecting traditional conceptions of gender relations that disadvantage women (Lovenduski, 2005). According to Lovenduski, "if parliament is the repository of traditionality and masculinity... political parties are its main distributors." Consequently, the policies and practices of political parties become central to advancing or restricting women's political representation.

FI provides a holistic approach that considers both formal institutions (laws and regulations) and informal institutions (norms and practices) as critical elements for explaining political processes and outcomes. Formal institutions encompass rules and procedures communicated and enforced through official channels, including laws and regulations. Informal institutions, on the other hand, consist of socially shared rules, often unwritten, communicated and enforced outside officially approved channels, incorporating elements of customs, traditions, moral values, religious beliefs, and behavioral norms (Chappell & Waylen, 2013).

The interaction between formal and informal institutions is structured by gender norms, significantly shaping political life. This analytical approach becomes crucial for comprehending the role played by both formal and informal rules and their impact on political parties. These

interactions can either be competitive or complementary, with informal rules either reinforcing or challenging formal rules, thereby influencing women's representation in political institutions (Waylen, 2014; Helmke & Levitsky, 2006).

In the context of Indonesia, the FI framework is enriched through the integration of Pancasila, the nation's foundational philosophical ideology. Among its five core tenets, the second principle (*Just and Civilized Humanity*), the fourth principle (*Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations among representatives*), and the fifth principle (*Social Justice for all the people of Indonesia*) hold particular relevance for gender justice. These principles offer normative guidance that complements the analytical insights of Feminist Institutionalism by providing a distinctly Indonesian ideological foundation for advancing gender equality, participatory democracy, and inclusive social justice.

Pancasila's values function not only as aspirational national ideals but also as informal normative institutions, i.e., shared beliefs and moral standards that shape political expectations and practices. When internalized by political actors and institutions, these values have the potential to counteract exclusionary gender norms and patriarchal biases embedded in political culture. Rather than viewing Pancasila merely as a cultural or historical backdrop, this study treats it as an active ideological resource that can guide and legitimize institutional efforts toward gender inclusivity in Indonesia's political life.

By integrating Pancasila into the FI framework, the study gains a culturally grounded lens through which to critically assess the gender-progressive alignment of political parties' formal practices and informal norms. It also enables a deeper evaluation of how these values are reflected – or contradicted – in internal party structures, candidate selection processes, and leadership dynamics. Furthermore, this integrated approach allows the study to explore the extent to which Pancasila may act as a local ideological counterbalance to deeply rooted patriarchal structures, offering a strategic avenue for transforming gender relations within Indonesian political institutions.

Drawing upon the established background, the formulated problem, and the research framework, the author tentatively posits that the portrayal of women in the legislative bodies of Indonesia is intricately linked to the political culture discerned within formal institutions. These institutions include electoral quotas for women, internal party quotas for women, the current and past occupancy of parliamentary seats by women, the arrangement of women's seats on party election lists for parliament, and the involvement of women in decision-making bodies. Additionally,

the impact of informal institutions, such as elements derived from customs, traditions, moral values, religious beliefs, and behavioral norms, is scrutinized through the lens of FI-Pancasila fusion.

Table 1. Aspects and Indicators of Feminist Institutionalism Approach

Aspects	Institution Type	Indicators	Data Sources
Women's Political Representation	Outcome	Percentage of female members in national parliament	Electoral commission (KPU), IPU
		Number of women in leadership positions within parliamentary bodies (e.g., committees)	Parliamentary records, media reports
		Women's participation in policy drafting and legislative debates	Interviews, parliamentary minutes
Formal Party Institutions	Formal	Existence of internal gender quotas (party-level)	Party statutes (AD/ART), official documents
		Presence of women in party leadership or decision-making organs	Party organizational charts
		Women's placement on electoral candidate lists (ranking, constituency competitiveness)	Electoral documents, party nominations
Informal Institutions (Gender Norms)	Informal	Party elites' attitudes toward women's leadership	Elite interviews
		Public discourse surrounding gender roles in politics (e.g., media portrayal, speeches)	Media analysis, social discourse

		Clientelistic or patrimonial recruitment practices (favoring family ties or personal loyalty)	Interviews, ethnographic observation
Pancasila Values as Normative Informal Institutions	Informal/ Normative	Party rhetoric promoting justice, equality, and inclusive participation (alignment with Pancasila)	Party manifestos, vision-mission docs
		Implementation of Pancasila principles (2nd, 4th, 5th) in gender policies and programs	Internal policy documents, party events
		Party initiatives that foster women's empowerment and leadership training based on national values	Party programs, interviews

Source: adapted from Sophia Lu, 2016; Kantola, J., & Rolandsen Agustín, L. (2019) and Pancasila

2. Method

This research employs a qualitative approach. The research is causal comparative in nature, often referred to as *ex post-facto* research, wherein data is collected and analyzed after the phenomenon has occurred. Cohen and Manion (1980) explain that this design allows researchers to examine potential causal relationships by comparing groups that differ based on certain variables. In this study, we compare the political cultures and institutional practices of Indonesia, specifically focusing on formal and informal structures that affect women’s representation within political parties served in parliament. This type of research begins with observable differences and subsequently investigates their underlying causes, effects, or consequences (Yusuf, 2014).

To capture a comprehensive picture, primary data will be collected through two main strategies: *First*, for formal institutions, quantitative data will be sourced from official institutions such as Indonesia’s General

Election Commission (KPU) and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA). This data will include information on electoral quotas, candidate lists, and the historical representation of women in parliamentary seats. *Second*, qualitative data will be collected through semi-structured interviews. The target respondents are female cadres from political parties who served in parliament during the 2019 legislative period and representing the major political-ideological orientations of the parties in Indonesian lower house parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Republik Indonesia/DPR-RI). These data were collected through interviews with four female DPR RI legislators: Mercy Chriesty Barends (PDI-P), Dr. Hetifah Sjaifudian (Golkar), Saadiah Uluputty (PKS), and Ela Siti Nuryamah (PKB). Secondary sources and official documents were also analyzed to examine party dynamics and institutional practices. This method allows for flexible yet focused conversations, providing rich insights into how gendered norms, traditions, and internal party culture shape women's political experiences.

To supplement the primary data, secondary data will be drawn from academic literature, reports, case studies, media articles, and policy documents that provide historical and contextual depth to the analysis. These sources help build the theoretical foundation and support triangulation. To ensure validity and reliability, the research applies data triangulation, particularly source triangulation (BS & Bachri, 2012). This involves comparing data obtained from interviews, statistical records, and textual sources to identify consistencies or contradictions.

For data analysis, the study follows the Miles and Huberman (1992) three-step model: (1) Data Reduction: simplifying and organizing raw data by eliminating irrelevant parts and categorizing information to detect patterns. (2) Data Display: presenting the reduced data visually or descriptively to facilitate interpretation and pattern recognition. (3) Conclusion Drawing and Verification: interpreting the findings and continuously validating them through re-checking the sources to ensure accuracy and robustness.

Finally, qualitative interpretation will be carried out using an interpretive approach, which emphasizes meaning making in social contexts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), making it particularly suitable for analyzing informal political norms and values.

3. The Impacts of Political Culture in Indonesia

3.1. Political-Ideological Orientations and the Mass Base of the Political Parties in Indonesia

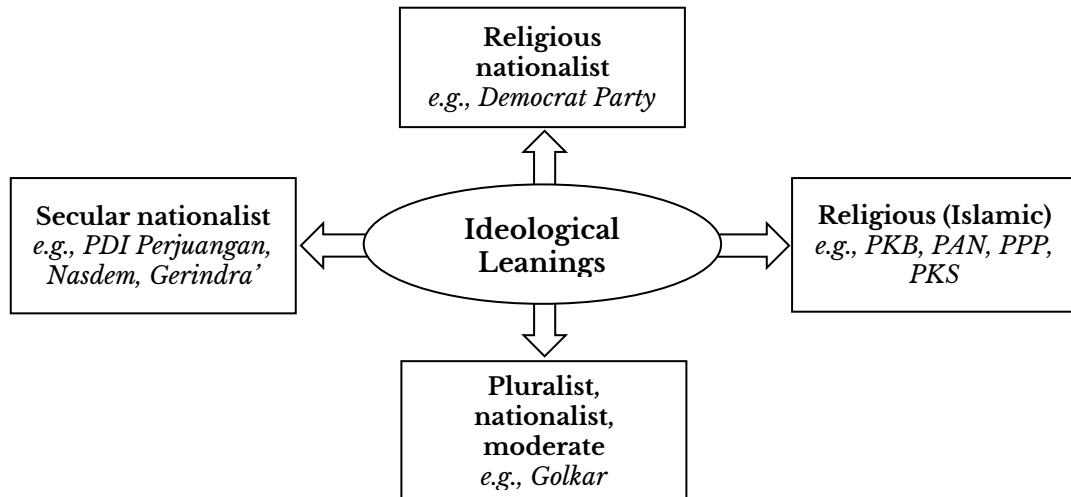
Community involvement in political planning and participation is crucial in democratic country like Indonesia (Lindo, 2016). Indonesia, after proclaiming independence in 1945, granted equal political rights to men and women, a commitment enshrined in Article 27(1) of the 1945 Constitution. Though its first election occurred in 1955, this legal equality was foundational. Indonesia have witnessed female presidential leadership, under Megawati Soekarnoputri (2001–2004) highlighting advancements in gender inclusivity at the highest level of governance. Indonesia's political party system, formalized in 1945, has reflected the country's social diversity, shaped by ethnicity, religion, and ideology (Romli, 2008).

In the pursuit of policies and political interests, political parties often engage in the formation of coalitions with other parties. A coalition, as defined by Hariwardhana (2006), is an alliance or combination of several elements where each group cooperates based on its own interests. Typically, these coalitions are temporary and motivated by mutual benefits. Examining the Indonesian political landscape, particularly in the context of the 2019 general election, two prominent coalitions emerged: the Working Indonesia Coalition and the Just and Prosperous Indonesian Coalition. The former included parties such as the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), Democratic National (Nasdem), National Awakening Party (PKB), Party Conscience of the People (Hanura), Indonesian Justice and Unity Party (PKPI), Golongan Karya Party (Golkar), United Development Party (PPP), Indonesian Unity Party (Perindo), and Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI). On the other hand, the latter comprised the Greater Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra), Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), People's Mandate Party (PAN), and the Democratic Party. Notably, there were indications of inconsistency in coalition formation, with parties like PAN and the Democratic Party expressing a desire to join the Working Indonesia Coalition, highlighting the dynamic nature of coalition politics in Indonesia (Priangani, 2019).

In the lead-up to the 2019 presidential election, certain new parties, including the Crescent Star Party (PBB), Berkarya, and Garuda, had not finalized their coalition choices by the end of the registration period. Nevertheless, predictions from Katadata suggested that these parties would likely lend their support to Prabowo (Kata Data, 2019).

Figure 1. Identification of Political Party Ideologies in the Indonesian Parliament (2019-2024)

Note: only large parties with a significant number of supporters and seats in parliament



Source: various (edited)

Ideology plays a pivotal role in defining political parties, and according to Steger (in Firmansyah, 2011: 96), ideology is a system of ideas and beliefs that forms a framework of values, norms, and ideal regulations accepted as factual and truthful by specific groups. It serves as the identity of a party, distinguishing it from others. This holds true for Indonesian political parties, where three main variations of ideology exist. First, there is Pancasila, which also encompasses the 1945 Constitution. Second, Islam serves as an ideology, but it is rooted in unique religious values. Third, there is a combination of the two, Pancasila and Islam, classified as a Catch-all party. Catch-all parties embrace pluralism, inclusivity, and a non-sectarian approach (Imawan, 2004:11). The diverse ideological landscape reflects the richness and complexity of Indonesia's political tapestry.

The sway of a political party is intricately tied to its supporter base. In the realm of Secular Nationalist parties, PDI-P relies on a traditional-nationalist voter base and lower-middle-income communities. As a mass-based party, PDI-P has successfully cultivated militant supporters who share a common ideology. The charismatic leadership of Megawati Soekarno Putri has played a pivotal role in transforming her erstwhile political silence into an inspirational force, attracting those who were beginning to disassociate from the Golkar party. However, PDI-P faces challenges in appealing to new voters who perceive it as no longer championing the common interests it once championed (Mawazi, 2017).

Conversely, the Gerindra party, under the leadership of Prabowo Subianto, has managed to garner support from a traditional mass base by positioning itself as a champion for economically marginalized groups. Gerindra's political advertisements emphasize its commitment to addressing economic issues, resonating with the concerns of the people (Nurjaman, 2014). The Nasdem Party has successfully garnered public sympathy through its portrayal as a new political entity, especially in television campaigns. The surge in new memberships at both central and regional levels attests to the growing enthusiasm among the public. However, despite this outward success, Nasdem faces challenges in maturing its institutions, as evidenced by internal friction among various groups within the party. Discontent among National Democratic Organizations, particularly civil servants, underscores potential challenges (Yudistira, n.d).

In the realm of Catch-all parties, the Democratic Party, led by Yudhoyono, draws support by embodying the yearning for a leader who can provide certainty and legitimacy, aligning with the interests of traditional groups. Notably, many votes from Golkar shifted to the Democratic Party, as Golkar struggled to maintain loyalty within its political support base. The Democratic Party utilizes bureaucratic structures and other state tools to secure votes, particularly during Yudhoyono's leadership. The transitional era initiated by former Golkar chairman Akbar Tanjung marked a shift in the party's institutional political orientation (Aminudin & Ramlan, 2015).

Islamic-based political parties, including PAN, PKS, PPP, and PKB, represent diverse constituencies. PAN, rooted in Muhammadiyah mass organizations, seeks to expand its reach to middle-class Islamic groups in rural areas. PKS stands out for its adaptive approach, gaining support across ideological, historical, and socio-political boundaries. PKB, with a support base from Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) mass organizations, has successfully attracted interest away from PPP, another Islamic party (Saputra, 2019).

3.2. Women's Representation in the Indonesian Parliament

Every five years, Indonesia's political landscape transforms as political parties compete in the General Election (*Pemilu*). In 2019, a significant milestone occurred with the simultaneous conduct of the Presidential (*Pilpres*) and Legislative (*Pileg*) Elections. The legislative election used an open proportional system, allowing voters to select individual candidates rather than parties. Candidates receiving the highest

votes in their constituencies earn seats in the national (*DPR RI*) or regional (*DPRD*) legislatures.

Law Number 7 of 2017 regulates legislative elections, including the 4% parliamentary threshold for parties to gain representation in the DPR RI. Seat allocations are based on population, ranging from 3 to 10 seats per district for the DPR RI, and 3 to 12 for the Provincial and Regency/City DPRD. The vote counting adopts the Sainte-Laguë method, using odd-numbered divisors to convert votes into seats. Sixteen political parties passed administrative and factual verifications by the General Elections Commission (*KPU*) in 2019. Administrative verification involves evaluating documents, including the inclusion of women candidates. Factual verification confirms the presence of party structures in provinces and districts through field visits.

Indonesia follows a presidential system with a multiparty structure. With a population of approximately 274.6 million, slightly more women than men. Indonesia is predominantly Muslim. Religion significantly influences national identity and politics, contributing to fragmentation and reshaping political dynamics in response to global events. In terms of human development, Indonesia ranked 111th in the UN Human Development Index (2020). However, gender equality remains a challenge. The Global Gender Gap report and the UNDP's Gender Inequality Index (GII) place Indonesia relatively low, reflecting ongoing disparities in political participation, access to education, and economic opportunities for women. This context highlights the need to critically evaluate the intersection of electoral systems, party behavior, and gender representation.

Table 2. Women's Equality Levels in Indonesia

Indicator	Rank
Human Development Index	0.707 (High), Rank 111
Global Gender Gap Index	0.685, Rank 68
Gender Inequality Index	0.451, Rank 103

Source: various (edited)

Indonesia is a signatory to the CEDAW, adopted by the UN in 1979 and in force since December 3, 1981. As of May 28, 2020, 99 UN member states had ratified the convention, which promotes equal rights for women and men in political, economic, social, cultural, and civil spheres. It urges signatory states to enact anti-discrimination laws and adopt affirmative action to achieve gender equality (UN Treaties, 2020). Indonesia also

endorsed the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA), a strategic framework addressing 12 critical areas affecting women and children, including women's participation in decision-making. These international commitments provide the basis for national gender mainstreaming policies in Indonesia. Domestically, parliamentary seats are filled through direct elections, with 17 as the legal voting age and 21 as the minimum age for legislative candidates (IPU, 2020).

3.3. Feminist Institutionalism and the Pancasila Perspective on Formal Institutions

FI, as defined by Lauth (2000), are "codified rules consciously designed, clearly articulated, and enforced through formal mechanisms." These include constitutions, laws, party bylaws, and internal regulations (North, 1990). Helmke and Levitsky (2004) similarly describe formal institutions as explicit, communicable, and implemented via structured procedures. In Indonesia, the analysis of formal institutions, particularly within political parties, must be contextualized through the values of *Pancasila*. Beyond serving as an ethical guide, *Pancasila* functions as a normative framework for assessing whether institutional rules advance gender justice and inclusive political representation. This study broadens the application of FI by integrating *Pancasila* to evaluate how political parties uphold these principles in practice.

The Second Principle of *Pancasila*, "*Just and Civilized Humanity*," serves as a benchmark for assessing whether party mechanisms ensure equitable treatment of women in recruitment, training, and candidacy. When the 30% gender quota is treated as a mere procedural requirement without real investment in women's capacity-building, the spirit of substantive justice is undermined. The Fifth Principle, "*Social Justice for All Indonesian People*," calls for a fairer political landscape, challenging male elite dominance and political dynasties. Women's limited access to decision-making roles reflects structural injustice requiring institutional reform. Thus, formal institutions are assessed not just as legal structures but as moral mechanisms, judged by their alignment with *Pancasila*. This study reviews party documents, women's legislative representation (2019–2022), and women's positions in party hierarchies and legislatures.

1.2.1. Electoral Quotas for Women in Indonesia

Gender quotas are key mechanisms for promoting gender equality in politics by ensuring representation for marginalized groups, particularly women (Dahlerup, 2006; Lu, 2016). In Indonesia, affirmative action policies have been institutionalized to address gender disparities in political representation. Law No. 12 of 2003 requires political parties to nominate at

least 30% women candidates for legislative elections. This was reinforced by Law No. 2 of 2008, which mandates 30% women's representation in party formation (Article 2) and management at all levels (Article 20), as codified in party bylaws (AD/ART). Law No. 10 of 2008 further introduced the “*zipper system*,” requiring at least one out of every three candidates on a party list to be a woman (KemenPPPA, 2020).

Barends (2020) emphasizes that such quotas not only ensure numeric representation but also enable substantive participation. She argues that these laws create “a space and place with real substantive justice” for women to lead, speak, and act as equal political agents, not symbolic figures.

Parties such as PDI-P, Golkar, PKS, and PKB have integrated these quotas into their internal structures. For instance, PDI-P bylaws' mandates 30% women's representation organizationally. However, implementation often faces structural and cultural challenges. As Barends notes, institutional inclusion does not automatically translate to participation. Many women remain hesitant to enter political arenas, not due to a lack of opportunity, but because of the deeply embedded patriarchal values that shape how politics is perceived and experienced. Politics is often viewed as a masculine, confrontational, and aggressive space, characterized by competition, personal attacks, and exclusionary dynamics, conditions that can discourage women from engaging or seeing themselves as political actors.

Uluputty (2020) notes that Golkar is gradually applying the 30% rule across regions, acknowledging that local readiness varies. She also credits affirmative action for influencing PKS to adopt similar rules. Despite these advances, entrenched patriarchal values continue to limit the full realization of gender-inclusive politics in Indonesia.

1.2.2. Development of Women's Seats in Indonesian Parliament (DPR-RI)

The trend of women's representation in the Indonesian parliament remains dynamic but is still relatively low compared to the 30% standard set by the United Nations. This poses an ongoing challenge for women in politics, particularly in influencing decisions and instigating changes that reflect women's interests. In the 2019 election, women's representation in the Indonesian parliament reached 20.35%, marking the highest level in the 69 years since the inception of elections in Indonesia (table 3).

Table 3. Data on Representation of Members of Parliament (Lower House) in Indonesia

Period	Male		Female	
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
1950-1955 (DPR Sementara)	236	96.2	9	3.8
1955-1960	272	93.7	17	6.3
Konstituante* 1956-1959	488	94.9	25	5.1
1971-1977	460	92.2	36	7.8
1977-1982	460	93.7	29	6.3
1982-1987	460	91.5	39	8.5
1987-1992	500	87	65	13
1992-1997	500	87.5	62	12.5
1997-1999	500	89.2	54	10.8
1999-2004	500	91	46	9
2004-2009	489	88.9	61	11.1
2009-2014	459	81.97	101	18
2014-2019	463	82.68	97	17.3
2019-2024	458	79.65	117	20.4

Source: various (edited)

Analyzing women's representation per political party in the 2019 elections, data from PUSKAPOL UI indicates that there were no significant changes in women's candidacy. Nasdem and PKS demonstrated the most notable achievements during this period. PDI-P, PPP, and Nasdem experienced simultaneous increases, while the Demokrat party witnessed a slow decline. Gerindra, PKB, PKS, Golkar, and PAN showed fluctuating trends in women's representation during the election year (PUSKAPOL UI, 2019) (table 4).

Table 4. Data on Women's Representation in Parliament in the DPR RI for the Period 2014 and 2019

Political Party	2014	2019
PDIP	19.30%	20.30%
GOLKAR	17.60%	21.20%
GERINDRA	15%	15.40%
DEMOKRAT	21.30%	18.50%
PAN	18.40%	16%
PKB	21.30%	20.70%
PKS	2.50%	16%
PPP	25.60%	26.30%
NASDEM	11.40%	32.20%

Source: PUSKAPOL UI (2019)

Women are often placed in lower serial positions on electoral candidate lists (Dapil), limiting their chances of election. Legislator Hetifah Sjaifudian highlights the potential of the “zipper system” to improve women’s representation in the DPR but stresses that electability also depends on district-specific dynamics, including cultural resistance in certain regions (Sjaifudian, 2020). Such resistance can significantly hinder female candidates, regardless of their qualifications.

Sjaifudian also notes that a party’s electoral base is crucial. In districts where a party lacks support or a history of electoral success, female candidates face added challenges in building visibility and voter trust. The number of seats in a Dapil and prior absence of female representation further complicate efforts, sometimes requiring women to make disproportionate sacrifices, even when they have contributed significantly to regional development (Sjaifudian, 2020). A key point of concern is women’s placement on party lists. Sjaifudian emphasizes that being ranked in the top three positions is vital for electoral success, making it imperative for parties to position women strategically and not symbolically (Sjaifudian, 2020).

In contrast, Barends from PDI-P cites her own experience to illustrate a more merit-based approach. Representing the Maluku district, she states that her party selects candidates based on capability and leadership potential, not gender. Barends contends that deserving women should be placed in top positions when they demonstrate capacity, challenging the assumption that men naturally deserve higher ranks. For her, candidate ranking should reflect merit, not gendered assumptions (Barends, 2020). This approach represents a more progressive party stance, where competence determines electability, helping normalize women’s presence in leadership roles.

Women’s representation in Indonesian political parties extends beyond numbers to include participation in decision-making structures. Although women now hold strategic roles, significant gender imbalances remain. In PDI-P, Megawati Soekarnoputri serves as general chair and Puan Maharani leads the MPR, showing progress. However, Barends notes that men still dominate central leadership roles despite these symbolic achievements (Barends, 2020).

Golkar has made modest gains: two of 11 deputy chair positions in its Central Executive Board (DPP) are now held by women. Sjaifudian stresses that top-level commitment and openness are essential for improving gender representation. Meutya Hafid’s leadership of Commission I in the DPR RI signals a break from gender norms within the party (Sjaifudian, 2020).

PKS offers a more inclusive model. Women participate equally in political discussions and hold leadership roles such as deputy faction chair, secretary, and treasurer. Saadiah Uluputty exemplifies this inclusive trend, occupying a key leadership post. PKB also emphasizes merit in appointing women to legislative commissions, ensuring their voices are recognized in policymaking.

Uluputty highlights that merit, not gender, drives appointments in PKS and PKB. Female candidates are chosen based on experience, mass support, and party influence, not as tokens, but as capable leaders (Uluputty, 2020). This meritocratic approach reflects a shift in Indonesian party politics, where women's political roles increasingly depend on competence and leadership capacity rather than gender alone.

1.3. Integrating Pancasila Values into Informal Institutions: Gender Norms and Political Participation in Indonesian Political Parties

In Indonesian political parties, informal institutions significantly influence political behavior and decision-making. These unwritten rules, shaped by cultural values, customs, religious traditions, and social norms, exist *outside* formal legal frameworks and are passed down through generations (Chappell & Waylen, 2013; Casson et al., 2010; North, 1990; Pejovich, 1999). They define how individuals interact within political structures and reinforce expectations about gender roles and authority. These deeply embedded norms often persist despite formal policies aimed at promoting gender equality. While formal institutions, such as electoral quotas and the zipper system, are designed to increase women's representation, informal practices rooted in patriarchal values frequently undermine their effectiveness.

Viewed through the lens of Pancasila, particularly its second and fifth principles on humanity and social justice, these informal institutions should promote dignity, democracy, and equity. However, the gap between Pancasila's egalitarian ideals and enduring patriarchal norms highlights a tension between formal commitments and actual practices. To advance women's political participation, both formal mechanisms and the informal cultural norms surrounding them must be transformed in alignment with Pancasila's values.

1.3.1. Moral Values and Beliefs

FI highlights how moral values and social norms shape parliamentary behavior, including gendered divisions of labor (Lowndes & Roberts, 2013). In Indonesia, entrenched cultural notions of masculinity and femininity continue to marginalize female politicians, limiting their leadership

opportunities despite formal equality measures. These gender norms conflict with Pancasila's principles, particularly *kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab* (human dignity and civility) and *keadilan sosial* (social justice), which advocate for equality and inclusive representation.

Barends underscores how politics is still widely perceived as a masculine domain, calling for recognition of both masculine and feminine capacities as complementary. She advocates for leadership grounded in *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), enabling equitable role distribution (Barends, 2020). Similarly, Sjaifudian notes that women are often judged based on stereotyped criteria of competence, while Uluputty emphasizes merit-based selection focused on experience and capacity (Sjaifudian, 2020; Uluputty, 2020). These reflect the Pancasila value of fairness and individual capability.

However, informal gender dynamics remain obstacles. Sjaifudian points out persisting skepticism around the 30% quota, reflecting resistance within political institutions and undermining social justice. Female legislators also highlight the “double burden” of balancing political and domestic responsibilities. Barends notes that political participation often requires family consensus, resonating with the Pancasila principle of *kekeluargaan* (family harmony) (Barends, 2020).

Finally, Uluputty stresses the importance of informal networks in lobbying and negotiation. She observes that women often excel in relational diplomacy, contributing to coalition-building through trust and rapport. This strategic influence aligns with Pancasila's emphasis on unity (*persatuan*) and cooperative political culture.

1.3.2. Religious Beliefs and Elements of Customs

Informal institutions such as religious beliefs and customary practices play a vital role in shaping social and political behavior in Indonesia. With nearly 80% of the population Muslim, Islamic interpretations, often patriarchal, have strongly influenced discourse on women's public and political participation. Male political and religious leaders have used these interpretations to reinforce traditional gender roles, limiting women's representation in higher political offices (Vermonte, 2014).

This situation poses a challenge to Pancasila's core values of justice, equality, and respect for human dignity. While Pancasila's principles of humanity and social justice advocate for gender equality, patriarchal norms rooted in religious and cultural beliefs such as women's roles being confined to the family continue to restrict women's access to political leadership. Legislator Barends notes that religious values often frame women as their husbands' “crowns,” reinforcing their domestic roles and limiting political aspirations (Barends, 2020). Influential religious and

traditional leaders frequently question the morality of women seeking office, asserting that public life is unsuitable for them (Hilman, 2017). This reflects an ongoing tension between traditional religious doctrine and Pancasila's progressive gender ideals.

Despite these obstacles, some Islamic-based parties like PKS and PKB claim to provide equal opportunities for women and men. PKS emphasizes gender equality within its ranks, with members of both genders equally involved in advancing party goals, including advocating for women's rights and governmental oversight (Uluputty, 2020). Similarly, PKB bases appointments on merit and highlights the value of *Rahmatan Lil'alam*—a principle of universal blessing and inclusivity—allowing women significant influence in legislative work and budget decisions (Nuryamah, 2020). These practices align with Pancasila's commitment to social justice and equal political participation.

However, socio-religious factors remain significant barriers, especially in regions like Java where ethnic and religious identities heavily influence voter behavior (Gaffar, 1992). Parties such as PDI-P leverage identity politics based on ethnicity and religion (Barends, 2020), while Golkar promotes diversity and inclusivity, reflecting Pancasila's principle of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) (Sjaifudian, 2020). PKS acknowledges the impact of primordial socialization on gender views but notes a gradual societal shift toward greater acceptance of gender equality. Nuryamah of PKB expresses optimism that these traditional constraints will diminish over time as society becomes more open to women's political participation (Nuryamah, 2020).

1.3.3. The Influence of Tradition on Women's Participation in Parliament

In Indonesian political culture, political dynasties and the patron-client model are two deeply entrenched practices that significantly affect women's participation in parliament. Political dynasties, that are common across Southeast Asia, entail the hereditary transfer of power, wealth, and influence within families, enabling them to maintain political dominance over generations (McCoy, 2002). The rise of direct elections and Regional Autonomy Law in Indonesia has further amplified the prominence of dynasties at both local and national levels. Yet, these dynastic systems often follow a "male first" principle, favoring male heirs and thereby limiting women's political representation.

From a Pancasila standpoint, which upholds justice and human dignity, political dynasties conflict with ideals of equality and democratic participation. While Pancasila envisions a political system where all citizens have equal opportunity regardless of gender or background,

dynasties perpetuate a patriarchal system passing power along family lines, often prioritizing males for their perceived charisma and leadership qualities (Purdey, 2016). Women are frequently relegated to secondary roles unless male heirs fail to meet expectations.

This gendered dynastic practice has serious implications for women's parliamentary representation. Research by the University of Indonesia's Center for Political Studies (2014-2019) found that nearly 47% of national parliament members come from political dynasties. Despite increasing support for women's political participation, these structures reinforce cultural norms that constrain women's access to high political offices (Hilman, 2016). Barends support this claim by noting that political dynasties are deeply embedded in party culture, where ideological and biological heritage intersect. Women like Puan Maharani benefit from family legacies, but their success depends on personal merit and alignment with party ideology (Barends, 2020). Meanwhile, Uluputty highlights that political dynasties also transmit political knowledge and skills across generations, so members from these families are often well-prepared politically. This dual nature shows dynasties as both familial and educational institutions within politics (Uluputty, 2020).

These dynasties function within a patron-client system, where patrons, individuals of higher socioeconomic status, exchange resources and access for political loyalty from clients (Scott, 1972). In Indonesia, parties and politicians heavily rely on these patronage networks to secure votes and maintain power. This clientelism shapes political power distribution and impacts women's opportunities, as political benefits often depend on familial or personal loyalty rather than merit or gender equality.

From a Pancasila perspective, justice demands an equitable political system where all individuals have equal participation opportunities regardless of gender or family background. However, the persistence of dynasties and patron-client relations challenges these values by sustaining patriarchal power structures and limiting women's decision-making access.

Despite these barriers, parties such as PDI-P and PKS have made efforts to support women's political involvement. Yet, entrenched dynastic and patronage networks continue to shape women's opportunities. Achieving true gender equality in Indonesian politics requires confronting and dismantling these traditional systems and fostering a political culture more aligned with Pancasila's principles of justice, equality, and social inclusion.

Indonesian political parties tend to be leader-centric, with clientelism deeply embedded at the grassroots level (Tomsa, 2013). This transactional political engagement depends heavily on personal networks and patronage to sustain influence and mobilize support. Even civil society organizations and non-electoral groups often exhibit elitist tendencies and sometimes engage in deals with political elites, reinforcing patronage systems (Ardiansa, 2016). Party competition frequently centers on access to patronage networks rather than substantive policy differences. This has intensified since the introduction of direct elections and open-list systems, which weakened party institutions and increased reliance on candidates' charisma, finances, and personal networks over party platforms. Barends observes that voters often prioritize material incentives over ideology, indicating that financial benefits commonly outweigh ideological loyalty in electoral choices (Barends, 2020).

Table 5. A typology of patronage democracies

	Control	Networks	Resources	Example
Party centered patronage democracy	Political parties control distribution of state resources	Exchanges organized by political parties and affiliated groups	Relational clientelism using public resources	Malaysia, Turkey, Mexico, Ghana, Sudan, India, Argentina
Community centered patronage democracy	Stronger control of non-party networks and/or limited availability of state resources	Exchanges organized through community leaders, family networks, dan other informal non-party networks	More one-off, retail clientelism, vote buying and community gifts	Some Caribbean and Pacific islands, Indonesia, Philippines

Source: Berenschot & Aspinall, 2020

Patron-client politics in Indonesia is marked by vote buying and reliance on community-based, non-party networks, which advance individual careers more than party development (Berenschot & Aspinall, 2020). This weakens ideological influence on voter behavior, shifting

decisions toward emotional proximity and material benefits provided by patrons (Ufen, 2008; Hasdin, 2015). Many parties are linked to dominant political families or figures, e.g. the Democratic Party is linked to the Yudhoyono/Sarwo Edhie Wibowo family, PDI-P is associated with the Soekarno family, Gerindra with Prabowo Subianto, and Hanura with Wiranto. This familial connection extends to parties with religious ideologies, such as PAN with Amien Rais, PKB with Abdurrahman Wahid, and PKS with figures like Himi Aminuddin and Anis Matta—creating hierarchical structures where patronage determines strategic placements, including for relatives with little experience (Jackson, 1981; Scott, 1993; Jarry, 1991; Hasdin, 2015). The influence of such patronage is particularly evident in the candidate selection process, which intensifies intra-party competition for top-list positions. In this context, party elites—often men—are typically placed first or second on party lists, reinforcing the gendered dynamics of political power (Vermonte, 2014).

This structure influences candidate selection, often privileging male elites atop party lists (Vermonte, 2014). Furthermore, parties depend on member contributions and donations, with financial capacity affecting a cadre's political trajectory. Sjaifudian noted that financial donations can indeed affect the positioning of female cadres, emphasizing the challenges faced by women in securing political positions due to limited access to financial resources. Limited access to capital hinders women from running for office or securing influential positions, as financial contributions often determine placement within party hierarchies (Sjaifudian, 2020).

4. Conclusion

This study employs the Feminist Institutionalism (FI) and Pancasila fusion framework to analyze the formal and informal institutions influencing women's political participation in Indonesia. It investigates electoral quotas, internal party quotas, women's representation in current and past parliaments, the placement of women on party electoral lists, and their involvement in decision-making bodies. The study also considers informal institutions, such as moral values, behavioral norms, religious beliefs, and traditions, as significant factors shaping social interactions and political dynamics. The analysis shows that Indonesia's formal institutions, including quota systems, have increased women's descriptive representation in parliament, though their substantive influence on policymaking remains limited.

From the FI perspective, institutions are crucial in advancing gender equality by embedding it within legal and operational frameworks. FI advocates constitutional reforms to integrate gender equality into political

mechanisms. Increased numerical representation of women is an important milestone, yet this does not always translate into substantive policy changes, especially regarding women-friendly initiatives. This underscores the necessity of moving beyond mere numbers to emphasize the real impact of women's political participation.

This challenge is particularly visible in the positions women hold in decision-making bodies. Although women have started occupying strategic roles within political parties and parliament, gender disparities persist. Women are often relegated to less influential positions due to enduring masculine biases within bureaucratic structures. FI highlights that while formal reforms are essential, they cannot fully eliminate entrenched masculine norms that continue to shape leadership and behavior in politics. Informal institutions, guided by gender norms and hierarchical relationships, perpetuate a "logic of gender conformity" that associates autonomy, strength, and rationality with masculinity, while linking passivity, emotionality, and nurturing to femininity. This social construct reinforces masculine traits as the standard for political and social power.

Religious beliefs and customs in Indonesia remain deeply interwoven with political practices, contributing further to women's subordination in the public sphere. Religious teachings and ethnic customs often position women as secondary citizens, limiting their parliamentary representation. Additionally, traditional practices such as political dynasties and patron-client relationships exacerbate gender disparities. Political dynasties favor male heirs, while the patron-client model restricts political access to those with significant resources. When these informal practices overshadow formal rules, conflicts arise that obstruct the implementation of gender-equal policies and institutional reforms. This highlights the complex interplay between formal and informal institutions in shaping gender dynamics in Indonesian politics.

Pancasila, Indonesia's foundational philosophy, emphasizes justice, equality, and mutual respect as core values essential for cultivating a political culture that supports gender equality. However, in practice, entrenched traditions, religious influences, and informal political practices hinder the realization of Pancasila's ideals. Although Pancasila promotes social justice and human dignity, persistent cultural norms continue to privilege masculinity in political spaces. Thus, while Pancasila offers a normative framework for gender equality, its principles remain incompletely actualized within the political culture, necessitating reforms to both formal and informal institutions to bridge this gap.

The study's findings emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach to tackling gender inequality in politics. This approach must

combine ongoing reforms of formal institutions with efforts to transform deeply ingrained cultural attitudes and practices that influence political behavior. By aligning formal institutional reforms with Pancasila's values—especially social justice and equality—it is possible to foster a more inclusive and equitable political system that genuinely supports women's meaningful participation in political decision-making.

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