

A Closer Look at Women's Electoral Participation in the 2024 General Election in Garut Regency

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Abstract

This research is motivated by the organization of the 2024 elections, which have been conducted annually within Indonesia's democratic system since the inception of independence. In practice, the execution of the democratic system via these elections has failed to effectively uphold democratic values within the government of the state and nation. The persistently low participation of female voter groups in the Pangatikan District, Garut Regency, during all phases of the 2024 general election is obvious. The employed research method is qualitative, utilizing an analytical descriptive approach to examine the object's condition in its natural state. The descriptive technique functions as a problem-solving approach that analyzes a subject or study object by depicting its current situation based on factual representation. The data gathering methods employed are direct observation and direct communication through interviews during the 2024 general election in the Pangatikan District, Garut Regency. According to the analysis of the examined concerns, the research findings comprise, The involvement of women's groups in the organizing of all phases of the 2024 general election in the Pangatikan District, Garut Regency, remains suboptimal. This is evident among female voters who possess knowledge of the general election's organization yet fail to actively participate and engage ideally in the 2024 electoral process. Factors affecting female voter participation in the 2024 general election in the Pangatikan District encompass political motivation from election organizers, the individual traits of the female voter demographic, the prevailing social characteristics in the Pangatikan District, and the evolving political landscape in the Pangatikan District, Garut Regency. Initiatives to augment female voter participation in the Pangatikan District, Garut Regency, for the 2024 general election encompass socialization activities regarding the election, the establishment of democracy volunteers to promote engagement and enhance voter quality, educational programs for first-time voters and female voter groups, and the amplification of mass media's role in disseminating information about the entire electoral process and its stages.

Keywords: Participation, Voters, Women, General Election

INTRODUCTION

General elections in the governance of a country are utilized as a democratic mechanism by various nations worldwide, including Indonesia. Elections are one of the pillars of a democratic state, embodying the concept that free and periodic elections are a primary criterion for a political system to be recognized as a democracy. (Sarbani, 2015). The electoral process allows all segments of society to be accommodated in their

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desires and aspirations, leading to the realization of a better governance system. This serves as an indicator of the stability and dynamism of democracy within a nation.

General elections, in practice, represent a form of political activity for all layers of society, especially for those who have been granted the right to make choices as stipulated in Law Number 7 of 2017. By applying the principles of direct, universal, free, secret, honest, and fair voting, it is hoped that this process will enhance political understanding and raise public awareness regarding democracy. (Reilly 2000). Hutington dalam Rizkiyansyah (2007:3) It states that a country can be considered democratic if it has a mechanism for periodic elections that facilitates the process of circulating the change of government officials.

The organization of general elections within the system practiced in Indonesia has been conducted periodically since the early days of independence. However, in practice, the implementation of the democratic system through the organization of general elections has not been able to optimally apply democratic values amidst the governance of the state and nation. The situation was influenced, among other factors, by the authoritarian political system of the time, which led to the emergence of hopes for an ideal form of democracy starting with the 1999 General Elections, coinciding with the reform movement in the governance system. For a country that has just emerged from an authoritarian system, the conduct of the general elections in 1999, held after the reform, stands as a historic achievement for the nation in its development towards democracy.

Through the general election, the people express their desire to actively and directly influence national policies and the administration of government, as participation from all voter groups is crucial in a democratic state. The general election serves as a significant form of participation for voter groups, embodying the concept of popular sovereignty that has been a focal point since the proclamation of this nation. It is during the general election that the people play the most crucial role in determining their political process by casting their votes directly to elect representatives for legislative bodies, as well as those who will hold positions in the executive branch.

The awareness of voters in exercising their voting rights during all stages of the election, from various voter group elements in the electoral process, is closely related to the democratic system adopted in a country, where ultimate sovereignty resides with the people. This is implemented through collective activities to establish goals, envision the future, and determine who will hold power in the administration of government. (Triwijaya et al., 2020).

Generally, elections provide a broader opportunity for the public to engage in various political processes, as they are fundamentally seen as a means of restoring the rights of the community in full by allowing participation in decision-making and determining the representatives who will occupy legislative bodies, with candidates selected by political parties that represent the interests of the community, reflecting the programs often communicated by political parties and legislative candidates during campaigns.

A good electoral system is one that can realize the diverse interests at the community level, representing the public in the governance process and the formation of state policies within the legislative bodies produced. (Miriam, 2015). The electoral system is a crucial element that significantly determines the quality of democratic life in a country. The main essence contained in the conduct of elections goes beyond mere legitimacy through voting in the electoral process. It also involves intervening in political activities for the public in a direct and open manner, fostering awareness about democracy that fundamentally positions the people as participants, rather than mere spectators.

According to the provisions outlined in Article 14 letter C of Law Number 7 of 2017, "to convey all information regarding the election organization to the public". this regulation indicates the necessity for the involvement of all segments of society and various voter groups to participate in the conduct of general elections. The role of the people is crucial for the successful execution of all stages of the elections, which serve as a vital instrument in the administration of government based on democratic principles, reflecting that the people are the holders of sovereignty in determining state policies.

Political participation in the electoral process by all voter groups is a crucial aspect of a democratic nation's framework, as well as a distinctive feature of political modernization. (Dewantara et al., 2019). In general, within traditional societies, the nature of political leadership is predominantly determined by a group of elite rulers. The involvement of the community, particularly voter groups, in influencing decision-making and impacting national life is relatively minimal. Only certain segments of society, typically consisting of ordinary individuals, tend to be overlooked in political processes.

Political participation is a manifestation of the sovereignty of the people, which is a fundamental aspect of the democratic process in the governance of the state. Political participation holds significant meaning in the functioning of democracy. When society has a high level of participation, the processes of political development and democratic practices in Indonesia will proceed effectively, thus greatly contributing to the progress of the nation and state.

The awareness of the community to participate in political activities serves as a benchmark for the success of democratic governance at both local and national levels. This awareness leads to active participation in political events, which fundamentally represents the transformation of public interests within the political structure.

As a manifestation of the people's sovereignty in the organization of the 2024 General Election, the position and role of the people in participating from all voter groups is crucial in the political process within their electoral districts by casting their votes directly. Referencing the aforementioned explanation, the awareness of voter participation from any societal group, regardless of the reasons, is a fundamental prerequisite that must be fulfilled in building a democratic nation-state. The meaning of community participation is an essential aspect of a nation's life, especially for those that identify as democratic states. The level of political participation serves as a determining factor for the quality of democracy that evolves within that nation.

When the electoral process experiences deviations and various frauds are committed by certain groups to obtain the highest number of votes, the simultaneous elections held across all constituencies, with significant budgets and facilities, will not achieve optimal results in line with the expectations of the majority of the Indonesian

people. Consequently, a democratic government will merely serve as a symbol that fails to materialize.

To ensure the organization of high-quality elections that meet healthy competition and accountability, it is crucial to consider the extent of involvement from all groups and components of society in determining the election process, overseeing, and monitoring the course of the democratic contest itself. Public participation in elections can be enhanced, fostering political awareness, and encouraging creativity in selecting candidates for legislative and executive positions at both central and regional levels, ultimately contributing to higher quality governance and regional development.

The level of citizen involvement in the General Election process presents an individual challenge. Although the elections proceed relatively smoothly and safely, reflecting the growth of democratic life, it must be acknowledged that this is not accompanied by an increase in political participation. This lack of engagement signifies a gap in public awareness regarding the importance of shaping the nation's future over the next five years, particularly concerning the participation of female voter groups in their respective electoral regions.

As part of the evaluation of the 2024 elections, based on data from Detik Jabar, in mid-September 2024, after completing a series of stages, the General Election Commission (KPU) announced the latest Final Voter List (DPT) for the 2024 Garut Regional Election. The list includes a total of 2,005,168 voters, comprising 1,023,858 males and 981,310 females.

Interestingly, in the recent regional election in Garut Regency, more than 53% of the voters were young people categorized as Millennials and Generation Z. In total, there are 1,063,767 young voters eligible to cast their ballots in the Garut election, consisting of 643,229 Millennials and 420,538 Gen Z.

It must be acknowledged that the participation of female voter groups in the organization of the 2024 elections is relatively low. This is evident from the data obtained during the General Election in Pangatikan District, Garut Regency. The political participation of female voter groups in the 2024 elections in Pangatikan District, Garut Regency, is affected by the lack of public awareness regarding the processes and stages

of the elections. This results in female voter groups being indifferent and apathetic towards the continuity of the 2024 elections. Ultimately, they perceive the elections merely as a process of selecting leaders and deem them unimportant, which consequently impacts the quality and awareness of participation among female groups in the organization of the 2024 elections.

Based on this background, this paper will analyze issues related to the awareness of female voter participation in the 2024 elections in Pangatikan District, Garut Regency. It will explore the determining factors of female voter participation awareness in the 2024 General Election in Pangatikan District, as well as the efforts that need to be made to enhance the awareness of female voter participation in the 2024 elections.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted in the Pangatikan District of Garut Regency, aimed at describing and analyzing the awareness of participation among female voter groups in the 2024 general elections within the Pangatikan District of Garut Regency. The determination of participants in this study comes from the group of female voters who have been granted the opportunity to make their choices, thus providing a comprehensive description of the awareness of female voter participation in the 2024 election administration in the Pangatikan District of Garut Regency.

The method used in this study is a qualitative method with an analytical descriptive approach. The qualitative method is employed to study objects in their natural conditions (Sugiyono, 2014). Meanwhile, the descriptive method (Hadari, 2012) is used as a problem-solving procedure by describing or illustrating the current state of a subject or research object based on factual observations. Data collection techniques included direct observation, direct communication in the form of interviews, indirect techniques, and documentation during the implementation of the 2024 general election in Pangatikan District, Garut Regency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Awareness of Women's Voter Participation in the 2024 General Election in Pangatikan District, Garut Regency.

The participation of community groups in the electoral process reflects the involvement of citizens in life to fulfill various needs and interests. However, conflicts often arise with interests and policies during elections when determining the right to vote for wise, firm, straightforward, responsible, and honest leaders who can carry out their duties effectively. According to Ramlan Surbakti in (Cholisin & Nasiwan, 2012) State that political participation is described as the voluntary engagement of the community in selecting leaders, whether directly or indirectly, to influence political decisions and public policies. As for according to (Liando & M, 2014) stating that public political participation is a manifestation in a democratic country, thus public participation will determine the quality of a country's democratic governance.

The participation of the public in the organization of the General Election in 2024 is one of the indicators of the legitimacy of the formed government. It is not uncommon for the government to encourage its citizens to cast their votes during the election. (Sucipto, 2014). A country lacking political participation from diverse voter groups is likely to become authoritarian and centralized in its governance. The political experiences that took place during previous administrations indicate allegations of abuse of authority by decision-makers in the formulation of policies and program planning, resulting in decisions or policies that do not align with the needs anticipated by the community.

In general, the participation of female voters in all stages of the 2024 general election in Pangatikan District, Garut Regency, has not been optimal. Many women's groups did not participate in the various stages of the election, including during the campaign period and the voting phase. This condition is evident in the low involvement of female voter groups in campaign activities, casting votes during the election process, participating in political discussions, and joining interest groups.

In a democratic country where citizens are directly involved in elections, this issue has been observed and confirmed through interviews and observations from several

sources. These sources generally state that the participation of female voters in Pangatikan District, Garut Regency, remains suboptimal. This is particularly noticeable during the voting process, where only a small proportion of female voters come to polling stations to cast their votes or take part in election-related activities.

Especially during the stages prior to the election, such as during the campaign period, where only a small portion of the female group participates in the campaign activities conducted by political parties or legislative candidates in the general election. In a similar vein, within a group or as a successful team, the female voter group unites and collaborates to form a successful team in support of the political party and the legislative candidates they endorse, aiming to gather the most votes for the candidates they will choose in the upcoming 2024 elections.

Analysis of the issue of women's participation that occurs in all stages of the electoral process can be seen from the indicators of social and economic status, which are very influential on the level of women's voter participation. This is because, from an educational perspective, it greatly affects their political participation, among other factors influenced by the education they possess. Usually, in an area where high school to university graduates are present, most of them have a high level of participation and are sensitive to their surroundings. Meanwhile, the group of women with elementary school education mostly have very low levels of participation and tend to be apathetic and indifferent to what happens in their surroundings and are less sensitive to their environment.

When analyzed through the lens of employment indicators, a significant portion of the population consists of housewives and farmers, which does not facilitate an increase in their participation in comparison to individuals engaged in entrepreneurial activities. Consequently, many individuals exhibit reduced sensitivity and understanding, and their professional environment does not provide substantial support for their engagement in the electoral process and its various stages in 2024.

The examination of awareness indicators within female voter groups reveals a significant level of understanding regarding their rights and responsibilities in the political participation landscape of Indonesia. Conversely, there are numerous influences

or solicitations from others to engage in participation. If these influences or invitations originate from external sources, one cannot assert that they possess political awareness. The awareness referred to here signifies that the community's comprehension of their rights and responsibilities in political engagement must originate from their own intrinsic beliefs. In the vicinity of the Pangatikan District, a significant number of residents demonstrate an understanding of their rights to engage in participatory processes. Nevertheless, numerous individuals are also swayed by external factors, such as receiving invitations to support a specific candidate. However, a significant number of individuals tend to overlook this aspect, while possessing an intrinsic awareness of their rights to engage in the process.

The analysis of awareness indicators across female voter groups indicates that they possess a high level of understanding regarding their rights and responsibilities in political involvement inside Indonesia. Conversely, there are several influences or solicitations from others to engage. If these impulses or invites originate from others, one cannot assert that they possess political awareness. The awareness referred to here is that the community's comprehension of their rights and responsibilities in political involvement must originate from their own convictions. In the Pangatikan District, the majority of residents possess understanding of their rights to engage in participation. Nonetheless, several individuals are also swayed by external factors, such as receiving invitations to support a specific candidate. However, the majority remain oblivious to this and possess an intrinsic awareness of their rights to participate.

Based on the data from the vote count of the 2024 General Election in the area around Pangatikan District, Garut Regency, it can be seen that 71.33% of its residents participated in the 2024 general election, with the community classified as DPT (Voter List) at 72.69%. This indicates that there are members of the female group who did not exercise their voting rights in the 2024 general election. Based on the findings above, it can be seen that the form of active political participation of the community is evident in political activities during the regional head elections, where the community directly votes during the election process to choose candidates for the legislative and executive positions at both the central and regional levels.

Political participation refers to the activities of an individual or a group of individuals who are actively involved in political activities or political life, such as voting for national leaders, which directly or indirectly influences public policy. (Arifin, 2015). In addition, according to (Liando & M, 2014) It states that political participation of the community is a manifestation of a democratic state. A country without political participation from its citizens tends to be authoritarian and centralized. Citizens play a crucial role in selecting candidates for regional leadership who will subsequently govern and make decisions in the future. (Arniti, 2020).

The manifestation of political participation among the community, particularly among female voters, in the 2024 general elections in the Pangatikan District of Garut Regency is evident through various forms of activities, including the following: :

1. The granting of voting rights in the process of organizing general elections; in the form of participation from women's groups in Pangatikan District, Garut Regency, in the electoral activities conducted, with the aim of selecting an individual who will be appointed through a consensus vote or ballot casting activities.
2. Strengthening the understanding of elections through discussions; in several community activities during the organization of elections in the Pangatikan District of Garut Regency, where interactions are conducted through direct communication or exchanging ideas and discussing political activities to be carried out during the regional head election, with the community participating in meetings and engaging in political discussions.
3. Participating in activities during the campaign phase involves a series of planned efforts to gain support from a broad audience, carried out by a group of individuals or the community. Engaging in campaign activities, even in small numbers, does not diminish the enthusiasm of the public to participate in campaigning and seek support from others, with the aim of selecting legislative candidates who will be appointed as prospective leaders. In this case, it can be observed that the community engages in campaign activities and this does not diminish the enthusiasm of the people to participate in campaign events.

4. Participate in shaping and joining interest groups; shared interests among individuals that unite them to coalition for the establishment of an institution or to join a political organization or a systematic assembly of people, or to become a successful team during elections aimed at seeking support from other communities to back the candidates they endorse and win in the elections.

The forms of these activities are conducted by the group of female voters in Pangatikan District, Garut Regency, as a manifestation of female voter participation in the organization of the 2024 General Election. Nevertheless, the participation of all groups of female voters remains limited in the activities outlined above.

Factors Determining Women's Voter Participation in the 2024 General Election in the Pangatikan District, Garut Regency

Based on the research findings, the factors influencing the political participation of female voters include aspects such as their jobs and responsibilities, which cannot be neglected and significantly affect community political participation. Additionally, the level of education among the public, which leads to a lack of understanding about the importance of political participation in elections, plays a role. The community's distrust in the candidates they previously chose, who have not made significant changes, results in a lower awareness when selecting local leaders. However, the community remains enthusiastic about participating in the electoral process, even though some individuals do not take part in the elections.

The educational factors that lead to a lack of understanding among female voters regarding the dynamics of political science result in a societal unawareness of the importance of general elections. Additionally, the responsibilities that cannot be neglected hinder female voters from participating optimally in the 2024 elections. Furthermore, their confusion regarding visions and missions that do not align with their expectations diminishes their awareness and willingness to engage in the electoral process. Next, the prospective representatives provide assistance in the form of basic necessities to attract the attention of women's groups while voicing aspirations that will be communicated to the public through their vision and mission for the advancement of the region in the future. The political situation during the election process is orderly and

safe, reflecting the enthusiasm of the community in the implementation of all stages of the 2024 elections.

The importance of establishing credibility and political integrity of candidates in the conduct of elections is crucial, as this has the potential to ensure a satisfying level of political participation among women. In addition to image, a leadership spirit is needed that considers the interests of all, not just any one group. (Valiana & Trisiana, 2016). Based on the research conducted, it can be observed that the candidates for the people's representatives, who will be chosen, are one of the factors influencing the political participation of women's groups. This is due to a lack of trust in the candidates, including skepticism towards campaign promises, disinterest in the proposed vision and mission, and uncertainty among the public about whether their vote will lead to any impact or change. (Liando & M, 2014). It can be concluded that the public is confused about the vision and mission presented by the candidates for the people's representatives, which do not align with the expectations of the voters. Additionally, the public does not understand the significance of the upcoming 2024 general election.

The political situation during the entire stages of the 2024 general election, although proceeding safely and orderly, still shows a low level of political participation among women, particularly in terms of political awareness and public trust in the candidates they will choose. The political situation during the entire stages of the 2024 general election, although proceeding safely and orderly, still shows a low level of political participation among women, particularly in terms of political awareness and public trust in the candidates they will choose. (Viva, 2019).

The factors influencing the participation of female voter groups in the 2024 elections are as follows. (Azhar, 2019),:

1. Implementing activities that encourage enthusiasm in the organization of the general elections; where the government has not yet optimally motivated the community to participate in the 2024 general elections, providing political incentives to women's groups to engage in political activities, and participate in political discussions either directly or indirectly.

2. The personal characteristics inherent in female voters; the traits associated with female voters will reflect an individual's concern to actively participate in the electoral process through involvement in political activities, or a societal awareness that enables participation during local elections, which also serves as a determinant for one's engagement.
3. The social character that develops in the environment of female voters; An individual's environment, concerning the social aspect where the community participates in the organization of all stages of the 2024 general election or joins a political organization to engage and participate in political activities.
4. The political situation that develops in the interaction of female voters: The political context or environment and the surrounding social conditions of a good and conducive voter, so that voters feel happy to participate in political activities.

The factors mentioned are determinants of women's voter participation in the 2024 general elections, although there will certainly be various obstacles that need to be addressed by all elements involved in influencing the participation of women in the 2024 electoral process.

Efforts of Community Political Participation in the 2024 General Election in Pangatikan Subdistrict, Garut Regency

The awareness of female voter groups in the organization of the 2024 elections will encourage individuals to use their voting rights rationally. Without political awareness, political participation may occur, as seen in cases where voters simply cast their votes without truly understanding the implications, resulting in random selections. On the other hand, if political participation is based on political awareness, it will lead to choices that are good and aligned with the aspirations of the individuals involved (Fatwa & Nur, 2016). A community's concern in supporting the functioning of a political system in a region, when public participation in political activities is low, necessitates efforts by the authorities to enhance political participation among the populace. (Azhar, 2019).

Efforts to engage female voter groups in the Pangatrikan District of Garut Regency reflect a community's concern for participating in political activities and elections. Consequently, the researcher found that there are several initiatives undertaken by

election organizers, supported by the government, to encourage political participation. Based on the results of interviews conducted with community leaders and women leaders, efforts to encourage female voter participation during the elections indicate that the government's initiatives to optimize the electoral process include socializing the organization of the elections carried out by both the General Election Commission and the Election Supervisory Body, forming democracy volunteers, providing education to female voters, and the role of mass media in supporting the organization of the 2024 elections.

The participation of female voter groups in the organization of the 2024 general elections in the Pangatikan region presents a democracy that offers new hope for the sovereignty of the people (Kusmanto, 2014). The efforts of women's voter groups in participating in the organization of elections include the following:

1. The socialization of the 2024 general election is essential to maximize the process of informing the public about the importance of conducting elections in a democratic country. The organizers of the general election, both the KPU and Bawaslu, conduct socialization from the beginning before the election takes place to maximize the socialization process and provide guidance to the community to participate in the regional head election.
2. Establishing democracy volunteers Social activities aimed at enhancing community participation and the quality of voters in exercising their voting rights, democracy volunteers become partners of the KPU and Bawaslu in carrying out socialization agendas. Where the election organizers form volunteers to participate in the 2024 general elections and are able to encourage the growth of high awareness and full responsibility among the public to optimally exercise their rights in the elections.
3. Providing education for first-time voters and women's voter groups as an effort to educate first-time voters and women's groups is not only conducted when reaching voting age. However, more than that, education for first-time voters should be conducted as early as possible, so that understanding is built from a young age. Although it may be done in a general manner, it is

hoped that first-time voters will be able to participate in the general elections in 2024.

4. Enhancing the role of mass media as a means of socialization to the public, particularly to female voter groups, so that the community is well-informed about all processes and stages of the 2024 general election. Regarding the improvement of election organizers' performance, it is not only about the performance of the election organizers but also about fostering awareness of the importance of public participation in the electoral process. Furthermore, the role of mass media in disseminating pamphlets, brochures, or sharing information through social media is crucial to maximize the socialization process carried out by the village government, enabling the community to participate in the upcoming 2024 elections.

Based on the research conducted, it can be concluded that the organizers of the general election, consisting of the KPU and Bawaslu, have carried out socialization of the general election quite effectively from the beginning in implementing the activities for the 2024 general election. This aims to encourage the community, especially female voters, to participate in the election and to form volunteers to raise public awareness of the importance of elections. In addition, the group of female voters continues to receive fundamental and comprehensive political education so that they have a complete understanding, enabling them to participate in all stages of the election. The role of mass media is also very important in enhancing the understanding and participation of female voter groups in all stages of the 2024 general election, so that the community, especially female voters, can be involved. serta dalam pelaksanaan pemilu secara optimal.

CONCLUSION

The political participation of women's groups in the 2024 general elections in the Pangatikan District of Garut Regency has shown progress, particularly in the organizational stages. However, the active involvement of female voter groups remains suboptimal. Although many female voters have an understanding of political participation, this is not effectively reflected in their involvement in the electoral process. Limited participation in voting, campaigns, and political discussions highlights this issue,

as many women face barriers to fully engage in activities, such as becoming part of success teams for the elections. The manifestation of political participation is a critical indicator of political stability, revealing citizens' levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. However, constraints on the use of voting rights and participation in political activities emphasize the need for greater inclusivity and empowerment of female voters.

Several factors influence the participation of female voter groups in the elections, including political encouragement, personal and social character, and the political situation. The government's efforts to provide incentives and encouragement for female participation have yet to be fully optimized. Additionally, personal concerns and societal norms impact women's willingness to actively engage in political activities. A conducive political environment is also crucial in fostering active participation. To address these issues, efforts such as socialization programs, forming democracy volunteers, and providing targeted education for first-time and female voters are being implemented. Mass media also plays a vital role in disseminating information and increasing awareness about the election process, ensuring that women are informed and motivated to participate fully in all stages of the 2024 general elections.

and infrastructure for technology and evaluator training, is critical for RPL's success.

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