

Determination of Women's Electability in The 2024-2029 Jambi Provincial Legislative Council Elections

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Abstract: Women's representation in Indonesian politics is an important indicator of the quality of democracy and gender equality. Although an affirmative policy of 30% female participation in legislative candidate lists has been implemented, the level of women's electability remains low. This article examines the determinants of women's electability in the 2024–2029 Jambi Provincial Legislative Council (DPRD) elections using Casey's theory of political capital, which includes institutional, social, cultural, economic, and symbolic capital. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method to understand the factors that influence women's political success at the local level. The results show that of the 732 legislative candidates for the Jambi Provincial DPRD, 247 or 33.74% were women, but only seven (12.72%) were successfully elected. This phenomenon reveals a gap between symbolic representation and substantive representation. An analysis of political modalities shows that women who were successfully elected generally possessed a strong combination of capital—institutional support from parties (institutional capital), extensive social networks (social capital), credibility and education (cultural capital), financial capabilities (economic capital), and moral legitimacy and public reputation (symbolic capital). These findings confirm that women's political success is not only determined by affirmative regulations, but also by the ability of female actors to strategically manage and convert various forms of political capital. This article provides empirical and theoretical contributions to strengthening a more gender-responsive inclusive democracy.

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INTRODUCTION

Women's participation in the public sector, especially in the political sector, is still subordinated despite having been given ample opportunity, especially with the existence of laws guaranteeing equal rights and freedom of participation. Guarantees for women's representation in the executive and legislative branches are regulated in Law Number 2 of 2011 concerning Amendments to Law

Number 2 of 2008 concerning Political Parties and Law Number 7 of 2023 concerning the Stipulation of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 1 of 2022 concerning Amendments to Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections into Law, as well as Law Number 10 of 2008 concerning General Elections for Members of the House of Representatives, Regional Representative Council, and Regional House of Representatives, which mandates a minimum of 30% representation for women and requires at least one female candidate in every three lists of candidates proposed. Women's representation in this legislative body is an important aspect of achieving gender equality and ensuring that various perspectives, particularly those of women, are included in policy-making (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection [KemenPPPA], n.d.).

Women's representation in Indonesian politics has been a topic of ongoing discussion since the enactment of the 30% affirmative action policy for women's participation in legislative candidate lists (Law No. 7 of 2017 on Elections). However, quantity does not always correlate with electability. This phenomenon shows a gap between the symbolic and substantive representation of women. In the context of Indonesian democracy, women's representation still faces structural and cultural barriers, including patriarchy, limited access to political resources, and the dominance of male elites in political parties.

In 2024, Indonesia will hold simultaneous general elections, namely the presidential election and legislative elections. This is certainly a great opportunity for women to participate in exercising their political rights so that they can accommodate policies that have been gender biased. Although there are various regulations that support women's representation in politics, in reality there is still a gap in the election of women to enter the political arena. The trend of women's political existence has indeed increased in accordance with applicable regulations, although in fact, the election of women is still quite minimal due to several determining factors. In the context of the 2024 legislative elections for the Jambi Provincial House of Representatives (DPRD), for example, women have shown their existence by becoming legislative candidates, although this is certainly due to regulations that require 30% *affirmative action* for women and the existence of a *zipper system* in politics (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection [KemenPPPA], n.d.; Sunan Gunung Djati State Islamic University [UIN SGD], 2024).

The political presence of women in the Jambi Provincial DPRD legislative elections shows significant active participation. Based on KPU data on the Final Candidate List (DCT) for the Jambi Provincial DPRD 2024, there are 247 female candidates out of 732 legislative candidates, or around 33.74% women, which means that the affirmative action quota for legislative candidates spread across 6 electoral districts in Jambi has been met. Although this 30% affirmative action quota has been met, in reality, the election of women as members of the Jambi Provincial DPRD is still quite minimal, with only 7 or 12.72% of women elected out of 55 members of the Jambi Provincial DPRD appointed by the KPU (See Jambi, 2024; General Election Commission [KPU], 2024).

Table 1. Number of DCT and Elected Candidates

| | Number of DCT | | Number of Elected Candidates | |
|-------|---------------|------------|------------------------------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| P | 247 | 33.74% | 7 | 12.72% |
| L | 485 | 66.26% | 48 | 87.28% |
| Total | 732 | 100% | 55 | 100% |

Source: infopemilu.kpu.go.id

Based on this data, 7 women were elected from the 6 electoral districts in Jambi Province, with no representatives from Electoral District 3 (Sarolangun-Merangin) and Electoral District 6 (Tanjung Jabung Timur-Tanjung Jabung Barat). The seven women elected as members of the Jambi Provincial DPRD for the 2024-2029 term can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Elected Female Members of the Jambi Provincial Legislative Council

| Name | Political Party | Number of Votes | Electoral District |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Riana Doris Sembiring | Golkar | 10,642 | 1 (Jambi City) |
| Maya Fitriah Siregar | Nasdem | 16,144 | 1 (Jambi City) |
| Yuli Yulianti | Democrat | 11,585 | 1 (Jambi City) |
| Ririn Novianty | PAN | 16,867 | 2 (Muaro Jambi-Batanghari) |

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------|--------|-------------------------|
| Apt Rucita Arfianisa | PDIP | 24,281 | 4 (Kerinci-Sungaipenuh) |
| Eka Marlina | PKB | 14,147 | 5 (Bungo-Tebo) |
| Umaima Kamila | Nasdem | 5,397 | 5 (Bungo-Tebo) |

Source: KPU.go.id

The election of women in politics, particularly in the Jambi Provincial Legislative Council, is expected to influence decision-making and sort out masculine agendas in the political arena. The role of women should not only be descriptive but also substantive in decision-making. According to Imron Wasi (2020), the presence of women in decision-making plays an important role in overcoming disparities in access, rights, and roles for women. Thus, women's involvement in politics is crucial to realizing inclusive democracy.

The lack of women's representation in politics as members of the Jambi Provincial DPRD for the 2024-2029 period is inseparable from issues such as significant political party dynamics that affect women's chances of being elected. Parties often prioritize male candidates due to deep-rooted gender bias and traditional views on leadership roles. This systemic problem is exacerbated by the lack of female representation in party structures, which can hinder women's access to resources, networking opportunities, and candidacy. Encouraging parties to adopt gender quotas or affirmative action policies can increase the presence of women in legislative positions. Not only that, socio-cultural attitudes towards women in leadership also influence their electability. In many regions, including Jambi, social norms may still favor male leadership figures over women. Such perceptions can discourage voters from supporting female candidates or prevent women from running for office. Public awareness campaigns that challenge these stereotypes and promote successful female leaders can foster greater awareness.

The election of these female candidates as members of the Jambi Provincial DPRD cannot be separated from the determining factors of their election, especially since only 12.72% of the 55 elected members are women. Factors such as institutional, economic, social, symbolic, and cultural factors play an important role in shaping the participation and success of female candidates. These factors are the modalities of the elected female members of the Provincial DPRD so that they are able to survive and be elected as legislative members for the 2024-2029 period. This research is relevant because the election of women is not only a matter of numerical representation but also a matter of the quality of local democracy. Low representation of women indicates that the democratization process is not yet fully inclusive. In fact, various studies show that the presence of women in legislative bodies can provide new perspectives in the formulation of public policy, especially on social issues such as education, health, and social protection. Therefore, understanding the factors that determine women's electability is an important step in strengthening the foundations of democracy and gender equality at the regional level.

In addition, this article also provides a theoretical contribution by adapting Casey's theory of political modality to the local context in Indonesia. Most previous studies on women's representation in Indonesia have focused on structural factors such as the electoral system and affirmative policies, or cultural factors such as patriarchal norms. However, few have examined how the interaction between political modalities simultaneously affects women's electoral opportunities. Casey's approach allows for a more holistic analysis by viewing women's electability as the result of multidimensional dynamics involving institutions, social networks, cultural values, and political economy.

From a practical standpoint, this article is expected to provide input for political parties, election organizers, and local governments to strengthen women's political capacity. Political parties need to review their recruitment and nomination mechanisms to be more inclusive of female candidates who have competence and a social base. Meanwhile, government institutions can promote political education and economic empowerment programs for women to strengthen their social and economic capital. Thus, women's representation will not only increase quantitatively but also substantively.

In particular, Jambi Province is an interesting example because it has unique social and cultural characteristics. Some of its people still strongly hold traditional values that place women in domestic roles. However, on the other hand, a new generation of highly educated women has emerged and begun to be active in the public sphere. This tension between traditional values and modernity is an important social context in understanding gender politics in this region. In the local political arena of Jambi, women's electability is determined by the candidates' ability to navigate these social structures—combining cultural legitimacy with modern political strategies.

To examine the determinants of women's electability in the 2024-2029 Jambi Provincial Legislative Council Elections, this article uses an approach based on the theory of political capital possessed by female candidates that enabled them to be elected as legislative members for the 2024-2029 term despite the low number of women elected to the Jambi Provincial Legislative Council.

Political experts J.A. Booth and P.B. Richard (1998) define political capital as the activities of citizens to achieve power and democracy. A. Hick and J. Misra (1993) say that political capital is a focus on the granting of power/resources to realize things that can achieve the goal of gaining power. In essence, political capital is the power possessed by an individual, which can then be operated or contribute to the success of their contestation in political processes such as general elections.

In another view, Bourdieu (1986) divides capital into four types: first, economic capital, which consists of means of production, material goods, and money; second, cultural capital, which can be obtained from formal education and family; third, social capital or networks possessed by individuals; and fourth, all forms of status, authority, and legitimacy accumulated as symbolic capital. In this case, social capital is a form of capital that is quite interesting for researchers to look at and review further. Bourdieu defines that the actual and potential social capital that a person has comes from institutionalized social networks and continues in the form of mutual recognition and acquaintance (or in other words, membership in social groups) that provides its members with various forms of collective support. Bourdieu also emphasizes social capital as something that is interrelated, whether economic, cultural, or other forms of social capital.

Casey (2016) defines political capital as the utilization of all types of capital possessed by a political actor or political institution to produce political action. Casey further details the existence of four political markets that influence the amount of political capital possessed by a political actor or political institution. The first political market is elections because elections are the basic instrument for selecting leaders in a democratic system. The second political market is the formulation and implementation of public policies. The third political market is the dynamics of relationships and conflicts between political actors and political institutions in the formulation and implementation of public policies. The fourth political market is public opinion regarding political actors or political institutions.

This political capital is multidimensional and interactive, whereby political power is the result of a balance and interaction between different types of capital, rather than from one specific type of capital. A political actor will have great power if he or she is able to manage, convert, and distribute this capital. Based on the narrative presented by Bourdieu and Casey, the integration of political capital can be described as follows:

1. *Institutional Capital*

This is formal legitimacy obtained from political and institutional structures, such as political party support, organizational positions, or bureaucratic networks. This capital determines a person's access to broader power resources. In an electoral democracy system (), institutional capital is the main gateway to gaining public trust and party support (Casey, 2016; Budiatri, 2018).

2. *Social Capital*

Refers to networks, social relationships, and trust that enable individuals to obtain collective support. Social capital is an important political "currency" in patronage-based societies, because personal relationships are more decisive than political ideology (Siisiäinen, 2000; Putnam, 1995).

3. *Economic Capital*

This includes financial and material resources that can be used to support political activities. Bourdieu (1986) asserts that economic capital has the strongest conversion effect because it can be converted into other forms of capital—for example, campaign funds can increase social and institutional capital.

4. *Cultural Capital*

Related to education, knowledge, reputation, and symbolic values that give legitimacy to individuals. In a political context, cultural capital includes communication skills, moral credibility, and intellectual image (Dahlerup, 2006; Norris & Krook, 2011).

5. *Symbolic/Ideological Capital*

Unlike cultural capital, cultural capital is ideological and normative in nature. It represents moral and symbolic legitimacy that is collectively recognized by society, such as religious values, politeness, or ethno-cultural identity (Casey, 2016). In politics, cultural capital can be a decisive force because it functions as a "social license" to be accepted by the public. This capital refers to honor, reputation, or a positive image that provides legitimacy in the eyes of the public. For example, religious leaders or social activists have strong symbolic capital.

Political actors who are able to balance and convert these five types of capital will have a greater chance of maintaining a dominant position in the power system. Casey emphasizes the concept of *capital* interconversion—that political power is not static, but rather depends on the ability to convert one form of capital into another according to the needs of the political arena. For example, institutional

capital can strengthen social capital (because formal positions add credibility), while cultural capital can increase cultural capital (because moral values strengthen reputation). Thus, political capital theory provides a dynamic lens for reading the relationship between power structures and political agents in various social contexts. In the context of local politics in Indonesia, this theory helps explain why affirmative quotas are not enough to guarantee the election of women. Women need to possess and manage various forms of capital to overcome existing structural and cultural barriers.

Although there have been many studies on women's representation in Indonesian politics, most previous studies have emphasized structural factors, such as the electoral system, affirmative policies, and patriarchal cultural barriers (Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019; Prihatini, 2019). Research such as that conducted by Budiatri (2018) and Wulandari (2021) focuses on quantitative analysis of the implementation of affirmative policies and the number of women representatives, but does not highlight non-structural factors that can influence women's election results. In addition, very few studies have examined women's political capital in a multidimensional way, especially at the local level. Previous studies tend to be limited to one-dimensional analyses of political capital, such as party support or economic factors (Budiatri, 2018), while the social, cultural, and symbolic roles in the process of women's electability are often overlooked. This study attempts to address this gap by using Casey's (2016) theory of political capital, which offers a multidimensional approach, combining institutional, social, cultural, economic, and symbolic capital. With this approach, this study provides a more holistic understanding of how various forms of political capital interact to influence women's success in the local political arena, particularly in the Jambi Provincial DPRD elections for the 2024-2029 period.

Therefore, this study not only seeks to describe the numbers of women elected, but also to explain *why* and *how* this situation came about. Although affirmative action regulations mandate 30% representation of women on legislative candidate lists, in reality only 12.72% of women were successfully elected as members of the Jambi Provincial DPRD for the 2024–2029 term. This phenomenon shows a significant gap between the symbolism of women's representation on legislative candidate lists and the actual election results reflected in the number of women elected. This indicates that despite regulatory guarantees, women's success in political contests remains constrained by more complex structural and cultural factors, such as the dominance of male elites in political parties and challenges in accessing adequate political resources. Therefore, this article seeks to explain the determinants of women's electability through an analysis of political modalities. This approach allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the structure of opportunities and challenges for women in the local electoral political arena. The analysis was conducted by linking each dimension of political capital to the social and political realities of women in Jambi. Thus, this study is not only descriptive, but also analytical and interpretive—building a deeper understanding of the determinants of women's electability in the context of local democracy.

METHOD

The method used in this study is a qualitative method with a descriptive analysis approach. Qualitative research was chosen because it allows researchers to explore data in depth and understand phenomena that occur in the local context, particularly related to the determination of women's eligibility in the 2024-2029 Jambi Provincial DPRD Legislative Election. Qualitative methods aim to obtain meaningful data (Sugiyono, 2018) and to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, and actions holistically. The data is presented in the form of descriptions of words and language related to specific natural contexts, utilizing various relevant scientific methods (Moleong, 2018).

The main source of data in this study is female legislators elected in the 2024-2029 Jambi Provincial DPRD Election. In addition, secondary data was also obtained from official documents (such as from the KPU and legislation) related to the list of legislative candidates, previous election results, and affirmative action policies for women in Indonesia. In-depth interviews were conducted with elected and unelected female legislative candidates to explore their experiences in political contests.

Data collection was conducted using three main techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Data collection through participatory observation was used to directly observe the dynamics of the campaign and the role of political capital in the election process. Furthermore, in-depth interviews were conducted with elected female legislators, as well as with political observers and relevant parties in political parties. These interviews aimed to obtain subjective views and direct experiences related to the election of women. Finally, documentation was used to collect secondary data such as lists of legislative candidates, election reports, and policies related to women's representation.

The data obtained was then analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (2014) interactive analysis model, which consists of three stages, namely data reduction to identify and summarize data relevant

to the research objectives; followed by data presentation, which presents the data in an easily understandable narrative form directly related to the phenomenon being studied; and drawing conclusions based on the results of data analysis to answer research questions regarding the determinants of women's electability.

Furthermore, the theory of political capital proposed by Casey (2016) is used as the main analytical tool to understand how the four forms of political capital—institutional, social, cultural, and economic—play a role in determining women's success in legislative elections in Jambi. This approach allows for a more holistic analysis of how women can utilize various forms of political capital to increase their electability at the local level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Electability of Women in the Jambi Provincial DPRD 2024–2029

Women's representation in Indonesian politics is an important indicator of the success of democracy and social justice. Although various affirmative policies have been implemented since the 1998 reform, women's political representation has not yet reached the ideal proportion. In the global context, women's participation in parliament is one of the main measures of gender equality and the quality of democracy in a country. In Indonesia, despite the stipulation of a minimum quota of 30% female representation in legislative candidate lists as stated in Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, the actual level of female electability is still far below this limit. This shows that affirmative policies at the regulatory level have not fully guaranteed an increase in the substantive representation of women in legislative bodies.

Figure 1. Female Members of the Jambi Provincial Legislative Council for the 2024-2029



Women's representation in Indonesian politics still faces various challenges. In Jambi Province, the election of women in the 2024-2029 Legislative Elections only reached 12.72% of the total DPRD members. Based on KPU data, of the 732 legislative candidates for the Jambi Provincial DPRD, there were 247 female candidates (33.74%). However, only 7 women were successfully elected (12.72%) out of a total of 55 seats. This shows a gap between formal candidacy and actual election.

Table 3. Comparison of the Number of Female Legislative Candidates and Elected Female Legislators in 2024 in Jambi Province

| Electoral District | Number of Female Candidates | Elected Legislative Members Elected Female Legislators |
|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Electoral District 1 (Jambi City) | 52 | 3 |
| Electoral District 2 (Muaro Jambi – Batanghari) | 38 | 1 |
| Electoral District 3 (Sarolangun – Merangin) | 40 | 0 |
| Electoral District 4 (Kerinci – Sungai Penuh) | 40 | 1 |
| Electoral District 5 (Bungo – Tebo) | 41 | 2 |
| Electoral District 6 (East Tanjung Jabung – West Tanjung Jabung) | 36 | 0 |

(Source: Jambi Provincial Legislative Council, 2024)

The Province of Jambi, as part of the national political landscape, presents a rather intriguing picture. In the 2024–2029 Jambi Provincial Legislative Council elections, a total of 732 legislative candidates (caleg) from various political parties competed for seats in the regional parliament. Of these, 247 people, or around 33.74%, were female candidates. However, of this proportion, only seven people were successfully elected as members of the Jambi Provincial DPRD, or around 12.72% of the total number of legislators. The distribution of women's electability was also uneven and still concentrated

in urban areas such as the city of Jambi. This figure shows a significant gap between the level of candidacy and the election of women, indicating that the issue of women's representation is not only normative but also structural and cultural.

Table 4. Elected Female Members of the Jambi Provincial DPRD

| Name | Party | Number of Votes | Electoral District |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Riana Doris Sembiring | Golkar | 10,642 | 1 (Jambi City) |
| Maya Fitriah Siregar | Nasdem | 16,144 | 1 (Jambi City) |
| Yuli Yulianti | Democrat | 11,585 | 1 (Jambi City) |
| Ririn Novianty | PAN | 16,867 | 2 (Muaro Jambi-Batanghari) |
| Apt Rucita Arfianisa | PDIP | 24,281 | 4 (Kerinci-Sungaipenuh) |
| Eka Marlina | PKB | 14,147 | 5 (Bungo-Tebo) |
| Umaima Kamila | Nasdem | 5,397 | 5 (Bungo-Tebo) |

Source: KPU.go.id

The phenomenon of women's electability in the legislature, particularly in Jambi Province, cannot be separated from the political capital possessed by elected female legislators compared to other female legislative candidates who were not elected. This can be analyzed through the theory of political capital, which provides a multidimensional perspective on the political resources that influence the position and power of actors in the arena of power. There are five main types of capital that influence the political process, namely institutional capital, social capital, cultural capital, symbolic capital, and economic capital. These five types of capital do not work independently, but rather interact with each other to form a structure of opportunities and obstacles for political actors, including women. In the context of local politics in Jambi Province, these five types of capital exhibit a distinctive configuration. Politics in Jambi reflects a strong relationship between power, patriarchal culture, and a patronage-based social structure. This results in an uneven distribution of capital, which is often dysfunctional for female political actors.

The electability of women in this context cannot be understood solely as the result of individual efforts, but also as a reflection of the surrounding social and political structures. This means that the low level of electability of women is not solely due to a lack of ability or competence on the part of female candidates, but also due to inequalities in the distribution of political capital. In a society that still places women as secondary actors in the public sphere, women often face a double challenge: on the one hand, they must fulfill cultural demands as guardians of domestic values, and on the other hand, they must prove their political abilities in a competitive and masculine public space.

In the context of electoral politics in Jambi, these five types of capital operate with unique dynamics. Institutional capital includes structural support from political parties, institutional rules, and positions within party structures. Social capital includes networks of relationships and social connections that can be mobilized to gain political support. Cultural capital includes knowledge, education, rhetorical skills, and ideological understanding that enhance a person's political credibility, including speaking skills, education, and intellectual style, which serve to strengthen one's position in the political arena. Not only that, there is also economic capital, which includes the financial ability to fund political activities, campaigns, and patronage networks. Not to forget symbolic capital, which refers to honor, reputation, or a positive image that provides legitimacy in the eyes of the public.

1. Institutional Capital as the Basis for Political Legitimacy

Institutional capital serves as the main foundation for women to gain formal legitimacy in the public eye. Support from political parties, strategic positions on legislative candidate lists, and involvement in party structures provide significant electoral advantages (Casey, 2016). This institutional capital reflects the formal legitimacy and institutional support provided by political parties because, formally, parties support women to meet quota requirements. In an open proportional electoral system such as Indonesia's, political parties still wield considerable influence in determining logistical support and access to political networks (Budiatri, 2018). Therefore, women who are able to utilize party structures as a means of mobilizing votes demonstrate the conversion of institutional capital into social and economic capital.

Table 5. Elected Female Legislative Members and Their Political Parties

| Name | Party Affiliation | Description | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--|---|
| Riana Doris Sembiring | Golkar | Candidate Number 5, Incumbent Member of the Jambi City Regional Representative Council |  |
| Maya Fitriah Siregar | Nasdem | Candidate Number 5, Incumbent Member of the Jambi Regional Representative Council 2019-2024, Treasurer of the Nasdem Regional Representative Council of Jambi City |  |
| Yuli Yulianti | Democrat | Number 1, Deputy Secretary III of the Jambi Provincial Democratic Party DPD |  |
| Ririn Novianty | PAN | Number 1, Chairwoman of the Muaro Jambi Regency PKK 2017-2022 |  |
| Apt Rucita Arfianisa, S.Farm | PDIP | Number 1, Deputy Chairperson of the PDIP Faction in the Provincial Legislative Council |  |
| Eka Madjid Muaz | PKB | Number 1, Chairperson of the PKB District Committee in Tebo Regency |  |
| Umaima Kamila | Nasdem | Number 1, newcomer |  |

Women who are successfully elected are generally those who have good relationships with party officials or have been active in party activities long before the campaign period. Continuous activity within the party builds internal reputation and trust, which ultimately increases their chances of obtaining

a strategic number. Female candidates who are elected as legislative members generally serve as DPC or DPD party officials in Jambi and often have advantages in the form of support networks, campaign assistance, and symbolic legitimacy as strong representatives of the party. Thus, institutional capital becomes a starting point for women to gain bargaining power and credibility in the public eye. Women who are also incumbents (who have been legislative members in the previous term) also have significant institutional capital to be re-elected in the current term (2024-2029) because they have gained a place in the public eye, especially if they have had a good political track record in the past, then their electability will be quite high as institutional capital.

2. Social Capital as an Instrument of Mobilization and Public Trust

Social capital is the most dominant factor because it can serve as a bridge that transforms social engagement into tangible electoral support. Kinship networks and social relations play a strategic role (Beriansyah & Qibtiyah, 2023). Most elected women have kinship ties with local political figures or bureaucrats. Kinship networks are social systems formed through blood ties, marriage, or culturally recognized social affiliations. In the context of politics and public participation, kinship networks function as social capital that can increase women's chances of being elected to public office. Social capital includes trust, norms, and networks that facilitate collective action and coordination between individuals in society (Putnam, 1993).

For women, especially in regions with strong patriarchal cultures, involvement in kinship networks is often an adaptive strategy to gain social legitimacy and political support. Kinship relationships can provide access to political resources such as financial support, voter bases, and the influence of local elites. In many cases in Indonesia, kinship politics (dynastic politics) is the main means for women to enter politics, especially when male family members already occupy strategic positions (Buehler, 2013).

However, the use of kinship networks has two sides. On the one hand, it strengthens women's position by opening doors to the arena of power; on the other hand, it can undermine women's political independence because their success is often associated with male figures in the family (Aspinall & Sukmajati, 2016). Thus, kinship networks function as relational social capital, namely the power that arises from social closeness institutionalized through family and community relationships (Lin, 2001).

From a social capital perspective, women's success is not only the result of individual ability, but also of their capacity to manage social relations within the family and community. These relationships form social support that fosters trust, expands political networks, and strengthens social legitimacy in the eyes of the community (Coleman, 1988). Therefore, kinship networks can be said to be cultural social capital, which plays a significant role in the process of women's election to public office and local politics.

Table 6. Elected Female Legislators and Kinship Networks

| Name | Party Affiliation | Kinship Network |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--|
| Riana Doris Sembiring | Golkar | Wife of Effendi Hatta (Chairperson of the Jambi Provincial Legislative Council 2009-2014) |
| Maya Fitriah Siregar | Nasdem | Daughter of Samiun Siregar (Member of the Padang Sidempuan City Regional People's Representative Council 2009-2014) Sibling of Paris Siregar, Pardomuan Siregar (Member of the Jambi Regional People's Representative Council 2014-2019), Martua Siregar (Member of the Jambi Regional People's Representative Council 2019-2024) |
| Yuli Yulianti | Demokrat | Wife of Zainal Abidin (Former Member of the Jambi Provincial Regional Representative Council 2014-2019) |
| Ririn Novianty | PAN | Wife of Bambang Bayu Suseno (Deputy Regent of Muaro Jambi Regency 2017-2022 and 2025-2030) |
| Apt Rucita Arfianisa | PDIP | Daughter of Ahmad Zubir (Mayor of Sungai Penuh for the 2021-2024 term) |

| | | |
|---------------|--------|---|
| Eka Marlina | PKB | Daughter of Madjid Muaz (Regent of Tebo) Incumbent (Member of the Jambi Provincial Legislative Council) |
| Umaima Kamila | Nasdem | Daughter of Fachrori (former Governor of Jambi) and Rahimah (former member of the Jambi Provincial Legislative Council) |

Not only that, in the communal society of Jambi, social capital becomes a strategic force for women to build a support base. Social networks built through social activities, women's organizations, religious study groups, and local communities provide direct access to constituents (Siisiainen, 2000). Women tend to have high *emotional* capital—the ability to build interpersonal closeness and social empathy—which makes them more trusted by the community (Yulianti, 2023). This trust is a valuable political asset in a democratic system that is still personalistic. Female candidates in Jambi who are active in social activities (e.g., PKK administrators, professional and advocacy organizations, or MSME and religious communities) generally have extensive and loyal relational networks that play a role in mobilizing votes. This type of social capital has proven to be effective in compensating for limited economic capital, as community support is often given voluntarily, based on a sense of closeness and solidarity.

3. Cultural Capital as Legitimization of Competence and Credibility

Cultural capital in the form of education, organizational experience, and public communication skills is one of the determining factors in the electability of women. Female candidates who have a higher education background or experience as social activists find it easier to build an image as competent and credible leaders (Norris & Krook, 2011). Cultural capital is related to public image, communication, and community trust. Elected women generally have a higher education background and a good social reputation. They are active in social activities, have public speaking skills, and appear as figures who are considered *dignified and religious*.

In Jambi, this can be seen from several elected female legislators who were previously active in non-governmental organizations (NGOs), educational institutions, or professional organizations. Their experience in the public sphere is a source of strong symbolic legitimacy in the eyes of voters.

Cultural capital also functions as a counterbalance to money politics and patronage, because voters who value competence are more likely to vote based on a candidate's track record and vision. In this context, women can utilize cultural capital as a substantive campaign tool—emphasizing intellectual ability and leadership, not just popularity.

Although patriarchal culture remains an obstacle, cultural capital such as exemplary behavior and morality actually serves as a symbolic tool that strengthens women's legitimacy in the public sphere. Furthermore, cultural capital has the power to convert into institutional and social capital. The higher the quality of a candidate's education and communication skills, the greater their chances of gaining party support and public sympathy.

Table 7. Elected Female Legislators and Cultural Capital

| Name | Birth | Education | Previous Occupation |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Riana Doris Sembiring, S.H | Born in Kisaran, North Sumatra | Bachelor's Degree from Jambi University | Lawyer, Member of the Jambi City Regional Representative Council |
| Maya Fitriah Siregar | Born in Jambi City | At Taufiq High School, Jambi Student at Jambi University | Member of the Jambi City Regional Representative Council |
| Hj. Yuli Yulianti, S.E, M.M | Born in Jambi City | Master's Degree | Third Deputy Secretary of the Democratic Party Provincial Branch in Jambi |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|--|---|
| Ririn Novianty, S.E | Born in Tanjung Karang | Bachelor | Chairperson of the PKK Muaro Jambi Movement Team |
| Apt Rucita Arfiansa, S.Farm | Born in Sungai Penuh | Bachelor's Degree from the Indonesian College of Pharmacy | Pharmacist / Deputy Chairperson of the PDIP Faction in the Provincial Legislative Council |
| Hj. Eka Marlina Madjid, SE, MH | Born in Yogyakarta | Master's Degree from Tanjungpura University | Chairperson of the PKB District Committee in Tebo |
| Dr. Umaima Kamila, M.A.R.S | Born in Muara Bungo | Bachelor of Medicine, University of Indonesia Master's Degree from Respati Indonesia University | Doctor |

4. Economic Capital as a Support for Campaign Sustainability

Although not all female candidates have significant economic capital, effective political financial management can strengthen their electability. Economic capital enables candidates to run organized and communicative campaigns. The following is the State Officials' Wealth Report (LHKPN) listed on the LHKPN e-Announcement website, which is in accordance with what has been reported by the person concerned.

Table 8. LHKPN of Female Legislative Members of Jambi Province 2024-2029

| Name | Total Assets |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Riana Doris Sembiring, S.H | 21.476.526.508 (2024) |
| Maya Fitriah Siregar | 320.531.071 (2019) |
| Hj. Yuli Yulianti, S.E, M.M | 5.143.705.000 (2019) |
| Ririn Novianty, S.E | 818.850.247 (2019) |
| Apt. Rucita Arfianisa, Pharm.D | 239.729.822 (2024) |
| Hj. Eka Marlina Madjid, SE, MH | Not found |
| Dr. Umaima Kamila, M.A.R.S | 7.169.653.155 (2024) |

Source: elhkpn.kpk.go.id

In the context of Jambi, women who own their own businesses, are involved in family businesses, or receive financial support from their social networks are able to maintain consistent campaign intensity. According to Casey (2016), economic capital has a strong conversion function because it can expand the effects of institutional and social capital.

In addition, women who are careful in managing campaign funds tend to have a positive public image—as efficient, transparent, and financially disciplined figures. This image acts as additional cultural and moral capital, which increases public trust. Thus, although economic capital is often considered an obstacle, for women who are able to manage it rationally and proportionally, this capital actually becomes a tool for strengthening their image and political effectiveness. Economic capital has proven to be an important determinant in electoral contests. Women who have stronger economic resources or financial support from their families tend to be more successful.

5. Cultural Capital as a Source of Moral Legitimacy and Local Values

Cultural capital is a highly significant symbolic force in the context of local communities such as Jambi, where religious, traditional, and moral values play a major role in political preferences (Zulkarnain, 2024). religious values are often more easily accepted by voters. In this case, cultural capital not only functions as a complement to cultural capital, but also as a tool for *political framing*. For example, several female candidates in Jambi utilized moral narratives such as "politics as service" or "leaders as mothers to the community" to build emotional closeness with voters. This type of framing is effective because it is rooted in local cultural values that place women as guardians of social

honor. Thus, cultural capital allows women to reverse patriarchal norms into symbolic power, making feminine values such as caring and honesty legitimate and positive political capital in the public eye.

Figure 2. Cultural Proximity of Female Candidates and the Community
Women who are able to present themselves as moral, integrity-driven figures who are close to



When these five forms of capital are managed in an integrated manner, women have a great opportunity to penetrate local power structures. The pattern found in the Jambi case shows that female candidates who are successfully elected generally have a synergistic combination of social and cultural capital, which is then reinforced by institutional support or moderate economic capital.

The electability of women in politics has normative implications as a political phenomenon. The normative implications of this phenomenon show that even though there are efforts to increase the number of women in politics through affirmative action policies, the quality of representation does not always reflect substantive participation. More meaningful representation of women should not only be viewed from a quantitative perspective, but also in terms of the quality of their participation and influence in public policy-making. If dynastic politics continues to develop, this could exacerbate inequality in access to political power, where politics remains dominated by a handful of individuals or families, rather than being based on individual political ability and integrity. Thus, this article invites critical reflection on how affirmative action policies can be continued without falling into the trap of dynastic politics and oligarchy, and how the democratization process can be carried out in a more inclusive and fair manner for all levels of society, including women who want to actively participate in it.

Although affirmative action policies have introduced progress in terms of the number of women representatives, the results show that the representation of women who have been successfully elected—only 12.72%—is still very limited. This not only reflects the gap between regulations and actual results, but also indicates the potential for increasingly strong dynastic political reproduction, especially in regions with deep family networks within the political structure. Dynastic political reproduction has the potential to hinder the progress of a more inclusive and representative democracy. Dependence on family networks and patronage often leads political processes towards oligarchy, where power remains concentrated within a limited circle dominated by certain elites. In this context, women's representation is often trapped in the same political pattern, where elected women more often come from families that already have established political power, as seen in several female candidates elected in the 2024-2029 Jambi Provincial DPRD Election, who have kinship ties with previous political officials.

Within Casey's theoretical framework, this describes the phenomenon of capital interconversion—where strengths in one form of capital can compensate for weaknesses in another (Casey, 2016). For example, economic limitations can be offset by strong social networks; weak institutional support can be replaced by high cultural legitimacy. This means that women's political capital is not fixed, but can be strengthened through conversion and adaptation strategies to existing social structures. This process demonstrates women's ability to engage in symbolic negotiations of power—not by opposing the system head-on, but by using it strategically to gain recognition and representation.

CONCLUSION

Women's electability in the 2024–2029 Jambi Provincial Legislative Council Elections is determined by their ability to manage and accumulate political capital, as argued by Casey. Social and cultural capital play a dominant role in building public trust and legitimacy, while institutional and economic capital strengthen electoral competitiveness. The five types of capital in Casey's theory—institutional, social, economic, cultural, and cultural—describe the mechanisms for women's success in electoral politics. The electability of women in Jambi is proof that women who are able to balance formal resources (institutional, economic) with symbolic resources (social, cultural, cultural) can break through the boundaries of local political patriarchy. In other words, women's power in politics does not only lie in their formal positions, but in their ability to convert and articulate political capital according to their social context. Casey's approach emphasizes that women's politics is not merely the result of affirmative policies, but also an expression of women's adaptive ability to utilize various forms of power capital available in the social arena.

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