

WOMEN LEADERSHIP: AN OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE IN RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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There are some who say there are so many women on the floor of congress, it looks like a mall.

Representative Henry Hyde¹

Abstrak

Saat ini kita sedang hidup di suatu abad di mana kesetaraan hak menjadi “talk” atau pembicaraan semua orang. Lebih jauh lagi, “talk” itu sudah meningkat menjadi gerakan sipil untuk menuntut kesamaan hak bagi semua kelompok, tidak peduli agama, ras, atau sejenisnya. Salah satu masalah yang terkait dengan hal di atas adalah isu tentang kepemimpinan perempuan diberbagai bidang kehidupan terutama bidang politik. Peran publik perempuan khususnya aksesnya dalam dunia politik di berbagai belahan dunia, dan Indonesia khususnya ternyata tetap menghadapi berbagai kendala. Dunia masih saja menganggap bahwa politik dan kepemimpinan adalah wilayah laki-laki, sehingga jika perempuan terjun ke politik atau parlemen tetap dipandang sebelah mata juga hanya penggembira saja. Mayoritas pendapat mengatakan bahwa hal tersebut memang terjadi sebagai akibat faktor ideologi yang ada. Pengaruh bangunan ideologi yang sarat nilai agama dan budaya tentu tampak jelas dalam konstelasi politik di Indonesia. Penafsiran

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¹ Quoted in the *New York Times*, September 16, 1993

sumber-sumber hukum dalam agama yang kadang tidak di telaah lebih komprehensif dan budaya patriarkhi menjadi kendala yang luar biasa besar bagi upaya-upaya perempuan Indonesia untuk mencapai sebuah kesetaraan.

Kata kunci: *leadership, women, ideology.*

I. Introduction

By the middle of the 20th century, most of the nations on earth, except many of the Islamic countries and Switzerland,² had granted women the basic citizenship right of voting (although in the many non democratic countries, voting carried with it no real power of collective decision making). Women constituted only a tiny fraction of political leaders at any level. This has begun to change, although women are still a small minority of national leaders, and few women have led their countries.

For Indonesian context, we know that the historical evidences reveal a lot of facts that Indonesian women for a long time have had the chances to play important roles in the society. We found that in the ancient time some prominent women became heads of states, like those in Aceh, Java, and South Sulawesi. Even several of them were fierce fighters against the Dutch during colonial wars.

When changes came at the turn of century with the coming the Western ideas and education, women also took the opportunity available for them. Although their number were still very limited, some of them become leaders when women's organizations were established following the emergence of the Indonesian modern elite.

However, later development, up to the present time we noticed the fact that women had been left behind. Some scholars believe that Adam and Eva ideology as well as the 19th century Western ideology which are popularly known as the Victorian moral values are still very influential. Even the decision makers also believe in those ideologies in framing their policies for women.

Then, how about the leadership roles for Indonesian women today? In the globalization era, we have to realize that what happened in one side of the world will giving impacts to another side. These are not only in economic

² Virginia Sapiro, *Women in America Society An Introduction to Women's Studies* (California-US: May Field Publishing, 1999), p. 41

and market sector, but also in people movement, and others. According to this condition, by interconnected in the global world, women's movement to change their status on public sphere in the most of the nation on earth, will also being an inspiration for Indonesian women's struggle. Moreover, it appeared to us that this influence had made changed of Indonesian governance's policies, especially about political policies for women participation on public sphere or perhaps political field. In this case means that the chance of Indonesian women to attend on public sphere is more open, so there is an expectation that their status would be changed, gradually.

There are several meanings of leadership. But basically, leadership refers to power and authority which mean men's world or public sphere as contrast to domestic sphere (women domain).³ So, we need redefinition of the meaning of leadership in order to open new passage for women.

In our awareness, we admitted that the leadership role for Indonesian women in the House of Representative or as the decision maker position has not increasing significantly, yet. It happened not only in the national level; specifically on echelon, judiciary, law holder, and council, but also in the local level of Indonesian government. Of course, it will become a big problem for women leadership access.

What's up with Indonesian women? However, we have to recognize that never stop for a struggle. Recently, we knew how the fight of Indonesian women to reach 30 % quota on General Election-2004. Based on article 65:1 Law No.12 of 2003 about General Election, Indonesian women fight to fulfill the quota. But finally, the result shown that the quota have not been filled fully. Even, the leadership is not only in political field, but we have to recognize that the real power as a leader is when someone has had a position as decision maker of the House of Council or perhaps executive branch of the government, because all of these positions would be determined their destiny.

There are several reasons: "why the lack of leadership roles for Indonesian women happened?" Some scholars believe that the aspects of ideology become the reason. Basically, ideology has established by religious and cultural values. So, how actually the perspective of Indonesian ideology about women leadership? The interpretation of the verses of Holy Book and the practical legacy of the patriarchy system are still very influential for

³ Melly G. Tan, *Perempuan Indonesia Pemimpin Masa Depan* (Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1991), p.10

the reached of women leadership in Indonesia. We have to remember how the controversy occurred while Mrs. Megawati Soekarnoputri took over of the Indonesian president, after Mr. Abdurrahman Wakhid has impeached by People's Consultative Assembly. And the controversy is still continuing, especially when Mrs. Megawati Soekarnoputri goes into stock of nomination for Indonesian president on the General Election-2004.

II. Defining Women's Leadership

It is commonly argued that women have been kept out of politics and government as a role of leadership almost entirely, and that for a variety of reasons, women do not participate in politics. In fact, women have never been as fully absent from Indonesian political life as many people believe. There is no question, that women still have considerably less political power than men, and only a small fraction of governmental decision makers are women. Any way, what can women do for it? The first, of course it really important understanding what does the meaning of women as a decision maker or as a leader it self. Additionally, we also need to know why women facing difficulties with leadership or decision maker position, always. Actually, these difficulties caused by limitedness of access on the field of education and politics for Indonesian women. Gender gap in the field of education and politics has had a greater affect on the leadership roles of women in the society than perhaps any other factors.

It is true that through education, women can have a better chance to attain positions authority, but there are other dimensions that must also be developed by women. Leadership skill, both of men and women demand the following qualities; a genetic predisposition for leadership or intelligence and physical energy; personal growth through which a person learns to take responsibility for her / his own life; skills of conceptual analysis and understanding which enable a person to gain awareness and consciousness; the ability to receive feedback, by which people can come to understand their strengths and weakness as a leader; and a commitment to skill building or development.⁴ As a term, leadership refers to a set of social processes, such as directing the productive activities of a group cohesion, and so forth. It may also refer to individual performing leadership roles, as when reference is

⁴ See Jay A. Conger, *Learning to Lead: The Art of Transforming Managers Into Leaders* (San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher, 1992), p. 20, p. 46-50

made to "the leadership" of group or organization.⁵ Sociologists are particularly interested in the circumstances under which leadership emerges in groups as well as how particular individuals become designated as leaders. Leaders are more likely to emerge during a crisis, and individuals who participate the most are most likely to become leaders.⁶

Besides the definition above, a leadership has defined as a person who has an authority to make a decision which control over the minds and actions for the other.⁷ So then, we know that a leadership position owing to power as the centre. As political science scholar "Hans J. Morgenthou" remarked that power means man's control over the minds and actions of other men.⁸

Furthermore, according to Toety Heraty Noerhadi; a leadership refers to a person who reached out for power and authority of the society which means men's world or public sphere....⁹ A leadership also means a competitive advantage and hierarchy which has related to authority and responsibility. Consequently, a good leadership would reached when a leader has a capability or ability to take a wise decision in every cases. Thus, we know that actually, not only men, but also women be able to carried out the real role of leadership.

III. Religious and Cultural Barriers

A. Religious Perspective

Religion forms a set of way of life that based on revelation of God and will have been doing with full of conviction and faith as noticed on the Holy Book. As a plural state, we know that Indonesia also has a plurality on about religious life. At least, there were five formal religion existed in Indonesia, including Islam. This paper will take Islamic values as the basic of analysis, because upon thinking about the controversy of women leadership legality among muslim scholars has very strained in Indonesia.

⁵ "Leadership". Edgar F. Borgotta and Marie L. Borgotta, eds., *Encyclopedia of Sociology* (New York: Mac Millan, 1992), p.1086-1088

⁶ Allan G. Johnson, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology, A User's Guide To Sociological Language* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1995), p. 156

⁷ Nana Nurlina Soeyono, "Wanita Sebagai Pemimpin: Suatu Tinjauan Historis", in Atho Mudzhar, et al (ed), *Wanita Dalam Masyarakat Indonesia: Akses, Pemberdayaan, dan Kesempatan* (Yogyakarta: Sunan Kalijaga Press, 2001), p. 279

⁸ Hans J. Morgenthou, *Politics Among Nations* (New York: Alfred A. Koopf, 1978)

⁹ Melly G. Tan, *Perempuan Indonesia...*, p. 10-11

There is an opinion that is more easy to find of prohibition, than the other way on the classic literature of Islam, including about the prohibition of women leadership. When we discussing about the prohibition of women leadership, we should reminded a story at the beginning of Islam. At the moment, Siti Aisyah (Prophet Muhammad's wife) leds a battle (*Jamal* battle) towards Ali bin Abi Thalib. It means there were some disciples of Prophet Muhammad who stand behind Siti Aisyah accepted for women leadership as Siti Aisyah did. With reference to a story of Aisyah condition after this battle, where it said that Aisyah repents what she did; Yusuf Qaradhawi explained that the Aisyah's repentance didn't caused by her public role, but it because of her blunder within her political thought in that battle.¹⁰ So, it is a different matter! According to this situation, it would be important to rethink of the meaning of women leadership in Islam.

With regard to the opinion that remarks of the prohibition of women leadership in Islam, we will found that their opinion was based on Holy Qur'an, on: An-Nisa (4): 34;¹¹

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ ...

It appears that men as "qawwam" for women..., and the translation of Qur'an from Religious Affairs Department of Indonesia noticed that qawwam translated as "a leader",¹² whereas another source said that "qawwam" can be translated as "a protector or a maintainer". It refers to Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translation which is translated qawwam as "man are the protectors and maintainers of women".¹³ Let's breakdown this words; if qawwam had translated as a leader, there was a structural relation in this condition or perhaps shown bias, namely: men will become a ruler and then women will become a ruled. We know that this meaning often be an object of debate among scholars, although they realize that sometimes the limitedness of Indonesian vocabulary would be the single one of reason for this bias occured. But however, we should accepted this reality as an interpretation matters. Unfortunately, based on one of interpretations of this verse, some muslim scholars and politicians are still justified that there was a prohibition

¹⁰ See Yusuf Qaradhawi, *Fatwa-Fatwa Kontemporer – 2*, (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1999), p.543.

¹¹ See: Al Qur'an: An-Nisa (4): 34

¹² Al Qur'an Dan Terjemahnya, (Jakarta: Religious Affairs Department of Indonesia, 1982), see: An-Nisa (4): 34

¹³ See Nasaruddin Umar, *Qur'an Untuk Perempuan*, (Jakarta: JIL and TUK, 2002), p. 72

for women leadership, so a leader position just special for men.

Indeed, in other scholars were rejected hardly that opinion above with any arguments. There are: first, actually this verse is talking about domestic sphere context, so it couldn't become a basic for public sphere cases. Second, this verse hasn't a normative characteristic, but an informative about the situation and condition of Arabic society at the time, so this verse doesn't have a law consequences. Third, another verses explain about the permitted for women as a leader, as on at-Taubah (9); 71 :¹⁴

أُولِيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بَعْضٌ ...

This verse explained that both men and women have an equal rights upon leadership, and they become the opposition each other in the framework of good deeds, but not for evil one. And *aulia'* there means: an authority, leadership, cooperation, and mutual assistance. Fourth, *ar-rijal* on this verse hasn't mean men as a sex, but it purposes to a masculinity which it may linked to men and also women, so women have an opportunity to be a leader as same as men. According to those reasons, they explained that no prohibition of women leadership in Islam.¹⁵

In addition to the verse of Holy Qur'an as the basic, like what mentioned before, the scholars who have an opinion that no chance for women leadership in Islam also said that their opinion was based on the tradition of Prophet Muhammad. Abi Bakarrah r.a. reported the Prophet said:

لَنْ يَفْلَحَ قَوْمٌ وَلَوْ أَمَرَهُمْ إِمْرَأَةٌ

It means: "there would be unsuccessful for people who their affairs entrusted to women".¹⁶ Unfortunately, this tradition has become a controversial thing.

As the causal factor of this tradition remarked is when Prophet Muhammad accepted the news about the appointment of Persian King's daughter as the King's successor. Some scholars from all of the school of thought concerning *muslim* law (*mazhab*) were took an *istimbath* (conclusion of laws) of this tradition is based on legal norm (*ushul* norm): "the law conclusion has based on the meaning of the text, generality, and not based on the specific characteristic of causes", so they will make a conclusion

¹⁴ See: Al Qur'an, Al-Taubah (9): 71

¹⁵ Be summarized of Nasaruddin Umar, *Argumen Kesetaraan Jender, Perspektif Qur'an*, (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2001)

¹⁶ See: Yusuf Qaradhawi, *Fatwa-Fatwa...*, p. 543

based on the meaning of the text, generality, only. And the result said that their conclusion for understanding of this tradition is there was a prohibition for women leadership. And all of them also agreed that one of the conditions for being a leader is men.¹⁷

On the other hand, there is an interesting opinion, namely Muhammad al Ghazali's opinion. Muhammad al-Ghazali remarked that some scholars have misunderstood about the real meaning of the tradition. According to Muhammad al-Ghazali view, actually this tradition is very contextual, because it is talking about Persian society that led by an incapable women. So, this tradition isn't the principle for all of conditions. Besides it, Muhammad al-Ghazali also said that a leadership position hasn't defined by gender, but due to integrity, capability, acceptability, and of course public endorsement.¹⁸

Furthermore, notes on Yusuf Qaradhawi about the tradition that was mentioned earlier also remarked as Muhammad al-Ghazali did. Qaradhawi explained that the causal factors of that tradition is how unsuccessful of leadership occurred in Persia. Whereas at the time Persian led by an incapable women, even she is a Persian King's daughter. So, it is clear that this tradition explained of Persian society context. It is true that majority of Islamic Law scholars were appointed that "the law conclusion has based on the meaning of the text, generality, and not based on the specific characteristic of causes", but it didn't yet become the single one opinion of all of muslim scholars.¹⁹ And in fact; Ibnu Abbas, Ibnu Umar, and other, reported that "is a necessity maintaining for causal factors of every verses to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation". Thus, based on these opinion, we may conclude that Islam didn't prohibit to women leadership if all of conditions could be fulfilled.

B. Cultural Perspective

Then, how about women leadership of the Indonesian cultural view? Culture can most simply be define as "how we do and view things in our groups". It is shared set of values, assumptions, perceptions, and conventions, based on a shared history and language, which enable members of groups

¹⁷The explanation of this consensus; see: Al-Mawardi, *Al-Ahkam as-Sulthaniyah*, (Kairo: Matba'ah al-Watan, 1298 H), p. 27, also: Al-Juwaini, *Al-Irsyad ila Qawathi' al-Adillah fil-'Itiqad*, (publicated by: al-Khanji, 1950),p. 246-247

¹⁸ Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah Bayna Ahlil Fiqh wal Hadist*, (Kairo: Dar al-Syuruq, 1989)

¹⁹ See Yusuf Qaradhawi, *Fatwa-Fatwa...*, p. 544.

or community to function together.²⁰ And we know that the key to understand any system is to identify its various parts and how they're arranged to form a whole.

So, for Indonesian leadership context, the key to understand socio-political system in Indonesia, it is really important to identify something what very influential for it. As the majority of nation state on Earth, patriarchy system also influence to Indonesian culture.

To understand a language, for example, we have to learn its alphabet, vocabulary, and rules for combining words into meaningful phrases and sentences. With a social system such as patriarchy, it's more complicated because there are many different kinds of parts, and it is often difficult to see just how they are connected. Patriarchy's defining elements are its male dominated, male identified, and male centered character, but this is just the beginning. At its core, patriarchy is a set of symbols and ideas that make up a culture embodied by everything from the content of everyday conversation to literature and film. Patriarchal culture includes ideas about the nature of things, including men, women, and humanity, with manhood and masculinity most closely associated with being human and womanhood and femininity relegated to the marginal position of "other".²¹

In certain parts of Indonesia, the degree of female subordination appears to be linked to global development, such as colonization and the penetration of an international market economy into societies previously based on agriculture. Ethno-historical studies have shown that pre-colonial societies, for instance in Indonesian archipelago, had egalitarian relation between the sexes. The same studies reveal the bewilderment of the European colonizers and missionaries when they saw women behaving as equals to men.²² According to this same source, pattern of Western culture imposed on Indonesian society did not create the most favorable conditions for preserving Indonesian women's autonomy.

The importance of women among Acehnese of Sumatra and the Minangkabau is obvious because they are generally the producers and

²⁰ Alix Henley and Judith Schoott, *Culture, Religion, and Patient Care in A Multy Ethnic Society* (London: Age Concern England, 2002), p. 2-3

²¹ Gwyn Kirk, *Women's Live: Multicultural Perspectives-2nd.ed.*, (New York: Mc Graw Hill, 2001), p.30

²² Els Postel-Coster, "Women as Gift: An Observer's Model", in Henry J.M. Claessen and David S. Moyer, eds., *Time Past, Time Present, Time Future: Perspectives on Indonesian Culture* (Leiden: Foris Publications, 1998), p. 248

control the economic resources.²³ Moreover, women are decision maker and are at least as assertive, for they occupy central positions. These areas of the Indonesian society fit the criteria expressive of “mythical” male dominance²⁴, because there is balance between formal male authority and informal female power, or women exercise economic but not political power. The Laweyan and Kauman communities for example, are frequently referred to as matrifocal, in which the primary solidarity relations involve women. Women took charge of the production of the traditional textile, called *batik*.²⁵ In patrifocal society, where the rest of Indonesian people belongs to, patriarchy has been followed as the guideline of the society, and no egalitarian pattern of social relations is applied.

The lack of leadership roles for Indonesian women is a problem that can be attributed to the practical legacy of the patriarchy system. Patriarchy refers to “power of the fathers” and is used by feminists in two ways: to describe a society in which older men are in position of power and authority and to describe a male dominated society.²⁶ At the heart of patriarchy is an oppression of women that has historically caused them to be excluded from major institutions and professions such as government or academia. So it is clear that there were obstacles for Indonesian women struggle to reach the better status of their life.

IV. Women As A Leader

A. Women’s Opportunities

As what mentioned in the previous discussion, a leader is not only in political field, but also in other field. Even so, in fact shown that the real power as a leader is when a person who has had a strategic position in political field, because this position would be determined their destiny. Based on this reality, we will explain about women leadership in political field, specifically. As we know that Indonesian women living in the middle of complicated problems,

²³ Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Female Power and Male Dominance: On the Origins of Sexual Inequality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 116-117

²⁴Kuntowijoyo, “Arah Pengembangan Organisasi Wanita Islam Indonesia: Kemungkinan-kemungkinannya” (Development Direction of Indonesian Muslim Womens Organizations and Their Possibilities), in Lies M. Marcoes Natsir and Johan Hendrik Meuleman, eds., *Wanita Islam Indonesia dalam Kajian Tekstual dan Kontekstual* (Jakarta; INIS, 1993), p.130

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Virginia Sapiro, *Women in American Society*, p. 56-57

like: women abuse, gender gap in the education field, rape, women workers, and many others. All of these problems can be caused by unclear of the legal for women protection. So, through political roles, women expect that they will be able to look after their rights.

Then, in this part; we will talking about women struggle to attain to the position as a leader. If the gender is not the single one of parameter for become a leader, rather it was based on integrity, capability, morality, credibility, and also public endorsment, so there was no problem when a woman becomes a leader, in which she has fulfilled all of the conditions.

The beginning of women's participation in the political field can be traced to when they were allowed in 1955 to vote for the first time. This accorded with article 27 of the 1945 Constitution, which states that all citizens of Indonesia have the same right and status before the law and in government. Indeed, it is clear that despite the slow pace of progress in this area, women's participation in the political field is growing, whether in organization or political parties. In organizations, women serve on boards of directors, participate as members, or attend the general meeting of the organization.

In the political arena, they have the right to vote in general elections as soon as they reach the age of 17, and their exercise of this franchise has been increasing in the last few years. Women may also become members of political parties or representatives in parliament. However, the election of women to parliamentary seats remains low. In the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly, female membership remained at 10% from 1987 to 1992. In the Indonesian parliament on the other hand, their numbers rose slightly in terms of percentage from 12% to 13% from 1987 to 1992, that is to say, at about 12%.²⁷ With such a low level of representation, women cannot contribute much to the government's decision making process. In the judiciary branch, women occupied seven out of the forty seven supreme court positions during the year 1993 (15%). By way of contrast, between 1987 and 1995 female judges comprised an average of approximately 23% of all those in the lower courts.²⁸ This of course can be seen as a sign of progress in women's participation in the judiciary, especially when compared with other muslim countries such us Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam.²⁹

²⁷ *The Advanced of Women in ASEAN: A Regional Report*, (Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 1996), p.6-7

²⁸ *Ibid.* p.7

²⁹ In Brunai Darussalam women are not represented on the Supreme Court; and there are no female judges either on the Branch of the Federal Court of Malaysia. Refers to: *Ibid.*

Nonetheless, gender disparity in this field is still strong and in view of the enormous list of cases which are related to women's issues, surmounting this disparity becomes urgent.

Something what we must bear in our mind is the real condition of Indonesian women roles, especially in the House of Representative. Till today, women's roles as the decision maker position still in minimize. And we know that the leadership role for Indonesian women in the House of Representative or as decision maker position hasn't increasing significantly, yet. It happened not only in national level; specifically on echelon, judiciary, law holder, and council, but also in the local level of Indonesian government. It is properly if the percentage of women role in political field has a number increasingly, now, but the facts have not shown like it, yet. In 1999, women role in the House of Council reach out for 11 %, but in 2000: the number goes down to 8,9 %.

Somehow, we must have a certain optimist attitude toward Indonesian women condition, although we recognize that the attainment of a better status takes some years. As Adriana Venny opinion: "if the delegation of authority for Indonesian women to take a role on public sphere more large, as large as men, it will carrying new performant and new expectation for Indonesian politics that already corrupt, unbending, and patriarchy".³⁰ Women certainly optimist about this. While the 30% of quota for women in the House of Representative hasn't fulfilled this time, yet, but it doesn't mean that women efforts to reach their goals stopped. Hopefully, with more preparation, we expect that the percentage of quota will increasing in the next general election.

It is time for gender perspective becomes one of approachments in every sides of life, especially in the decision making process. It must be a difficult assignment, all the more so Indonesian ideological values like: verses interpretation and patriarchy culture, etc, are still influential. For example: actually, women were became the majority of vote in Indonesia, it proved by the percentage of the real number of women votes reached out 57% in general election-1999. And the facts that there was almost no change for that real number in the next general election (2004). Yet, based on reality: just a high number of vote didn't carrying an increase of women representation. It appeared to us that women representation had attained just around 10%. Therefore, taken 30% of quota as the setting standard

³⁰ Artikel Adriana Venny, "Menuju Politik Yang Lebih Berperspektif Perempuan", *Kompas*: 17 Maret 2003

for women representation in parliament is very important in the frame work of *affirmative action* and also in order to open new passage for women to increase their political participation within both of qualitative and quantitative values.

According to Indonesian case, we know that some scholars and politicians taken ideological values to fulfill their political interests, and usually, the subordination of women position happened. It shown in the general election sometimes ago that women candidates were on the end of candidates line in every levels. It means women still didn't have a strategic position in politics.

B. Women's Challenges

Women's challenges in the political field are mainly the result of their being underestimated and underrepresented. Actually, this condition can be caused by any reasons; including political obstacle like the less of access to authority, political net, and also education. Then, socio-economic problems, as less of income, discrimination, etc. And certainly, also ideological matters; including religious and cultural values. As some muslim scholars and politicians said that there was a prohibition for women to take a role in politics, especially about women leadership. And the cultural view shown that patriarchy system still living in Indonesia, so of course it can be influenced to many aspects of human being life, especially political aspect.

The lack of leadership role for Indonesian women is a problem that can be attributed to the political legacy of the patriarchal system. At the heart of patriarchy is an oppression of women that has historically caused them to be excluded from major institution and professions such as government or academia. Even, when they have been allowed to participate, it has generally been a subordinate and second-class levels. In Indonesia's male dominated and male centered society, position of authority are generally reserved for men. Men even see them selves as heads of the house hold, although domestic work, which is (ironically) undervalued is mostly done by women.³¹ Furthermore, inequality of oppotunity and achievement between men and women, in all walks of life, widens the gender gap. Additionally, Indonesian women are often discriminated against in school and occupational hiring,

³¹ Chatarina A. Mac Kinnon, *Toward A Feminist Theory of the State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 79

promotion, and reward.³² Logically, if some of these male dominated and male centered aspects of society were changed, there would be a better chance for progress in women's roles and participation in national development.

The gender gap in leadership roles in Indonesia exist for a variety of reasons: less access to education for women; large number of women in the field of agriculture and the wage earning sector, which includes teaching, survive and production; gender differences in work experiences; cultural discrimination against women; and wage inequities at every level of education. Consequently, Indonesian women face unseen barriers to their participation in jobs at the management level. It is not surprising, then that administrative and managerial positions are mostly held by men and that it is difficult for women to improve their status.

Another factor in the subordination of women in Indonesia is often considered to be a religious nature. The fact, of the matter in that injustices related to gender roles in society are due to interpretations that are considered to be as holy as religion it self.³³ Religion it self cannot be responsible for interpretations that seem to undermine women, nor can its interpreters be blamed because they expressed their own society and time. It is the contemporary muslim's who are to be blamed if they accept all such interpretations without reservation and without making any changes to suit their own condition and time. Consequently, it is quite incorrect to identity religion, in this case Islam, as one of the factors hindering women's efforts toward a better status, although it is correct to blame its interpreters for this interference.

Based on reality, how difficult the women position in Indonesia especially. An opportunity in many challenges will bringing pressure to bear on women's public roles. It is proper that government should protects the women's activities in political field with a concrete measures as a welcome attitudes for women's public role. For example: the government can make a regulation of meeting times for parties or parliament in order to make more equitable, so women can devided their time for public and domestic roles, clearly, and others regulations that have existence of gender equalities as its core. Consequently, women must promise to more pro-active in every democratic practices. It is important to open new passage for women roles on decision making process and not just as an object of policy.

³² See Allan G. Johnson, *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), p. 11-12

³³ Wardah Hafidz, "Feminisme: Agenda Baru dalam Pemikiran Islam" (Feminisme: New Agenda in Islamic Thought) *Ulumul Qur'an* ; no.3.vol VI (Jakarta, 1994), p.108

V. Conclusion Remarking

The relationship between women leadership and ideological aspects as the obstacle in Indonesia has experienced rise and fall. As what mentioned in the previous discussion, ideology as religious and cultural product could be influential for the women roles in Indonesia, specifically in the public sphere roles and especially about women leadership. There is a real controversy between scholars about women leadership matter, and its still debatable, and so forth. At least, we find the points as the conclusion; there are: *firstly*, the factor of the subordination of women in Indonesia is often considered to be a religious nature. Some muslim scholars remarking that there is a prohibition for women leadership. The fact of the matter is that injustices related to gender roles in society are due to interpretations that are considered to be as holy as religion it self.

Secondly, the minimize of women roles in public sphere, especially political roles in which it will access to decision makers position, could be attributed to the political legacy of the patriarchy system. We know that patriarchy is one of the oldest cultures in Indonesia, but still exist till this time. *Thirdly*, beside two points before, we have to realize that women roles in Indonesia has begun to change, although women are still a small minority of national leaders, and few women have chosen as representative. And *finally*, all person must have the full right to express their view and through organized, collective, and non-violent action, to work actively for positive, systematic changes that will guarantee reproductive choice. Women must have the opportunity to be involved at all levels of the political process and within all political parties and be encouraged to take positions of leadership.

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