

## The Actualization of Political Communication Deliberative Democracy of DPRD Medan Produces Gender Responsive Policies

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### Abstract

*Gender injustice is one of the main problems in Medan City, problems experienced by women in various problems including marginalization, patriarchal cultural factors, violence, human trafficking, and the position of women in the political realm. Women's problems can be solved with gender responsive public policies. DPRD as the manifestation of the people's voice, has a central role in realizing gender pengarusutamaan by producing gender responsive policies. The policies produced by the Medan City DPRD from period to term of office of DPRD members do not produce gender responsive policies, one of the factors causing the weak political communication. Weak political communication between legislative members, local government NGOs / CSOs and constituents. Whereas the interest group in producing a policy should have the obligation to convey ideas / issues summarized from various problems that occur in society, especially women in Medan City. The problem of weak political communication which results in the lack of gender responsive policies is the basis for the importance of alternative models of political communication in producing gender responsive policies. This study uses empirical methods with qualitative analysis followed by FGDs involving stakeholders, participatory, participatory, democratic political communication models that involve all interest groups by producing shared understanding and the best solutions in producing gender responsive policies.*

### Keywords

communication, deliberative democracy, policy, gender



### I. Introduction

The formation of regional policies is under the authority of the regional government which consists of the government (executive) and the DPRD. In accordance with Law 22 of 2003 concerning the composition and position of DPRD, they have the authority to formulate Regional Regulations (Perda), namely initiating the birth of the Draft Regional Regulations (Raperda) and also discussing and approving / rejecting the Raperda proposed by the executive. The regional legislative, DPRD has an equal position and is a regional working partner. Meanwhile, in running as a Regional Reference Agency, DPRD has the right to hold the regional head accountable. This position makes DPRD very central in matters of regional development. Of course, by collaborating with local governments and even the people. DPRD is used as an institution that becomes the foundation for fighting for the interests of the community in the area it represents (Fuad, 2000).

Therefore, in addition to the presence of DPRD as a representation of the people's interests, it is also an institution that strengthens local government governance, especially in

terms of listening to people's aspirations. So that strengthening the institutional role of DPRD in fighting for the aspirations of the people is an inevitable part. One of the important issues struggling for members of the DPRD Medan City is the problem of women, who experience various gender injustices in the midst of society, such as marginalization, patriarchal cultural factors that position women as number two, violence, human trafficking, and the position of women in the realm of political. Problems experienced by women in Medan can be resolved through policies produced by DPRD Medan City based on gender equality and pengarusutamaan. In the period of members of the DPRD Medan City for the 2014-2019 period, there have been three draft policies that are gender responsive and accommodate women's problems in Medan including the Draft Regulation on Cervical Cancer, Draft Regional Regulation on Human Trafficking, and the Draft Regional Regulation on Exclusive Mother's Milk. But only until the draft regulation, until the end of the DPRD member period in 2019, this draft did not materialize in a single policy which actually became a glimmer of hope for Medan City women who experience gender injustice and protect women from various gender issues.

One of the main reasons for the lack of gender responsive public policies in the women's legislative period and the non-raising of women's issues is due to weak political communication between members of the Medan City legislature in the process of forming public policies, in addition to the lack of knowledge of male legislators regarding the concept of gender and the importance of gender responsive policies so that there is often misunderstanding of communication between female legislators and male legislators in Medan City. The problem of weak political communication is also the lack of voices fighting for women's voices in the legislature. This is evidenced by only five members of the DPRD Medan City out of 50 total members of the DPRD Medan City. Whereas the women DPRD members in Medan are focused on struggling in a political policy process that accommodates the various demands, rights and aspirations of women. Various political issues for women such as issues of women's reproduction, issues of sexual violence, labor laws, and female migrant workers will be political issues that women continue to roll out in the legislative body so that in creating a gender-biased policy or gender disparities occur.

Weak political communication also occurs between legislators and local governments, NGOs / CSOs and with constituents as well as a problem in the realization of gender responsive policies. Political communication between DPRD members and local governments is more about discussing issues in general so that decisions are agreed upon regardless of gender equality in each policy. Political communication created during dialogue between legislators and constituents is less effective because it does not take place reciprocally which should be possible for every communication actor. freely convey their ideas and desires without distance. This is due to the passive communication carried out by constituents, especially female constituents, and political communication carried out by members of the Medan City legislature with constituents during the recess period, often misunderstanding. Likewise, political communication between DPRD members and NGOs is not actively established. The importance of an alternative political communication model for members of the legislature that is effective in producing gender responsive policies, so there needs to be a model of political communication between members of the DPRD Medan City, and political communication between DPRD members and local governments, NGOs and constituents.

## II. Research Method

This research method uses a qualitative method with direct observation, namely, observations made to determine the condition of the object regarding the activities of DPRD members in conducting political communication with fellow DPRD members, constituents and NGOs in producing gender responsive policies. Interview, literature study and continued with Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving stakeholders.

## III. Discussion

The Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) is a means of realizing the sovereignty of the people in the regions, both regencies / cities and provinces, within the framework of the government of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila. The DPRD Medan City, according to its function, is a representation of the people of Medan City, amounting to 2,602,612 people (KPUD data Medan City, 2013). Of the total population of the city of Medan, 1,711,878 people are registered compulsory voters in the 2014 elections. With details of male voters totaled 843,285 people and female voters totaled 868,593 people (2014 KPU recapitulation data). Of the 50 members of the Medan City DPRD, for each period, there are five women DPRD members who are a manifestation of the struggle for gender equality, especially for women. In an effort to further improve their bargaining position and provide an arena for sharing information, female members of the DPRD Medan City established a forum for parliamentary women called the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (KPP) of the DPRD Medan City. The Women's Parliament Caucus with its limitations seeks to abolish or revise all gender-biased regional regulations and encourage the birth of gender sensitive regional regulations. Members of the Medan City Parliamentary Women's Caucus are all women members of the Medan City DPRD. Consisting of a chairperson, secretary, and other members of the women's council as members of the women's parliamentary caucus. In its activities, the women's parliamentary caucus always discusses the issue of affirmation of each commission, issues related to increasing women's representation and specifically raises budget issues (Syafuruddin et al, 2015: 788)

Having members of parliament in the DPRD, especially women, will result in a struggle for a political policy process that accommodates the various demands, rights and aspirations of women. Various political issues for women such as issues of women's reproduction, issues of sexual violence, labor laws, and female migrant workers will be political issues that women continue to roll out in the legislative body so that in creating a gender-biased policy or gender disparities occur. Responding to this problem, intense and measured political communication is one of the most important things that members of the DPRD Medan City must do in fighting for women's rights in the policy-making process. It is through this process that issues exist to be addressed in order to produce solutions.

In addition, DPRD political communication in formulating a regional regulation can be viewed as a process. In this case it can be said that political communication is a process that integrates with political phenomena. As in the research results stated in formulating public policy at the regional level (Perda). Political communication is assumed to be what makes the political system alive and dynamic. Political communication presents a political system, so that aspirations and interests are converted into regulations that apply in the regions. The political communication process carried out by members of the DPRD Medan City, especially women DPRD members, is in fighting for women's rights in the process of making gender-based policies. Political communication carried out by members of the DPRD Medan

City in accommodating aspirations is not without problems. There are several notes obtained from field data as inhibiting factors for political communication by members of the DPRD Medan City regarding the gender-based policy making process, including:

1. Political communication that is created during the dialogue between DPRD members and their constituents is less effective because it does not take place in a reciprocal way, so that every actor of the communication should be able to freely convey their ideas and desires without being limited by distance. This is because the mindset of most female constituents of Medan city still feels taboo to tell about the problems experienced by them so that it is difficult for women DPRD members to gather information on women's problems in Medan City.
2. Political communication carried out by male DPRD members in Medan with female constituents during recess often misunderstandings, with regard to the fact that the focus of women's conversations is on connectivity, while men are on their status and independence. Differences create a gap between men and women, because each is in a cross-cultural position. Kramarae in Puji Lestari put forward a number of hypotheses about women's communication based on several research findings:
  - a. Women have more difficulty expressing themselves than men
  - b. Women understand the meaning of men more easily than men understand the meaning of women
  - c. Women have created their own modes of expression outside of the dominant male system
  - d. Women tend to express more dissatisfaction about communication than men
  - e. Women often try to change the dominant communication rules in order to avoid or oppose conventional rules
  - f. Women have a different humorous conception than men (Puji, 2010: 195). The communication difficulties faced by men and women are the same as those faced by people with different cultural backgrounds. Thus, gender differences still cause problems in communication, so that male DPRD members in Medan City have difficulty obtaining information about the needs and problems of women in Medan City. This can be seen from the draft regional regulations regarding human trafficking, male DPRD members in Medan City still see the contribution to the government, namely the absence of a list of Indonesian Manpower Service Companies (PJTJKI) in Medan City so there are still many companies that have not paid taxes. Because it's still illegal. Whereas in making regulations must be gender-based, because there are already 14 women in Medan City who have become victims of human trafficking.
3. The lack of knowledge of male DPRD members in Medan City regarding the concept of gender. Whereas the concept of gender is a trait inherent in both men and women who are constructed socially and culturally. For example, women are known to be gentle, emotionally beautiful and motherly, while men are considered strong, rational, manly and mighty. This difference is due to many things which are formed, socialized, strengthened and even constructed socially and culturally, through religious or state teachings, and ultimately are considered as provisions as the nature of men and women. This difference at the next level creates social injustice, especially for women. This concept is not understood by male DPRD members to fight for women's rights in Medan City
4. The small number of women DPRD members in a faction will reduce the chance of their electability to be involved in the DPRD organs and committee, this can be proven by only one female member of the DPRD Medan City, namely Mrs. Ratna Sitepu, who is involved in the Regional Regulation Making Body for Medan City, thus minimizing opportunities for political communication in fighting for women's rights in Medan City.

The above conditions indicate that the level of institutionalization in policy making can be said to be an interest bias. One conclusion of the researchers noted is related to the problem of the weak role and function of board members in producing this gender responsive policy based on various reasons; first, the stagnation of the political education process within the council members themselves. The understanding of DPRD Medan City members towards the substance of the orientation of gender responsive policy formulation based on the existing normative rules has not worked as ideally. The lack of knowledge of male DPRD members in Medan City regarding the concept of gender. Whereas the concept of gender is a trait inherent in both men and women that is constructed socially and culturally. Second: the commitment factor of Medan city council members with the local government and the absence of guidance in the two scopes of the institution. The weak commitment of this institution is shown by the ineffectiveness of a number of existing regulations regarding gender mainstreaming. Although the Gender Budget Statement has been around for a long time to be used as a budgeting instrument, in fact it has not been used effectively by local governments in the budget preparation process until today. In line with the results of research by Rusmiwari et al (2018) that there is no budgeting process that uses the GBS and GAP instruments, causing the existing program to be a top down policy and priority interests based on political considerations.

The weakness of the joint commitment of the two institutions to gender responsive policies is also reflected in the failure to formulate a common guideline that guides gender mainstreaming programs in Medan City. The absence of these guidelines has an impact on the incompatibility of pro-women's programs and activities prepared by members of the DPRD Medan City council and the government of Medan City. One of the factors that makes it gender unresponsive is the absence of verbal or written orders from any local government administration institution in Medan.

The third factor; In line with the results of the study by Rusmiwari et al (2018), they also state that in this case the rules regarding planning in producing gender responsive policies are seen from a cost and benefit perspective. Someone will act obediently or disobediently to a rule by considering the advantages and disadvantages of each action. In terms of implementing Permendagri No. 67 of 2011, both members of the council and the local government of Medan City are more likely to estimate the benefits they will get if they implement these regulations. Likewise, it will estimate the losses that can be obtained if you do not implement the norms in these rules. If you feel that the benefits you get and are worthy enough to be obtained, it is very likely that you will implement these rules. Even though, on the other hand, if by not implementing these rules there is no loss, it is very likely that it will not implement norms regarding planning in developing gender responsive policies.

However, the above problems cannot be used as an excuse for DPRD Medan City members not to carry out their obligations in building political communication and fighting for the interests of their constituents. The implementation of these obligations must be carried out in a serious manner so that it does not appear that activities in aspirations are merely ceremonial.

### **3.1 Political Communication Model of Deliberative Democracy as an Alternative**

In accordance with the categorical and thematic analyzes, the findings of this study can be divided into four problems. First, the perspective of the DPRD Medan City institution in the process of political communication can be found that there is disharmony and no integration of gender responsive policy formulation with the regional government of Medan City. Second, the absence of clear, measurable and thematic guidelines in developing and implementing gender responsive policies. Third, political communication activities that are



carried out are only ceremonial. Fourth, the lack of capacity building for members of the DPRD Medan City council and the Medan City regional government regarding gender-based public policy programs. These findings indicate that there is a lack of political communication both within the DPRD Medan City and externally such as the Medan City government as well as stakeholders and society. Even in terms of performance, initiatives in making policies are dominated by the local government of Medan City. So that the position of local government shows more distributive attractiveness than integrative. In fact, the ideal conditions in political communication require negotiation.

Local government political communication in the perspective of the legislative body of the DPRD Medan City found indications that the local government only wants to communicate with the executive government only not with the DPRD. DPRD is more positioned as "spectators" in producing policies. Currently, there is no regulation that explains political communication from the DPRD to be involved and participate directly in local government communications. So that the people's aspirations received by the DPRD go through a long process to be conveyed to the local government. Even so, it can still be found that there are local government policies that involve DPRD in conveying aspirations, advocating for and encouraging the emergence of the desire of local governments to be noticed, but this is not optimal, especially regarding the interests of women.

This study also finds that the existence of regional autonomy and regional heads who come from various political parties causes no synchronization of policies between the DPRD Medan City institution and the government of Medan City. So that in the process of political communication, local governments are indicated to be more concerned with utilizing their own authority without involving many legislative institutions such as the DPRD. The cause is a lack of dialogue in planning and limited rational options with limited time. Political communication between members of the DPRD Medan City and local governments in the formulation of gender responsive policies is still rigid, mechanistic, and depends on binding regulations such as laws, regulations or presidential decrees, regulations or ministerial decrees.

The theoretical implementation of the political communication model is more partial and takes elements that can be done pragmatically and is still not ideally understood and applied. Therefore, this study recommends that members of the DPRD Medan City and local government officials be involved in a joint activity that uses a participatory deliberative political communication model that takes into account harmonization and integration in formulating policies, especially gender-based. So that during the process until the application of this model, members of the DPRD Medan City and local government officials can become politicians, professionals and volunteers. Then the DPRD Medan City as well as the regional government can place their apparatus as political communication liaison officers who are able to bridge their respective interests.

Academically, the study uses the concept of a participatory deliberative democratic political communication model to propose an ideal model that can be developed in the context of political communication in government. Borrowing Habermas's theory (in Bantas, Hercules, 2010) explains that this Deliberative Democratic Political Communication Model is an actualization of the spirit of democracy - governance from the people, by the people, and for the people - and in particular is deliberative democracy. There are at least five characteristics of deliberative communication: (1) the existence of different views being confronted; (2) there is tolerance and appreciation for listening to other people's arguments; (3) there is an effort to reach consensus and respect differences; (4) old views can be questioned and have the opportunity to debate them; (5) coverage for communication and freedom without control. Deliberative democracy sheds light on how the legal procedure is

formed. Law, which is formalized in a deliberative democracy, is a dialogue between the legislative mechanism and discourses, both formal and informal, in the dynamics of civil society. Deliberative democracy provides space outside the administrative power of the state. These spaces are public communication networks in civil society. There is a clear correlation between the idea of democracy and the idea of deliberative democracy, namely placing the public in an emancipatory position to carry out legislative activities through public spaces. It turns out that representative democracy is not a pure form of democracy, but a modification of the purest form of popular sovereignty (Haliim, 2016)

#### IV. Conclusion

The deliberative democratic political communication model is a political communication model that involves two things, namely: (1) the existence of an analysis process (creating an information base, prioritizing key values, identifying solutions, weighing solutions, and making the best decisions) and (2) social processes which discusses opportunities, mutual understanding, consideration and appreciation (Gastil & Black, 2007) in every decision making by the central and regional governments in creating public policies. Participatory deliberative democratic political communication models based on the existence of different views being confronted; there is tolerance and appreciation for listening to other people's arguments; there is an effort to reach consensus and respect differences; old views can be questioned and have the opportunity to debate them; coverage for communication and freedom without control. The orientation produces intellectual skills of policy makers and strives for aspects of community participation in formulating and producing gender responsive policies.

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