

Analysis of Women's Representation in Student Organization Leadership and the Division of Gender Roles in Academic and Non-Academic Activities on Campus

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Abstract: *This study examines how women are represented in leadership positions in student organizations, as well as how the division of roles between men and women is seen in academic and non-academic activities in higher education (Butler, 1990). Women's involvement in student organizations is an important reflection to see the extent to which gender equality values are truly implemented in the campus environment. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews and direct observation of various student organizations at the university. The results of the study indicate that although women's participation in organizational activities is quite high, strategic leadership positions are still largely dominated by men. This inequality arises due to cultural influences, gender stereotypes, and general views that still place women in supporting roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). In addition, women are more often placed in administrative and social tasks, while men are more often involved in decision-making and in external organizational activities. Based on these findings, this study emphasizes the importance of implementing gender mainstreaming (PUG) policies and increasing women's leadership capacity (UNESCO, 2015). This step is necessary to create a more just, equal, and inclusive student organization environment for all genders.*

Keywords: *women's leadership, student organizations, gender roles, gender equality.*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini membahas tentang bagaimana perempuan direpresentasikan dalam posisi kepemimpinan di organisasi kemahasiswaan, serta bagaimana pembagian peran antara laki-laki dan perempuan terlihat dalam kegiatan akademik maupun non-akademik di perguruan tinggi (Butler, 1990). Keterlibatan perempuan di organisasi mahasiswa menjadi cerminan penting untuk melihat sejauh mana nilai-nilai kesetaraan gender benar-benar diterapkan di lingkungan kampus. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi langsung dari berbagai organisasi mahasiswa di universitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun partisipasi perempuan dalam kegiatan organisasi cukup tinggi, posisi kepemimpinan strategis masih banyak didominasi oleh laki-laki. Ketimpangan ini muncul karena adanya pengaruh budaya, stereotip gender, serta pandangan umum yang masih menempatkan perempuan pada peran pendukung (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Selain itu, perempuan lebih sering ditempatkan pada tugas-tugas administrasi dan sosial, sedangkan keterlibatan laki-laki lebih sering dalam hal pengambilan Keputusan maupun dalam kegiatan eksternal organisasi. Dari temuan tersebut, penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya penerapan kebijakan pengarusutamaan gender (PUG) serta peningkatan kapasitas kepemimpinan

perempuan (UNESCO, 2015). Langkah ini diperlukan agar tercipta lingkungan organisasi kemahasiswaan yang lebih adil, setara, dan inklusif bagi semua gender.

Kata kunci: *kepemimpinan perempuan, organisasi kemahasiswaan, peran gender, kesetaraan gender.*

Background

The issue of gender equality is increasingly gaining attention in various aspects of life, including higher education (Kabeer, 1994). As institutions that play a significant role in shaping character, mindsets, and values of social justice, universities should be inclusive spaces free from gender discrimination. Both men and women should have equal opportunities to participate and develop themselves through various academic activities and student organizations. However, in reality, gender inequality persists, particularly regarding the representation of women in leadership positions in student organizations (Connell, 2005).

The involvement of women in student organizational structures not only reflects their level of participation but also illustrates the extent to which the principle of gender equality is truly implemented on campus. Although the number of female students continues to increase, male dominance in strategic positions remains common. This indicates that the increase in the number of women has not fully matched their opportunities to occupy leadership positions and be involved in organizational decision-making processes

Various factors, such as patriarchal culture, gender stereotypes, and prevailing social constructs, contribute to shaping views on women's leadership abilities (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Generally, women tend to be placed in administrative or social roles, while men are more often considered suited to strategic decision-making positions. This mindset not only limits women's mobility within organizations but also reinforces the existing gender inequality in both academic and non-academic settings.

This situation indicates that student awareness of the importance of gender equality still needs to be improved. Student organizations, ideally designed to be places to learn leadership and democracy, actually have significant potential to foster a more equal organizational culture for all genders. Therefore, a study of women's representation in student organization leadership and an analysis of gender role distribution patterns on campus are crucial (Sutrisno & Wulandari, 2018).

Based on this background, this study formulates the following questions:

1. Is gender equality at Telkom University Purwokerto truly felt in daily activities, or is it still merely a concept on paper?
2. During your campus activities, have you ever seen or experienced a situation that you felt did not reflect gender equality? If so, what usually caused it?
3. What strategic steps can campus institutions and students take to build a more just and equitable organizational culture for all genders?

This research is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of gender conditions in student organizations and serve as a basis for formulating strategies to strengthen women's leadership capacity. Therefore, the results of this research are expected to support the creation of a more inclusive and equitable campus environment that implements the principles of gender equality in all student activities.

Research Method

This research uses a qualitative approach. This approach was chosen because it aims to gain a deeper understanding of gender equality within the Telkom University Purwokerto campus. Through a qualitative approach, we can explore the meanings and values that shape the campus community's views on the role of women in student organization leadership. This method was chosen based on the view that the issue of women's representation in leadership is not simply a matter of numbers or statistics, but rather is related to long-standing cultural and perspectives. Therefore, a qualitative method is deemed appropriate to explore how views that place women in substitute or reserve positions are reflected in the dynamics of student organizations, as explained in the study of gender and women's inferiority by Hastuti & Septiawan (2007). The primary data for this study were obtained through in-depth interviews and direct observation with several relevant informants. These informants included lecturers, students serving as leaders of student organizations, and other students active in campus activities. The results of the interviews and observations were then analyzed descriptively to find the main themes related to the representation of women in student organization leadership and patterns of gender role division in academic and non-academic activities, in accordance with the methodological guidelines from Sugiyono (2019).

Discussion

The Dilemma of Equality Implementation

The Gap Between Institutional Policy and Student Culture. This study analyzes the implementation of gender equality at Telkom University Purwokerto and finds a dual paradigm in its implementation, answering the question of whether equality is truly felt or still conceptual. At the formal institutional level, the university demonstrates a high level of commitment; informants (Mrs. Ami, Ms. Chika) point to the presence of a female Director as concrete evidence that structural barriers have been removed, and there is no discrimination in the allocation of lecturer assignments. However, at the level of daily practice within student organizations, qualitative research reveals that male dominance continues to dominate strategic positions and decision-making. This gap suggests that although Telkom University Purwokerto has successfully changed regulations and provided opportunities (as observed by Mr. Deddy), the university still grapples with entrenched social norms at the student level. Formal equality serves only as an

umbrella, while the underlying organizational culture tends to revert to the status quo that limits women's roles (Risman, 2004).

Identification of Task Clustering Patterns and Functional Role Limitations:

Gender inequality manifests itself through stereotyped role assignments based on gender assumptions, addressing the perceived lack of equality. This clustering pattern systematically limits women to administrative roles, while men monopolize roles that require power, physical strength, or perceived superior logic. A concrete example revealed in interviews (by Ms. Ajda, Student Executive Board Chairperson) is the tendency to delegate logistical and equipment tasks to men, due to the perceived superiority of men. Stereotypes even extend to the cognitive realm; male dominance in the Informatics study program is linked to the assumption of stronger logic in technical fields (Sister Ajda). This task clustering has a dual consequence: it not only limits women's leadership experiences but also implicitly reinforces the narrative that strategic leadership roles are incompatible with women's attributes (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012).

Dismantling the Ideology of Inferiority:

Biological Justification as a Primary Cultural Barrier The most fundamental root cause of imbalanced representation is the social construct that doubts women's leadership capacity, often disguised in non-academic justifications. Fatir's view, which links women's inability to lead to biological factors ("difficulty regulating their hormones") and a lack of emotional stability, provides a key case study. This argument is a form of discriminatory ideology that uses biological reasons as justification to exclude women from positions of authority. This analysis is highly relevant to the theoretical framework of gender and female inferiority (Hastuti & Septiawan, 2007), which emphasizes that subordination is maintained through cultural narratives that limit women's identities to emotional or domestic aspects. This view is reinforced by Adam's recognition that public opinion, which places greater trust in male leadership, also serves as a barrier that requires women to confront collective perceptions (Crenshaw, 1989).

Synthesis of Findings:

Failure of Cultural Internalization and the Urgency of Mindset Change. Synthetically, this research confirms that the issue of female leadership at Telkom University Purwokerto has shifted from an issue of access to a problem of cultural internalization. Although female directors have become symbols of equal opportunity, the culture of student organizations tends to relegate women to support system roles, reinforced by stereotypes about physical and emotional roles. This failure of internalization indicates that patriarchal culture still functions as an informal filter determining who is allowed to lead. Male dominance in leadership is no longer a coincidence, but a logical consequence of collective acceptance of this narrative of inferiority. Therefore, the primary task facing the campus is not simply to announce new regulations but to create an environment that actively deconstructs culturally inherited biases.

Strategic Recommendations for Organizational Culture Transformation:

Addressing this cultural issue requires comprehensive strategic action. First, a complete overhaul of the organization's task allocation is recommended, eliminating gender-based task clustering and assigning mandatory roles based on individual potential (Ajda). Second, the Institution must fully support the strengthening of women's leadership capacity (Kak Adam) through mentoring programs and special training to improve decision-making skills and women's visibility.

externally. Third, and most crucially, the campus must actively re-educate students by holding critical forums to dismantle and challenge the ideology of inferiority (Hastuti & Septiawan, 2007) that disguises discrimination as biological justification. These steps are necessary for Telkom University Purwokerto to transform from merely an institution that provides formal opportunities into an environment that culturally supports equal and fair participation.

Conclusion

This research reveals a fundamental contradiction in efforts to achieve gender equality at Telkom University Purwokerto. Institutionally, the campus demonstrates strong adherence to the principle of equality: structural barriers have been removed, as evidenced by the absence of discrimination in the distribution of lecturer duties and even the presence of a female Director. This formal commitment, unfortunately, serves only as a theoretical umbrella. However, at the student organization level, significant implementation gaps are found, where a practical culture dominated by patriarchal norms consistently hinders women's leadership opportunities. Qualitative analysis reveals a stereotypical clustering of tasks; women are often marginalized in administrative, emotional, or support system roles, while positions that require decision-making, physical strength, or are perceived as requiring "superior logic" (such as logistics or leadership in technical study programs) are almost entirely monopolized by men, effectively limiting critical leadership experiences for female students.

The most fundamental root cause of this imbalance in leadership representation lies not in formal access, but in social constructs that are skeptical of women's leadership capacity. These doubts are often neatly packaged in an ideology of inferiority that seeks justification through biological factors such as the perceived emotional or hormonal instability of women. This discriminatory view acts as a powerful cultural narrative, collectively accepted by the general public, which serves to justify women's subordination to positions of authority. Consequently, the problems facing this campus have shifted in essence: they are no longer about a lack of opportunities, but about the internalization of a patriarchal culture that functions as an informal filter. This filter implicitly determines who is qualified to

lead, making male dominance the logical outcome of collective acceptance of this inferiority narrative, despite the formal framework of opportunities being in place.

Therefore, transformation efforts at Telkom University Purwokerto must go beyond simply announcing new regulations and focus on deconstructing inherited cultural biases. The campus is obligated to implement comprehensive strategic actions. Key recommendations include three pillars: first, completely revising the allocation of tasks within student organizations to eliminate gender-based clustering; second, strengthening women's leadership capacity and experience through structured training and mentoring programs; and third, and most crucially, organizing critical forums that actively challenge, counter, and dismantle the ideology of inferiority that subtly disguises discrimination. These steps are crucial for Telkom University Purwokerto to fully transform from a mere provider of formal opportunities to an organizational environment that culturally supports equal and fair participation for all its students.

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