

## **BUNDO KANDUANG AND WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN 50 KOTA REGENCY**

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### **Abstract**

This research provides an overview of a study that investigates the role of Bundo Kandung in enhancing women's representation and empowerment in the 50' Kota Regency of West Sumatra, Indonesia. Bundo Kandung is a traditional Minangkabau institution that plays a significant part in the social, cultural, and political life of the Minangkabau community. This research delves into how Bundo Kandung's role has influenced the participation of women at that regency. The study employs qualitative research methods, including interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis, to collect data on the experiences and perspectives of women in the 50' Kota Regency. The research explores the historical development of Bundo Kandung, its organisational structure, and its contemporary role in women's lives. Preliminary findings suggest that Bundo Kandung has evolved, adapting to changing cultural and political contexts. It has played a crucial role in preserving Minangkabau cultural traditions and promoting women's involvement in decision-making processes at the community level. However, it also faces challenges and criticisms, particularly related to its role in gender issues. The research project aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of Bundo Kandung's impact on women's lives and the potential for future improvements in women's representation and empowerment.

**Keywords:** Bundo Kandung, Women Representation, Role Analysis.

### **Abstrak**

*Penelitian ini memberikan gambaran studi yang menyelidiki peran Bundo Kandung dalam meningkatkan keterwakilan dan pemberdayaan perempuan di Kabupaten 50' Kota Sumatera Barat, Indonesia. Bundo Kandung merupakan lembaga adat Minangkabau yang mempunyai peranan penting dalam kehidupan sosial, budaya, dan politik masyarakat Minangkabau. Penelitian ini menggali bagaimana peran Bundo Kandung mempengaruhi partisipasi perempuan di kabupaten tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif, meliputi wawancara, diskusi kelompok terfokus, dan analisis dokumen, untuk mengumpulkan data tentang pengalaman dan perspektif perempuan di Kabupaten 50' Kota. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi sejarah perkembangan Bundo Kandung, struktur organisasinya, dan peran kontempornya dalam kehidupan perempuan. Temuan awal menunjukkan bahwa Bundo Kandung telah berkembang seiring berjalannya waktu, beradaptasi dengan perubahan konteks budaya dan politik. Lembaga ini memainkan peran penting dalam melestarikan tradisi budaya Minangkabau dan mendorong keterlibatan perempuan dalam proses pengambilan keputusan di tingkat masyarakat. Namun, lembaga ini juga menghadapi tantangan dan kritik, khususnya terkait peran mereka dalam isu gender. proyek penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif tentang dampak Bundo Kandung terhadap kehidupan perempuan dan potensi perbaikan keterwakilan dan pemberdayaan perempuan di masa depan.*

**Kata Kunci:** *bundo kandung, keterwakilan perempuan, analisa peran.*

## Introduction

The representation of women's elements in politics is one of the important indicators in looking at gender balance in public decision-making.<sup>1</sup> In Indonesia, targeting provisions have been set to achieve 30% representation of women at all political levels through affirmative policies, but in reality, the achievements and implementation of these policies only have an administrative impact. Although the Indonesian political system underwent reform towards democracy, it has not brought significant changes to the representation of women's elements in politics in Indonesia. Although democracy manifests the desire that decisions affecting the association as a whole should be taken by all its members and that each member should have equal rights in the decision-making process, It turns out that the encouragement of these conditions has not increased the intensity of women's existence in general.

In Indonesia, as in many other countries, women often face challenges in achieving equal political representation with men. This can be due to a variety of factors, including patriarchal culture, institutional barriers, and gender stereotypes. Research on women's representation in politics attempts to understand the extent to which women are involved in politics, what challenges they face, and the impact of greater representation in the political decision-making process.

This condition also occurs in West Sumatra; the representation of women's elements in politics is a problem in West Sumatra. For example, the representation of women in West Sumatra politics at the national level is 22.22 percent, out of 18

seats (14 DPR RI)<sup>2</sup> and 4 DPD RI<sup>3</sup>) only 4 seats in parliament were obtained by women based on the results of the 2019 legislative election, although this figure changed to 27.77 percent after the 2020 election. Even at the local level in West Sumatra, the representation of women in provincial legislatures only reached 6.1 percent, whereas of the 65 provincial DPRD seats available, only 4 seats were obtained by women.<sup>4</sup> The same data flow also occurs at the city district level, especially 50 city districts, where out of 35 DPRD seats only 2 seats are obtained by female politicians, which means only 5.7 percent.<sup>5</sup> A sad figure is found if you look at the existence of women in the executive field where the achievement is 0 percent, of the 19 regional heads in West Sumatra there is not a single district/city whose regional heads are women.<sup>6</sup>

The low representation of women in politics in West Sumatra is an irony. As the only region in Indonesia that applies the material kinship system, a mechanism for measuring lineage through mothers, with the potential for ethnic homogeneity does not contribute to the representation of women in the political field. Even in West Sumatra, there is a custom specifically shaded by women called the term "bundo kanduang". Bundo kanduang has a role as an important traditional institution in the life of the Minangkabau people. Since a long time ago, bundo kanduang has played a role in maintaining and preserving customs and protecting the Minangkabau community. Bundo Kanduang became a place to complain for the community in solving customary problems.<sup>7</sup> The vital role of

<sup>1</sup> Sulistyowati Irianto. 2006. *Perempuan dan Hukum: Menuju Hukum yang Berspektif Kesetaraan dan keadilan* /1/934 "NAMA ANGGOTA DPRD TERPILIH PROVINSI SUMATERA BARAT PERIODE 2019 – 2024" DIAKSES 10 JUNI 2023.

<sup>2</sup> <https://kumparan.com/kumparannews/14-caleg-dpr-terpilih-sumbar-andre-rosiade-hingga-mulyadi-limapuluh-kota-periode-2019-2024-dilantik/>. diakses 10 juni 2023.

<sup>3</sup> <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2019/05/12/adi-kepala-daerah-di-sumbar-nevi-itu-bukan-ilusi.html>. diakses 10 juni 2023.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.binews.id/berita/1814/perempuan-1r5GoIEC1yV/full>. diakses 10 Juni 2023.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.binews.id/berita/1814/perempuan-1r5GoIEC1yV/full>. diakses 10 Juni 2023.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.binews.id/berita/1814/perempuan-1r5GoIEC1yV/full>. diakses 10 Juni 2023.

<sup>7</sup> Ermi Sola, 2020. Bundo Kanduang Minangkabau vs Kepemimpinan. *Jurnal Sipakalebbi. Pusat Studi Gender dan Anak UIN Alauddin, Makasar*. Vol 4. no 1. h 351.

bundo kanduang is clear evidence of the representation and representation of women's elements in politics, especially in decision-making in a society in Minangkabau in the past.

Bundo Kanduang is a term in Minangkabau culture that refers to matriarchal figures or housewives who have an important role in the social structure and culture of Minangkabau. They are often considered guardians of tradition and carriers of cultural values in Minangkabau society. In several studies, Bundo Kanduang was studied as a symbol of women's strength in the context of Minangkabau culture.

This study will try to describe the role of women's privilege in West Sumatra, namely 'Bundo Kanduang', in realising women's representation. Furthermore, this study will try to explore what factors cause the low representation of women's elements in politics in 50 Kota District, West Sumatra, as well as its impact on women's development and political participation. This research will also identify solutions to increase the representation of women's elements and increase public awareness about the importance of women's representation in public decision-making. Through this research, it is hoped that effective solutions can be found to increase the representation of women's elements in politics in West Sumatra, so that it can make a positive contribution to the representation of women's elements in politics in West Sumatra, especially in the 50 city districts.

The political representation of a group can be understood as the presence of members of that group in formal political institutions.<sup>8</sup> The theory, at its simplest level, is that representatives act in favour of the groups they represent. The theory of political representation states that representatives have the incentive to represent their interests in the future even though they do not share those

interests. In such a formulation, elections serve as a perfect marketplace in which all political demands are met. In practice, elections don't go that way. Most representatives tend to represent interests that are not theirs only when those interests form a broad, coherent, self-conscious minority in society.

In women's political representation, according to Lovenduski, there are two forms:

1. Descriptive Representation

The demand that women be involved in decision-making proportional to their membership in the population is a demand for descriptive representation (sometimes called proportional, delineate, or microcosmic representation). refers to the concept of political representation, which describes the diversity of the population equally among political representatives. In this case, women's descriptive representation refers to the presence of women in political power structures and political positions that are evenly distributed and to the proportion of women in the population.<sup>9</sup>

2. Substantive Representation

The concept of substantive representation extracts the content of the decisions of representatives. The substantive representation of a group is most simply described as a representative of its interests. This concept focuses on the ability of political representatives to champion issues that are important to women and pay attention to women's interests in political decision-making. Women's substantive representation not only ensures the presence of women in political power structures but also ensures that women's voices and interests are represented and accommodated in the political decision-making process.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Josefina Ericson and Cecilia Josefsson. 2022. *The Parliament as a Gendered Workplace; How to Research Legislators (UN) Equal Opportunities to Represent*. Parliamentary Affairs: A Journal of Representative Politics; Hansard Society. Oxford University Press. Vol 75, No 1 – January 2022. hal. 20.

<sup>9</sup> Joni Lovenduski. (2008). *Politik Berparas Perempuan*. Yogyakarta; Kanisius. hal. 52.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. hal. 55.

The concept of role refers to the role or function played by individuals in various social, cultural, and organizational contexts. Roles are the way individuals interact with others and their environment, as well as how they participate in activities and tasks appropriate to those roles. This is what was stated by Soekanto: that the role determines the form of behaviour and activity of individuals or groups in the context of their society. This role emphasises function, adjustment or adaptation, and a continuous process.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, Soekanto explained the types of roles as follows:

a. Normative role

This type of role is based on the analysis of the behaviour of a person or institution based on a set of norms, values, or provisions that apply in society. The same opinion was also conveyed by Nasution, who quoted Talcott Parsons more descriptively in his theory of social systems of action, which describes how social norms affect individual behaviour.<sup>12</sup> Thus, these views tend to reinforce the role of norms in society by proposing views on how social norms should be shaped to achieve certain goals.

b. Ideal role

An ideal role is a role performed by a person or institution based on ideal values or that should be carried out in accordance with its position in a system.<sup>13</sup> In his book, Raho explains that Durkheim argues that the ideal role is a description of how individuals should behave according to social norms and values that exist in society.<sup>14</sup> It can be concluded that there are different perspectives regarding normative roles in social society. These differences occur because of differing views on human nature and social norms, reflecting differences in their understanding of how society should function.

c. Factual role

The form of factual role is the role of a person or institution based on the concrete achievement of

facts or reality in real social life.<sup>15</sup> In his book, Raho also elaborates on the opinions of two experts regarding the role of facts. First, according to Emile Durkheim, who defines it as the way individuals act in daily practice, it can be different from ideal roles. Both of Goffman's opinions corroborate Durkheim's view of the factual role. Goffman views the factual role as an individual's performance in everyday life, focusing on the way individuals maintain a desired social image.<sup>16</sup> The synergy of these views illustrates the complexity of social interactions and individual behaviour in society and how social norms and ideal roles can differ from the reality of everyday behaviour by reflecting the variability and dynamics of social behaviour.

Therefore, this study tries to explore the relationship between Bundo Kanduang and the representation of women's elements in politics in 50 urban districts through the influence of the Bundo Kanduang concept to influence perceptions of the role of women in politics in Minangkabau society. Or vice versa, does the representation of women's elements in politics in Indonesia affect or be influenced by the cultural values contained in the concept of Bundo Kanduang? This kind of research can provide valuable insights into the complexity of the relationship between women's culture, tradition, and political participation in Indonesia.

## Method

A qualitative approach was used to analyse the representation of women as decision-makers based on Minangkabau local wisdom in West Sumatra. This research was conducted in West Sumatra, which is the only region in Indonesia that uses a meterylinial principle approach in its social life.

This research will make representatives of women's elements in West Sumatra (bundo kanduang) the object of study. Some cultural aspects that will be examined are related to the

<sup>11</sup> Soerjono Soekanto, 2002. *Teori Peranan*. Jakarta ; Bumi Aksara, hal 268-269.

<sup>12</sup> Marlian Arif Nasution. 2022. *Agama dan Masalah Makna Dalam Teori Sosiologis Talcott Parsons*. *Al-Hikmah: Jurnal Theosofi Dan Peradaban Islam*, vol 4(1). hal 133.

<sup>13</sup> Soerjono Soekanto. loc. cit.

<sup>14</sup> Bernard Raho. 2021. *Teori sosiologi modern (EDISI REVISI)*. Maumere; Penerbit Ledalero. hal 24.

<sup>15</sup> Soerjono Soekanto. loc. cit.

<sup>16</sup> Bernard Raho, loc.cit. hal 28-30.

kinship system and the position of women in socio-political life, customary law, and several traditions involving women as policymakers. To reveal this, in-depth interviews will be conducted with traditional leaders, community leaders, and academics.

This interview was conducted by purposive sampling in informant withdrawal, namely the withdrawal of data sources with measurable consideration of the informant's understanding of research problems.<sup>17</sup> Interviews were conducted by researchers with a wide range of questions, asking informants to share knowledge of various local wisdom that could potentially be developed as a basis for political solidarity. They will be asked to provide concrete examples of how those values can be developed as a political basis for women's struggle. All interviews were conducted in person and ranged from 48 to 98 minutes, accompanied by audio recordings made with the knowledge and consent of the informants.

In addition, data collection was carried out through observation and participation, with direct observation of social life and the phenomenon of women's representation in politics in District 50 City, West Sumatra. To triangulate the data, researchers will also conduct interviews with stakeholders, such as organisations related to women in West Sumatra. In addition, there is also a continuous dialogue with academics who have expertise regarding the interpretation of reality and ensuring the validity of information from sources. also conduct long-term observations and spare time at the research site.

## Research and Discussion

Bundo kanduang is a term used in the concept of Minangkabau cultural customs to define women in the social structure of society. However, following the development of the

government system in West Sumatra, bundo kanduang is also used as a term for women's organizations. Therefore, the term bundo kanduang will be described in two contexts in this study: bundo kanduang in the context of culture as an organ of social structure and bundo kanduang in the institutional context as a women's organisation.

Bundo kanduang when viewed as a social structure has a simple interpretation of being described as a woman who has a certain social status. Some literature defines bundo kanduang as a term for married women in Minangkabau.<sup>18</sup> Some define Bundo Kanduang as a Minangkabau woman who is married but must meet several criteria.<sup>19</sup> But if traced historically, Bundo Kanduang is interpreted as being the oldest woman in a tribe, derived from the term *mandeh sako*.<sup>20</sup> So it can be concluded that the meaning of bundo kanduang can be interpreted as a Minangkabau woman who already has a marriage bond and is made a woman who is used in matters of custom, culture, and society.

Etymologically, bundo kanduang comes from the words *bundo* (mother) and *kanduang* (womb), so of course this refers to mothers who have blood relations caused by marriage relationships in the social structure of Minangkabau society. Meanwhile, in terms of bundo, kanduang is a customary term given to Minangkabau women who have had a marriage relationship under the provisions of customs and are legitimately consecrated by their people. However, based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers, emphasis is also given to marital status because not all marriages carried out by Minangkabau women follow the provisions of customs and norms that apply in Minangkabau, such as *Sasuku Saparuiik* marriages (marriages of the same tribe that have close blood ties),

<sup>17</sup> Sugiyono. 2019. *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif & RND*. Bandung: Alfabeta. hal. 133.

<sup>18</sup> Ibrahim Dt. Sanggoeno Diradjo, 2009. *Tambo Alam Minangkabau Tataan Adat Warisan Nenek Moyang Orang Minang*. Bukittinggi ; Kritasl Multimedia, h 272.

<sup>19</sup> Ermi Sola, loc.cit. h 355.

<sup>20</sup> Ernatip dan Silvia Devi, 2014. *Kedudukan dan Peran Bundo Kanduang Dalam Sistem Kekebabatan Matrelinial Di Minangkabau*. Padang; Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya (BPNB), h 2.

marriages caused by extramarital relations, and even serial marriages and polygamy are allowed by belief. So that the condition of the woman's marital status will have an impact on embedding the title of bundo kanduang in the woman herself in Minangkabau.

The title bundo kanduang is given to Minangkabau women in accordance with the criteria of kato pusako (heirloom word) which reads “*dibias jo budi baiak, malu sopan tinggi sakali, Baso jo basi bapakaian, nan gadang basa batuah, kok hiduik tampek banzar, kok mati tampek banial*” (have noble ethics, have shame and courtesy, have social ethics and protect their aurat, have leadership and wisdom, time of life, place of vow, time of death, place of intention). “*Tiang kokoh budi nan baiak, pasak kunci malu jo sopan, biasan dunia jo akbirat, anuuh tampek mintak aia, lapa tampek minta nasi*” (The sturdy pillar of good mind, the main support of shame and modesty, adornment in the world and hereafter, when thirsty place asks for water, when hungry place asks for food)).<sup>21</sup> Based on this expression, women who become bundo kanduang in Minangkabau are described as married women who have authority, wisdom, politeness, empathy, subtlety, and the ability to introspect themselves and become role models, guardians of norms both for the family (their household) and the community (their people).

However, with the development of the constitutional system, bundo kanduang, which was once a title given to individuals, turned into an organized institution. In 1978, precisely on November 18, the Government of West Sumatra established the Bundo Kanduang institution as a tool to balance other women-based organisations that existed at that time. Bundo Kanduang was established based on the aspirations of the Minangkabau people at that time. This step also received support from the Minangkabau Natural Customary Density Institute (LKAAM), which

had already been formed.<sup>22,23</sup> So that bundo kanduang, which was only a cultural title, transformed into an organisation that has a structure in the life of the Minangkabau people.

Bundo kanduang, which has been transformed into an organisation that has its organisational mechanism, is still used as a means of preserving Minangkabau traditional and cultural values. Bundo Kanduang has a scope of activities in the community, both within the Minangkabau cultural area and the administrative area of West Sumatra and those outside the area. This happens because Bundo Kanduang as an organisation becomes an autonomous organisation that is given the authority to take care of its organisation independently by adjusting the community affairs where it exists based on applicable related regulations. This condition caused the Bundo Kanduang organisation to develop even outside the administrative area of West Sumatra Province, where this organisation was established, due to the effects of the Minangkabau cultural tradition of "marantau."

### **The Role of Bundo Bladder in the Context of Cultural Customs**

Based on the cultural perspective in analysing the role of bundo kanduang in political representation, the role carried out is categorically categorised into a normative role and an ideal role. A normative role is the role of a person or institution based on the order of norms adopted or believed in people's lives. While the ideal role is the role of a person or institution based on ideal values or standing in a system.<sup>24</sup> This is, of course, because in the process of analysing the role of bundo kanduang carried out, the analysis tool is the values, norms, and customs of Minangkabau itself.

In terms of norms and the order of Hinduism in Minangkabau, bundo kanduang is

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, hal 70.

<sup>22</sup> Iliia Paspirman, 2016. *Organisasi Bundo Kanduang di Kota Padang (1974-2015)*. Sarjana thesis, STKIP PGRI Sumatera Barat. hal 10.

<sup>23</sup> Fabela Adhitya Putri, 2018. *Eksistensi Organisasi Bundo Kanduang Di Kota Solok*. Skripsi. Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik Universitas Andalas. hal 5.

<sup>24</sup> Soerjono Soekanto, loc.cit.

positioned as "limpapeh rumah gadang" (kupu-kupu rumah gadang). This shows how important the role of bundo kanduang is in the social structure. Based on the results of interviews with resource persons, the depiction of bundo kanduang as the main pole of Rumah Gadang is part of the teaching of Minangkabau culture, 'Alam Takambang Become Guru'. This is based on the principle that when building a house or gadang house, the existence of the main pole is the key to connecting elements of the building and strengthening and protecting other pillars because if the main pole collapses, the others will fall apart or may collapse.

Bundo kanduang in the community order in Minangkabau is the peak of a mother's status because the bundo kanduang not only become mothers for their children but also become mothers of their entire people. Like a mother who raises children and takes care of their household, they are also entrusted with the trust to guide the example of their people as well as manage the property of their people. So in Minangkabau, Bundo Kanduang will have duties in the following;<sup>25</sup>

- a) *Manuruik Alua Nan Luruib* (following the rules); in Minangkabau the rules that must be followed are Minangkabau customs and Islamic teachings. There are 2 Minangkabau customs, namely; Alua Pusako (rules that have been formed from ancestors) and Alua Adaik (rules obtained from traditional musyarah).
- b) *Mamalihar Harato pusako* (Preserve heirlooms); According to the Minangkabau belief, all property and all assets whose basic benefits have an impact on the lives of the people and their ownership rights on behalf of the people, will be managed by bundo kanduang.
- c) *Mamalihar anak jo kamanakan* (Nurturing Children and Nephews); in Minangkabau culture, the responsibility of caring for children and nieces is the duty of all members

of a race. However, instinctively and psychologically, women have a more intimate closeness with children; therefore, women in Minangkabau are encouraged to be more dominant and easier to instill in children, especially concerning customary values and norms and Islamic religion.

In addition to the above roles, in the life of social order in Minangkabau, bundo kanduang is also part of the policy-making process of a clan. Broadly speaking, bundo kanduang does not have a significant role in the process of formulating a policy for a tribe in Minangkabau, but bundo kanduang has a crucial role in the process of legitimising a policy taken for a clan. This happened because leadership in the clan based on Minangkabau beliefs was handed over to men in a clan represented by Niniak Mamak, Datuak, Cadiak Panda, and Penghulu. A policy that has been prepared to be able to act as a tribal policy must get legitimacy or permission from the Bundo Kanduang kaum. Based on traditional beliefs in Minangkabau, the validity of a policy in a new community is categorised as a legitimate and wise decision if it has included female representatives of a clan, namely Bundo Kanduang.

There are many other roles of a bundo kanduang based on the cultural context in Minangkabau, but in this case, researchers see roles that are considered to be used in describing the representation of female elements in Minangkabau. Based on the description above, the author concludes that the role of bundo kanduang in the representation of women's elements based on cultural aspects occurs in the inspiring order of regeneration and social control. Indeed, quantitatively, in the aspect of women's representation, their role based on the cultural context does not cause a significant increase in women's representation. Of course, this is because the role they play is only normative and must be explained descriptively.

<sup>25</sup> Ernatip, op.cit. hal 81 – 97.

The role of Bundo Kandung consistently has an impact on the inspiring aspects of regeneration for women in Minangkabau. They suggest that women could have a strong and important role in society, although the surrounding culture might portray more traditional gender roles. This can motivate other women to take steps to actively participate in various fields, including politics. It even inspires women to better understand and appreciate their cultural heritage and maintain their cultural identity while involved in politics.

On the other hand, the role of bundo kanduang as part of social control shows that women can maintain a balance between living traditional traditions and customary norms and participating in the modern world, including politics. Their role as custodians of traditional values and Minangkabau customary norms causes them to act with integrity and high ethics. These conditions enable women to participate in various aspects of society in a way that supports cultural sustainability while creating positive change in society.

### **The Role of Bundo Kandung as a Government Institution**

Bundo Kandung, when transforming from a cultural element into an organisation and having a relationship with local government, has also changed its cultural role into an organisational role. The role they previously played due to cultural sustainability factors is now increasing with new tasks derived from the vision and mission of the organisation and the purpose of the establishment of the institution. This condition is actually in line with Soerjono Soekanto's explanation regarding the ideal role, which is the role of a person or institution based on ideal values or propriety derived from position, rank, or position in a system.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the role of bundo kanduang, which was previously an individual representation,

becomes a role carried out in a structural or communal institutional hierarchy.

Organizationally, the Bundo Kandung Institution was established with four objectives as stated in the AD/ART, namely;<sup>27</sup>

- a. The realisation of the position, function, and role of women with the Minangkabau young generation based on the traditional cultural order;
- b. Increase understanding and experience of traditional values of basandi syarak and syarak basandi kitabullah among women and the young generation of Minangkabau;
- c. Improve the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual abilities and intelligence of women and the young generation of Minangkabau to become human beings of character;
- d. Strengthening the kudukan bundo kanduang adat/Mande soko in the family, race, and community.

Based on the goals that the Bundo Kandung institution has set in its AD/AART, they formulate three activities into roles that must be carried out as their duties and functions as part of an organisation, namely;<sup>28</sup>

- a. Provide a briefing and explanation to Minangkabau women and the young generation regarding their obligations and responsibilities as individuals in family life, race, society, and banagari in accordance with the guidance of Minangkabau customary and cultural norms;
- b. Passing on the fundamental and instrumental values of Minangkabau customs and culture to the younger generation so that they can be the main reference in behaving and acting in daily life.
- c. Conduct continuous coaching for Minangkabau women and the young generation, especially related to Minangkabau customs and culture.

<sup>26</sup> Soerjono, loc. cit.

<sup>27</sup> Anggaran Rumah Tangga Perkumpulan Bundo Kandung Minangkabau, 2020. hal 2.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. hal 3.



The above points are the ideal role of Bundo Kandung as an organisation or institution, but to understand further their role as institutions, it is also necessary to see the factual role performed. A factual role is the role of a person or institution based on concrete reality in social life that occurs in reality. Based on the definition expressed by experts, there is a fundamental distinction between factual roles and ideal roles, where ideal roles refer to expectations and expectations while factual roles refer to facts that occur on the ground. So it could be that the ideal role possessed is not the same, even contrary to the factual role that occurs.

The role of bundo kandung is very important in maintaining Minangkabau culture and tradition, and as an institution, bundo kandung is mandated to do the same. They are tasked with preserving and promoting Minangkabau cultural heritage through organisational activities in the form of cultural festivals, art exhibitions, seminars, workshops, community empowerment, and even active involvement in policymaking in their respective regions. But like any other institution, their existence is greatly influenced by the environment in which they are located because of the different social challenges and problems in each region. So the role of bundo kandung, which was previously an individual representation, becomes a role carried out in a structural or communal institutional hierarchy.

Here are some factual roles of Bundo Kandung institutions that can be drawn into the context of realising women's representation: This was obtained based on in-depth interviews with the resource persons for this study, as follows;

### **The role of empowerment.**

Bundo kandung institution is very active in empowering women and communities in West Sumatra. As an institution they provide support, guidance and training especially to women to develop skills, knowledge and confidence. Many of these activities are carried out through various methods such as training, workshops, workshops.

Of course, this activity is not carried out alone by them independently but is carried out in collaboration with various parties such as local governments, non-governmental organizations and other existing youth community organizations.

This empowerment role not only applies to communities outside the Bundo Kandung organisation; it also applies to its members. The institution is part of the organisational and leadership skills training process for each of its members. They, as a formal organisation, have carried out the organisational mechanism neatly. For structural hiraki affairs, Bundo Kandung has a well-organised and well-recorded career path from the nagari (village), subdistrict(kelurahan), district(city), and even provincial levels.

### **The Role of Advocacy**

The Bundo Kandung organization is a driving force in fighting for positive changes related to issues relevant to women's representation. Although this role is not clearly standardized in the organization, the positive impact of this role cannot be ignored. As an institution, Bundo Kandung uses its influence and authority in advocating gender issues and other crucial issues in society. Of course, the activities they carry out as an organization aim to educate and raise public awareness.

This advocacy activity carried out by Bundo Kandung is part of a step to achieve their goals to protect Minangkabau culture, increase the role of women, and fight for the rights of the Minangkabau community more broadly. In particular, Bundo Kandung advocates for women's rights, both for women as individuals and women as part of society. Usually, their advocacy involves raising support from the community, effective communication with stakeholders, and ongoing efforts to achieve positive change. So one of the estuaries of their advocacy boils down to their ability to influence policy formulation or even change policy.

### **Participate in and influence public policy.**

Bundo Kanduang can rally community support and mobilise women's participation in the political process to ensure their voices are heard and counted. But in reality, they play a role as conduits of people's aspirations, of course, specifically women's aspirations, to the government and policy institutions. They can also act as calculators of aspirations, representing the interests of women and the general public, but they also assist in identifying the root causes of problems and providing input on ways to address them through government policies and programmes.

Bundo Kanduang also encourages active community participation in the decision-making process. They can organise community meetings, discussions, and consultations to ensure that people's views and aspirations are considered in policy. As an organisation that has a strong network and connections within Minangkabau society, they serve as intermediaries between the government and the community. Referring to the role of Bundo Kanduang as a cultural element that considers the decisions of a race, as an organisation, the role is maintained and even given legal strength and certainty. In the end, Bundo Kanduang organically considers its presence important in regional policy discussions such as the formulation of draft regional medium-term development plans and even in the process of formulating other regional regulations.

### **The Challenge of Realising Women's Representation in Politics.**

In carrying out its role related to the representation of women's elements in politics, there are many challenges faced by Bundo Kanduang. This challenge occurs because of the conditions faced as individuals and as an institution, both internal and external. The existence of this presents stumbling blocks for Bundo Kanduang in maximising actualization and achievements related to the problem of women's representation. Here are some problems that

researchers consider to be crucial factors in the challenges facing Bundo Kanduang in its role, including:

### **Women's Roles are Multi-complex.**

Women are naturally created to have complex roles and carry various roles and responsibilities in their daily lives. This can include a mother, wife, worker, friend, child, and possibly other roles in the community or society. Of course, living this multi-role life often requires a strong ability to manage time, energy, and resources to fulfil all these tasks and responsibilities. However, women with the above multi-complex roles still have limitations physically, psychologically, and socially. So that this multi-complex role in women cannot be realised simultaneously, causing her under certain conditions to make considerations and priority scales on what roles should be carried out.

Roles are multi-complex and have limitations; it is only an internal obstacle for women. The condition of the problem becomes increasingly complicated by external barriers, such as the minimal support and initiative of couples or the opposite sex, stereotypes of women's roles (cases, kitchens, and wells), and gaps in access and resources for women. This condition is increasingly burdensome for women's activities, especially for careers in positions that will be considered higher or "superior" than men. Indeed, this condition does not apply generally to women, but this is a problem for the majority of women.

The conditions described above prevent women from being actively involved in various activities and even politics and from obtaining higher career and structural positions. Efforts to minimise this obstacle include more encouragement for women to be more active but also certainty of occupying higher positions, because active encouragement without certainty is tantamount to legitimising women's views only. For this reason, as part of the research results, the strengthening of advocacy that has been carried out by Bundo Kanduang as an institution needs to

be strengthened by other stakeholders, both in terms of government and academics.

### **Politics Is Not Yet Gender Sensitive**

The condition of low political representation and the heavy burden of pressure of the challenge of *bundo kanduang* institutions in West Sumatra have a correlation with politics that are still not gender sensitive. Gender sensitive is a condition where a container allows the needs and interests between men and women to reach the stage of equality both in terms of composition, structure, operation, method and even work. This condition removes barriers, both substantively, structurally and culturally, to full participation between men and women in these conditions so that they become a forum that is not only able but desirable to work, do activities and contribute. So that in the context of the representation of female elements, researchers draw this description to see the practical political 'arena' as a forum to be explored.

This gender-sensitive phenomenon shows the level of complexity and change that occurs across time. As explained in another section, in Minangkabau, women have culturally been given the privilege of being part of the decision-making of a race, but these conditions can only be realised in the record of certain conditions. *Bundo kanduang*, which has transformed from a mere norm in culture to part of a modern institutional system, still cannot penetrate the achievement of women's representation. So the researcher concluded that in this case, one of the challenges in representation is the container itself, namely practical politics.

The discourse on the representation of women's elements in politics in Indonesia has been a narrative for a long time, as well as in West Sumatra. Many policies and regulations have been implemented to achieve the representation of this female element, but they have not yet materialized. In reality, in the realm of practical politics, the representation of women's elements is displaced by the still strong patriarchy in politics in West Sumatra. This condition is evident from the

dominance of men in politics, which can be reflected in a variety of ways, including the number of women elected as members of parliament, executive officers, or in important positions in local government.

This condition, according to the results of the research, is not only caused by the high interest of men in politics, but it is also exacerbated by the stereotype attached to practical politics itself. Women, both individually and in groups, have a negative stigma against politics. Political traits are more commonly identified as masculine traits, such as being rude, violent, conflicted, cheating, cunning, emotional, selfish, and egocentric. These traits are in stark contrast to the characteristic portrayal of women who are gentle, friendly, caring, sympathetic, affectionate, and loyal. In the end, it is the identification of the majority of women with politics that causes them to become a sustainable part of the political arena.

### **Women in the Shadow of Patriarchal Politics**

The high challenges and political arena are not yet gender sensitive; it does not completely stop the representation of women's elements in politics, even though it is in a small presentation and not by the targets set in the regulations. This condition is, of course, the answer in quantity and procedure to the representation of women's elements both in politics and public policymaking. But can this be evidence of successful efforts to encourage increased women's representation? Therefore, in this study, researchers also discussed the problem of the substance of the representation of female elements with the speakers.

Based on the results of interviews with sources, there is a phenomenon where, in political power struggles, there is often the use of women as political tools. This phenomenon is often found in conditions where women are positioned as part of efforts to continue to maintain legitimacy over power. This is often part of one form of the phenomenon of political dynasty in a region or region. If examined in terms of regulation, this does not violate the applicable rules or is

frequently part of some form of political unrest in a region. Even in terms of quantity, this is part of the solution to increase the percentage of representation of the female element itself.

The process of using women as part of a strategy to maintain the legitimacy of this power only becomes a problem if we see the side effects of women's involvement as a representation of women's representation. The majority of problems in this condition occur when women who become political tools are unable to escape or even absolutely only act as successors of the political choices and interests of the controlling men. So the existence of these women as a representation of the representation of female elements turns into a representative representation of political interests.

Apart from the above problems, the condition of patriarchal profits in politics can also be seen from the picture of the reality of community organizations in 50 kota or even West Sumatra itself. Culture-based community organisations are not only *bundo kanduang*; there are also LKKAM and Kerapatan Adat Nagari (KAN), but only *bundo kanduang* as organisations that do not open opportunities to utilise the potential benefits of social capital. This can be seen from the fact that, organisationally, *Bundo Kanduang* does not allow the elite of its organisation to use the status of *Bundo Kanduang* to be involved in politics. Of course, this condition limits their opportunity to enjoy the benefits of social capital as a political resource. While other culture-based organisations do not apply the dominated by patriarchs. So that those occupying the positions of strategists or elites in the organisation can freely crystallise the gains of social capital into their political resources.

## Conclusion

An analysis of the role of *bundo kanduang* in the representation of women's elements in District 50 kota of West Sumatra City reveals a complex relationship between traditions, cultures, and gender dynamics that continues to develop.

The study highlights the historical significance of *Bundo Kanduang*, its relevance today, and the challenges it faces in encouraging women's participation and empowerment in the region. Unfortunately, the relationship between *Bundo Kanduang* and the representation of women's elements in politics is not significant. *Bundo kanduang* as a forum for strengthening women has traditionally been dragged into the administrative dynamics of government alone, thus failing to assess the potential and value contained in it to become the main motor of women's representation, especially in the 50 Kota District.

*Bundo kanduang* has a deep-rooted historical meaning in Minangkabau society, serving as a guardian of traditions and cultural values. Over time, she, who initially only became a symbol of Minangkabau identity, transformed into a formal institution that contributed to the preservation of cultural heritage and increased the representation of women's elements in various aspects.

Research findings show that *bundo kanduang* plays an important role in encouraging women's involvement in community affairs, but in its implementation in the field, this is not optimal. *Bundo Kanduang* has provided a platform for women to voice their concerns and participate in decision-making processes, particularly in matters related to culture, family, and social life. Unfortunately, at the same time, *Bundo Kanduang* faces great challenges. Traditional gender roles and rigid hierarchical structures limit the full potential to promote women's representation. The tension between preserving traditions and adapting to modern gender dynamics is a major challenge. *Bundo Kanduang* has shown its adaptability, adapting to changing social and political contexts. As the world changes, it finds ways to stay relevant and make a positive contribution to the lives of women in the 50 kota District. In the end, it needs to be understood that the role of *Bundo Kanduang* in the representation of women's elements in the 50 kota District has many aspects. Although they have historically

played an important role in preserving culture and empowering women, they face challenges from patriarchal, conservative mindsets and hierarchies of social structures in society.

By understanding this complexity, there is an opportunity to work towards a more inclusive and gender-equitable future for women in West Sumatra, one that respects and celebrates traditions while promoting modern ideals of gender equality and representation. The study provides a foundation for further research and action on the ongoing journey towards women's empowerment and cultural preservation in the region.

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