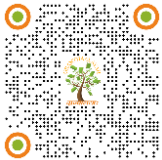


HOW DOES WOMEN IN SECURING ELECTORAL VOTE IN INDONESIAN POLITIC? INSIGHT FROM SOUTH SUMATERA PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

The issue of women's representation in politics has become an interesting discourse in various countries, even in Indonesia. The advancement of female candidates needs to be appreciated in the midst of the patriarchal culture that is still inherent in Indonesia. The presence of women in politics cannot be separated from the role of family ties. This is the focus and purpose of this article, which is to describe the family ties that influence women's electability in politics. The research method used in this article is a qualitative-descriptive method through literature study to explain the family ties factor in Ratu Tenny Leriva's representation as a senator for the 2024 South Sumatra Electoral District. Using the theoretical framework of the Richter model of family ties, this study reveals that Ratu Tenny Leriva's election cannot be separated from Herman Deru's position and influence. As a former Governor, Regent, and Chairman of the Regional Representative Council of the NasDem Party in South Sumatra, Herman Deru facilitated Ratu Tenny Leriva in building a positive image, popularity, and electability, despite being a newcomer and still 23 years old. This can be seen from Ratu Tenny Leriva's involvement in various public spaces and campaign periods, where many billboards or posters include Herman Deru's photo. This family bond is an important factor and political modality in Ratu Tenny Leriva's electability in South Sumatra in 2024.

Keywords: Legislative Election, Women Representation, Ratu Tenny Leriva, Herman Deru, Family Ties

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of women's representation in politics garners significant global interest, particularly within social and political science. This topic is often examined through the lens of gender stereotypes, which are widely acknowledged as major global challenges, particularly in their impact on voter decisions [Gottlieb et al. \(2016\)](#), which is not only in the United States and Japan but also in Indonesia. [Dolan \(2014\)](#) highlights that in the U.S.A, these stereotypes significantly influence voters'

choices regarding female candidates. Conversely, in Japan, [Kage et al. \(2019\)](#) found that gender bias has a minimal effect on voters' decisions about female candidates. In Indonesia, [Rahmatunnisa \(2016\)](#) identified the strong culture of masculinity and prevailing perceptions of women in politics as major barriers to increasing female representation in parliament. In these cases, Paxton, [Kunovich & Hughes \(2007\)](#) argued that politics, the public sector, and government are often viewed as masculine domains. This view reinforces the stereotype that these areas are unsuitable for women, who are frequently seen as secondary. Such gender biases contribute to the underrepresentation of women and perpetuate the belief that politics and government are predominantly male spheres, creating significant obstacles for women in electoral politics.

In Indonesia, the issue of women's representation in politics has been significantly influenced by the global feminist movement advocating for equal rights in public spheres [Soeseno \(2014\)](#). This movement aimed to address the gender imbalance in politics. Interest in women's political participation has gradually increased, particularly since the introduction of a 30 percent gender quota for parliamentary seats through affirmative policies in 2004 [Prihatini \(2019b\)](#). As a result, women's political representation has become a significant aspect of electoral politics in Indonesia. Despite these efforts, the advancement of women in political contests faces challenges due to the role of political parties [Barnes & Córdova \(2016\)](#), persistent gender stereotypes, and deeply ingrained patriarchal cultural norms. This can be seen from women's representation in Indonesian political arenas at both national and local levels remains low and has not yet met the 30 percent target established in 2004. For instance, women's representation in the House of Representatives was 8.8% in 1999, 11.82% in 2004, 17.86% in 2009, 17.32% in 2014, and 21% in 2019 [Ramadhan \(2019\)](#). Therefore, these policies have sparked ongoing debates about the effectiveness of the 30 percent quota. Some view affirmative action as a form of gender discrimination [Dedeas \(2016\)](#), while others see it as a crucial measure for improving women's representation in parliament [Utami et al. \(2024\)](#).

Theoretically speaking, women's electoral success highlight several key factors. Drawing from various studies, three main influences emerge in explaining women's achievements in Indonesian political contests. Firstly, the dynastic factor. [Haboddin \(2023\)](#) finds that women have gained positions as regents and mayors partly due to the strengthening of political dynasties in various Indonesian regions. [Zahra \(2020\)](#) exemplifies this with her research on Banten, where women's representation has been bolstered by political dynasties that perpetuate power structures. Secondly, the incumbent factor. Women's electoral success often benefits from their status as incumbents, which provides them with considerable political advantages. For instance, Siti Mukaromah's victory as an incumbent in Cilacap Regency was supported by the political influence of Nahdliyin and connections with the National Awakening Party [Assidiq & Triguswinri \(2021\)](#). Similarly, Een Rusmiyati's repeated success in Cirebon City's legislative elections and Anik Maslachah's triumph in East Java's 2019 legislative elections were both facilitated by their incumbent status and effective political strategies [Sari. \(2021\)](#); [Muzadi & Fitriyah \(2020\)](#). Thirdly, the modality factor. In this context, political capital significantly influences women's success in elections. [Febrian \(2022\)](#) highlights those female legislative candidates in Pekanbaru in 2019 won due to substantial political capital. In Central Java, Sri Marnyuni's repeated victories in legislative elections are attributed to her strong political capital and strategy [Rafsanjani et al. \(2023\)](#). These studies collectively suggested that dynastic affiliations, incumbent status, and political capital are crucial in shaping women's electoral prospects in Indonesia. However, the impact of

family ties in their impact on voter decisions still remains an area that requires further exploration.

This research aims to investigate the impact of family connections on women's political success at the local level in Indonesia, focusing specifically on South Sumatra. It seeks to address gaps in existing literature by examining the role of familial ties, particularly the influence of fathers, in securing electoral victories for their daughters. While [Beriansyah & Qibtiyah \(2023\)](#) have explored the role of family connections in the success of female legislative candidates during the 2019 elections in South Sumatra, their study remains broad and lacks depth. It identified involved relatives but did not detail the mechanisms of family influence in the candidacy process or the strategies used by female candidates. This study, however, zeroes in on Ratu Tenny Leriva's campaign in the 2024 Regional Representative Council-Republic of Indonesia for South Sumatra, analyzing the father's pivotal role in her success and the strategies and processes involved. The goal is to fill the literature gap concerning the factors behind women's victories in local politics and to enhance understanding of how family ties contribute to political success in Indonesia.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, using a literature review as the primary data collection method to explore the topic. The literature review aims to gather relevant sources and data on the subject, providing a theoretical foundation and guiding the identification of research gaps [Danial & Wasriah \(2009\)](#). For data analysis, researcher utilized qualitative methods to document phenomena related to the electability of female candidates in South Sumatra. Data was sourced from academic literature, journal articles, mass media, and social media. This data was then refined and analyzed to extract information pertinent to the research focus, synthesizing it with existing theories to offer a detailed analysis of female candidates' electability. The findings indicate that family networks and political support, particularly from influential father figures, significantly impact the electability of female candidates in Indonesian politics.

The analysis involved developing theories relevant to candidate electability, integrating these with observations of women's political participation in Indonesia. A researcher found that the success of female candidates is closely linked to their family backgrounds, especially those with prominent political histories. For example, the family's political prominence, such as leading a political party or holding high-ranking positions, enhances the visibility and electability of female candidates. The influence of family ties, especially paternal support, emerged as a critical factor in advancing candidates to national levels. Therefore, this research aims to deepen the understanding of how family connections and political networks influence the electability of female candidates in local Indonesian politics. By combining empirical evidence with theoretical frameworks, it seeks to illuminate the dynamics of electoral politics in South Sumatra and highlight key elements that contribute to female candidates' success.

3. RESULT AND DICSUSSION

3.1. NEWCOMER FEMALE POLITICIAN

Ratu Tenny Leriva's political career is fairly easy. The woman who is more familiarly called Iva, waltzed so easily in getting a political ticket in the legislative contestation for Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia, from

Electoral District of South Sumatera province. The strong determination to enter politics, Ratu Tenny Leriva, is increasingly visible, especially after the departure of his sister, the late Percha Leanpuri in 2021 [Kompas \(2021\)](#), Ratu Tenny Leriva began to be forged to understand and understand the world of politics.

One of the ways is through the chairman of the South Sumatra literacy ambassador, who replaced her late sister, Percha Leanpuri. Since taking on the task as the South Sumatra Literacy Ambassador, the woman who has just earned a Bachelor of Medicine degree from Sriwijaya University, systematically has to appear in various activities. She must be present in public spaces, both to replace the deceased in regional meetings and in other activities related to literacy tasks in South Sumatra. Through this role, Ratu Tenny Leriva increased his visibility among the wider community, strengthened his position as a recognized candidate, and demonstrated his commitment to literacy. Her active and consistent involvement in various literacy activities not only expands her reach among voters but also strengthens her image as a leader who cares about education and regional progress. Therefore, this directly increases Ratu Tenny Leriva's popularity in the eyes of the public.

Figure 1



Figure 1 Ratu Tenny Leriva at the Literacy Ambassador Event in Lubuk Linggau

Source [Silamparismartcity \(2022\)](#)

In addition to being busy as a South Sumatra literacy ambassador, Ratu Tenny Leriva also serves as Deputy Chair of the Political and Organizational Section of the South Sumatra NasDem Party Student League [Tribunnews \(2023\)](#). With this role, Ratu Tenny Leriva has been certainly shaped her capacity and capability to enter the political world, tries to build a political image, and attract sympathy from various circles, not only as a successor to his older sister, but also as an individual who has his own capacity and vision. With frequent appearances in public, Ratu Tenny Leriva's election in the legislative election for the South Sumatera electoral district in 2024, cannot be separated from the myriad of factors he has. Not only in terms of supporting parties that provide support, but also the capital factor of his political image plays an important role. On that basis, the popularity gained through various public appearances is an important capital that encourages his election as the legislator who gets the most votes.

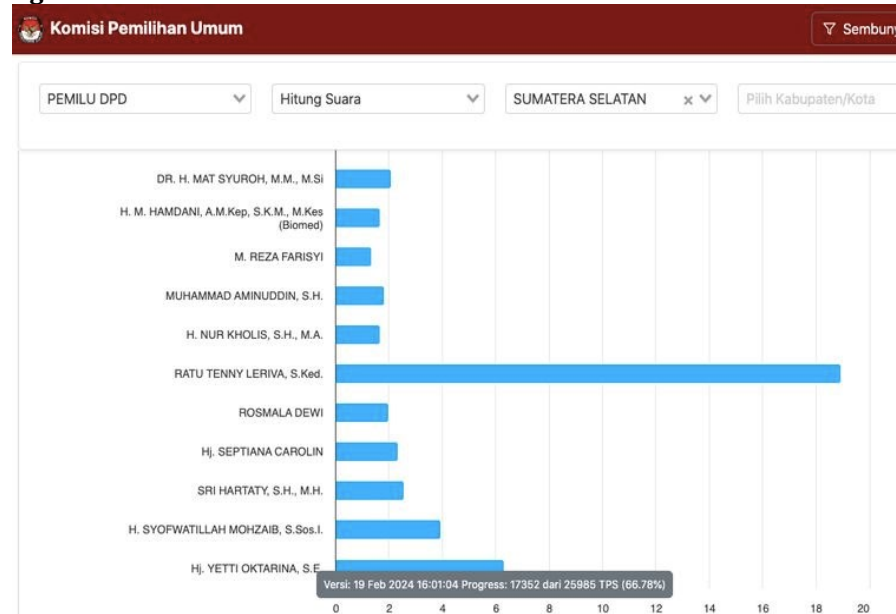
Figure 2

Figure 2 Vote Acquisition Of DPD-RI Candidates for the South Sumatera Electoral District
 Source [Kompas \(2024\)](#)

The illustration above vividly demonstrates the exponential rise in Ratu Tenny Leriva's vote acquisition. At just 23 years old, she has emerged as a remarkably convincing candidate. Her impressive performance in the vote tally not only highlights her appeal but also her ability to surpass numerous other candidates, both male and female. This achievement underscores her significant impact and the strong support she has garnered from voters, reflecting a noteworthy shift in the political landscape that challenges traditional gender norms.

Table 1**Table 1 Comparison of Vote Acquisition**

No	Name of Candidate	Status	Voting
1	Ratu Tenny Leriva	New comer	833.799
2	Jialyka Maharani	Incumbent	549.140
3	Amaliah Sobli	Incumbent	528.749
4	Eva Susanti	Incumbent	508.540
5	Yetti Oktarina	Incumbent	385.752

Source Indonesian Bahasa, for English version must be **General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia**

From the two datas above, it shows how Ratu Tenny Leriva's vote acquisition was exponential. In fact, it far beat other incumbent female candidates [Detik \(2024\)](#). In the vote, Ratu Tenny Leriva was able to excel far, even beating other female incumbent candidates by 833,799 votes [Kompas \(2024\)](#). This achievement shows that Ratu Tenny Leriva not only received strong support from his voter base, but also managed to attract the attention and trust of the wider community. Her success in gaining the most votes is inseparable from her effective campaign strategy and personal approach to voters. He was able to utilize social media and digital platforms to reach out to the younger generation and new voters, thus increasing

his popularity and electability. Furthermore, strong support from his family and political network played a crucial role in his success.

3.2. HERMAN DERU AS A SYMBOL OF RATU TENNY LERIVA'S POLITICAL POWER.

The problem of gender stereotypes in politics is still low in a society dominated by a patriarchal culture, so female candidates must have more political capital to be elected by the public [Barnes & Córdova \(2016\)](#). One way to obtain this political capital is to bring the names of relatives who have previously been in politics. The advancement of women in political contestation is not only to realize gender equality and give birth to gender justice-based political policies, but also as a counter-criticism of the negative dichotomy and gender bias that are still embedded in the social life of Indonesian society [Teele et al. \(2018\)](#). The advancement of Ratu Tenny Leriva in political contestation needs to be appreciated amid the influence of political values that develop in society. Even though, in gaining support from voters is complex, Ratu Tenny Leriva's selection as the candidate with the highest vote in the Regional Representative Council-Republic of Indonesia contestation for the South Sumatera as Electoral District in 2024 cannot be separated from the important role of a father.

The term "family ties" in political contestation was first introduced by [Richter \(1990\)](#). The term has gained prominence in political and social science discourse, as strategies using kinship patterns have become an important factor in the presence of female politicians. Kinship in this context, refers to the fact that the majority of elected female politicians have relatives of male politicians (either father, father-in-law, brother, uncle, or husband) who have a strong influence over the power they have. In addition, these male relatives are also promoters who facilitate the emergence and victory of female candidates in the contestation of electoral politics in Indonesia.

Table 2

Table 2 Ratu Tenny Leriva's Political Family Ties		
Name	Familial Ties	Position in political party
Ratu Tenny Leriva	Daugther	Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia elected in 2024
Herman Deru	Father	Governor of South Sumatra 2018-2023
		Chairman of Regional Representative Council Party Nasdem
		Regent of OKU Timur 2 Periods (2005-2015)

Source Processed by Researchers, 2024

In the context of Ratu Tenny Leriva's election, the father's role was very systematic, from the nomination process to the election. Herman Deru seeks to influence voter behavior not solely based on voter rationality, but also the potential for family ties. One example of how Herman Deru's position as a local political elite in South Sumatra is to introduce Ratu Tenny Leriva from various activity events in the region. This, one of which was seen in Herman Deru's visit to Padang Lengkuas Village, in order to strengthen the relationship with the community [Sriwijayamedia \(2023\)](#).

Figure 3**Figure 3** Herman Deru with Ratu Tenny LerivaSource [Sriwijayamedia \(2023\)](#)

From the picture above, it shows that Herman Deru and Ratu Tenny Leriva held a gathering with the community. If analyzed more deeply, especially with the contestation of the 2024 legislative election, Herman Deru aimed to introduce Ratu Tenny Leriva to the voters. Therefore, the family relationship between Herman Deru, as a political elite for the election of Ratu Tenny Leriva, is well utilized. This can be seen from ([Table 2](#)), how Ratu Tenny Leriva is the daughter of Herman Deru, who is not only the former two-term Regent of OKU Timur and Governor of South Sumatra 2018-2023 [Kompas \(2021\)](#), but also the Chairman of the Regional Leadership Council of the Nasdem Party [Tribunnews \(2024\)](#)

What is the central position of the "Herman Deru", which is so important to discuss as a manifestation of Ratu Tenny Leriva's selection. Consists of three (3) important aspects. First, as a person who was once number one in South Sumatra, Herman Deru has very strong resources. The existence of a mutual and continuous relationship between the leadership baton from the male patron to the next generation, be it wife or daughter, through the mechanism of direct elections can be said to be an effort to build a political dynasty and perpetuate political power at the local level. In this context, the appearance of Ratu Tenny Leriva as a legislative candidate cannot be separated from the position and role of Herman Deru, as the former Governor of South Sumatra, who has a strong influence on the selection of candidates who will compete. Both still in office and after being the Governor of South Sumatra, Herman Deru often involves and includes Ratu Tenny Leriva's involvement in various events and activities. Herman Deru's position as Governor makes it easy for Ratu Tenny Leriva to get facilities in increasing his electability and popularity in the community. Herman Deru also tried to build a positive image in shaping his son's leadership spirit. Although Ratu Tenny Leriva is a medical graduate, Herman Deru's important role as the former Regent of OKU Timur for two periods facilitates his efforts in increasing his popularity and electability by involving his family name in the campaign. One of Herman Deru's efforts, in introducing Ratu Tenny Leriva to the public sphere is by making her the South Sumatra Literacy Ambassador. This can be seen from Ratu Teeny Leriva's participation in the Ilit Expo Solo Exhibition.

Figure 4



Figure 4 Herman Deru with Ratu Tenny Leriva at The Tungkal Ilir Expo Exhibition
Source [Infosumsel.Id](https://infosumsel.id) (2023)

Seeing from Ratu Tenny Leriva's participation in the Tungkal Ilir Expo cast event above, politically, it is the principle of utilizing the family relationship with the father as an important factor that makes Ratu Tenny Leriva as the South Sumatra Literacy Ambassador, as well as to facilitate the election of her daughter in the election of female legislators from the electoral district of South Sumatra. Fathers, as political actors and local political elites who hold important positions have political, social and economic capital to win political contestation.

Second, as Chairman of the Regional Leadership Council of the Nasdem Party, Herman Deru opened the nomination of legislative members to the public. However, some sons and daughters of political elites are still recruited as members because they are considered to have competence. Their presence as part of a political party cannot be separated from family ties or closeness to relatives who have been involved in politics before. When these relatives retire and can no longer run for political office, new immigrants who get sympathy from people who have known previous political officials have a great chance of being elected. Thus, legislative candidates who are related to political officials are expected to have at least similar competencies. In addition, most female legislative candidates who participate in political contestation receive motivation and facilities from those closest to them. Therefore, family relationships between political actors are considered unavoidable, including the election of Ratu Tenny Leriva, who cannot be separated from Herman Deru's influence.

Figure 5



Figure 5 Ratu Tenny Leriva billboard
Source [Posmetro.id](https://posmetro.id), 2023

Third, father as the main endorsement. Her father, who has a long track record in politics in South Sumatra both as chairman of the Regional Leadership Council of the NasDem party as well as a former two-term Regent of OKU Timur and Governor of South Sumatra, certainly has the popularity to provide its own advantages for Ratu Tenny Leriva. The implications of all the father's modalities can be seen during the campaign period, starting from the installation of billboards or posters of candidates who also include the family name behind the real name, then the use of political party attributes such as skin color, political parties for women whose relatives hold positions in political parties, including relatives of political officials in campaigns conducted to the public. This can be seen from Ratu Tenny Leriva's billboards which always include Herman Deru. In addition, her father's political popularity and influence helped to expand her support network and open access to resources needed for the campaign. One of these was the banner of the Forum Silaturahmi Pemuda Sumatera Selatan (FSPSS) with photos of the Governor of South Sumatra (Patron), and the daughters of the Governor of South Sumatra and Ratu Tenny Leriva (advisor), and other administrators.

Figure 6



Figure 6 Herman Deru with Ratu Tenny Leriva at the South Sumatra Literacy Ambassador Event
Source [Tribunsumsel \(2021\)](#)

From the picture above, at first glance, it explicitly reveals that Herman Deru revealed Ratu Tenny Leriva as the South Sumatra Literacy Ambassador. However, implicitly, Herman Deru is trying to introduce his daughter to the public to be better known by the public. With the support and factor of her father, easily defeating other candidates, Ratu Tenny Leriva shows that young age is not an obstacle to excel in politics.

4. CONCLUSION

The selection of Ratu Tenny Leriva by winning the most votes and defeating other incumbent candidates is proof of the success of family ties in political contestation. Even though, she is still 23 years old, Ratu Tenny Leriva's selection as a senator of the South Sumatra Election District in the 2024 election is not something surprising. Family ties with Herman Deru are the main key in facilitating, shaping, and influencing voters, so Ratu Tenny Leriva managed to reach the senatorial seat in Senayan, Jakarta. Therefore, the implications of the family ties factor between Herman Deru and Ratu Tenny Leriva play an important role as political capital owned by women elected to represent the province of South Sumatra.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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None.

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