

FEMALE LEADERSHIP AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN LOCAL POLITICS SINCE 2005: TREND, PROSPECT, AND REFLECTION IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRAK

Analisis dan refleksi mengenai perkembangan demokratisasi di Indonesia pasca-Orde Baru (setelah lengsernya Suharto sejak Mei 1998) dapat ditinjau dari perkembangan demokratisasi di tingkat lokal. Kebijakan desentralisasi baru, khususnya mengenai mekanisme pemilihan kepala daerah secara langsung (pemilukada langsung) sejak tahun 2005, merupakan salah satu rangkaian demokratisasi di tingkat lokal. Tulisan ini menganalisis demokratisasi di tingkat lokal, khususnya melihat dampak pemilukada langsung terhadap peran politik dan kepemimpinan perempuan. menganalisis tata cara pemilihan kepala daerah sesuai ketentuan UU No. 32/2004 dan data jumlah kandidat perempuan yang mencalonkan diri dalam pemilukada langsung sejak tahun 2005 memberikan gambaran tren, karakteristik, dan prospek kepemimpinan perempuan yang muncul di tingkat lokal. Analisis terhadap tren dan karakteristik kepemimpinan perempuan di tingkat lokal sebagai dampak positif demokratisasi di Indonesia merefleksikan pemahaman baru tentang peran agama (khususnya Islam), gender, dan hubungan kekerabatan (familial ties) sebagai faktor penting yang ditemukan dibalik fenomena politik tersebut.

Keywords: *pemilukada, kepemimpinan perempuan, demokratisasi*

INTRODUCTION

Assessing trend and prospect of democratization in Indonesia's local politics is important if we want to gain a comprehensive picture of the development of democratization in Indonesia after the New Order (since Suharto was forced to step down in 1998). This is because the radical changes in Indonesia's local politics in Post-Suharto Indonesia, such as introduction of the new paradigm of decentralization policy, occurred as one of the consequences of the political reform as part of democratization since 1998. The Reform Era began in 1998 and promoted freedom and autonomy. The centralized approach based on the New Order's Act No. 5/1974 was replaced by the Act No. 22/1999 on Local

Government Autonomy. It was issued during President B.J. Habibie's term, and gave considerable authority to regencies (*kabupaten*) and municipalities (*kota* or *kotamadya*). Scholars like Edward Aspinall and Greg Fealy believe that Act No. 22/1999 was "one of the most radical decentralization programs attempted anywhere in the world" (2003: 3). Several years later Act No. 22/1999 was replaced by Act No. 32/2004. Some scholars have suggested that Act No. 32/2004 indicates "recentralization" in the sense that it strengthens the central government by giving it a degree of control over administrative and fiscal matters (Pratikno 2009: 57; Buehler 2009: 102). Currently, the Act No. 32/2004, which introduced direct local head election mechanism for electing local government head, is under discussion for further revision.

There have been many studies devoted to understand the current feature of Indonesia's democratization in local politics, especially after the introduction of the direct local head elections in 2005. For example, Syarif Hidayat's research concludes that money politics either in the form of a direct manner (cash given by candidates running for the position of local government head) or an indirect manner (material objects given instead of money) have heavily colored direct local head elections since 2005, as evident in Banten and Jambi (Hidayat 2009). Similarly, Okamoto Masaaki and Abdul Hamid's research on Atut (daughter of Chasan Shohib powerful political figure in Banten) and Masduki's strategy to win the 2006 direct election for governor in Banten also revealed the significance of money politics as a key strategy in winning "pragmatic" voters' hearts and getting elected (2008).

Beyond the money politics discourse, some scholars observed the impact of direct local head election on the political role of women. Maribeth Erb and Priyambudi Sulistiyanto's edited volume, which explores the political games surrounding direct local head elections, briefly addresses the rise of female Javanese politicians. In this volume, Tri Ratnawati's chapter analyzes Rustriningsih, the first female regent elected in the direct local head election in Kebumen in 2005, though provides only a mere glimpse of gender perspectives in her political analysis (2009). Hana. A Satriyo's chapter in the edited volume by Edward Aspinall and Marcus Mietzner provides a general picture of the rise of female political leaders in direct local head elections. Interestingly, in developing the argument, Satriyo proposes a pessimistic argument about the prospect of female leaders in direct local head election because she believes that male domination inside political parties remains the biggest barrier preventing female politicians' candidacy in local politics (2010: 246–251).

Although there is rising concern over the increasing role of women in the direct local head elections, none scholars have provided a comprehensive analysis of the trend and prospect of female leadership in democratization in local politics in post-Suharto Indonesia, especially since 2005 on ward. This paper fills this scholarly gap by comprehensively assessing and providing analysis of the trend and prospect of female leadership and democratization, especially in local politics in post-Suharto Indonesia.

I argue that democratization in local politics by means of the direct local head election introduced since 2005, have expanded structural opportunities for women to take greater leadership in local politics. This results in the trend of increasing number female political leaders elected as governors/regents/mayors in local politics in post-Suharto Indonesia with diverse characteristic in each political terms (2005–2010) and (2010–2015). I further contend that this positive trend in local politics indicates a bright prospect of female leadership in national politics in the Indonesia's on-going democratization.

DEMOCRATIZATION AND DIRECT LOCAL HEADELECTION IN INDONESIA: EXPANDING STRUCTURAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN'S ROLE IN LOCAL POLITICS

The decentralization policy became an important political agenda signifying the period of reform. It brought positive impacts on the political role of women. This phenomenon has occurred in several countries. Since the 1980s, in South American countries such as Brazil and Chile, as Macaulay has noted, decentralization facilitated greater participation of women in local politics by means of not only gender-relevant public policy making but also individual and collective empowerment of women (1998: 87). In Brazil, it was the Workers' Party, with its commitment to gender equality, that has been able to implement local gender policies at the municipal level; whereas in Chile gender policy initiatives came from the center (the National Women's Service) (Macaulay 1998: 105). Decentralization, however, has an opposite impact on South African women. Since the mid 1980s, South Africa has entered a phase of decentralization and strengthening its local government, efficiency, and democratic participation, though it is heavily donor-driven (Beall 2004: 2). Interestingly, it has not necessarily increased women's access to or presence and influence in local government. This is because decentralized local governments in South Africa, which have strong links to informal institutions such as traditional leaders' highly patriarchal networks (male heredity and the

military), tend to exclude women, though local politics does allow them to better organize actions (Beall 2004: 4–17).

In Southeast Asian countries, decentralization has been implemented as a part of democratic reforms. For example, in the Philippines under the influence of international development organizations, the decentralization agenda was forged in the late 1980s, whereas in Thailand it started in the late 1990s with powerful national technocrats as the primary force behind decentralization (Hadiz 2010: 23). Direct elections were introduced to elect local officials in the Philippines and Thailand as a part of their respective decentralization schemes.

The fact that decentralisation, especially the direct local head election, has been implemented as a part of democratic reforms, is also the case in Indonesia as explained earlier. In Indonesia, especially in relation to women's roles, I argue that the introduction of direct local head elections under Act No. 32/2004 has had a positive impact on women's roles in local politics. I suggest—borrowing Pippa Noris' idea about “the structure of opportunities” as one component in legislative recruitment (1997: 11)—that structural opportunities for women to be recruited into politics have increased under the new conditions of direct local head elections. Today, female politicians can move freely among voters without running into barriers set up by oligarchies and male-dominated political parties. It is now the voters who decided who wins, and not the male dominated political elites inside the Regional People's Representative Council (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah*, DPRD) which formerly elected local leaders. In addition, the changing aspect of candidates, in my view, has had a positive effect on women's political participation. This is due to the second changes in articles 56 and 59 of Act No. 32/2004, as enacted in Act No. 12/2008, which give room for an independent candidate, either men or women who fulfil the requirement, or for a candidate supported by a coalition political parties. For example, in 2010 direct local head elections, independent candidate presents within 71 direct local head elections in regency/municipality throughout 17 provinces (*Kompas*, July 16, 2012).

In turn, introduction of the direct local head election results in the increasing number of female elected leaders in local politics. There were, for example, only four female leaders: three regents, namely Rustriningsih, Regent of Kebumen (2000–2005); Haeny Relawati Rini Widyastuti, Regent of Tuban (2000–2005); Rina Iriani, Regent of Karanganyar (2002–2007), and one vice governor, namely Atut Chosiyah as Vice Governor of Banten (2001–2006),

ever elected under the former mechanism of election by DPRD members that was in place prior to 2005. Whereas after direct local head elections were introduced in 2005, the number of women elected (governors/regents/mayors) increased significantly as I will present in Table 1 in the subsequent section.

Moreover, on March 22, 2005, the Constitutional Court approved the judicial review of the North Sulawesi Branch of the National Awakening Party (*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*, PKB) on article 59 of Act No. 32/2004. As per the judicial review, coalitions of political parties which do not have seats in DPRD but have at least 15 percent of the total number of votes approved in the electorate, could nominate a candidate in direct local head elections (*Jawa Pos*, March 23, 2005). This new regulation later proved to be a critical opportunity for female leaders to proceed with their candidacy in local elections, such as the case of Ratna Ani Lestari as elected Regent of Banyuwangi in 2005. The next section will present the trend and characteristic of the emergence of female leaders in local politics following democratization in local politics since 2005.

FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN INDONESIA'S LOCAL POLITICS: TREND AND CHARACTERISTIC

From 2005 until now, implementation of the direct local head election can be divided into two terms (in which one term consists of five years serving period of the elected local government head) namely (2005–2010) and (2010–2015). Therefore, in assessing the trend and characteristic of female leaders in local politics following introduction of the direct local head election, I divide the analysis into two different periods, as mentioned above. The first term namely (2005–2010) is the initial period implementation of the direct local head election mechanism, of which few female political leaders took the new opportunities of democratization in local politics, as can be seen in Table 1 below.

According to the data from Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, from 2005–2008, under Act No. 32/2004, 466 direct local head elections were held, consisting of 355 elections outside Java and 111 elections in Java (Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2009). According to the data, the percentage of pairs elected that have female politicians (either as regents, vice regents, governors, vice governors) in Java was higher (11 pairs or 9.91%, with all the female politicians are Muslim) compared to those elected outside of Java (15 pairs or 4.22%, with 12 Muslim and 3 Christian).

If we are focusing on the number of female political leaders who run in the key position as candidate of local government head in Java in the 2005 direct local head elections, there were eight women.¹ Whereas, there were 12 female political leaders who run for the candidate of local government head outside of Java in the 2005 direct local head election.²

Particularly, Table 1 above presents only the female leaders who run for candidate of local government head and won the direct local head election since 2005. By looking at the Table, we can see some characteristic of the female leaders elected in the first term of the direct local head elections (2005–2010). I classified the characteristic into three categories namely geographical feature and political party's affiliation, religion, and the primary factor behind their political success.

First, by geographical feature and political party's affiliation. The data above shows consistencies with the basic division of major Indonesian political parties along ethnic and regional lines as Aris Ananta et al (2004) have noted. Based on the 1999 General Election, the Indonesian Democrat Party of Struggle (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan*, PDIP) and the National Awakening Party (*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*, PKB) are often seen as Java and Javanese-based parties, while Golkar and PPP are frequently viewed as non-Javanese and based outside of Java (Ananta, Arifin, Suryadinata 2004: 3). From Table 1, we can see that PDIP female candidates overwhelmingly won without coalitions in two direct local head elections in Kebumen and Karanganyar, both in Java. PKB also won one direct local head election in Java where their female candidates were elected as Regent of Pekalongan. Clearly, PDIP and PKB, both have strong Javanese-based political parties, have

¹ They were: (i) Rustriningsih for Regent of Kebumen, (ii) Ratna Ani Lestari for Regent of Banyuwangi, (iii) Haeny Relawati Rini Widyastuti for Regent of Tuban, (iv) Siti Qomariyah for Regent of Pekalongan, (v) Rina Iriani Sri Ratnaningsih for Regent of Karangayar, (vi) Khofifah Indar Parawansa for Governor of East Java, (vii) Amelia Ahmad Yani for Regent of Purworejo, (viii) Endang Setyaningdyah for Regent of Demak (Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2009).

² These women were: (i) Vonny Anneke Panambunan for Regent of North Minahasa, (ii) Marlina Mona Siahaan for Regent of Bolaang Mongondow, (iii) Suryatati A. Manan for Mayor of Tanjung Pinang, (iv) Telly Tjanggalung for Regent of Minahasa Tenggara, (v) Atien Suyati for Mayor of Lampung, (vi) Johana Jenny Tumbuan for Regent of South Minahasa, (vii) Mercy Baredes for Regent of Kepulauan Aru, (viii) Reina Usman Ahamadi for Regent of Pahuwato, (ix) Sri Indraningsih Lalusu for Regent of Luwuk, (x) Hariyanti Syafrin for Mayor of Bandar Lampung, (xi) Risnawaty Dartatik Damanik for Mayor of Pematang Siantar, (xii) Suryatinah for Regent of Kotabaru (Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2009).

Table 1.
Political Parties and Political Party Coalitions who's Female Candidates (for Head of Local Government) Won Direct Local Head Elections in, and outside of, Java between 2005 to 2008

JAVA			
No.	Name	Position	Party
1	Hj. Rustriningsih	Regent of Kebumen (2000–2005), (2005–2010), Vice Governor of Central Java (2008-2013)	PDIP
2	Ratna Ani Lestari	Regent of Banyuwangi (2005–2010)	Coalition of 18 small political parties which did not have seats in DPRD (PNIM, PBSB, PBB, PM, PDK, PNBK, PKPI, P. PELOPOR, PPDI, PNUI, PAN, PKPB, PKS, PBR, PDS, PSI, PPD, P. PANCASILA)
3	Hj. Haeny Relawati Rini Widyastuti	Regent of Tuban (2000–2005), (2006–2011)	Golkar Faction; Golkar + 16 small political parties (2006-2011)
4	Hj. Siti Qomariyah	Regent of Pekalongan (2006–2011)	PKB
5	Rina Iriani Sri Ratnaningsih	Regent of Karanganyar (2002–2007), (2008–2013)	Pembaruan Faction in DPRD; PDIP (2008–2013)
6	Hj. Atut Chosiyah	Governor of Banten (2006–2012)	Golkar, PDIP, PBB, PBR, PDS, PPI
OUTSIDE OF JAVA			
1	Vonny Anneke Panambunan	Regent of North Minahasa (2005–2010)	PP, PKPI, PPD
2	Hj. Marlina Moha Siahaan	Regent of Bolaang Mongondow (2006–2011)	Golkar
3	Hj. Suryatati A. Manan	Mayor of Tanjung Pinang (2008–2013)	PDIP, Golkar
4	Telly Tjanggalung	Regent of Minahasa Tenggara (2008–2013)	Golkar

Source: Author's compilation from the data of the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, "Daftar Kepala Daerah dan Wakil Kepala Daerah yang Telah Diterbitkan Keputusannya oleh Presiden Republik Indonesia Hasil Pemilihan Kepala Daerah Secara Langsung Tahun 2005, 2006, 2007, dan Tahun 2008."

opened up larger opportunities for female politicians in Java to take greater political leadership. There is a different trend outside Java. Golkar, without any coalition, nominated two successful female candidates in the direct local head elections in Bolaang Mongondow and Minahasa Tenggara. Thus, outside Java, Golkar has played a certain role in facilitating the rise of female political leaders though the numbers are lower compared to in Java.

Second, by looking at their religion, I found an interesting contrast in which all of the six female leaders elected in Java are Muslim, whereas two of the four female leaders elected outside Java are Christian. Even more interesting, the six Muslim female leaders elected in Java located in strong Islamic base region, particularly base of *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU, traditionalist Islamic organization) as the dominant Islamic organization in Java, such as in Kebumen, Banyuwangi, Tuban, Pekalongan, and Banten. This phenomenon contradicts with the common assumption that it would be difficult for women to gain political positions in devout Islamic regions, where discourse on women's empowerment, let alone leadership, is considered sensitive. And for the two female leaders elected outside Java whom are Christian, interestingly they were elected and located in Christian base region namely North Minahasa and Southeast Minahasa. Although it needs further investigation, we can see some interesting patterns of possible link between the religious background of female leaders with the religion of majority of local people, as well as, role of religion (Islam and Christianity) behind the rise of the female leaders in Java and outside Java.

Third, by looking at their story of political success, I discover even more interesting picture. Begin with the elected female leaders in Java, my observation of their profiles shows that they all generally had strong individual capital derived from their prominent family backgrounds (such as their father or mother), which was nationalist in the case of Rustriningsih, Ratna Ani Lestari, Rina Iriani Sri Ratnaningsih, Atut Chosiyah, Haeny Relawati Rini Widyastuti, and religious (NU *santri*) in the case of Siti Qomariyah. Furthermore, if we examine familial ties factor, which suggests that a female political leader's rise and victory is due to the influence and political connections of her father or husband who are/were prominent political figures, as the common denomination factor behind the rise of female leaders in Asia (see Richter 1990–1991: 528; Thompson 2002–2003: 535). Interestingly I discovered that, familial ties were not the most common or prominent factor. Familial ties were present in the case of Rustriningsih (her father was former prominent PDIP political

activist in Kebumen), Ratna Ani Lestari (her husband was Regent of Jembrana (2000–2005) (2005–2010)), Atut Chosiyah (her late father was prominent political figure in Banten), Haeny Relawati Rini Widyastuti (her late husband was prominent politico-businessmen in Tuban). But not in the case of Siti Qomariyah, since neither her father nor husband were active in politics, while in case of Rina Iriani Sri Ratnaningsih it was her track record as bureaucrat which leads her into higher political career.

Even more diverse profile if we look at the elected female leaders outside Java. Familial ties is also not the common primary factor behind their success of political career. For example, Vonny Anneke Panambunan as the elected Regent of North Minahasa comes from ordinary family though her husband comes from rich family. However, Vonny becomes single mother who raises their two small children alone following her separation from her husband. She struggled to raise her children by developing her own business through many obstacles of which she becomes a successful businesswoman with various business in Jakarta, Kalimantan and abroad, eventually.³ So it is carrier and integrity rather than familial ties (none of her ex husband or father were prominent politicians), that facilitates her into new political carrier as Regent in the Christian based region, North Minahasa in 2005.

Marlina Moha Siahaan is the first elected female Regent of Bolaang Mongondow in 2006. While her father was prominent policeman in the region,⁴ her husband (late) Hi Syamsudin Kudji Moha was businessman and prominent politician as chief of the Regional Board of Golkar in South Bolaang Mongondow and chief of DPRD in South Bolaang Mongondow. Here we can see that in the case of Marlina Moha Siahaan, familial ties factor in which the role and influence of her husband is significant to facilitate her political career and success.

Suryatati A. Manan the elected Mayor of Tanjung Pinang in the direct local head election in 2008, has rather different story of political career. It is her educational background and her professional career as bureaucrat in the region which strongly facilitates her political success. She was educated in Institute of Government Science (*Institut Ilmu Pemerintahan*, IIP) Jakarta, a special education and training institution for the prospectus bureaucrat in Indonesia.

³ http://www.hariankomentar.com/arsip/arsip_2007/feb_16/lkPanggung.html (accessed May 11, 2012).

⁴ <http://beritamanado.com/berita-utama/wawancara-eksklusif-curahan-hati-butet-ketika-kembali-menjadi-orang-biasa-bag-2/40593/> (accessed May 11, 2012).

Once she finished, she develop her career as low ranked bureaucrat in the Riau Province which she gradually gained higher bureaucratic career, and eventually was elected as Mayor of Tanjung Pinang in the 2008 direct local head election.⁵

Whereas, Telly Tjanggalung, the elected Regent of Minahasa Tenggara in 2008, previously was member of DPRD of North Sulawesi. Her husband was former Regent of Talaud though he had to step down due to corruption case while he run as the governor candidate of North Sulawesi in the 2010 direct local head election.⁶ From this simple profile, we can see that her husband's position as prominent politician, to some extend provides suitable influence for Telly's political career. Outside Java, we can see that familial ties factor were not prominent behind the rise and victory of the two (Vonny Anneke Panambunan, Suryatati A. Manan) of the four female leaders elected outside Island Java. Thus, outside Java, familial ties were not the most common or prominent factor behind the rise and victory of female political leaders, as in Java.

As we understand the characteristic of the female leaders elected in the first term of direct local head election, how about their characteristic in the second term of direct local head elections? I summarize and explore the finding in Table 2 below.

According to the General Election Commission, there were 245 direct local head elections to be held in 2010/2011 throughout Indonesia.⁷ This second term of the direct local head elections has been marked also by the emergence of female politicians, as occurred in the first term. There were at least 16 female candidates for local government head (either as regents, mayors, or governors) in Java and outside of Java who competed in 2010. Interestingly, there is a new trend in which most of them were wives, daughters, or relatives of prominent

⁵ http://www.mipi.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=278:hj-suryatati-a-manan&catid=61:profil-penerima-mipi-awards-09&Itemid=218 (accessed May 11, 2012).

⁶ <http://infokorupsi.com/id/korupsi.php?ac=8719&l=sejumlah-massa-laporkan-dugaan-korupsi-bupati-minahasa-utara-ke-kpk-dan-kejangung> (accessed May 11, 2012).

⁷ http://www.kpu.go.id/dmdocuments/jadwal_pilkada.pdf (accessed March 10, 2011).

male politicians. There were ten women candidates from Java,⁸ and the other six women candidate from outside Java.⁹

Particularly, Table 2 above presents only the female leaders who run for head of local government and won the direct local head election since 2005. By looking at the Table, we can see some characteristic of the female leaders elected in the second term of the direct local head election. The characteristic is in the same categorization as in the first term of direct local head elections.

First, by geographical feature and political party's affiliation, I found similar characteristic with the first term of the direct local head election. PDIP is leading political party which nominated many female candidates who successfully won the direct local head election in Java, mainly without coalition such as in Bantul, Kendal, and Surabaya. Whereas, in outside Java Golkar leads the political competition in where, their two female candidates won the direct local head election in Kutai Kartanegara and South Minahasa.

Secondly, in term of religion, interestingly I also found similar characteristic with the first term. All the seven female leaders elected in Java are Muslim, whereas two of the three female leaders elected in outside Java are Christian and Hindu.

⁸ Namely: (i) Anna Sophanah, wife of Irianto M.S. Syafiuddin, the Regent of Indramayu for two periods (2000–2005) (2005–2010); (ii) Airin Rachmy Diany, daughter-in-law of Chasan Sochib, a powerful figure with a strong political dynasty in Banten; (iii) Ratu Atut Chosiyah, Governor of Banten (2006–2011) and also a daughter of Chasan Sochib; (iv) Emy Susanti, wife of Win Hendarso, former Regent of Sidoarjo for two periods (2000–2005) (2005–2010); (v) Haryanti Sutrisno, wife of Sutrisno, former Regent of Kediri for two periods (2000–2005) (2005–2010); (vi) Sri Surya Widati, wife of Idham Samawi, former Regent of Bantul for two periods (2000–2005) (2005–2010); (vii) Widya Kandi Susanti, wife of Hendy Boedoro, former Regent of Kendal for two periods (2000–2005) (2005–2010); (viii) Kusdinar Untung Yuni Sukowati, daughter of Untung Wiyono, former Regent of Sragen for two periods (2001–2006) (2006–2011); (ix) Titik Suprapti, wife of Bambang Riyanto, former Regent of Sukoharjo for two periods (2000–2005) (2005–2010); and (x) Only one candidate, Tri Rismaharini, with excellent background as successful bureaucrat in Surabaya Municipality while her husband was not prominent politician.

⁹ These women were: (i) Aida Zulaikha Nasution, wife of Ismeth Abdullah, former Governor of the Riau Archipelago (2006–2010); (ii) Septina Primawati Rusli, candidate for Mayor of Pekanbaru and wife of Rusli Zainal, Governor of Riau for two periods (2003–2008) (2008–2013); (iii) Adlina T. Milwan, wife of Batu T. Milwan, former Regent of Labuhan (2000–2010); (iv) Ni Putu Eka Wiryastuti, daughter of Nyoman Adi Wiryatama, former Regent of Tabanan (2005–2010); and (v) Rita Widayari, daughter of Syaukani HR, former Regent of Kutai Kutaneegara for two periods (1999–2004) (2005–2006) (*Gatra*, September 8, 2010), and (vi) Christiany Eugenia Paruntu, successful businesswoman in South Minahasa.

Table 2.
Political Parties and Political Party Coalitions who's Female Candidates
(for Head of Local Government) Won Direct Local Head Elections
in, and outside of, Java between 2010 to 2012

JAVA			
	Name	Position	Party
1	Haryanti Sutrisno	Regent of Kediri (2010–2015)	PDIP, PKS
2	Sri Surya Widati	Regent of Bantul (2010–2015)	PDIP
3	Widya Kandi Susanti	Regent of Kendal (2010–2015)	PDIP
4	Anna Sophanah	Regent of Indramayu (2010–2015)	Golkar
5	Airin Rachmy Diany	Mayor of South Tangerang (2011–2016)	PKS
6	Ratu Atut Chosiyah	Governor of Banten (2011–2016)	Golkar, PDIP, Hanura, Gerindra, PKB, PAN, PBB, PPNUI, PKPB, PDS, PPD
7	Tri Rismaharini	Mayor of Surabaya (2010–2015)	PDIP
OUTSIDE JAVA			
1	Ni Putu Eka Wiryastuti	Regent of Tabanan (2010–2015)	PDIP
2	Rita Widiasari	Regent of Kutai Kartanegara (2010–2015)	Golkar
3	Christiany Eugenia Paruntu	Regent of South Minahasa (2010–2015)	Golkar

Source: Author's compilation from various resources.

Thirdly, in regard to the primary factor behind their political success, all of the five female leaders elected in Java (Kediri, Bantul, Kendal, Indramayu, South Tangerang) and two in outside Java (Tabanan and Kutai Kartanegara) has strong familial ties factor, of which their father or husband are prominent politician. Based on this phenomenon, some people suggested a trend of strengthening “political dynasties” as women obtained political power by using the available structures of power, networks, and patronage of their husbands or fathers (*Gatra*, September 8, 2010: 29–30). In my view, the above success of these female political candidates is evidence of “political familial ties”, where female politicians gain and increase their political power through the use of the available resources of their husbands, fathers, or brothers who are/were

prominent male politicians, was a significant factor behind the rise and victory of female political leaders in the second term of direct local head elections (2010–2015).

The rise of the wives or daughters of male politicians in this term was also caused by restrictions in the regulation on direct local head elections. Article 58 (o) of Act No. 32/2004, on the requirements for local government candidates states that candidates must not have served as a local government heads or deputy local government heads for two periods in the same position (*belum pernah menjabat sebagai kepala daerah atau wakil kepala daerah selama dua kali masa jabatan dalam jabatan yang sama*). Therefore, when male politicians have served as regent for two periods, they cannot run again in the next direct local head election for regent. In order to maintain political power in the region, these male politicians brought in and facilitated the nomination of their wives or daughters in the second term of direct local head elections (2010–2015). Therefore, many of the female politicians who were nominated and went on to win direct local head elections as regents or governors were not ordinary women, as their husbands or fathers had previously held key political positions. In the second term of direct local head elections, “political familial ties” had a positive impact on women, in the sense that it provided an important channel for women to take an active role in Indonesian local politics.

Familial ties made a significant contribution to their rise in the second term of direct local head elections (2010–2015). However, the political victory of female political leaders, especially the Muslim candidates in this term, was also determined by their ability to take advantage of the Islamic belief on female leadership, and to use their gender in combination with Islamic piety and networks. This is the key argument in my Ph.D. dissertation on the factor behind the rise and victory of Muslim female political leaders in direct local head election (Dewi, 2012). Seven of the eight successful Muslim female candidates (mentioned above in Table 2) wore the veil. The veil served as an important instrument not only to expand their political base and to increase their political acceptability among the majority of Muslim voters, but also to create a distinct political identity in contrast to the majority of male candidates (Dewi, 2012). Moreover, as the number of female political leaders who emerged (either as regents, vice-regents, governors, vice-governors) in the second term (2010–2015) of direct local head election was higher compared to the number in the first term (2005–2010), it indicates that gender becomes even more popular political commodity in local politics.

In summary, there are similar trend, both in the first term (2005–2010) and the second term (2010–2015) of the direct local head elections, namely the increasing number of elected female leaders as the head of local government. However, there are different characteristic between the elected female leaders in the first and the second term of direct local head election, especially on the familial ties factor, though there are similar characteristics on the nature of political party's affiliation and religion. While Familial ties was not such a pertinent factor behind the rise of female political leaders in the first term of the direct local head elections (2005–2010), familial ties became a strong factor in their rise in the second term of the direct local head elections (2010–2015).

PROSPECT OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN INDONESIA'S DEMOCRATIZATION: LOCAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL OVERVIEW

From the above features, it is clear that democratization in local politics by means of the direct local head election has brought positive impact on women's role in local politics. We can see that now Indonesian women in general are able to take advantaged from the democratization in local politics, where they seek greater political leadership in local politics since 2005, than even before. In addition, from the above characteristic of the elected female leaders, Muslim women share greater number among them. This phenomenon indicates that new developments and changes have taken place in relation to Islam, gender and politics following Indonesia's democratization.

The rise of female political leaders, especially Muslim women political leaders in local politics reflects significant role of Islam as to provide a strong religious foundation for women to be political leader in local politics. According to Dewi (2012) interviews with prominent NU *kiai* (Islamic religious leaders) in Kebumen, Pekalongan, and Banyuwangi where three female leaders were victorious (Rustriningsih, Siti Qomariyah, and Ratna Ani Lestari), it was found no strong Islamic foundation to oppose females leadership as regents (*bupati*) or governors (*gubernur*) because neither positions are the highest position in the state, as is the president (Dewi 2012). Moreover, as the number of female political leaders in the direct local head election increases, this indicates that gender is not a constraining factor for female political career. It seems that, there are positive perceptions among ordinary people that the rise of female leaders, indicate their ability to break the conventional norm of men dominated politics. This results in the general acceptability of public toward female leader

candidates. This phenomenon is congruent with the spirit of political democratization where people favour freedom of expression and seeks political changes from the New Order authoritarian and homogenized political nature, including in local politics. In addition, it is also due to a common positive stereotype regarding female candidate across societies that female leaders carry more feminine image of leadership which emphasizes on cooperation, consensus, nurturance (King 1995: 72, 86). In general, the trend of increasing number of female leaders in local politics implies pivotal and actual role of religion either Islam or Christian. Islam is specifically mentioned as the religion embraced by majority of the female leaders elected either in the first and second term of the direct local head elections, and gender in democratisation in Indonesia's local politics.

Understanding this all important developments, it is not overwhelmingly to say that Indonesian local politics is important locus for the future of female leadership in Indonesian national politics. The positive trend of female leadership in local politics provides vital foundation, inspiration, and comfortable atmosphere for Indonesian women in general, to seek greater leadership in national politics in the near future. However, we have to consider this progress carefully because it follows by the strengthening of familial ties factor as discover above, that indicates a concentration of local political power in the hands of a small group of political elite, which hinders democratization in local politics. How do we see this trend compared to other countries in Southeast Asia?

In Filipino, Mina Roces states that “the distinctive system of kinship politics has empowered women in post-war Philippines” because even women who did not hold official power could have access to real power by means of kinship alliances (1998: 2). Lourdes Veneracion-Rallonza expressed a similar view that familial/kinship politics and patron-client networks have enabled women to negotiate their inclusion in politics either through informal or formal power (2008: 215). Generally, kinship or clan politics has featured highly in the rise of Filipino women in national politics. Such women include Corazon Aquino, who entered politics following the political assassination of her husband, Senator Benigno Aquino who entered politics in 1983 and later became president (1986–1992); and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the daughter of former President Diosdado Macapagal who was elected president in 2001. Filipino women also occupy significant positions in local politics. This is evident from the fact that the Philippines had 18 female governors (22.5%), 13 female vice governors

(16.25 %), 274 female mayors (15.76%) and 230 female vice mayors (14.41%) in 2010.¹⁰

Similarly to the Philippines, personal ties and patron-client relationships color contemporary Thai politics (Vichit-Vadakan 2008a: 29), but the political position of women is more peripheral in Thailand than in Indonesia and the Philippines. While the dominance of the military in Thai politics since 1932 has contributed to this (Iwanaga 2008: 5), some scholars have pointed to cultural elements, such as religious beliefs (Buddhism) that view women as second-class citizens, as contributing significantly to the peripheral position of women in politics (such as Iwanaga 2008: 11; Vichit-Vadakan 2008a: 32–34). However, there are some changes that have brought improvements to their role in politics. For example, since the 1982 annulment of the Interior Ministry's regulation that allowed only men to be village and sub-district heads, women have filled approximately two to three percent of these positions (Vichitranonda and Bhongsvej 2008: 64). In addition, in 1995 administrative power was decentralized down to the level of sub-district administrative organizations and in the 1997 Constitution, this was extended down to the level of *tambon* (the lowest administrative unit in Thailand), which meant that *tambon* councils and executive committees were directly elected by the people (Vichit-Vadakan 2008b: 133). Today in local politics, women make up 12% of elected provincial council presidents, 2.4% of elected sub-district heads, and 3.3% of elected village heads (in 2005).¹¹ Looking at the stories of Thai female leaders in politics, Vichit-Vadakan's research reveals that family, kinship networks, and particularly the advantage of the legacy of a deceased male politician in the family are crucial factors for women in politics (2008b: 130–62). The strong influence of familial ties was clearly shown in the recent election of Yingluck Shinawatra (Phue Thai Party), sister of former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, as the first female Prime Minister in Thai history.¹² She deliberately imitated her brother's political image, profile, and political base to boost her popularity, which proved successful. Here, it is evident that the same

¹⁰ "Updates on Women and Men in the Philippines", National Statistical Coordination Board, March 1, 2010.

¹¹ Data from the Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, Bangkok, as cited in Vichitranonda and Bhongsvej (2008: 61).

¹² "Yingluck, PM Pertama Thailand", *Kompas* <http://internasional.kompas.com/read/2011/07/04/10015049/Yingluck.PM.Perempuan.Pertama.Thailand> (accessed July 8, 2011) and "Abhisit Mengaku Kalah", *Kompas* <http://internasional.kompas.com/read/2011/07/04/07325610/Abhisit.Mengaku.Kalah> (accessed July 8, 2011).

kinship politics of the Philippines is also found in Thailand, almost similar with the rising importance of familial ties behind the rise of female political leaders in Indonesia's local politics.

CONCLUDING REFLECTION

This paper begins from curiosity to understand the impact of democratization in Indonesia's local politics following the introduction of the direct election of local head in 2005 on women's political leadership. By gathering data on the number of female leaders' candidates and its successful story within two terms of direct local head election since 2005 up to now, this paper reveals the trend and characteristic of the phenomenon. By assessing the rise of female political leaders in local politics, in which majority of them are Muslim, this paper suggests the significant role of religion namely Islam in Indonesia behind the rise of female (Muslim) political leaders in local politics, and strategic role of gender that becomes even more popular political commodity in Indonesia's local politics.

These findings signify important clue to change our understanding on local politics in Indonesia. There is a need to expand our perspectives in viewing local politics. Local politics in post-Suharto Indonesia should not merely be seen as important "arena of contestation" as Hadiz (2010: 3) wrote. Beyond that, local politics becomes "a critical enabler site" where Muslim or Christian women can maneuver comfortably within their gender, religion, and individual capital to secure leadership roles¹³ without as much opposition as they would receive in national politics.¹⁴ Today, local politics is an important locus for Indonesian women to intervene and color the public sphere, a domain once dominated by males.

The finding of this paper also indicates the importance of incorporating gender analysis in political analysis. While scholars concerned with the absence of gender analysis in studies of Southeast Asian politics emerged in the 1990s,¹⁵

¹³ For deeper elaboration of this point, especially on the role of gender and Islam, see my Ph.D. dissertation (Dewi 2012).

¹⁴ The debate and opposition on female leadership role in national politics is more intense compared to those in local politics such as in the case of Megawati Soekarnoputri in the 1999 General Election. For article which elaborates this case see White and Anshor (2008: 138).

¹⁵ Errington noted the absence of gender analysis in writings on Southeast Asian politics, which according to her might have been due to the relative economic equality between men and

it continues to persist today.¹⁶ This paper is in line with scholars' efforts to incorporate gender analysis with political analysis. By doing so, we are able to understand the contribution of gender and religion, particularly Islam (as the religion embraced by majority of the elected female leaders in the direct local head elections), behind the relatively new phenomenon of Indonesian Muslim women seek greater roles in local politics, as well as to see how far Indonesian women are able to shape the growth and direction of Indonesian democratization especially in local politics. For sure, the current trend of the increasing number of female leaders in Indonesia's local politics, whom majority of them are Muslim, provides important lesson learned for other female politicians in Southeast Asia countries, as it occurred in the biggest Muslim majority country in the world. This current phenomenon in Indonesia, contradicts with a general perception, as noted by the prominent Indonesian Muslim female activist (the late) Lili Zakiyah Munir, that Islam is a source of discrimination and oppression against women which results in the common perception that as a religion Islam hinders the promotion of women's rights (*The Jakarta Post*, December 10, 2002, 6). The rise of Muslim female political leaders in Indonesia's local politics suggests a bright future of Indonesia's democratization in which Islam, gender, and politics can work side by side comfortably and supporting greater women's leadership in politics.

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women in Southeast Asia which has resulted in a paucity of symbolic expression of gender differences in the region. See Errington (1990). In line with Errington, Maila Stivens and Susan Blackburn highlighted the lack of gender perspectives in the political writings of scholars on Southeast Asia, based on the results of a conference at Monash University in 1987. See Stivens (1991).

¹⁶ Blackburn discovered that general books on Southeast Asian politics (Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam) since the mid 1990s have shown a disappointing level of gender analysis, with an average of only one chapter of an edited book addressing gender, and single-authored works presenting a rough picture. See Blackburn (2009: 53–72).

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