

The Illusion of Women’s Substantive Representation: Normative Vacuum in Committee Assignments of the Central Java Provincial DPRD

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Received: 2026, 01, 13 Accepted: 2026, 05, 25

Available online: 2026, 06, 20

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Substantive Representation; Gendered Portfolios; Glass Walls; Institutional Engineering; Council's Complementary Organs.</p> <p>Conflict of Interest Statement: .</p> <p>Copyright © 2026 Vifada Assumption Journal of Law. All rights reserved.</p>	<p>Purpose: This study examines how the normative vacuum in the Rules of Procedure of the Central Java Provincial DPRD undermines women’s substantive representation within committee assignments and formulates institutional reforms to address the resulting pattern of gendered portfolios and glass walls.</p> <p>Research Design and Methodology: This normative legal research employs a statutory approach, a conceptual approach grounded in Feminist Jurisprudence and institutional sociology, and a case approach to analyze the internal legal structure governing the Parliamentary Completeness Apparatus (AKD).</p> <p>Findings and Discussion: The findings show that the absence of binding rules on proportional distribution leaves committee assignments to factional discretion, producing gendered portfolios through the concentration of women in welfare-related committees and reinforcing glass walls that limit their access to strategic budgetary and infrastructural bodies. This condition demonstrates that women’s electoral presence in the DPRD has not yet been translated into substantive representation within the AKD.</p> <p>Implications: The study therefore recommends institutional engineering through binding amendments to the Rules of Procedure, including cross-commission distribution, mandatory women’s representation in the Budget Committee, and proportional leadership arrangements within the AKD in line with Constitutional Court Decision Number 169/PUU-XXII/2024.</p>

Introduction

In her seminal work, *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (1989), Catharine MacKinnon asserts that essentially, both state and regional institutions are not immune to gender bias, wherein masculinity is regarded as the standard and perpetuated as a culture.¹ In the 21st century, alongside the evolving understanding of the relationship between law and gender, one school of thought that highlights this issue is Feminist Jurisprudence. Feminist Jurisprudence posits that women constitute a crucial aspect that must be considered within legal perspectives and policymaking, given that the prevailing culture and living realities fail to provide adequate space for women to actualize their capabilities.²

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as an international legal instrument, provides guidelines and standards through Article 7 for ratifying states regarding how women should acquire rights in public and political spheres. Rights in the public sphere

¹ Andri Nurwandri et al., “Peran Gender Dalam Pembentukan Norma Etika Dan Kode Etik Profesi Hukum Di Indonesia,” *Rechtsnormen Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Informasi Hukum* 3, no. 2 (April 30, 2025): 70-77, <https://doi.org/10.56211/rechtsnormen.v3i2.806>.

² Matthijs Bogaards, “Feminist Institutionalism(S),” *Italian Political Science Review/Rivista Italiana Di Scienza Politica* 52, no. 3 (November 8, 2022): 418-27, <https://doi.org/10.1017/ipo.2022.15>.

entail women's rights to impart meaning and/or self-actualization through activities beneficial to the wider public (public interest), whereas rights in the political sphere denote women's rights to participate in every stage of the political process, including within the context of policy formulation.³

Indonesia, as a ratifying state of CEDAW through Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (the CEDAW Law), acknowledges women's rights in both public and political domains.⁴ This commitment is evidenced by Article 245 of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections (the Election Law), which explicitly mandates that the list of prospective candidates for the House of Representatives (DPR), provincial Regional House of Representatives (DPRD), and regency/city DPRD must contain at least 30% (thirty percent) women's representation.⁵ Although this explicit provision fundamentally demonstrates Indonesia's commitment to enhancing women's roles in public and political spheres, its implementation encounters significant challenges, particularly concerning regional application.

In practice, this threshold often remains limited to descriptive representation, functioning mainly as fulfillment of the 30% quota without ensuring proportional access to strategic institutional spaces. This is reflected in the placement of female legislators within the Parliamentary Completeness Apparatus (AKD), where women are more frequently assigned to welfare and care sectors (soft issues), while male legislators remain more dominant in economically, politically, and socially strategic positions.⁶

This phenomenon can be understood through the concepts of Gendered Portfolios and Glass Walls.⁷ Gendered Portfolios explain the patterned placement of women in sectors traditionally associated with feminine roles, while Glass Walls describe the invisible institutional barriers that restrict women's access to more strategic and male-dominated policy arenas.⁸ Together, these concepts clarify how women's formal presence in parliament may still coexist with unequal access to substantive decision-making power.⁹

The irony of descriptive representation is clearly visible in the Central Java Provincial DPRD for the 2024-2029 period. Electorally, this institution appears to have fulfilled the democratic mandate with the induction of 24 female legislators. However, the analytical lens of Feminist Jurisprudence reveals that this quantitative presence is merely an illusion of representation. Upon entering the parliamentary gates, female legislators are confronted with a normative vacuum (*normative vacuum*) within the DPRD's Rules of Procedure (*Tata Tertib*). The absence of clauses mandating proportional cross-commission membership distribution grants absolute discretionary space to Faction leaders, who historically operate as a masculine network (*Old Boys Network*).¹⁰

Consequently, the Central Java Provincial DPRD cannot be regarded as a neutral policy arena, because the current AKD distribution reflects a gender-biased institutional arrangement. This is visible in the spatial segregation of women's representation across commissions. Through a mechanism theoretically known as *Gendered Portfolios*,¹¹ the majority of the 24 female legislators are isolated in Commission E to handle social welfare and health issues labeled as the feminine

³ Madeline Gleeson, "Unlocking CEDAW's Transformative Potential: Asylum Cases Before the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women," *American Journal of International Law* 118, no. 1 (January 9, 2024): 41-97, <https://doi.org/10.1017/ajil.2023.55>.

⁴ Ade Yuliany Siahaan and Fitriani Fitriani, "KEBIJAKAN PEMERINTAH TERHADAP IMPLEMENTASI CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW) ATAS HAK PEREMPUAN DI INDONESIA.," *Jurnal Darma Agung* 29, no. 2 (August 16, 2021): 193, <https://doi.org/10.46930/ojsuda.v29i2.1060>.

⁵ Andie Hevriansyah, "Hak Politik Keterwakilan Perempuan Dalam Sistem Proporsional Representatif Pada Pemilu Legislatif," *Awasia: Jurnal Pemilu Dan Demokrasi* 1, no. 1 (2021): 67-85.

⁶ Reut Itzkovitch-Malka and Odelia Oshri, "The Weight on Her Shoulders: Marginalization of Women Legislators in Parliaments and Substantive Representation of Women," *British Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 4 (October 27, 2024): 1340-61, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123424000401>.

⁷ Maria C. Escobar-Lemmon and Michelle M. Taylor-Robinson, *Women in Presidential Cabinets* (Oxford University Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190491420.001.0001>.

⁸ Dee Goddard, "Entering the Men's Domain? Gender and Portfolio Allocation in European Governments," *European Journal of Political Research* 58, no. 2 (May 1, 2019): 631-55, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12305>.

⁹ Josefina Erikson and Cecilia Josefsson, "Feminine Leadership Ideals and Masculine Practices: Exploring Gendered Leadership Conditions in the Swedish Parliament," *Politics & Gender* 19, no. 4 (December 23, 2023): 1061-86, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X23000090>.

¹⁰ Sally White et al., "Voting against Women: Political Patriarchy, Islam, and Representation in Indonesia," *Politics & Gender* 20, no. 2 (June 22, 2024): 391-421, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X23000648>.

¹¹ LAEL R. KEISER et al., "Lipstick and Logarithms: Gender, Institutional Context, and Representative Bureaucracy," *American Political Science Review* 96, no. 3 (September 15, 2002): 553-64, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055402000321>.

domain (*soft issues*). Simultaneously, the Faction institutions construct impenetrable horizontal *Glass Walls*, hindering women from intervening in the epicenters of financial and infrastructural power (*hard issues*), such as in Commission C, Commission D, and the Budget Committee (*Badan Anggaran*).

Borrowing Catharine MacKinnon's framework, this segregation practice within the Central Java DPRD is not an administrative coincidence, but rather a form of patriarchal domination legalized by the legal instrument of the Rules of Procedure itself. While at the national level, the Constitutional Court through Decision No. 169/PUU-XXII/2024 has mandated the dismantling of factional monopolies to ensure proportional women's representation in the DPR RI's AKD leadership, the Central Java DPRD paradoxically maintains an obsolete status quo. Accordingly, the Central Java Provincial DPRD still reflects a deficit in substantive justice and requires institutional engineering to address the gendered barriers embedded in its internal committee arrangement.¹²

The novelty of this study lies in its specific legal-institutional focus on how the normative vacuum within the DPRD Rules of Procedure sustains gendered committee assignments and obstructs the transformation of women's descriptive representation into substantive representation within the AKD, thereby extending the debate beyond electoral quotas to the internal design of parliamentary power. Drawing upon the aforementioned background, this study is constructed around the following research questions:

1. What is the *status quo* of the distribution of women's representation within the Parliamentary Completeness Apparatus (AKD) of the Central Java Provincial DPRD concerning the phenomena of *gendered portfolios* and *glass walls* that diminish women's substantive representation?
2. How should institutional engineering (*institutional engineering*) be formulated within the Parliamentary Completeness Apparatus of the Central Java Provincial DPRD to address the phenomena of *gendered portfolios* and *glass walls* in pursuit of Substantive Representation?

To provide analytical depth based on the background and research questions above, the author constructs a literature review comprising the following concepts and theories to serve as analytical frameworks (*analytical tools/frameworks*), namely:

First concept, In the literature of political science and feminist institutionalism, the concept of Gendered Portfolios (gender-biased portfolios) serves as a primary analytical instrument to dissect representation inequality within internal parliamentary structures. Conceptually, Gendered Portfolios refer to the practice of segregation and compartmentalization in the assignment of political positions or parliamentary apparatus based on the reproduction of traditional gender stereotypes, rather than merit or the technical expertise of legislators (O'Brien & Krook, 2012). This practice operates informally and latently, where institutions divide public affairs into rigid dichotomies between feminine and masculine sectors.¹³

According to Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson (2005), the architecture of this portfolio distribution creates an unequal power hierarchy. Women are systematically and structurally directed toward commissions overseeing the reproductive sphere or *soft issues* such as social welfare, health, education, and family empowerment under the assumption that these align with domestic nature and the *ethics of care*.¹⁴ Conversely, commissions managing the productive sphere or *hard issues* such as finance, regional budget allocation, infrastructure, and the economy are claimed as exclusive masculine territories demanding rationality and aggressiveness. At this juncture, Gendered Portfolios function as a subtle exclusionary mechanism; it allows women to be physically present within the parliamentary building while paralyzing their autonomy by distancing them from the epicenters of strategic power and the distribution of material resources.

¹² Susi Dian Rahayu and Arifudin Arifudin, "Constitutional Court Decision No 169/Puu-Xxii/2024 and Efforts to Mainstream Gender in Political Representation on Parliament," *The Digest: Journal of Jurisprudence and Legisprudence* 6, no. 2 (December 28, 2025): 175-204, <https://doi.org/10.15294/digest.v6i2.37338>.

¹³ Itzkovitch-Malka and Oshri, "The Weight on Her Shoulders: Marginalization of Women Legislators in Parliaments and Substantive Representation of Women."

¹⁴ Enzo Lenine and Manuela Gomes Pereira, "Paridad de Género En Las Organizaciones Internacionales: Discurso vs. Números," *Relaciones Internacionales*, no. 48 (October 26, 2021): 101-21, <https://doi.org/10.15366/relacionesinternacionales2021.48.006>.

Second concept, In organizational sociology and feminist institutionalism studies, the concept of Glass Walls refers to invisible horizontal barriers that restrict the movement of women within an institution. Unlike the *Glass Ceiling*, which operates vertically to prevent women from reaching top leadership positions, Glass Walls function spatially by compartmentalizing or isolating women within specific departments or work units traditionally regarded as feminine domains. This phenomenon creates occupational segregation where women are allowed entry into the organization but remain confined to support or service functions (soft issues) and are hindered by transparent walls from moving into strategic sectors that control core operations, finance, and technical policy (hard issues).¹⁵

Within the parliamentary context, Glass Walls manifest in the distribution of the Parliamentary Completeness Apparatus (AKD) through latently discriminatory practices. As explained by Louise Chappell (2006), political institutions often maintain gender-biased power architectures through 'informal rules' that separate legislative portfolios. Consequently, even when female legislators successfully break through electoral barriers, they are often obstructed by glass walls that imprison them in social welfare or women's affairs commissions. These are termed 'glass' walls due to their subtle nature; female legislators can witness the strategic decision-making processes in the finance or infrastructure commissions located immediately adjacent to them, yet institutionally, they are denied access or authority to participate. Thus, Glass Walls are not merely administrative hurdles but sociological instruments used by masculine networks to maintain a monopoly over the epicenters of budget authority and strategic state policy.¹⁶

In the discourse of political representation and gender-just institutional studies, the **Critical Mass Theory** proposed by Drude Dahlerup (1988) serves as a fundamental analytical framework for evaluating the effectiveness of affirmative quota policies. This theory is predicated on the premise that the transformation of political institutions cannot occur solely through the partial physical presence of a minority but requires the attainment of a specific proportional threshold at least 30% for quantitative representation to transform into qualitative policy. Dahlerup emphasizes that 'quotas are not directly proportional to power' if the minority has not yet reached the critical mass point.¹⁷

Dahlerup dissects the dynamics of representation into proportionality phases. When the percentage of women within an institution (or commission) falls significantly below the threshold (Skewed Group), their presence is reduced to a mere display or *token* (tokenism). In this tokenism phase, female legislators experience political isolation, are burdened by hyper-visibility, and are psychologically compelled to assimilate into the work culture and policy orientations of the masculine majority simply to survive politically. Conversely, when the 30% threshold is met, the minority gains autonomous bargaining power to deconstruct 'informal rules' (Old Boys Network). Critical mass enables female legislators to form strategic alliances to shift legislative discourse and reform legal products to be more gender-responsive. Thus, without achieving critical mass in every Parliamentary Completeness Apparatus (AKD), legal guarantees of descriptive representation will never manifest into substantive representation, instead producing only an illusion of equality that reinforces the patriarchal status quo.¹⁸

Literature Review

Descriptive Representation and Substantive Representation

Descriptive representation refers to the numerical presence of women in political institutions through electoral mechanisms and quota policies, whereas substantive representation concerns their

¹⁵ Prabha Ramseok-Munhurrin, Perunjodi Naidoo, and Sandhya Armoogum, "Navigating the Challenges of Female Leadership in the Information and Communication Technology and Engineering Sectors," *Journal of Business and Socio-Economic Development* 5, no. 1 (January 14, 2025): 55-70, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBSED-03-2023-0014>.

¹⁶ Amy Diehl and Leanne M. Dzubinski, *Glass Walls* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.5771/9781538170977>.

¹⁷ Federico Battiston et al., "Networks beyond Pairwise Interactions: Structure and Dynamics," *Physics Reports* 874 (August 2020): 1-92, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physrep.2020.05.004>.

¹⁸ Reham ElMorally, "Beyond Gender Quotas: Unveiling Intersectional Pathways to Political Equity in Egypt," *Open Journal of Political Science* 14, no. 02 (2024): 234-57, <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2024.142015>.

actual ability to influence institutional agendas, policy priorities, and decision-making processes in ways that reflect women's interests and broader gender justice.¹⁹ This distinction is essential because formal inclusion does not automatically ensure effective participation. A legislature may therefore appear inclusive at the compositional level while still reproducing unequal access to substantive institutional power.²⁰

Pitkin's framework remains important because it clarifies that representation must be assessed not only by who is present, but also by what they are able to do within the institution. In parliamentary practice, women may formally occupy seats while lacking equal access to strategic commissions, budgetary forums, or leadership channels.²¹ Under such conditions, descriptive gains may conceal substantive deficits. This is why the quality of internal institutional arrangements becomes central to the study of representation.

In the context of this article, the distinction between descriptive and substantive representation provides the basic analytical entry point. The study does not stop at measuring the number of women in the Central Java Provincial DPRD, but examines whether their presence is translated into meaningful institutional power within the AKD. This perspective also helps identify how internal rules may weaken the substantive value of affirmative representation. Accordingly, descriptive representation functions here as the starting threshold, while substantive representation constitutes the normative benchmark.

Gendered Portfolios

The concept of gendered portfolios explains how political institutions distribute assignments according to gendered assumptions rather than objective considerations of capacity or representational fairness. In many legislatures, women are more likely to be placed in sectors associated with care, welfare, education, and family matters.²² By contrast, finance, infrastructure, development, and budgetary affairs are commonly treated as masculine domains. This division is not neutral because it reflects and reproduces stereotypes about political competence.²³

Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson show that institutional assignments often mirror broader power hierarchies within politics. Women may be included in public office, but they are frequently directed toward positions with lower strategic influence over core state resources.²⁴ As a result, institutional participation becomes segmented. This segmentation produces unequal authority even where formal inclusion appears to have been achieved.

Within parliamentary institutions, gendered portfolios operate as an informal mechanism of exclusion. Women are not denied entry into the institution, but their role is channeled into specific sectors that are seen as extensions of traditional feminine responsibility.²⁵ This means that access to legislative power is differentiated internally. The issue is therefore not only representation in general, but representation within the architecture of institutional power.

For this study, gendered portfolios are relevant because they provide a framework for examining how women legislators in the Central Java Provincial DPRD are distributed across commissions and other AKD structures. The concept helps explain why concentration in welfare-related commissions cannot be treated as a neutral administrative outcome. Instead, it may indicate a structured pattern

¹⁹ SARAH SUNN BUSH, DANIELA DONNO, and PÅR ZETTERBERG, "International Rewards for Gender Equality Reforms in Autocracies," *American Political Science Review* 118, no. 3 (August 24, 2024): 1189-1203, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055423001016>.

²⁰ Nam Kyu Kim, "When Does Women's Political Power Matter? Women's Representation and Legal Gender Equality of Economic Opportunity across Contexts," *European Political Science Review* 14, no. 4 (November 9, 2022): 583-99, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773922000352>.

²¹ Reut Itzkovitch-Malka and Odelia Oshri, "The Weight on Her Shoulders: Marginalization of Women Legislators in Parliaments and Substantive Representation of Women," *British Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 4 (October 27, 2024): 1340-61, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123424000401>.

²² Katrine Beauregard, Mirya Holman, and Jill Sheppard, "Sexism and Attitudes Toward Policy Spending in Australia and the United States," *Frontiers in Political Science* 4 (May 27, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpos.2022.892111>.

²³ Corinna Kroeber and Joanna Hüffelmann, "It's a Long Way to the Top: Women's Ministerial Career Paths," *Politics & Gender* 18, no. 3 (September 10, 2022): 741-67, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X21000118>.

²⁴ BRENNAN ARMSTRONG et al., "Financial Crises and the Selection and Survival of Women Finance Ministers," *American Political Science Review* 118, no. 3 (August 11, 2024): 1305-23, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055423000825>.

²⁵ Pierre Alayrac et al., "Still Struggling to Reach the Top? Women Officeholders and Gendered Career Pathways in the European Commission," *European Union Politics* 26, no. 1 (March 3, 2025): 23-44, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14651165241300650>.

of gendered placement. This makes gendered portfolios an essential concept for assessing whether the AKD arrangement supports or undermines substantive representation.

Glass Walls

Glass walls refer to invisible horizontal barriers that restrict women's movement across institutional sectors.^{26,27} Unlike the glass ceiling, which blocks upward mobility, glass walls confine women within particular units or policy areas and limit their access to more strategic institutional spaces.²⁸ In feminist institutional analysis, these barriers are sustained not only by formal rules but also by informal norms and organizational culture, making the resulting inequality appear subtle while still producing concrete consequences for authority and policy influence.²⁹

In parliamentary settings, glass walls can be observed when women are systematically concentrated in certain commissions while excluded from bodies that control finance, infrastructure, and agenda-setting power.³⁰ This form of segregation does not require explicit legal prohibition. It can emerge through factional negotiations, customary practices, and internal assumptions about political suitability.³¹ As a result, women's legislative roles become spatially limited even within the same representative institution.

This concept is directly relevant to the present research because the problem under examination is not merely underrepresentation in aggregate, but unequal access within the internal organization of the DPRD. Glass walls help explain how the placement of women in the AKD may reflect institutional bias despite the formal success of electoral quotas. The concept also supports the argument that legal reform must address internal arrangements rather than only candidacy rules. Therefore, glass walls function as a bridge between empirical committee distribution and normative institutional critique.

Critical Mass Theory

Critical mass theory argues that the effectiveness of minority representation depends not only on presence, but also on whether the minority reaches a threshold sufficient to influence institutional behaviour. In gender and politics scholarship, Dahlerup's theory is widely used to explain why numerical gains do not always result in structural change.³² A small number of women in an institution may remain politically isolated. Their presence may be symbolically important, yet still insufficient to transform institutional culture.³³

The theory distinguishes between token presence and a level of representation capable of generating coalition, bargaining strength, and agenda influence. When women remain below a meaningful threshold, they are often pressured to adapt to dominant norms rather than reshape them.³⁴ This condition limits their ability to act collectively. Consequently, representation may remain formal without becoming transformative.

Critical mass theory is also useful because it connects numbers with institutional outcomes in a more nuanced way. It does not claim that numerical increase alone is enough, but it does show that

²⁶ Amy Diehl and Leanne M. Dzubinski, *Glass Walls* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.5040/9798881834821>.

²⁷ Dila Agrizzi, Teerooven Soobaroyen, and Abeer Alsallom, "Spatiality and Accounting: The Case of Female Segregation in Audit Firms," *Accounting, Organizations and Society* 93 (August 2021): 101238, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aos.2021.101238>.

²⁸ Malu AC Gatto and Kristin N Wylie, "Informal Institutions and Gendered Candidate Selection in Brazilian Parties," *Party Politics* 28, no. 4 (July 5, 2022): 727-38, <https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688211008842>.

²⁹ Indira Shrestha et al., "Invisible Barriers: Effects of Glass Ceiling on Women's Career Progression in Nepalese Commercial Banks," *Problems and Perspectives in Management* 21, no. 4 (December 13, 2023): 605-16, [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(4\).2023.45](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(4).2023.45).

³⁰ Encarna Hernández Rodríguez and Loredana Stan, "Liderazgo Femenino Para Una Administración Pública Innovadora," *Documentación Administrativa*, January 19, 2023, 26-42, <https://doi.org/10.24965/da.11138>.

³¹ S. Harikrishnan and John Doyle, "Understanding the Role of Physical Spaces in Social De-Segregations: Spatial Lessons from Kerala and Northern Ireland," *Land Use Policy* 146 (November 2024): 107315, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2024.107315>.

³² Kendall D. Funk, Hannah L. Paul, and Andrew Q. Philips, "Point Break: Using Machine Learning to Uncover a Critical Mass in Women's Representation," *Political Science Research and Methods* 10, no. 2 (April 20, 2022): 372-90, <https://doi.org/10.1017/psrm.2021.51>.

³³ Annika Marlen Hinze, "Made for Men: Political Science Departments in the United States as Gendered Institutions," *Politics & Gender* 20, no. 1 (March 14, 2024): 104-36, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X23000399>.

³⁴ Funk, Paul, and Philips, "Point Break: Using Machine Learning to Uncover a Critical Mass in Women's Representation."

very limited representation creates structural disadvantages in deliberation and leadership.³⁵ In practice, women who remain scattered or isolated across institutional units are less likely to challenge dominant internal rules. This makes proportional distribution an issue of both fairness and institutional functionality.³⁶

For this article, critical mass theory helps assess whether women's representation in the AKD is distributed in a way that allows meaningful participation across commissions and leadership structures. The issue is not only the overall number of women in the DPRD, but whether women are present in sufficient proportion within each strategic organ. If they are concentrated in only one sector, then the conditions for critical mass are not met across the institution. This strengthens the argument that proportional distribution is necessary for substantive representation.

Position of the Study and Scholarly Contribution

The concepts of descriptive representation, substantive representation, gendered portfolios, glass walls, and critical mass theory together provide a coherent framework for analyzing women's representation beyond electoral entry.³⁷ Descriptive representation explains the formal success of quota-based inclusion. Substantive representation establishes the evaluative standard for meaningful institutional participation. Gendered portfolios, glass walls, and critical mass theory then explain why formal inclusion may still coexist with structured internal inequality.³⁸

This study is positioned within the intersection of feminist jurisprudence, parliamentary institutional analysis, and gender-sensitive representation theory. Its analytical focus is not limited to women's candidacy or electoral outcomes, but is directed toward the internal legal architecture that governs committee placement and leadership distribution.³⁹ In this respect, the Rules of Procedure become an important object of analysis. They are examined not as neutral procedural instruments, but as legal structures capable of reproducing or correcting institutional inequality.

The scholarly contribution of this study lies in connecting representation theory with the normative design of subnational parliamentary institutions. Rather than focusing only on quotas at the nomination or electoral stage,⁴⁰ this article examines how internal parliamentary rules shape the translation of descriptive representation into substantive representation. On that basis, the article argues that the core problem in the Central Java Provincial DPRD lies in the normative gap within the Rules of Procedure, which permits unequal committee assignments and weakens women's bargaining power within the AKD. This also clarifies that the proposed institutional engineering is a legal response to a specific structural problem rather than merely a political preference.

Research Design and Methodology

This study employs normative legal research, focusing on the examination of legal norms and legal materials relating to women's representation within parliamentary institutions. The analysis specifically addresses the normative vacuum in the Rules of Procedure of the Central Java Provincial DPRD and its implications for the transformation of women's descriptive representation into substantive representation within the Parliamentary Completeness Apparatus.⁴¹

³⁵ Marc van de Wardt et al., "Birds of a Feather Flock Together? The Survival of Underrepresented Groups within Parliamentary Parties, 1991-2015," *European Journal of Political Research* 60, no. 2 (May 2, 2021): 474-96, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12409>.

³⁶ Lu Ciccia et al., "Feminization of the Precarious at the UNAM: Examining Obstacles to Gender Equality," ed. Alejandro Botero Carvajal, *PLOS One* 20, no. 10 (October 29, 2025): e0334122, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0334122>.

³⁷ Ekaterina Rashkova and Silvia Erzeel, "The Field of Gender and Substantive Representation: Re-Conceptualising, Measurement and Implications," *European Journal of Politics and Gender*, August 21, 2023, 1-4, <https://doi.org/10.1332/251510821X16890760236494>.

³⁸ Devin K. Joshi, "Substantive Representation of Women by Parliamentarians in Asia," in *Substantive Representation of Women in Asian Parliaments* (London: Routledge, 2022), 1-23, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003275961-1>.

³⁹ Claudia Mayordomo Zapata, "La Generización Del Proceso de Asignación de Comisiones En Un Contexto Paritario," *Papers. Revista de Sociologia* 109, no. 3 (June 12, 2024): e3239, <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/papers.3239>.

⁴⁰ William Cross, "Understanding Power-Sharing within Political Parties: Stratarchy as Mutual Interdependence between the Party in the Centre and the Party on the Ground," *Government and Opposition* 53, no. 2 (April 7, 2018): 205-30, <https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2016.22>.

⁴¹ Nurazlina Abdul Raof et al., "Exploring the Depths: A Comparative Analysis of Doctrinal and Non-Doctrinal Legal Research," *International Journal of Research in Social Science and Humanities* 06, no. 05 (2025): 122-29, <https://doi.org/10.47505/IJRSS.2025.5.13>.

The approaches utilized in this paper include the Statute Approach, aimed at dissecting the relations, hierarchy, and normative contradictions between Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections (electoral law) and the Central Java Provincial DPRD Regulation concerning the Rules of Procedure (internal governance law). Through this approach, the research identifies the normative vacuum regarding the obligation for equitable gender representation.⁴²

The Conceptual Approach is utilized to construct a critical analytical framework of constitutional realities. The concepts excavated include the doctrine of Feminist Jurisprudence (particularly Catharine MacKinnon's dominance theory) to scrutinize the absolute discretion of the Factions, as well as institutional sociological theories such as Gendered Portfolios and Glass Walls to map the commission segregation within the DPRD.⁴³

The Case Approach is applied to dissect the ratio decidendi (legal reasoning) of the Constitutional Court Decision Number 169/PUU-XXII/2024. This decision is positioned as a foundation for jurisprudential comparison to urge institutional engineering within the Rules of Procedure of the Central Java Provincial DPRD.⁴⁴

The legal materials in this study consist of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials. The primary legal materials include Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, the Rules of Procedure of the Central Java Provincial DPRD, the Decree of the Central Java Provincial DPRD Number 37 of 2024, and Constitutional Court Decision Number 169/PUU-XXII/2024. The secondary legal materials include journal articles, books, and scholarly works relevant to feminist jurisprudence, substantive representation, gendered portfolios, glass walls, and critical mass theory, while tertiary materials include supporting legal references. As a normative legal study, this research does not employ population and sample in the empirical sense.

Based on the aforementioned research type and approaches, the author constructs the following working hypotheses:

- H1.** *"The normative vacuum regarding gender affirmation within the Rules of Procedure of the Central Java Provincial DPRD delegates absolute discretion to the Factions. This legally legitimizes patriarchal institutional practices, wherein member placement within the Parliamentary Completeness Apparatus is determined by masculine networks (Old Boys Network) rather than the principle of representational justice."*
- H2.** *"As a consequence of this normative vacuum, segregation practices in the form of Glass Walls occur within the parliament. Female legislators systematically experience portfolio compartmentalization (Gendered Portfolios) by being isolated in welfare sector commissions (soft issues) and excluded from strategically valuable commissions and budget allocations (hard issues)."*

These two working hypotheses guide the legal analysis in formulating institutional engineering based on proportional substantive representation. The legal materials were collected through literature study and document review of statutory regulations, parliamentary rules, court decisions, official institutional documents, and relevant academic publications. They were then analyzed qualitatively through descriptive-analytical and prescriptive methods by identifying the legal issues, examining the normative implications of the relevant legal materials, and formulating legal prescriptions to address the identified institutional gap. Through this process, the findings are derived from the relationship between legal norms, institutional arrangements, and the distribution of women's representation within the AKD.

⁴² Frank Luis Mila Maldonado, Karla Ayerim Yáñez Yáñez, and Jorge David Mantilla Salgado, "Una Aproximación a La Metodología de La Investigación Jurídica," *Revista Pedagogía Universitaria y Didáctica Del Derecho* 8, no. 2 (December 28, 2021): 81, <https://doi.org/10.5354/0719-5885.2021.60341>.

⁴³ Mila Maldonado, Yáñez Yáñez, and Mantilla Salgado.

⁴⁴ Mila Maldonado, Yáñez Yáñez, and Mantilla Salgado.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The findings of this study show that the core institutional problem lies in the normative vacuum within the Rules of Procedure of the Central Java Provincial DPRD. The examined legal framework does not provide an explicit and binding mechanism requiring the proportional distribution of women within the Parliamentary Completeness Apparatus. As a consequence, the placement of members within commissions and other AKD structures remains largely dependent on factional discretion. This condition demonstrates that the formal achievement of women's representation at the electoral stage is not automatically followed by equal institutional access within the parliament.

The findings further indicate that factional dominance plays a decisive role in determining the internal composition of the AKD. In practice, the absence of procedural limitations allows political party factions to assign their members according to internal preferences that are not necessarily aligned with the principle of substantive representation. This situation produces an unequal pattern of women's representation, particularly in strategic sectors related to economic, financial, and developmental decision making. Thus, the institutional arrangement still permits women's representation to remain concentrated in certain sectors rather than being proportionally distributed across the parliamentary structure.

In quantitative terms, the available institutional data show that 29.2% of the 24 female legislators are placed in Commission E, which is responsible for welfare affairs, while their presence in commissions associated with more strategic hard issues remains lower. This distribution demonstrates that women's representation within the AKD is not proportionally dispersed across strategic organs. The significance of this pattern lies in the fact that substantive representation depends not only on the number of women elected, but also on whether they obtain meaningful access to committees and institutional spaces that shape budgetary, developmental, and broader policy priorities. Thus, the available data confirm that the current arrangement still reflects descriptive inclusion without equally secured institutional influence. The detailed distribution data are presented in Table 1 in the following subsection.

Discussion

A. The status quo of women's representation distribution within the Parliamentary Completeness Apparatus (AKD) of the Central Java Provincial Regional House of Representatives.

Women's struggle to attain equal rights within the spheres of government and politics continues to face significant challenges, primarily concerning the existence of gender bias that has crystallized through masculine structures. Although Article 245 of the General Election Law explicitly mandates a minimum of 30% (thirty percent) representation in the House of Representatives (DPR), Provincial Regional House of Representatives (DPRD Provinsi), and Regency/City Regional House of Representatives (DPRD Kab/Kota), in reality, this figure merely represents a normative policy perceived as purely semantic; in other words, it is not fully and substantively implemented.⁴⁵

The lack of implementation regarding the aforementioned policy is influenced by a perspective which assumes that once a council at either the national or regional level fulfills the 30% quota, the logical consequence is that women have inherently attained equal rights. This perspective neglects the question of whether women can consistently and sustainably determine and/or participate in policymaking processes concerning matters within the council's purview. Frequently, legal norms such as the Election Law, which mandate the 30% (thirty percent) quota, fail to be applied due to the council's internal regulations, particularly those concerning the composition and selection of elected members within the Council's Complementary Organs (Alat Kelengkapan Dewan or AKD). The existence of these internal council regulations, in practice, grants absolute authority to political party factions to determine the placement of individuals within a specific AKD. Although this does

⁴⁵ Alfi Nursyifa et al., "Partisipasi Perempuan Dalam Politik," *Jurnal Ilmu Politik Dan Pemerintahan* 9, no. 1 (June 7, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.37058/jipp.v9i1.4120>.

not directly diminish the quantitative representation, the immense authority held by political party factions relegates the mandate of Article 245 of the Election Law to a merely normative dimension, rather than a practical reality.⁴⁶

As a concrete example, this reduction in the meaning of representation can be empirically traced within the architecture of the Council's Complementary Organs (AKD) of the Central Java Provincial DPRD for the 2024-2029 term. Although, on paper, the mandate of the Election Law has successfully ushered 24 female legislators into parliament, the absolute authority of faction leaders in determining commission placements has undermined the representative substance of this achievement. Referring to the Decree of the Central Java Provincial DPRD Number 37 of 2024, the absence of normative limitations within the Rules of Procedure (Tata Tertib) provides factions with the latitude to distribute their members based on the bias of Gendered Portfolios, as evidenced by the following data:

Tabel 1.
Distribution of Women's Representation in the Central Java Provincial Legislative Council's Standing Committees.

Comission Name	Total of Women	Percentage (per 24)	Name of The Women in DPRD Jawa Tengah
Komisi A Pemerintahan & Hukum	5	20.80%	1. Ayuning Sekar Suci (PDIP) 2. Hj. Sri Ruwiyati (PDIP) 3. Tietha Ernawati (Golkar) 4. Nur Fatwah (PPP) 5. Orizah Santifa (Gerindra)
Komisi B Perekonomian	5	20.80%	1. Hj. Endrianingsih Y. (PDIP) 2. Hj. Irna Setiawati (PDIP) 3. Hj. Kadarwati (PDIP) 4. Hj. Sri Hartini (Gerindra) 5. dr. Hj. Sholeha K. (PPP)
Komisi C Keuangan	4	16.70%	1. Wulan Purnama Sari (PDIP) 2. Rr. Maria Tri Mangesti (PDIP) 3. Hj. Siti Rosidah (PKB) 4. Ni'matul Azizah (PKB)
Komisi D Pembangunan	3	12.50%	1. Hj. Nur Sa'adah (PKB) 2. Niken Mayasari (PKB) 3. Anindiya K. P. (Golkar)
Komisi E Kesejahteraan	7	29.20%	1. dr. Messy Widiastuti (PDIP) 2. Krisseptiana/Tia Hendi (PDIP) 3. Hj. Sumarwati (PKB) 4. Shinta Laila (Gerindra) 5. Padmasari Mestikajati (Golkar) 6. Hj. Ida Nurul Farida (PKS) 7. Hj. Kartina Sukawati (Demokrat)

Source : Central Java Provincial DPRD Decree Number 37 of 2024.

The factions systematically concentrate nearly one-third of the female legislators (29.2%, or 7 individuals), clustering them in Commission E, which manages social welfare (often categorized as soft issues). Conversely, in the realm of hard issues which govern infrastructure and physical projects, such as Commission D the factions deployed only 3 women (12.5%). This case of segregation within the Central Java DPRD serves as undeniable evidence that when internal council rules grant a 'blank check' of absolute discretion to political factions, the 30% mandate of the Election Law is paralyzed at the commission's threshold. Women are permitted a quantitative presence within the council

⁴⁶ Emilia Sahira, Ismail Eri Qomaini, and Eny Kusdarini, "Implikasi Hukum 30% Terhadap Keterwakilan Perempuan Pada Pemilu Legislatif Tahun 2024," *Journal of Indonesian Social Studies Education* 3, no. 1 (2025): 63-72.

building, yet their access to actual portfolios of power remains controlled by masculine lobbying networks within the parties.

Table 1 shows that the distribution of women across commissions is not proportionally dispersed. Commission E accommodates 7 of the 24 female legislators, or 29.2%, while Commission D contains only 3 women, or 12.5%, and Commission C contains 4 women, or 16.7%. In concrete terms, the number of women in Commission E is equal to the combined number in Commissions C and D, even though the latter two are more closely related to finance and development. This pattern indicates that women's representation remains concentrated in welfare-oriented sectors rather than evenly distributed across strategic committees. More specifically, the gap between Commission E with 29.2% and Commission D with 12.5%, alongside the lower proportion in Commission C with 16.7%, shows that women's representation is still channeled toward welfare portfolios rather than proportionally present in committees linked to finance, development, and broader policy influence.

Although several female legislators hold chairmanships within the Complementary Organs (AKD), such as in Commission D, this does not necessarily indicate an improvement in the quality of representation within these bodies. This is due to the fact that the decision-making system within the complementary organs is based on the "one person, one vote" principle; therefore, even if women chair the AKD in certain instances, they remain a quantitative minority in decision-making processes regarding their purview.

Indeed, the aforementioned facts demonstrate that the current involvement within the Central Java DPRD is indicative of the concept of Tokenism. In simple terms, Tokenism (derived from the word "token," implying a mere sign or symbol) is the practice of pseudo-representation or political lip service. In political sociology and gender studies, tokenism refers to the actions of an institution (or a dominant group) that recruits or grants positions to a select few individuals from minority or marginalized groups, not with the genuine intent of power-sharing, but merely to fulfill an obligation and deflect public criticism. When this occurs, substantive representation is not achieved; instead, women are instrumentalized as a tool of legitimacy for institutional and party interests simply to satisfy representation quotas.⁴⁷

This phenomenon can be analyzed more comprehensively through Critical Mass Theory, as posited by political scientist Drude Dahlerup in her article titled "From a Small to a Large Minority: Women in Scandinavian Politics," published in the journal *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1988). Dahlerup argues that the mere presence of women does not automatically alter the institutional culture and norms within an organization, let alone within political parties inherently tied to power. In her work, Dahlerup divides the stages of minority group presence (in this case, women) into several phases, namely:⁴⁸

1. Tokenism Phase (1%-15%)

Due to their significantly small numbers, the presence of women or minority groups is regarded merely as a "symbol" of an institution, disregarding the roles, substantive authority, and rights they acquire in comparison to the dominant group whether based on gender or specific affiliations that controls the institution. The existence of this phase compels women and vulnerable groups to assimilate, either formally by integrating into specific factions or by diluting the substance of their perspectives in order to remain heard and relevant within the institution. Consequently, it can be concluded that, during this phase, women are rendered paralyzed in their capacity to enact directly impactful decisions or policies, particularly within domains heavily dominated by men.

2. Transition Phase (15%-30%)

In this phase, the number of women is larger, enabling the formation of coalitions that can play a substantive role in policymaking. Although women fundamentally possess sufficient numbers to intervene in decision-making processes, the enduring power of traditional culture and customs, which are inherently tied to masculinity, continues to pose significant obstacles. These significant obstacles often manifest as compartmentalization, which

⁴⁷ Mustafa Kocanci, Beyhan Aksoy, and Mete Kaan Namal, "Beyond Tokenism: Breaking the Men's Circle for Gender Equality at Male-Dominated Jobs," *Women's Studies International Forum* 110 (May 2025): 103097, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2025.103097>.

⁴⁸ Battiston et al., "Networks beyond Pairwise Interactions: Structure and Dynamics."

restricts women to a single focus typically associated with women's own domestic affairs without granting them meaningful involvement in decision-making within other, more crucial sectors.

3. Critical Mass Phase (30%-40%)

According to Dahlerup, a shift toward a more substantive character of women's representation occurs when they constitute 30-40% of an institution's total membership. This quantitative threshold not only signifies that women ultimately transition into policy-making "actors," but also ensures that they possess the autonomous power to influence, and even construct, policies across various aspects. According to Dahlerup, once this Critical Mass Phase is achieved, radical changes will occur across six dimensions within the parliament:

- a) Changes in Reaction, wherein the dominant gender and/or groups, such as men, cease to view women through the stereotype of the "mother/wife," recognizing them instead as genuine professional politicians.
- b) Improved Performance, as women no longer experience the stress of being scrutinized as tokens. They are able to work naturally without the pressure of a double burden of proof.
- c) Changes in Institutional Culture, wherein meeting cultures laden with masculine jargon and family-unfriendly working hours (e.g., midnight budget lobbying) begin to shift.
- d) Shifts in Political Discourse, whereby soft issues (such as child protection and maternity leave rights) that were previously deemed trivial are elevated into mainstream political discourse.
- e) Changes in Policy Products, wherein regional regulations and Regional State Budget (APBD) allocations become more gender-equitable.
- f) The Strengthening of Women's Power, wherein women are no longer merely regular members, but begin to control the council's complementary organs without being obstructed by a glass ceiling.

The current distribution confirms that women's representation has not yet reached a substantive level within the AKD. Although 24 women are present in the DPRD, their concentration in Commission E and their lower presence in Commissions C and D show that no proportional critical mass has been achieved across committees associated with strategic institutional influence. When linked to the concept of Gendered Portfolios, the placement of the majority of women in Commission E substantiates the author's hypothesis regarding the empirical consequences of a vacuum in policy implementation where the mandates of the Election Law fail to be substantively realized due to the unfiltered authority of political party factions.⁴⁹

Based on the factual conditions analyzed through Drude Dahlerup's Critical Mass Theory, there is an urgent need to formulate a proposed solution to ensure women achieve both quantitative and substantive representation, thereby attaining optimal equality. This can be achieved through affirmative action interventions, requiring political party factions to adhere to Article 27 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. Such affirmative action should be implemented through vertical and horizontal distribution engineering. Horizontal distribution engineering is carried out by proposing member placements across commissions, mandating that factions distribute legislators proportionally to eliminate commission-based segregation. Vertical distribution engineering is also required to shatter the glass ceiling, aiming to dismantle leadership dominance that is inconsistent with the ideals of equality.

B. Institutional Engineering within the Complementary Organs (AKD) of the Central Java Provincial DPRD to Overcome the Phenomena of Gendered Portfolios and Glass Walls in Achieving Substantive Representation.

The paradox in implementing the 30% threshold has reached a stalemate and remains blind to the absolute authority held by parties/factions in placing their cadres within specific fields. Given that this issue lies at the heart of the dynamics of women's representation, it necessitates change through the demystification of the prerogative rights held by political party factions. This demystification must be interpreted as a genuine shift in perspective, particularly regarding the

⁴⁹ Frank Lefley and Václav Janeček, *Board Gender Diversity and Critical Mass Theory* (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2026), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-13608-4>.

constitutional awareness of political parties, to consistently realize gender equality in the selection of AKD compositions.

Although political parties are fundamentally the largest political vehicles and hold a central role in fulfilling the right to participation through their factions, once serving as representatives of the people, every faction must adhere to the principle of non-discrimination as mandated by Article 28H Paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution. Consequently, the unchecked authority exercised by political party factions within the representative assembly must be limited by the assembly's own Rules of Procedure (Tata Tertib) to prevent the production of masculine bias. The aforementioned restrictions can be implemented through two aspects, namely horizontal and vertical distribution engineering, as follows.

First is horizontal distribution engineering, namely the proportional placement of women across commissions and parliamentary organs so that their representation is not concentrated only in welfare-oriented sectors. In this framework, the Rules of Procedure should direct factional placements toward a more balanced distribution across the AKD through the following measures:

- a) Cross-Distribution Affirmation Clause, The Rules of Procedure should include a clause requiring each faction to distribute its female legislators proportionally across commissions and other AKD structures. This clause is necessary to ensure that the 30% mandate is not treated merely as electoral compliance, but is translated into internal institutional representation. Operationally, the proposed composition submitted by each faction should be reviewed by the DPRD leadership before ratification to ensure that women are not concentrated only in one sector. In this way, cross-distribution becomes a binding procedural requirement rather than a matter left solely to factional discretion.
- b) Prohibition of Sectoral Concentration. To prevent the continued concentration of women in welfare-oriented commissions, the Rules of Procedure should include a clause prohibiting factions from assigning most of their female legislators only to one commission while other commissions remain dominated by men. At the stage of AKD formation, each faction should submit its proposed commission distribution to the DPRD leadership for verification of proportional representation across commissions. If the proposed composition reproduces concentration in one sector, the proposal should be returned for revision before ratification. This mechanism would make the principle of substantive representation enforceable within the internal structure of the DPRD.
- c) The Budget Epicenter Mandate. The Rules of Procedure should also require every faction that assigns members to the Budget Committee to include women in proportion to the number of female legislators within that faction, or at minimum to ensure women's representation in the Budget Committee when female legislators are available. This requirement is necessary because the Budget Committee is the central organ for regional budget formulation and determines whether policy priorities receive financial support. Its implementation may be carried out through prior verification by the DPRD leadership before the composition of the Budget Committee is approved in the plenary session. In this way, women's access to budgetary power becomes a binding institutional requirement rather than a matter left entirely to factional discretion.⁵⁰

Second is vertical distribution engineering, which can be defined as the distribution of women's participation along the lines of coordination between the factions and/or the leadership of the Central Java DPRD itself. This aims to anticipate and/or eliminate the *Glass Walls* phenomenon that constrains women, even when they are appointed to commission leadership positions. Paradoxically, positioning women as commission leaders can sometimes result in a more restricted participatory maneuvering space compared to being a regular member; this situation is further exacerbated by the fact that the quantitative presence of women remains tangibly low in several commissions chaired by females. The implementation of this vertical distribution engineering necessitates several key aspects, namely:

⁵⁰ Bryony Hoskins and Diego Carrasco, "Understanding Gender Inequality in Political Self-Efficacy in Early Adolescents: Different Measures, Different Gender Gaps," *Political Studies Review* 23, no. 2 (May 13, 2025): 425-44, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14789299241264970>.

- a) Adoption of Constitutional Court Decision Number 169/PUU-XXII/2024. The ratio decidendi of Constitutional Court Decision Number 169/PUU-XXII/2024 should be incorporated into the DPRD Rules of Procedure as a binding standard for the distribution of AKD leadership positions. This means that proposals for Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary submitted by factions should be reviewed by the DPRD leadership before ratification to ensure proportional women's representation. If the proposed composition ignores gender proportionality, it should be returned for revision. Through this mechanism, the Constitutional Court's reasoning is translated into an operational rule that limits factional monopoly and strengthens women's substantive role in parliamentary leadership.⁵¹
- b) Proportionality of AKD Leadership. Efforts to eradicate vertical barriers or the Glass Ceiling within the parliament require legal interventions that directly target the leadership structure of the Council's Complementary Organs (AKD). Based on empirical findings, the normative vacuum has given rise to practices where the appointment of female legislators as chairpersons of commissions and/or AKDs is often carried out merely as a formality, without genuinely considering a holistically proportional composition across genders. This practice is a clear manifestation of institutional tokenism, wherein placing women in top leadership positions is not accompanied by the delegation of substantive decision-making authority. Conversely, Faction discretion continues to provide much greater room for cadres holding dominant roles (the male majority) to monopolize control over strategic decisions in the social, economic, and legal spheres. To end this illusion of representation or purely semantic representation, institutional engineering through amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Central Java Provincial DPRD must include imperative norms regarding the Proportionality of AKD Leadership. This clause formulates a legal obligation that the quota system for AKD leadership seats which includes the positions of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary, typically distributed proportionally among Factions must incorporate gender affirmation prerequisites. Operationally, if a Faction receives an allocation of several leadership seats across various commissions or bodies, the Faction is prohibited from exclusively reserving all these strategic positions for the male political elite. The Rules of Procedure must bind Factions to distribute a certain percentage of these leadership seats to their female legislators. Through the formulation of this proportionality clause, the normative vacuum that has thus far delegated absolute discretion to masculine networks (the Old Boys Network) can be significantly reduced. This intervention will ensure that women's leadership within the parliament is no longer performative, but rather transforms into substantive representation possessing real bargaining power in the formulation of public policy.

To ensure effective implementation, the DPRD should also establish periodic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess compliance with gender proportionality in AKD leadership distribution and to require corrective measures when imbalances persist.

Conclusion

This study concludes that women's representation in the Central Java Provincial DPRD remains predominantly descriptive rather than substantive. The root cause of this representational deficit is the existence of a normative vacuum within the DPRD's Rules of Procedure (Tata Tertib), which grants absolute discretion to political party factions. The absence of these normative boundaries directly perpetuates gender-biased institutional practices, wherein strategic decisions remain absolutely controlled by masculine elite networks (the Old Boys Network).

Empirically, the normative vacuum in the DPRD Rules of Procedure allows factional discretion to shape an unequal AKD distribution, in which women remain concentrated in welfare-oriented sectors and underrepresented in strategic organs related to finance, development, and budgetary power. This shows that the existing quota has not yet been translated into equal institutional access. The contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that the deficit of substantive representation is closely linked to the internal legal design of parliamentary procedures, not merely to electoral outcomes. Accordingly, the recommended reform is the amendment of the Rules of Procedure through cross-

⁵¹ Ade Irma Suryani and Dodi Jaya Wardana, "Legal Aspects of Women's Political Participation in a Gender Perspective," *JURNAL USM LAW REVIEW* 7, no. 3 (December 28, 2024): 1967-81, <https://doi.org/10.26623/julr.v7i3.10634>.

distribution affirmation, safeguards against sectoral concentration, mandatory women's representation in the Budget Committee, and proportionality in AKD leadership in line with Constitutional Court Decision Number 169/PUU-XXII/2024.

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