

## Exceeding the 30 Percent Quota: Women's Strategic Participation in Election Monitoring at the Denpasar Election Supervisory Agency (BAWASLU)

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 11 February 2026

Revised 26 February 2026

Accepted 04 March 2026

Available online

<https://talenta.usu.ac.id/Mahadi>

E-ISSN: 2964-7185

P-ISSN: 3025-3365

#### How to cite:

Sahadewa, A A G A W., Sari, K N P. (2026). Exceeding the 30 Percent Quota: Women's Strategic Participation in Election Monitoring at the Denpasar Election Supervisory Agency (BAWASLU). *Mahadi: Indonesia Journal of Law*, 05(01), (41-51).

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze in depth the role and contribution of women in the supervision process of regional head elections (Pilkada) in Denpasar City, with a focus on their level of involvement in the Denpasar City Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu). This study uses an empirical juridical method with a descriptive, qualitative approach, employing direct observation, document analysis, and in-depth interviews with Ni Wayan Eka Lestari, A.Ma as Coordinator of the Human Resources, Organization, and Training Division of Bawaslu Denpasar. The results of the study show that women's participation in election supervisory institutions has shown significant progress, with the composition of Bawaslu Denpasar membership meeting and even exceeding the 30% quota for women's representation, with two of the five commissioners and most of the secretariat staff being women. Women have proven to make a real contribution to maintaining the integrity of the regional elections, particularly through their meticulousness in data verification, their ability to communicate empathetically, and their sensitivity in resolving potential conflicts in the field. However, this study also found several obstacles, such as the double burden of domestic and public responsibilities, as well as the strong influence of patriarchal culture, which still places women in a subordinate position. Therefore, this study recommends strengthening affirmative policies, increasing women's resource capacity, and creating a more equitable and inclusive work environment to encourage women's continued participation in election monitoring.

**Keyword:** Bawaslu, Gender Equality, Political Participation, Election Monitoring

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis secara mendalam peran dan kontribusi perempuan dalam proses pengawasan pemilihan kepala daerah (Pilkada) di Kota Denpasar, dengan fokus pada tingkat keterlibatan mereka dalam Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum (Bawaslu) Kota Denpasar. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode empiris yudisial dengan pendekatan deskriptif dan kualitatif, yang melibatkan observasi langsung, analisis dokumen, dan wawancara mendalam dengan Ni Wayan Eka Lestari, A.Ma sebagai Koordinator Divisi SDM, Organisasi dan Diklat Bawaslu Denpasar. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa partisipasi perempuan dalam lembaga pengawasan pemilihan telah menunjukkan kemajuan yang signifikan, dengan komposisi keanggotaan Bawaslu Denpasar memenuhi bahkan melebihi kuota 30% untuk representasi perempuan, dengan dua dari lima komisioner dan sebagian besar staf sekretariat merupakan perempuan. Perempuan telah membuktikan kontribusi nyata dalam menjaga integritas pemilihan daerah, terutama melalui ketelitian mereka dalam verifikasi data, kemampuan berkomunikasi secara empati, dan kepekaan dalam menyelesaikan potensi konflik di lapangan. Namun, penelitian ini juga menemukan beberapa hambatan, seperti beban ganda tanggung jawab domestik dan publik, serta pengaruh kuat budaya patriarki yang



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<http://doi.org/10.26594/register.v6i1.idarticle>

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masih menempatkan perempuan dalam posisi subordinat. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini merekomendasikan penguatan kebijakan afirmatif, peningkatan kapasitas sumber daya perempuan, dan penciptaan lingkungan kerja yang lebih adil dan inklusif untuk mendorong partisipasi perempuan yang berkelanjutan dalam pemantauan pemilu.

**Keyword:** Bawaslu, Kesetaraan Gender, Partisipasi Politik, Pengawasan Pemilu

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## 1. Introduction

The issue of gender equality is a perennial topic of discussion and continues to be fought for, particularly in the context of Indonesia's democracy. Many people agree that there are fundamental differences between women and men. However, it is important to note that gender focuses more on the differences in the roles and functions that society assigns to men and women. In everyday life, men and women have different social roles, which result in different social statuses. In this case, men are often more advantaged than women due to existing social constructs. Since 2004, Indonesia has implemented a 30% gender quota for female legislative candidates to strengthen women's political representation. However, this policy has not been fully effective due to various obstacles, particularly cultural and ideological factors that limit its development.<sup>1</sup>

Gender is not something that arises naturally; rather, it is the result of a long process of socialization and internalization. This process is reinforced by the roles of various social institutions, ranging from the family, the smallest unit of society, to educational, religious, and political institutions.<sup>2</sup> When discussing women, it is essential to consider their roles and positions in society, especially in the political context. Patriarchal traditions and gender norms significantly limit women's involvement in politics. In Somalia, for example, the patriarchal clan-based social structure places men as the dominant party in public affairs, thereby depriving women of the opportunity to express their opinions or exercise their right to vote.<sup>3</sup> A similar situation occurs in Indonesia, where patriarchal culture marginalizes women, making it difficult for them to access leadership roles. A similar situation occurs in Indonesia, where patriarchal culture marginalizes women, making it difficult for them to access leadership roles.

In the Indonesian democratic context, the discourse on women's political participation should not be reduced to mere numerical presence. The deeper question concerns whether women are granted equal access to influence institutional direction, shape policy priorities, and participate meaningfully in strategic decision-making. Gender equality in politics is therefore not only a matter of representation but also of redistribution of power. When women are structurally positioned only as complementary actors rather than as equal decision-makers, democratic consolidation becomes procedurally complete but substantively fragile. Hence, examining women's participation in election supervisory institutions becomes crucial, as these institutions serve as guardians of electoral integrity and democratic legitimacy.

The patriarchal culture that has long been rooted in Indonesian society places significant restrictions on women's active participation in politics. Patriarchy refers to a social system in which men hold control over power and privileges, while women are placed in subordinate positions. In this context, women are often considered unsuitable for public roles, such as politics, which is seen as a male domain<sup>4</sup> For a long time, Indonesian society has held the belief that women are naturally weak, while men are considered stronger. Therefore, leadership roles in the family are typically given to men. This view reflects male dominance in the domestic sphere. As a result, women are often burdened with endless household chores, such as cooking, housekeeping, and childcare. These tasks are also carried out alongside reproductive responsibilities. Assigning women exclusively to domestic roles reduces their opportunities to contribute to productive activities. Since the establishment of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, the

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<sup>1</sup> Sun Caiwei, "Electoral System and the Development of Female Parliamentary Representation in Indonesia: The Interactive Effects of Open-List Pr, District Magnitude, and Multi-Party Competition.," *In Taiwanese Political Science Review* 24, no. 1 (2020): 67–108, [https://doi.org/10.6683/TPSR.202006\\_24\(1\).0002](https://doi.org/10.6683/TPSR.202006_24(1).0002).

<sup>2</sup> Hanifa Maulida, "Perempuan Dalam Kajian Sosiologi Gender: Konstruksi Peran Sosial, Ruang Publik, Dan Teori Feminis," *Journal of Politics and Democracy* 1, no. 1 (September 30, 2021): 71–79, <https://doi.org/10.61183/polikrasi.v1i1.6>.

<sup>3</sup> Abdulkadir Mohamed Abdullahi, Kim Williamson, and Mohamed Yusuf Ahmed, "The Impact of Patriarchal Culture on Somali Women's Participation in Politics," *Development Policy Review* 42, no. 2 (March 13, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12747>.

<sup>4</sup> Bayu Setyawan, "Patriarki Sebagai Akar Diskriminasi Gender Di Sri Lanka," *Resolusi: Jurnal Sosial Politik*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.32699/resolusi.v3i1.1277>.

government has established the principle of gender equality between men and women, as stipulated in Article 27 of the 1945 Constitution, which establishes equal status in law and government and the obligation to uphold the law and government without exception.<sup>5</sup>

Women's involvement plays a crucial role in reducing gender inequality and strengthening the democratic system, despite regulations supporting gender equality.<sup>6</sup> Affirmative action policies and gender quotas are enforced to ensure that women make up at least 30% of the legislative body.<sup>7</sup> Women's political participation is urgently needed to integrate gender issues into public policies. Women's participation refers to how women access the political sphere. Indonesia's status as a democracy means that every citizen can exercise their political rights to participate in determining the country's direction.<sup>8</sup> In the ongoing democratization process in Indonesia, it is crucial to ensure the representation and participation of women in legislative bodies and public institutions involved in political decision-making and public policy formulation. Women's political participation should be understood as a manifestation of the fulfillment of their citizenship rights. As citizens, women have the right to contribute to improving political conditions so that they and other minority groups do not have to experience discriminatory treatment.<sup>9</sup> Women and elections are inextricably linked. Through elections, women have the opportunity to occupy leadership positions in local government, helping create policies sensitive to gender issues.

In addition to normative guarantees, the effectiveness of women's political representation is strongly influenced by the design of the electoral system and institutional arrangements. Sun Caiwei explains that Indonesia's open-list proportional representation system produces complex effects on women's electability. While the 30 percent quota creates formal opportunities, intense intra-party competition often disadvantages female candidates who lack financial resources and strong political networks. This indicates that numerical representation does not automatically translate into substantive influence, especially when institutional competition reinforces existing gender hierarchies.

Furthermore, emphasizes that women's participation in election administration and supervision should not be viewed merely as compliance with regulatory quotas, but as part of strengthening democratic legitimacy. Women's presence in electoral institutions contributes to more inclusive oversight, particularly in ensuring that marginalized groups' rights are protected during election stages. Therefore, examining regions where women's representation exceeds 30 percent becomes important to assess whether quantitative gains have translated into qualitative improvements in electoral governance.

Several previous studies have examined women's political participation in the context of election administration and supervision. Research by Nurlia Dian Paramita (2022) emphasizes the importance of strengthening women's roles in election supervision, particularly through political education and capacity building, yet highlights that representation often remains administrative rather than substantive. Similarly, Mutiarahmanika and Pakasi (2023) found that although women have entered the General Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), gender bias in recruitment and institutional culture still limits their full participation in strategic decision-making. Furthermore, Sumarni (2024) argues that affirmative action in the 2024 elections has not entirely eliminated structural barriers, as women continue to face a double burden of domestic and public responsibilities. At the local level, Bagaskara and Ma'ruf (2025) show that low female representation in subdistrict supervisory committees resulted in limited substantive influence in election oversight.

Although these studies provide important insights, most of them focus primarily on the quantitative fulfillment of the 30% quota or on regions where female representation remains low. There is still limited research that examines areas where women's representation has exceeded the mandated quota and analyzes how this condition affects the quality and effectiveness of election supervision. Moreover, empirical studies

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<sup>5</sup> Wery Gusmansyah, "Dinamika Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Kehidupan Politik Di Indonesia," *HAWA* 1, no. 1 (June 1, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.29300/hawapsga.v1i1.2233>.

<sup>6</sup> Raquel Fabiana Lopes Sparemberger, Daniela Simões Azzolin, and Rafaela Isler da Costa, "Participação Feminina Na Política e Violência Política de Gênero a Democracia Brasileira Em Gangorra," *Revista Brasileira de Estudos Políticos*, no. 130 (September 2025), <https://doi.org/10.9732/2025.V130.1132>.

<sup>7</sup> Zaenal Mukarom, "Political Communication Strategies to Increase the Opportunity of Women's Political Representation in Indonesian Parliament," *Journal of International Women's Studies* 23, no. 1 (2022).

<sup>8</sup> Anak Agung Gede Ananta Wijaya Sahadewa and Ni Made Jaya Senastri, "Protection of Personal Data in the Process of Updating Voter Data for the 2024 Regional Election in Denpasar City," *Jurnal Bali Membangun Bali* 5, no. 3 (2024): 215–55.

<sup>9</sup> Antik Bintari, "PARTISIPASI DAN REPRESENTASI PEREMPUAN DALAM PENYELENGGARAAN PEMILU," *Jurnal Keadilan Pemilu* 2, no. 1 (July 18, 2022): 13–22, <https://doi.org/10.55108/jkp.v2i1.142>.

specifically addressing the experience and strategic contribution of women within Bawaslu at the municipal level—particularly in Denpasar City during the 2024 simultaneous regional elections—remain scarce.

Bawaslu as one of the general election organizing agencies with supervisory duties.<sup>10</sup> The Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) supervises regional head elections. Bawaslu is a hierarchical institution that includes Bawaslu RI at the central level, Provincial Bawaslu, Regency/City Bawaslu, Panwaslu at the sub-district and village levels, and ad hoc Polling Station Supervisors. Article 18, paragraph (4) serves as the constitutional basis for the implementation of regional head elections. The regional head position is that of an executive leader in their respective region. This means that regional heads must be elected through a general election process involving citizens who have the right to vote as a form of the principle of people's sovereignty, whereby the community has a direct say in electing their leaders.

The regional elections in Denpasar City are a manifestation of the democratic process of electing regional leaders, in this case, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Denpasar. What makes the 2024 regional elections special is that they will be held simultaneously across Indonesia. Several issues that often arise in the Denpasar regional elections revolve around tourism, public services, waste, the environment, and community welfare. In addition, community participation in regional elections is also an essential factor in determining the legitimacy of the elected government. The implementation of regional elections involves various stakeholders, such as the General Elections Commission (KPU) and the Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu). The election process begins with the formation of an ad hoc body, updating voter data, political campaigns, candidate debates, socialization activities, and finally, voting day. The regional elections in Denpasar are an essential moment in the city's democratic life, where the community plays a direct role in determining the direction of development and local policy for the next five years.

Therefore, the implementation of regional elections needs to be supervised by an institution to ensure that all stages of the election are carried out in accordance with the rules and free from fraud. In Indonesia, the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) was established to ensure that elections are conducted fairly and honestly. As the institution authorized to supervise, investigate, and take action against election violations, Bawaslu plays an essential role in preventing fraud. However, Bawaslu faces several major challenges, including limited manpower and budget, and a lack of optimal coordination between agencies.<sup>11</sup> The General Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) is an independent institution responsible for supervising the implementation of general elections in accordance with Law Number 7 of 2017. Bawaslu's main tasks are to develop supervision standards, prevent and address election violations and disputes, and supervise all stages of the election, from preparation to the determination of results. Bawaslu also plays a role in preventing money politics, ensuring the neutrality of the state apparatus, supervising the implementation of decisions on election-related violations, and reporting alleged violations to relevant agencies. In addition, Bawaslu is responsible for archive management, supervision evaluation, and ensuring the implementation of KPU regulations. Bawaslu also collaborates with relevant government agencies and encourages public participation. In the event of a violation, Bawaslu has the authority to investigate and examine alleged violations. In addition, Bawaslu also monitors all stages of the election, including voter data updates, the determination of election participants, the implementation of campaigns, and the announcement of election results.<sup>12</sup>

According to Nurlia's research women's political participation is still below the 30% quota. This is partly due to a domestic political culture that limits women's involvement.<sup>13</sup> Based on this, voter education for women is considered an important solution. The composition of the leadership and membership of the Denpasar City Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) reflects the active and strategic involvement of women in the implementation of election supervision. Of the five commissioners in office, two are women, demonstrating compliance with the minimum 30% gender representation mandate in regulations governing election organizers. Not only that, the Head of Secretariat position is also entrusted to a woman, who plays

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<sup>10</sup> Rima Yuwana Yustikaningrum and Mohammad Mahrus Ali, "From Sekadau to Sabu Raijua: Measuring the Traces of the Election Oversight Body in the Dynamics of the Constitutional Court Hearing," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 18, no. 4 (2021): 918–38, <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk1849>.

<sup>11</sup> Putri Ramdahani Rangkuty et al., "Efektivitas Pengawasan Bawaslu Dalam Mencegah Kecurangan Pemilu," *Konstitusi: Jurnal Studi Hukum* 01 (2025): 1, <https://glonus.org/index.php/konstitusi>.

<sup>12</sup> Ali Imran Nasution et al., "Penguatan Fungsi Pengawasan Bawaslu Republik Indonesia Dalam Penyelenggaraan Tahapan Kampanye Pemilu Serentak 2024," *Ajudikasi: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 7, no. 2 (2023): 229–56, <https://doi.org/10.30656/ajudikasi.v7i2.7666>.

<sup>13</sup> Nurlia Dian Paramita, "MENGUATKAN PERAN PEREMPUAN DALAM PENGAWASAN TAHAPAN PEMILU 2024," *Jurnal Keadilan Pemilu* 3, no. 2 (December 1, 2022): 59–70, <https://doi.org/10.55108/jkp.v3i2.384>.

an essential role in coordinating and supporting supervisory tasks at the administrative level. Interestingly, the majority of the members of the Denpasar City Bawaslu secretariat are also women, which confirms the enormous contribution of women in ensuring that all stages of supervision run effectively, professionally, and inclusively. This composition also illustrates the implementation of gender equality at Bawaslu Denpasar City, which is not merely a formality but has become an integral part of the institution's work culture, helping realize fair, participatory, and responsive election supervision across various social issues, including gender equality.

Tabell. Number of Commisioners of the Denpasar City Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu)

No	Position	Gender
1.	Chairman	Male
2.	Member & Coordinator Sumber Daya Manusia, Organisasi dan Diklat	Female
3.	Member & Coordinator Pencegahan, Partisipasi Masyarakat dan Hubungan Masyarakat	Female
4.	Member & Coordinator Penanganan Pelanggaran dan Data	Male
5.	Member & Coordinator Hukum	Male

The composition of leadership and membership in the Denpasar City Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) shows the critical role of women in its organizational structure. Of the five commissioners, two are women, and the Head of Secretariat is also a woman. In fact, the majority of secretariat members are women, reflecting the high level of women's involvement in supporting election supervision at the city level. This condition illustrates how women are not only present in terms of quantity in the institutional structure, but also have strategic space to contribute to the supervision of the implementation of regional elections. However, a more in-depth study is needed to understand how this role is realized in practice, the extent of women's real contribution to election supervision, and how they influence the effectiveness and quality of supervision in Denpasar City. Based on this, the research questions in this study are: What is the role of women in election monitoring in Denpasar City? And how do women contribute to election monitoring in Denpasar City?

## 2. Method

This research is empirical legal research.<sup>14</sup> This study uses qualitative descriptive methods, namely problem-solving procedures that emphasize field observation. Data were obtained through observation, documentation, and oral interviews at the Denpasar City Bawaslu Office. The data was analyzed, interpreted, and conclusions drawn based on the available facts

## 3. Result and Discussion

### 3.1. The Role of Women in Monitoring Regional Elections

The Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) has the primary responsibility of overseeing the entire general election process to ensure that elections are conducted fairly and honestly. In carrying out its duties, Bawaslu develops standard monitoring procedures for election supervisors at all levels, as well as preventing and addressing various forms of violations and disputes in the election process. In addition, Bawaslu monitors the stages of election preparation, which include setting the schedule, procuring logistics, and conducting public outreach. Supervision is also carried out during the implementation stages of the elections, from updating voter data to determining the final results. This institution plays an active role in preventing money politics and maintaining the neutrality of the civil service (ASN), members of the TNI, and Polri. Supervision of the implementation of decisions related to election disputes and violations of official neutrality is also part of its responsibilities. In addition, Bawaslu is obliged to report alleged violations of the code of ethics to the Election Organizers Honorary Council (DKPP) and alleged election crimes to the

<sup>14</sup> Jeva Fitri Fadilla and Daly Erni, "KEPASTIAN HUKUM TERKAIT KEWENANGAN NOTARIS DALAM MENGESAHKAN AKTA RISALAH RUPS YANG DISELENGGARAKAN SECARA ELEKTRONIK," *JISIP (Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Pendidikan)* 7, no. 1 (January 3, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.58258/jisip.v7i1.3996>.

Integrated Law Enforcement Center (Gakkumdu). Other tasks include managing archives in accordance with regulatory provisions and conducting periodic evaluations of election supervision carried out.

Article 92, paragraph 11 of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections stipulates that in forming the membership of Bawaslu, Provincial Bawaslu, and Regency/City Bawaslu, the principle of women's representation must be taken into account with a minimum requirement of 30 percent. Although the phrase in Article 92 paragraph 11 is limited to consideration (not a binding norm). This provision aims to encourage women's active participation in election supervision and to ensure gender equality in decision-making within election supervisory institutions. The implementation of this policy reflects the state's commitment to strengthening inclusive and balanced democracy, while encouraging the strategic role of women in maintaining the integrity of the Empirical findings in several regions show that women's involvement in election supervisory institutions tends to strengthen ethical sensitivity and procedural compliance. Normatively, the inclusion of women in Bawaslu's institutional structure reflects constitutional values of equality before the law. However, beyond normative commitments, women's presence also reshapes institutional dynamics. In supervisory practice, election monitoring requires not only regulatory interpretation but also ethical judgment, sensitivity to social conflict, and the ability to mediate competing political interests. Women's involvement helps balance formal-legal approaches with social-persuasive strategies, thereby preventing supervision from becoming rigidly procedural. In this sense, gender diversity strengthens the institution's adaptive capacity in responding to complex electoral challenges. Mutiarahmanika and Pakasi (2023) found that although women in Bawaslu often face structural barriers, their participation improves institutional responsiveness, particularly in addressing violations affecting vulnerable groups and gender-based political violence. This suggests that women supervisors do not merely fulfill representational requirements but contribute substantively to oversight quality.

Demonstrate that the effectiveness of election oversight institutions depends not only on regulatory authority but also on the integrity and deliberative capacity of their members. Strong internal deliberation and accountability mechanisms significantly influence public trust in electoral outcomes. In this context, increasing women's participation can enhance deliberative dynamics within Bawaslu, particularly in consensus-building and conflict-mitigation processes. Women's political participation is a central issue in the study of modern democracy, especially in the context of building an inclusive and gender-equitable government. Globally, women still face significant challenges in politics — both structural and cultural — that hinder their full involvement in decision-making.<sup>15</sup>

### **3.2. Women's Contribution to the Supervision of the Denpasar City Regional Election**

Based on the results of an interview with Mrs. Ni Wayan Eka Lestari, A.Ma, as Coordinator of the Human Resources, Organization, and Training Division of the Denpasar Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) on February 10, 2025 in the 2024 Denpasar Regional Elections, women's participation in the supervisory agency (Bawaslu Denpasar) has met and even exceeded the minimum quota target of 30%. This is demonstrated by the composition of the Denpasar Bawaslu management, which now consists of five commissioners, two of whom are women (40%), as well as a secretariat and staff that are primarily women. This achievement is consistent with the provisions of Article 92, paragraph (11), of Law No. 7 of 2017, which mandate a minimum representation of 30% for women in election organizing institutions.<sup>16</sup> Previously, data showed that in 2021, only one of the five commissioners of the Denpasar Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) was female (20%), so improving this figure above the minimum threshold is a significant step forward. The sufficient number of women not only meets the regulations but also has a practical impact: exceeding the recruitment quota for ad hoc supervisors at the sub-district level, namely Panwascam and Pengawas Kelurahan Desa (PKD), with almost 50% of PKD members being women. This situation aligns with affirmative efforts to encourage women to actively participate as election supervisors, especially in the 2024 regional elections in Denpasar City.

The fact that women's representation in Bawaslu Denpasar exceeds the minimum quota reflects not merely compliance with legal standards, but a gradual transformation of institutional culture. When women occupy both commissioner and secretariat positions in significant numbers, their presence becomes normalized rather than exceptional. This normalization reduces symbolic barriers and strengthens collective confidence among female supervisors at lower levels. It also creates a mentorship pattern in which

<sup>15</sup> Susi Widiya Putri and Yulita Nilam Fridayanti, "Partisipasi Politik Perempuan Di Kabupaten Kendal Pasca Pemilu 2024," *Resolusi: Jurnal Sosial Politik* 7, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.32699/resolusi.v7i1.7531>.

<sup>16</sup> Agus Prastyawan et al., "Women's Participation in Election in Jombang District," *JKMP (Jurnal Kebijakan Dan Manajemen Publik)* 10, no. 1 (April 27, 2022): 8–15, <https://doi.org/10.21070/jkmp.v10i1.1682>.

experienced female commissioners indirectly inspire ad hoc supervisors at the subdistrict and village levels. As a result, women's participation is institutionalized as part of organizational identity rather than treated as a temporary affirmative measure.

Table 2. Number of Denpasar City Bawaslu Secretariats

No	Position	Gender
1.	Head of Secretariat of Bawaslu Denpasar	Female
2.	Head of Administration	Male
3.	Head of Supervision	Male
4.	Head of P3SPH	Female
5.	Treasurer	Female
6.	Staff	Female
7.	Staff	Female
8.	Staff	Male
9.	Staff	Female
10.	Staff	Female
11.	Staff	Male
12.	Staff	Female
13.	Staff	Male
14.	Staff	Female
15.	Staff	Female

The role of women in the decision-making process at Bawaslu Denpasar is quite prominent. Based on interviews with commissioners and staff, 70% of whom are women, 70% are considered to make significant contributions through their thoroughness, in-depth case analysis, and communicative approach. In particular, women's ability to communicate persuasively and empathetically has eased political tensions in the field. For example, in the case of the installation of campaign materials in a prohibited location in Serangan Village, Bawaslu successfully resolved the conflict without escalation through negotiations primarily conducted by female commissioners and staff. The "soft spoken" personalities and the ability to listen and pay close attention of female members helped maintain internal and external harmony during the election stages. This finding is consistent with widespread observations that the presence of women tends to increase deliberative and consensus-based approaches in public decision-making. As illustrated by Aldian Bagaskara<sup>17</sup> noting that patriarchal culture (which is stronger in certain regions) generally limits women's participation in politics, while limited female participation (for example, only 9.5% in Panwascam Ponorogo) results in weak substantive contributions<sup>18</sup>. In other words, the Denpasar Bawaslu's move to increase the number of female members helps balance representation and leverage women's unique communication strengths.

Tabel 3. Number of Subdistrict Election Supervisory Committees in Denpasar City

No	Subdistrict	Male	Female
1.	DENPASAR BARAT	1	2
2.	DENPASAR SELATAN	1	2
3.	DENPASAR TIMUR	3	0
4.	DENPASAR UTARA	3	0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>

Based on the data in Table 3, there are 12 members of the Subdistrict Election Supervisory Committee (Panwaslu Kecamatan) in Denpasar City, of whom 30% are women (8 men and 4 women). In detail, West Denpasar and South Denpasar subdistricts each have 1 male and 2 females, while East Denpasar and North Denpasar subdistricts are dominated by males, with 3 males and no females.

<sup>17</sup> "Analisis Keterwakilan Perempuan Sebagai Penyelenggara Pemilu 2024 (Studi Kasus Partisipasi Perempuan Sebagai Panitia Pengawas Pemilu Kecamatan Di Kabupaten Ponorogo)," *Socius Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 2, no. 11 (2025): 376–91.

<sup>18</sup> Bayu Setyawan, "Patriarki Sebagai Akar Diskriminasi Gender Di Sri Lanka," *Resolusi: Jurnal Sosial Politik*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.32699/resolusi.v3i1.1277>.

Tabel 4. Number of Panwaslu (Election Supervisory Body) Members in Urban Villages/Villages throughout Denpasar City

No	Subdistrict	Number of Villages	Male	Female
1.	DENPASAR BARAT	11	4	7
2.	DENPASAR SELATAN	10	8	2
3.	DENPASAR TIMUR	11	4	7
4.	DENPASAR UTARA	11	6	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	43	22	21

Meanwhile, Table 4 shows that the total number of Panwaslu Villages in Denpasar City reached 43, spread across 43 villages. Of this number, 49% are female, with 22 males and 21 females. South Denpasar Subdistrict has the highest proportion of males, with 8 of 10 urban villages/villages having male residents. In contrast, West Denpasar and East Denpasar Subdistricts show the same distribution, with 4 males and 7 females across 11 urban villages/villages. Meanwhile, North Denpasar District shows a more balanced composition, with 6 males and 5 females across 11 sub-districts/villages. This data reflects variations in the gender distribution within the election monitoring structure at the sub-district and sub-district/village levels in Denpasar City.

Women's contribution to improving the effectiveness of Denpasar's regional election monitoring was also very evident. Effective communication in the field was cited as the key to successful tracking. Female members tended to pay attention to procedural details and proper language when coordinating with field implementers (KPPS, voting committee) and the community. Their sensitivity to social dynamics and high level of empathy also contribute to the smoother dissemination of regulations and to the smoother follow-up on violations. In practical supervision, electoral disputes often emerge not only from legal ambiguity but from miscommunication and mistrust among stakeholders. Women supervisors in Denpasar demonstrate that effective oversight is not solely dependent on sanctioning authority, but also on the ability to build dialogue with political actors and community members. Their approach tends to emphasize clarification before confrontation, persuasion before coercion, and consensus before escalation. Such strategies do not weaken institutional authority; instead, they reinforce legitimacy by ensuring that supervisory actions are perceived as fair, proportional, and transparent. More broadly, the literature indicates that an inclusive environment with female participation can improve the accountability and transparency of election administration.

Research conducted by Prastyawan in Jombang District confirms that women election supervisors tend to prioritize communicative engagement with communities, thereby increasing public compliance with electoral procedures and reducing the escalation of conflict. This pattern resonates with findings in Denpasar, where women commissioners and staff applied persuasive and dialogical approaches to resolve field disputes. In addition, Nasution et al. underline that strengthening Bawaslu's supervisory function requires not only regulatory authority but also human resource capacity and ethical commitment. The significant presence of women within Bawaslu Denpasar contributes to this institutional strengthening by diversifying decision-making perspectives and reinforcing preventive supervision strategies, particularly during campaign monitoring and voter data verification.

In addition, affirmative action in election regulations has been shown to encourage women to overcome stereotypes while serving. Thus, women's participation helps ensure comprehensive oversight and fairer elections. Regarding internal policies to support women's roles, the Denpasar City Bawaslu does not have an explicit program, but it applies a family- and gender-equal approach in its work culture. According to informants, the principle of "no gender bias" is upheld, ensuring that men and women are treated equally in their duties. Male officials ensure the safety and comfort of their female colleagues, for example, by assisting when working in the field. This unwritten policy has increased women's enthusiasm to get involved, as they feel appreciated and supported by the institution. This condition aligns with the national recommendation of Srikandi Bawaslu that election organizing institutions should create a female-friendly work environment, including maternity leave, breastfeeding facilities, and psychosocial support.<sup>19</sup> Although not yet formalized in specific policies, gender equality implementation at Bawaslu Denpasar is already quite "ideal" as expected, with women being given a whole space to contribute.

<sup>19</sup> Bali Portal News, "Srikandi Bawaslu Tegaskan Komitmen Wujudkan Pemilu Bebas Diskriminasi Dan Kekerasan," <https://baliportalnews.com/2024/12/srikandi-bawaslu-tegaskan-komitmen-wujudkan-pemilu-bebas-diskriminasi-dan-kekerasan/>, 2024.

### 3.3. Challenges Faced by Women as Election Supervisors in Denpasar City

Although gender equality at the Denpasar Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) is quite ideal, female election organizers in Denpasar face significant challenges. The main difficulties are cultural stereotypes and traditional double burdens. Patriarchal culture is still deeply rooted and places women in a secondary position in the public sphere. Female supervisors not only face professional demands, but also domestic and local cultural responsibilities. This double burden often drains their time and energy, causing stress and potential exhaustion when carrying out lengthy supervisory tasks, such as plenary recapitulation or polling-station supervision, until late at night. The double burden experienced by female supervisors is not merely a personal challenge but reflects a structural imbalance in the distribution of domestic responsibility. While professional demands during election periods intensify significantly, domestic expectations often remain unchanged. This condition forces women to negotiate between public duty and private obligation, sometimes at the expense of personal well-being. If not institutionally acknowledged, such pressures may discourage long-term female engagement in electoral governance. Therefore, recognizing this burden as a structural issue rather than an individual weakness is essential to building a sustainable, gender-sensitive supervisory system. Sumarni study emphasizes that the double burden of public and domestic responsibilities is a significant obstacle for women election administrators. However, affirmative policies encourage women's participation, the reality on the ground shows high cultural pressures and household expectations.<sup>20</sup> The stereotype that women are “less competent” and that politics is a male domain is still common, even within Bawaslu. In many regions, such as Jember and East Java, female panwascam members face the stigma that politics is a male-dominated world full of violence that encourages verbal intimidation and psychological pressure. A similar phenomenon was observed by Mutiarahmanika & Pakasi, which found that the selection process for Bawaslu members was still gender biased, with women experiencing political literacy barriers and “recruitment spaces that were not female-friendly.”<sup>21</sup>

Women are often expected to perform domestic tasks before and even during their public duties. Findings from other regions confirm this: women election supervisors are often caught between their family responsibilities and work demands, leaving them exhausted.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the Denpasar City Bawaslu Commissioner acknowledged the double domestic burden, but at Bawaslu they “considered it a consequence” and were committed to carrying out their supervisory duties. Although personal in nature, this attitude needs to be supported by structural policies (e.g., special maternity leave during the election period, childcare services on voting days) as proposed by Srikandi Bawaslu. In addition, internal obstacles in the form of self-doubt or stereotypes within the supervisory team itself sometimes arise, as described in the literature, that the assumption that women are “less competent” still exists among both men and women. Minor conflicts between supervisory staff (panwascam vs. secretariat) also occurred, but were often mitigated by a female approach. Overall, these obstacles are similar to those encountered in various regions, namely patriarchy and double responsibilities. Still, the collegial character of Bawaslu Denpasar and the commitment of the women within it have ensured the smooth running of supervision.

The patriarchal political culture in Indonesia operates subtly through informal norms and expectations that shape leadership perceptions, often associating authority and firmness with masculinity. As a result, women in supervisory roles must continuously prove their competence in environments where leadership legitimacy is implicitly gendered. Moreover, highlight that post-election evaluations show women often experience higher psychological pressure due to the need to balance professional integrity with social expectations within their families and communities. Therefore, strengthening institutional support mechanisms is not merely an equality agenda but a structural necessity to maintain supervisory performance and prevent burnout among female election organizers.

## 4. Conclusion

The results of this study show that women's participation in the supervision of the 2024 Denpasar Regional Elections has met the quota target and had a positive impact. Women now occupy approximately 40% of the positions on the Denpasar Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), and nearly half of the ad hoc supervisors in the sub-districts are women, exceeding the minimum of 30% stipulated in Law Number 7 of

<sup>20</sup> Sumarni, “KEBIJAKAN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: PARTISIPASI DAN TANTANGAN PEREMPUAN DALAM PEMILU 2024,” *Jurnal Masyarakat Indonesia* 50, no. 1 (2024): 1–11.

<sup>21</sup> Fakhra Mutiarahmanika and Diana Teresa Pakasi, “Women’s Representation as Members of the General Election Supervisory Board,” *Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Science* 2, no. 11 (August 28, 2023): 3905–14, <https://doi.org/10.55324/ijoms.v2i11.636>.

<sup>22</sup> Sumarni, “KEBIJAKAN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: PARTISIPASI DAN TANTANGAN PEREMPUAN DALAM PEMILU 2024.”

2017 concerning General Elections. This involvement has led to a more inclusive approach to supervision: women play an active role in decision-making, promoting persuasive communication and empathy that can reduce conflict and increase the legitimacy of supervisors' actions in the field. This contribution aligns with findings that strong female representation can enhance the integrity of the democratic process. On the one hand, although the challenge of the public-domestic double burden still exists, the family-like work culture at Bawaslu Denpasar helps minimize practical barriers for women. Based on these findings, several recommendations are made. First, Bawaslu Denpasar and the local government need to continue to uphold their commitment to gender equality. This includes strengthening affirmative policies so that the 30% quota is truly “realized” and not merely “observed,” as well as implementing women-friendly facilities (maternity/breastfeeding leave, childcare) in accordance with the recommendations of Srikandi Bawaslu. Second, political education and capacity-building for female candidates in the election supervisory body must be organized to build their confidence and train them to handle technical and administrative tasks. Third, the culture of kinship and gender equality within Bawaslu must be maintained and serve as an example for other supervisory units. In the future, it is hoped that women will not only contribute to supervision but also actively advocate for gender issues in election policy, as emphasized by the Srikandi Bawaslu movement. With these steps, women's participation in local democracy can continue to be strengthened, fostering inclusive and gender-sensitive local government. The experience of Bawaslu Denpasar demonstrates that exceeding the 30 percent quota should not be viewed as the endpoint of gender equality efforts, but rather as a starting point for deeper institutional transformation. Quantitative representation becomes meaningful only when accompanied by qualitative influence in agenda-setting, decision-making, and supervisory strategy. The Denpasar case illustrates that when women are entrusted with real authority and provided with supportive institutional space, they contribute not only to compliance with regulations but to the strengthening of democratic substance itself. Alternative policies are needed to develop public policies oriented towards gender equality in the context of election supervision.

## 5. Acknowledgement

The author would like to express his gratitude to all those who have provided support, guidance, and assistance in compiling this work. Special thanks go to the Faculty of Law at Warmadewa University and the Denpasar City Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) for the permission and resources provided in the conduct of this research.

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