
Re-conceptualizing the Construction of Political Education for Women's Party Cadres Based on Gender Competences and Needs

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Abstract

Political education for women cadres is a primary concern for the low quality (performance) of women's politics in the public world. Especially, for women's party cadres, it is necessary to reconstruct the conception of political education so that occurs in politics. Researchers also targeted 45 informants from academics, practitioners, and the party's women cadres. The method used is a grounded theory approach to obtain field data as the basis for theory construction/conceptualization of the resulting theory. The research results indicated that the reconceptualization of the political education construction must be carried out on a philosophical, juridical, sociological, and practical basis. Three things that need to be reconceptualised, which are (1) the meaning of the essence of political education; (2) the process of implementing political education; and (3) the competencies that must be possessed by women's party cadres. Recommendations are also discussed for political parties, government, and women political groups.

Keywords

competence, gender, reconceptualization, political education, women's party cadre

Article History

Received 16 September 2022

Accepted 14 December 2022

How to Cite

Rafni, A., Suryanef, & Azizah, C. N. (2022).

Re-conceptualizing the construction of political education for women's party cadres based on gender competence and needs.

Indonesian Research Journal in Education | IRJE |, 6(2), 261–273. <https://doi.org/10.22437/irje.v6i2.20614>

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Introduction

As one of the democratic institutions, political parties have a paramount role in empowering women in politics through competency-based political education implementation for women party cadres. Competencies that will be realized are candidates for legislative members, party administrators, or government institutions leaders whose political skills are not based on charity (Ferreira & Gyourko, 2014). Women at the practical political level have different political backgrounds and performances from men. The findings of the research indicate that political education carried out by political parties for women party cadres tend not to pay attention to the needs of women (Alrafni, 2013; Hariyanti, Darmawan, & Masyitoh, 2018; Rafni 2015). As a result, many women are not ready to occupy political positions. Sastriyani (2009) revealed portraits of women legislators in areas that are far from expectations. There is a persistent gender gap that affects women's abilities and qualifications in politics (Fox & Lawless, 2014; Kanthak & Woon, 2015). The abilities and qualifications of woman in political need to reconceptualize by presenting the construction of political education for woman's party cadre based on gender competencies and needs.

According to Muslimat (2020), political education for women's party cadres has the following objectives: (1) cognitive aspects of building knowledge of basic political concepts, (2) the practical aspect of forming the character of citizens in favor of democratization and identity as the holder of people's sovereignty and (3) psychomotor aspects to build intellectual and moral skills in realizing a more democratic life. Furthermore, Suharto (2011) stated that the purpose of political education for women is not to seize the dominance of political power from men but to build a balance of roles in practical politics so it can accommodate the interests of both parties fairly and proportionally. He also explained that women whose self-awareness should not be infiltrated by capitalist politics that positions women to compete with men in the power struggle. Therefore, Predescu and Darjan (2010) explained the need for competence in carrying out practical political activities so that what is done is not trivial.

Meanwhile, Kontu (2017) emphasized six knowledge competencies must be mastered by women's party cadres, such as (1) the Indonesian state and government system, (2) the general election system, (3) self-image building, (4) political communication, (5) fundraising, and (6) network building. Additionally, Rothwell (1999) mentioned five competencies needed by a person in carrying out his duties and responsibilities, such as (1) technical competence, (2) managerial competence, (3) social competence, (4) strategic competence, and (5) ethical competence. Technical competence is the skills and abilities to carry out their duties. Whereas managerial competence is competence related to managerial ability in planning, organizing, mobilizing, and supervising. In addition, social competence is a person's ability to interact with other parties. Last, strategic competence is the ability to look far ahead to formulate various strategic policies. At the same time, ethical competence carries out its duties and responsibilities with ethical and moral considerations.

Political education for women's party cadres based on gender competencies and needs can motivate women in political activities and prepare qualified candidates for legislative and government members and party administrators. The experience of other countries proves that the representation of women in decision-making institutions has a role in realizing policies

that care about women's interests. The high political representation of women in the United States parliament correlated with the low infant mortality rate in 1990-2012 (Homan, 2017). In India, women politicians care deeply about promoting the advancement of public health (Kumar & Prakash, 2017). On the other hand, York and Bell (2014) revealed that the high quality of women's representation in politics has implications for the high priority of the community towards health services. The research revealed that the political education for women's party has implications for their success in displaying their competence well. Therefore, it is necessary to describe how political education for women's party cadres is based on gender competencies and needs. Concept exploration and theory formulation are built from a philosophical, juridical, sociological, and practical view of the internal dynamics of the party.

Methodology

This research is qualitative research with a grounded theory approach. The grounded theory assumes that the data obtained in the field becomes the basis for theory construction/conceptualization of theories carried out by researchers as an essential instrument in qualitative research (Charmaz, 2014). However, in general, this research follows a systematic research flow as suggested by Creswell (2014), which are (1) researchers collected information (from observational interviews, documents, and so on), (2) the researcher used open-ended questions to the participants and took field notes, (3) researchers analysed data based on themes and categories, (4) researchers look for general patterns, generalizations, or theories from the themes or categories created, and (5) the researchers proposed generalizations or theories from the literature and research experience.

Research informants were determined purposively, which included: (1) political party administrators who were selected based on the representation of women in the DPRD of West Sumatra Province, namely the *Gerindra*, *Golkar*, and *PDI-P* party, (2) National and Political Unity Agencies (*Kesbangpol*) as an institution for fostering political parties in West Sumatra Province, (3) academics and practitioners of education and political education, (4) women members of the people's consultative assembly (MPR) of West Sumatra Province, (5) women executives who sit in the ranks of the government of West Sumatra. All informants were 45 people.

The data were collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), and documentation studies. To ensure the validity of the data, the researchers carried out credibility, transferability, and dependability. Credibility (trust is also called internal validity) is done through data triangulation techniques and theoretical triangulation. Meanwhile, transferability is the extent to which research results can be transferred in other contexts. Furthermore, the data were analysed qualitatively with the stages of data reduction, data presentation, data verification, and drawing conclusions.

Findings

The construction of political education for women's party cadres based on gender competencies and needs begins with laying the philosophical, juridical, sociological, and

practical foundations. The philosophical foundation concerns the basis of the state, which is translated into the vision-mission, statutes and by laws of the party. Meanwhile, the juridical basis has been explicitly stated in Article 11 of Law Number 2 of 2011 that political parties are a means of political education for party members and the wider community. Furthermore, political parties also get funding sources through the budget income state expenditure (APBN) and budget income regional expenditure (APBD) to implement political education. Research findings indicate that party fund is inadequate for political education. According to administrator, the careful party revealed the interview results that generally party experience problem funding in carrying out the political education process. As stated by one woman administrator party is as following,

“The party has many programs to reach the primary destination that wins the general election, at a time preparing the cadre party to occupy crucial positions in temporary government. The political education process only carried out on once or twice a year for society, while for cadre by importance and the right moment. It is because of party funds for political education is limited.”

The sociological basis of women’s party cadres is highly dependent on the internal environment of the party and the culture of the society in which the political party is located. First, it concerns the party's internal environment. Second, regarding the culture of the community where the party is located, it is also a concern and contribution to the existence of women politicians. Furthermore, from the practical aspect, it explains that political parties carry out political education for women’s party cadres which consists of two things, namely internal political education, and external political education. The party's internal political education attended by women cadres is no different from what is carried out by the party for male cadres. The research findings show that the three parties studied have standardized the implementation of political education for their party cadres without distinguishing between female or male cadres. Standardization is only limited to the norms contained in the Articles of Association and by-law of each party. Article 88 and 89 of the articles of association (AD)/(ART) of (PDIP) explain that political education for party cadres is carried out based on levels that consist of first-level, middle-level, and main-level cadres. For the interests of political parties and party regeneration, the central leadership council (DPP) of the PDI-P has also established party cadre schools and party schools. Party schools aim to provide political education and national education. Whereas the party’s cadre school aims to: (1) form party cadres who have ideological, organizational, political, and environmental awareness and an understanding of the socio-economic aspects of the community and (2) educate and prepare candidates for party, nation, and state leaders, and (3) convey Bung Karno's thoughts.

Like the PDI-P, Article 15 of the *Golkar* Party's Articles of Association (AD)/ By-laws (ART) contain levels of cadres, namely primary cadres, intermediate cadres, and main cadres. Meanwhile, the explanation of *Golkar* cadres is contained in Article 6 of the party's By-laws (ART), which are (1) *Golkar* Party cadres are party members who are the core and movers of the *Golkar* Party, (2) party cadres are members who have attended cadre education, training and have been screened based on mental-ideological criteria, appreciation of the party's vision, mission, and platform, achievements, dedication, discipline, loyalty and blamelessness

(PD2LT), and leadership, militancy, and independence. Whereas, the articles of association (AD)/By-laws (ART) of the *Gerindra* Party also mentions party cadres in article 10, which the members of the *Gerindra* Party are the core and movers of the party? Party cadres have attended cadre education and training and have been screened with almost the same criteria as *Golkar* Party cadres.

Based on the philosophical, juridical, and sociological foundations, as well as the practical ones that have been built, a reconceptualization of the political education construction is carried out regarding (1) the meaning of the essence of political education, (2) the process of implementing political education, and (3) competencies that must be possessed by women's party cadres. Another thing revealed about the factors influencing the reconceptualization of political education for women's party cadres based on gender competencies and needs. Several factors greatly influence the political education organized by the party. The research results indicate four primary factors influencing the construction of political education, (1) gender-responsive political party policies, (2) party governance for political education, (3) party institutionalization in optimizing the function of political education, and (4) external political education network. These four things are the result of thinking based on findings in the field. Each explanation is below.

Gender-responsive political party policies

Political education for women's party cadres is a crucial issue for two reasons: (1) increasing women's participation in politics, and (2) increasing the capacity of women's party cadres to take part in public positions, both in the legislature and the executive. The issue of increasing women's participation in politics is global and national. The experience of other countries proves that the representation of women in decision-making institutions has a role in realizing policies that care about women's interests.

Some research related to gender and politics stated that special treatment is needed for women in political education carried out by parties because women at the practical political level have different political backgrounds and performances from men. Therefore, parties need to support internal party policies, such as incorporating gender-responsive policies into the vision and mission, Articles of Association (AD), and By-laws (ART).

The management of party funds for political education

The provision of political education for women's party cadres is also greatly influenced by the availability of funds. Article 34 paragraph 3a of Law Number 2 of 2011 concerning political parties states that political parties receive funds from the state budget (APBN) and regional government budget (APBD). This budget allocation is used with a priority to conduct political education for party members and the public. The amount of funds allocated is regulated in government regulation number 1 of 2018 concerning financial assistance to political parties. The provisions in article 5 state the amount of financial assistance to political parties as follows:

- a. financial assistance to political parties at the central level that obtains seats in the DPR as referred to in Article 2 paragraph (3) in the amount of IDR. 1.000.00 (one thousand rupiahs) per valid vote,
- b. financial assistance to political parties at the provincial level that obtains the provincial DPRD as referred to in Article 2 paragraph (3) in the amount of IDR. 1.200.00 (one thousand two hundred rupiahs) per valid vote;
- c. the value of the financial assistance to a district/city level political party that obtains a seat in the district/city DPRD as referred to in Article 2 paragraph (3) is IDR. 1.500.00 (one thousand five hundred rupiahs) per valid vote.

With these various regulations, why do many political parties not carry out their role as instruments of political education even though financial assistance is available? Nurdin (2019) stated the state has a weak role in providing sanctions to political parties that do not carry out the function of political education to cadres and the public. He further explained that the instrument of sanctions is a preventive and repressive measure in the supervision of political parties. It is crucial to consider that without sanctions, there is a possibility that political parties will deviate from the predetermined path. If it happens, the credibility of political parties in the eyes of the public will be increasingly threatened, so political parties are no longer trusted to carry out their functions.

Regarding the application of sanctions and obligations of political parties as regulated in Article 47 and Article 13 of Law Number 2 of 2011 concerning Amendments to Law Number 2 of 2008 of Political Parties, which essentially regulates:

- a. Violation of the provisions as referred to in Article 13 letter h, namely "keeping the books, maintaining a list of contributors and the amount of donations received, and being open to the public", is subject to administrative sanctions in the form of warnings by the government.
- b. Violation of the provisions as referred to in Article 13 number I, which is "submitting an accountability report on financial receipts and expenditures sourced from APBN assistance financial and regional expenditure revenues periodically once a year to the government after being audited by the State Audit Board" is subject to sanctions. Administrative assistance in the form of termination of APBN/APBD assistance until the report is received by the government in the relevant fiscal year.

Based on the provisions, the application of sanctions to political parties that do not carry out their obligations, one of which is to provide political education to the community, does not provide a deterrent effect. Therefore, it is necessary to have a model for implementing sanctions aimed at making political parties carry out their obligations in providing political education to the public and party cadres (Nurdin, 2019).

Party institutionalization in optimizing the function of political education

Well standardized political parties will carry out regeneration and political education for their members on an on-going basis. The cadre and political education are to improve the quality of its members so that later they can face the problems and challenges that always develop in political, national, and state life (Rush, 2002). Party institutionalization is a necessity

that cannot be avoided considering that will make the party run in the proper corridor and function.

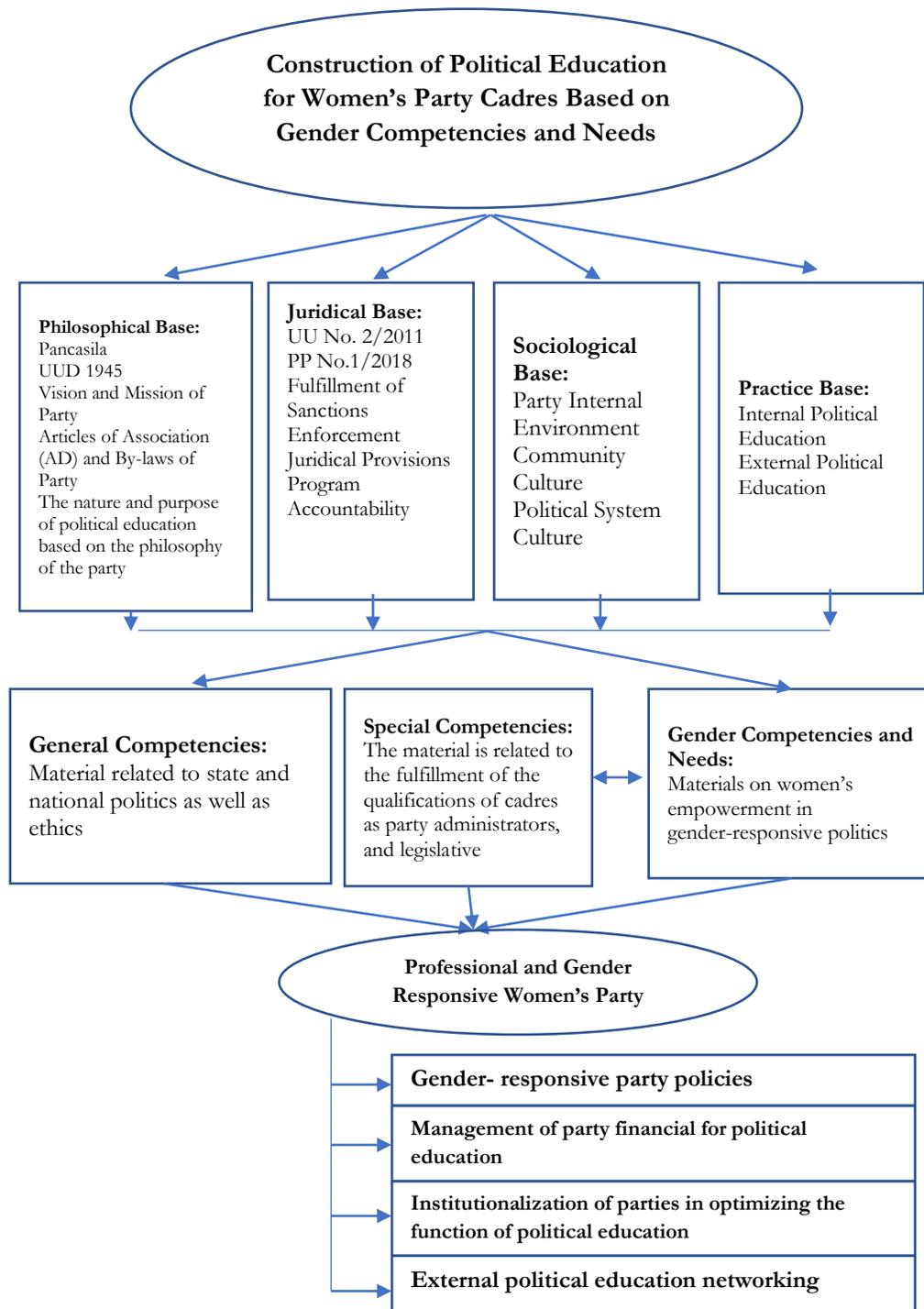
Scully (1995) defined institutionalization as strengthening political parties processes in structural and cultural aspects. These aspects are manifested in patterns of behaviour, attitudes, and culture. Meanwhile, according to Basedau and Stroh (2008), the institutionalization of political parties is an organizational process and procedure to obtain definite values and stability. When a political party has succeeded in formulating and internalizing its values and internalizing internal stability, it can be properly institutionalized. Regarding the context of political education, the theories of institutionalization of political parties can explain how optimally political parties are to organize political education. The more standardized the values that will be implemented in political education, the more optimal the party will be in carrying out the function of political education.

Besides the need for institutionalization of political parties, the modernization of political parties is also a must. Hofmeister and Grabow (2009) revealed the theory of political party modernization through the following ten indicators, such as (1) membership and organization, (2) party members, (3) political recruitment, (4) cadre education and training, (5) the existence of a party program, (6) internal and external communication, (7) the realization of internal democracy, (8) conflict and conflict resolution, (9) the existence of quotas for women and minorities, and (10) party financing. The implementation of these ten indicators can only be achieved through the commitment of the political parties themselves. Therefore, it is necessary to reconceptualise how the institutionalization and modernization of political parties can be carried out to improve the implementation of political education for women's party cadres.

External political education network

Besides internal party of political education, women's party cadres also receive political education from external parties, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Ministry of Women's Empowerment, community organizations, or traditional groups. An interesting example from Australia is the electoral commission's on-going collaboration with indigenous people through indigenous electoral participation programs. The program involves civil society in learning political education with party cadres. The women's political resource center (WPRC) regularly provides political education for women politicians in Georgia. In Europe and Latin America, one of the specialized institutions that provide political education for women is the women and cities political training center. This institution is in Barcelona, Spain. It has a mission to make women politicians have a huge influence in making decisions in a more democratic society (Dewi, 2010). From the various factors that influence the construction of political education and based on research findings in year I and II, a proper construction of political education for women's party cadres can be conceptualized based on gender competencies and needs. Its construction is in the following diagram.

Figure 1. Construction of political education for women's party cadres based on gender competencies and needs



Discussion

One of the efforts to achieve gender equality in politics that can be done by political parties is to prepare women's party cadres to compete in the public sphere with good quality. Hence, parties are obliged to carry out political education by paying attention to women's particular needs. Unfortunately, the implementation of political education by political parties tends to be gender neutral. As a result, many women feel less confident in appearing in public spaces, which impacts their political performance. The research results [Sastriyani \(2009\)](#) revealed that the performance of women's representatives in an area was far from expectations. There is a gender gap that continues to affect women's abilities and qualifications ([Fox & Lawless, 2014](#); [Kanthak & Woon, 2015](#))

Definite actions from internal parties in carrying out political education are strategic steps to improve the process of developing women cadres themselves. According to [Soeharto \(2011\)](#), the purpose of political education for women is not to seize the dominance of political power from men. However, it aims to build a role balance in practical politics, so it accommodates the interests between men and women moderately and proportionally. [Squires \(2013\)](#) revealed the need for special treatment for women because women have different political backgrounds and performances from men. When discussing policy issues, women's political performance tends to pay attention to social needs that are full of services, education, and health. [Ferreira and Gyourko \(2014\)](#) stated that the competencies possessed by women would impact their skills as party administrators, legislators, or government leaders. According to [Hoecker and Fuchs \(2004\)](#), women make a difference. They are "present" in democracy and bear democracy (bringing different styles and values to politics).

According to [Hoecker and Fuchs \(2004\)](#), there are many reasons why women need to be involved in politics. The first is justice. Justice refers to the fact that democracy involves women and men in determining and making policies. Equality refers to political participation as a paramount criterion for assessing or measuring the political process in a gender-democratic democracy. Second, the argument about "women's interests". It is good if women are championed as representatives to have women-friendly policies. Meanwhile, the third is emancipation and change. It concerns the changes made by women to become the new driving force in society and political participation that is not only in terms of women's rights but also in terms of needs.

Then fourth, women make a "difference". Women are not only present in democracy but also gender democracy. Women are expected to "carry different styles and values into politics. It means that women bring different views, perspectives, and talents to formal politics. It relates to (1) leading and encouraging efforts against gender-based violence, (2) promoting and ensuring issues of old age, childcare, gender equality, and electoral laws/regulations to strengthen women's access to parliamentary legislative processes, (3) the responsibility to represent women in general, (4) the importance of advocacy for the wider community, and (5) promoting the "women's agenda" into broader political discussions. Finally, mean that women become role models or motivations and encouragements for other women.

Three things are very urgent and must be built conceptually, (1) regarding the meaning of the essence of political education, and (2) the process of implementing political education,

and (3) competencies that must be possessed by women's party cadres. In addition, the foundation of political education itself was reconstructed, namely the philosophical, juridical, sociological, and practical foundations. Furthermore, to present women's party cadres who are professional and gender responsive, supporting factors are needed, such as (1) gender responsive party policies, (2) governance of party funds for political education, (3) party institutionalization in optimizing the function of political education, and (4) external political education network.

The research findings indicate that the party does not yet have a standard operating procedure (SOP) to carry out political education operationally or procedurally. Although there have been instructions from the DPP empirically at the district/city level, there are no firm rules regarding the pattern of organizing political education. Hence, it is necessary to strengthen party institutions in carrying out political education.

The institutionalization of political parties to strengthen political parties structurally and culturally is to build patterns of behaviour and culture. The party institutionalization process consists of internal-external aspects and structural-cultural aspects (Randall & Svasand, 2002). They also explained, if the two aspects are crossed, four criteria will emerge in looking at institutionalization, such as (1) systemic criteria, which is the process of implementing the functions of political parties carried out according to agreed, procedural rules, requirements, and mechanisms, (2) value identity criteria (value infusion), which is political parties have value identities that are different from one another and become a representation of the pattern and direction of their struggle, (3) independence criteria, which is political parties have decision-making autonomy which determines the level of party authority in making decisions, and (4) criteria for public image (reification) which is the depth of public knowledge about the existence and movement of parties.

Furthermore, it is necessary to build a network with the government, the community, and the private sector. Political education within the party needs to be supported by external party education. Parties must build networks and cooperate with various parties to optimize political education for their cadres. In this case, women are party cadres. The research results indicate that there have been partnerships between women's party cadres with several institutions such as the women and children empowerment agency in terms of gender mainstreaming (PUG), Indonesian women's political caucus (KKPI) by holding counselling and socialization, including: (1) women's empowerment development program in the political field, (2) a strategy to increase women's ability to gain public sympathy, (3) tips for building political communication between women politicians, and (4) smart strategies to win election campaigns and so on. Meanwhile, the material provided by Non-Governmental Organizations is also not much different in providing counselling for women's party cadres, including (1) determining seat allocation, (2) technical guidelines for drafting laws, and (3) gender-responsive budgets. Referring to the counselling material provided, the political education from external parties provides more insight or gender perspective for women activists or party cadres.

If we learn from other countries, such as Australia, in improving the quality of democracy, cooperation with local communities is built in a program called indigenous electoral participation (Setiawaty, 2014). In this program, the local community continues to have a network to create a better political life. Campbell and Niemi (2016) revealed their

research results in the American Political Science Review by describing the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) program by continuously evaluating the level of political knowledge of young people (18-24 years) during the period 2006 - 2010 for the sustainability of political education patterns. Thus, the party needs to expand the network of cooperation with various parties. Political education is a necessity in a democracy. Lippman and Rossiter (1982) that there is no democracy without politics and no politics without parties. Therefore, political education programs in political parties must be based on gender-responsive party policies.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The reconceptualization of the construction of political education for women's party cadres based on gender competencies and needs consists of (1) the foundations that form the basis for the implementation of political education, which are the philosophical basis, juridical basis, sociological basis, and practical basis, (2) the meaning of political education, (3) the process of providing political education, and (4) the concept of competence that must be possessed by women's party cadres. Our main factors that influence the construction of political education for women's party cadres based on gender competencies and needs, which are (1) gender responsive political party policies, (2) party governance that supports the political education process, (3) party institutionalization in optimizing the function of political education, and (4) external political education network.

Political parties should create an applicable political education model for support enhancement competence of women cadre party based on gender. Also, government areas give relatively sufficient budget for the process of organizing political education so that the representation of women could increase at a time increase capacity as people's representative.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Acknowledgments

The authors' gratitude goes to the Chancellor of Universitas Negeri Padang and the Institute for Research and Service to the Community (LPPM) that have facilitated the implementation of research for this article.

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