

## Women and Democracy

### Editorial

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### Articles

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*Andi Misbahul Pratiwi*

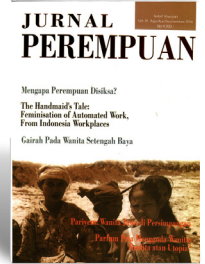
Published by:

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Accreditation Number: 748/Akred/P2MI-LIPI/04/2016

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Email: [yjp@jurnalperempuan.com](mailto:yjp@jurnalperempuan.com)

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Pasar Minggu, Jakarta Selatan 12540  
Telp./Fax (021) 2270 1689  
E-mail: [yjp@jurnalperempuan.com](mailto:yjp@jurnalperempuan.com)  
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First published in May 2019

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This JP edition is published by Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan with the support from the Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (MAMPU). MAMPU program is a joint initiative between the government of Australia and the government of Indonesia that aim to improve access of poor women in Indonesia to public services and other government programs in order to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment. Opinion in the articles solely belong to each of the authors and do not represent the views of the government of Indonesia and the government of Australia.

## Women and Democracy

The 1998 post reformation democratization process in Indonesia has opened up access for women to participate in politics and policy-making processes. The numbers of women sitting in the legislative body, especially in the House of Representative (DPR) have increased from 9% in the 1999 general election into 17% in the 2014 general election. Nevertheless, the percentage is still below the set 30% quotas; a minimum percentage that is expected to create change of direction to the political policy.

Women's movements in electoral democracy still experience various challenges. Women parliament members (MPs) also face political challenges from the political institutions due to the electoral system and internal policies of the existing political parties. Inside DPR, the voices of women legislators were kept under the control of political fraction and masculine politics. Public pressure from women's movement outside parliament still have important meaning to support and to guard women's political agenda in the parliament.

Indonesian post 1998 democracy has grown into a high political cost of electoral democracy. This is demonstrated by the high cost for establishing a political party and the expensive cost of legislative candidacy and political campaign. Thus, political parties are filled and controlled by those who have power and money to fund the high cost electoral politics. Party's coalition has been built as a pave way for parties' leaders or parties' administrators to gain power and positions (either as minister, governor, regent, or mayor) who could be used as cash machine for the next election. Shared ideology, values, or political vision are not used as the basis for setting up a coalition. This fluid, opportunistic, and vulnerable kind of coalition has created difficulty for voters in demanding for accountability from each of the parties or their leaders. In this context, the electoral politics is controlled particular power that is known as oligarchy.

Consequently, the feature of the current DPR is filled by people who have economic elites' backgrounds (business tycoons) and have connections with the political elites. Government institutions and policies under this situation

are prone to the oligarch's interests. Political corruptions have spread and thus became a predominant problem in Indonesia. General election was supposed to offer diverse options among the competing ideas. Instead, the options have decreased, differences among political parties become blurred, and voters cannot demand accountability from politicians upon their actions.

Explaining democracy only as a process that taking place inside the parliament would reduce its meaning. Democracy is not only about election, it encompasses freedom of expression, opinion, association, and protection to minorities, and also to include social and economic aspects, not just politics. Some people have argued that democratization in Indonesia is facing a deadlock. The phenomenon can be seen in the application of the Electronic Information and Transaction Law (UU ITE). UU ITE has trapped Baiq Nuril, a woman survivor of sexual violence who was charged guilty and punished instead of being given protection.

Indonesia democracy tend to be Jakarta and Java centered, therefore local aspirations are often overlooked. Meanwhile, the challenges and the fight for democracy also happen at local level. At regional level we can many cases where communities fight for their social rights have been prone to criminalization, such as Kendeng women in Centarl Java, Eva Bande – an activist in Central Sulawesi. Regional autonomy as the output of Reformasi, has been celebrated only for its direct voting. It has not been recognized in term of its benefits for people's welfare, protection and promotion of human rights, right to development, and promotion of women's rights.

Articles published in the current *Jurnal Perempuan* edition show the need to intervene political party as the electoral democracy's institution in order to realize democracy that is just and respect gender equality. On the other hand, the challenges that are faced by women's movement will be more complex, particularly because of the emerging women conservative candidates who reject feminist agenda. For that reason, increasing critical consciousness and at the same time developing collective power for feminist's agenda are important in the process of consolidating democracy. **(Anita Dhewy)**



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Anna Margret (Cakra Wikara Indonesia & Political Sciences Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Indonesia)

**Two Decades of Indonesian Democracy and the Fading of Feminist Agenda**

DDC: 305  
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 24 No. 2, May 2019, pp 83-93, 20 ref

This article explores the complexity of the relationship between democracy and feminism in both theory and practice. For a long time, feminist theorists have put forward criticism of democratic studies, which emphasize the importance of transforming political institutions and addressing the measure of the goodness of democracy that is considered to be generally accepted. As a result, the voice and interests of women are considered merely complementary and not a priority. Feminist agendas—marked by the formulation of interests aimed at challenging patriarchy in a variety of manifestations—are increasingly scarce in the work of fighting for democracy in Indonesia, especially in the participation of women's electoral politics. While non-electoral participation is more indicative of the presence of a feminist agenda, the challenge lies in the lack of linkages with electoral politics. The achievements of democracy over the past 20 years show the lack of contribution of democracy to the struggle that the women's movement formulated with the breath of feminism. This article highlights the increasingly eroded feminist agenda in the consolidation of democracy in Indonesia. It is time for the consolidation of democracy to borrow the logic of feminism, which rejects the public/private; personal/political dichotomy; in the electoral/non-electoral political struggle.

Keywords: feminist agenda, electoral, non-electoral, democracy

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Dewi Komalasari (Jurnal Perempuan)

**The Interwoven of Interests in Political Economy and Political Behavior of Women Members of Parliament**

DDC: 305  
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 24 No. 2, May 2019, pp 95-106, 2 tables, 19 ref.

Representation of women's interests through women Members of Parliament (MPs) is achieved if there is a connection between women MPs and their constituents. In order to be able to establish cooperation between these two parties, a developed understanding of MPs behavior is required. This article discusses women MPs various political-economic relationships. These relationships begin when women MPs are nominated as legislative candidates. The relationships result in various interests and pressures that women MPs must respond to. By understanding the various interests and pressures that women MPs face, civil society actors can design action plans that trigger positive responses from MPs and minimize potential risks.

Keywords: parliamentary political economy, elections, clientalism, patronage, women candidates, women in parliament

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Atnike Nova Sigiro (Jurnal Perempuan/ Paramadina University)

**Strengthening Substantive Representation of Women through the Engagement Model of the Women's Movement with the DPR and DPRD in Indonesia**

DDC: 305  
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 24 No. 2, May 2019, pp 107-114, 20 ref.

Although it has not yet reached an ideal composition, the adoption of a 30% quota of women in elections in Indonesia has increased the number of women in parliament, both at the central level (House of Representative/DPR) and at the regional level (Regional House of Representatives/DPRD). However, the issue of women's representation in parliament is not only a matter of representation based on sex, but also of substantive representation, where women's political agenda can be voiced. One of the concepts developed by feminist thinking is the concept of critical actors. This article seeks to explain how women's organizations and parliamentarians are critical actors that encourage women's involvement with parliament. This article explains how the involvement between women's organizations and parliament can strengthen the substantive representation of women in both the DPR and the DPRD. The article is developed based on studies on engagement models of MAMPU's partners with the DPR and DPRD.

Keywords: women's politics, political representation, parliamentary women, women's representation

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<sup>1</sup>Abdul Madjid Sallatu, <sup>1</sup>Rahmadani, <sup>1</sup>Agussalim & <sup>2</sup>Abby Gina (<sup>1</sup>Pusat Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kependudukan dan Gender Universitas Hasanuddin (P3KG-UNHAS) & <sup>2</sup>Jurnal Perempuan)

**Ensuring the Women's Political Agenda: A Study of Women Members of Parliament in Nine Regencies/Cities in Eastern Indonesia**

DDC: 305  
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 24 No. 2, May 2019, pp 115-127, 7 tables, 9 ref.

Representation of women in the legislature is important. The presence of women members of parliament (MPs) does not only balance the number of parliamentarians (gender balance), but also encourages women's issues to be a priority, so that various gender sensitive policies are born. This study focuses on women legislator in nine regencies/cities of Eastern Indonesia, namely: Maros Regency, Bone Regency, Tana Toraja Regency, Parepare City, Mataram City, East Lombok Regency, Kendari City, Belu Regency and Ambon City. This study looks at women legislator's portraits in nine research areas, obstacles in implementing main tasks and functions as women legislator and relations with various related groups. This study applies a phased mixed method design that focuses on qualitative studies. Data collection is done through document review, surveys, and in-depth interviews. This research found that in order to guarantee the struggle for women's political agenda, capacity building was needed for Parliamentary Members of Women in Eastern Indonesia.

Keywords: women members of parliament, women's representation, gender-sensitive policies

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Fathimah Fildzah Izzati (Pusat Penelitian Politik - Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia)

**The Problem of "Women's Work" and the Idea of Work Democratization for the Liberating Empowerment of Women**

DDC: 305  
Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 24 No. 2, May 2019, pp 129-136, 40 ref.

Women never make choices about their work democratically. In patriarchal society, "women's work" is constructed as work that is in the area of social reproduction and is "natural" for women. Consequently, women are increasingly in a vulnerable position in the labor market. In addition, women also face obstacles to being actively involved in

various democratic spaces such as unions and women's movements, and wider social movements because they bear a double workload that is life-consuming. However, various women's empowerment programs launched by a number of development institutions to overcome the problems faced by women turned out to be far from women's interests. Empowerment, also known as "liberal empowerment", actually depoliticized and atomized women. Feminist scholars also call for the importance of realizing "liberating empowerment". Related to that, this paper sees that the process of democratization of work on women's work is an effort that can be done to pave the way for women's liberation.

Keywords: women's work, democratization of work, empowerment, liberals, liberation

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Andi Misbahul Pratiwi (Jurnal Perempuan)

**The Policies, Practices & Politics of Women's Representation in Political Parties: A Case Study of Women Members of Parliament for Regency / City DPRD 2014-2019**

DDC: 305

Jurnal Perempuan, Vol. 24 No. 2, May 2019, pp 137-148, 1 table, 27 ref.

Political parties play an important role as a gateway to women's representation. In political parties the entire battle to win seats in parliament occurs. Therefore, the policies, practices and politics in the political party determine the face of women's representation

in parliament. This study focuses on policy, practice and politics in political parties in the context of encouraging women's representation in the regency / city-level legislative council in Indonesia. This research explores the strategy, experience and challenges faced by women legislative members in the regency / city-level legislative council for the 2014-2019 period of the four parties that passed to parliament in the 2014 elections, namely PDIP, Golkar Gerindra and one Islamic party, PPP. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document review of articles of association/ bylaws (AD/ART) of political parties. The results showed that 1) AD / ART of a number of political parties has adopted a 30% quota affirmative policy for party management structures and the formation of women's party wing organizations; 2) The practices of affirmative action policies in the process of recruitment, candidacy and political campaigns have not yet fully adopted the ideology of gender mainstreaming; knowledge, programs and decisions of political parties as well as competition between legislative candidates in competing for votes are still gender biased, thus detrimental to women's political agenda; 3) Parliamentary women experience psychological violence and intimidation in pushing the political agenda of women in parliament - rooted in patriarchal ideology, while the women's wing have not standing for women's agenda.

Keywords: women in parliament, women's political agenda, regency/ city-level legislative council, women and political parties, substantive representation

## The Problem of “Women’s Work” and the Idea of Work Democratization for the Liberating Empowerment of Women

**Fathimah Fildzah Izzati**

Pusat Penelitian Politik Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia  
Gedung Widya Graha LIPI, Jl. Jend. Gatot Subroto, Kav.10, Jakarta Selatan 12710, Indonesia

fathimafildza@gmail.com

Manuscript chronology: received 30 April 2019, revised 24 May 2019, officially accepted 29 May 2019

### Abstract

Women never make choices about their work democratically. In patriarchal society, “women’s work” is constructed as work that is in the area of social reproduction and is “natural” for women. Consequently, women are increasingly in a vulnerable position in the labor market. In addition, women also face obstacles to being actively involved in various democratic spaces such as unions and women’s movements, and wider social movements because they bear a double workload that is life-consuming. However, various women’s empowerment programs launched by a number of development institutions to overcome the problems faced by women turned out to be far from women’s interests. Empowerment, also known as “liberal empowerment”, actually depoliticized and atomized women. Feminist scholars also call for the importance of realizing “liberating empowerment”. Related to that, this paper sees that the process of democratization of work on women’s work is an effort that can be done to pave the way for women’s liberation.

Keywords: women’s work, democratization of work, empowerment, liberals, liberation

### Introduction

The issue of work is always seen as an apolitical problem unrelated to other social problems in society. Work is often only interpreted as a way for individuals to earn income to survive rather than as a social convention (Weeks 2011). As a result, problems arising from work are often resolved individually. In this digital economic era, workers, especially in creative industries, are faced by narratives centered around such notions as passion or vocation that are used to perpetuate the individualization of the work process. As an illustration, among workers in the media and creative industries, there are the sayings such as “if you have not had typhus yet, you have not worked” or “it is okay not to sleep as long as you do something you are passionate about”. These sayings eventually normalize inadequate working conditions such as overwork or unpaid overtime.

Furthermore, the decision regarding one’s job is still understood as an individual choice rather than as a consequence of the existing political power structure (Weeks 2011). One’s choices for work are determined by various political-economic conditions, such as the expansion of flexible labor markets, the lack of access to education, and the loss of living space in rural areas due to land expropriation for infrastructural development (Akram-Lodhi, Kay & Borras 2012; Standing 1999). As

an illustration, we can see that many migrant workers in Indonesia are forced to work abroad because the government has seized agricultural farms in their hometowns for the sake of development (Solidaritas Perempuan 2014).

In addition, for women, the choice of work is also largely not democratically determined. In a patriarchal society, women are constructed to be the responsible bearer of social reproduction work in the household/family, in the form of intensive domestic task, such as cleaning the house, washing clothes, cooking family meals, taking care of children, managing family finances, and so on (Fraser 2017). Work, which was later constructed socially as “women’s work”, is then determined as something “natural” for women. Meanwhile, men are socially constructed as responsible for productive work in the public domain (Fraser 2017). In this paper, the term “women’s work” refers to work that is socially constructed as women’s responsibility.

As a consequence of this social construction, women finally experience domestication that transfer women’s work in the production area to domestic spaces such as houses. One example can be seen in the phenomenon of the many factories that move their machines to people’s homes so that workers, especially women workers, can do production work inside the house while doing social

reproduction work for their families (Staples 2007). In fact, for similar reasons, the domestication of women's work also penetrates the current digital era as seen in the proliferation of online stores on various social media platforms that are mostly managed by women - especially housewives - from their homes (Izzati 2019). In this case, most of the women who are involved in the online store business claim to choose this job because they can work from home so they can increase family income while still fulfilling their "obligations" in managing children and households (Izzati 2019). Here, we can see that the displacement of work locus into homes is caused by the construction of women's work that extends from new industrial work areas (factories) to digital area work (online shops).

The transfer of work that is carried out by women in the production area to the private sphere such as one's own house then perpetuates the social construction that women who work for a living in productive areas - most of whom also bear social reproduction work at home - are additional income earners even though in reality they are the backbone of the family (Elson & Pearson 1981). In other words, the work that is done by women is considered as a complementary job to men's work. As a result, women always receive lower wages than men — who are socially constructed as the heads of the family. It can be seen, for example, in the data on the gender pay wage gap (wage inequality based on gender) throughout the world.

Another result is that women also occupy a vulnerable position in the labor market, which is proven in the feminization of work. In this process, women tend to be accepted readily in the labor market than men because under patriarchy women are constructed as submissive or obedient and do not easily protest if they are given low wages or experience abnormal working conditions (Arizpe & Aranda 1981; Elson & Pearson 1981; Mezzadri 2016; Pratap 2014). At the same time, the women's entry into the labor market is also caused by the condition of women who tend to be poorer than men (Federici 2012).

The domestication of women's work, which eventually places the work carried out by women as complementary to men's work, ultimately alienates women from the broader social life. Consequently, women tend to become more atomized or individualized and kept away from the idea of association and assembly and their rights as workers and citizens. In comparison, women who work in productive sites, such as in factories have succeeded in organizing themselves through trade unions which,

ultimately, can slowly change their poor working conditions (Silver 2003).

Besides that, women are considered to be lacking in leadership character and the ability to lead or do jobs with public responsibility because women are seen as only doing "light" jobs, such as domestic work in the house and not "heavy" work as done by men (Dalla-Costa & James 1972).

Various development institutions, including the state, then come up with women's empowerment programs — which put women as objects — to overcome the multiple challenges they face. However, feminist scholars most notably Sardenberg (2008, p. 18) highlight the empowerment that is carried out by these development institutions, which she labels as liberal empowerment. According to Sardenberg, liberal empowerment forgets the direct involvement of women. As a result, empowering women fall far from women's interest, especially those the most marginalized. Therefore, in order to create more democratic social conditions for women in determining their choices, both in work matters and other life issues, liberating empowerment is needed (Sardenberg 2008, p. 19).

This paper has two main theses to answer the issues on women's work and liberal empowerment. First, this paper argues that the answer to the question of women's work is liberating empowerment and not liberal empowerment. Second, steps to liberate empowerment can begin with the process of democratization of work, that is, the socialization of work that is conceived as "natural" for women - to the community (Federici 2012; Rowbotham 2010). This paper contends that the democratization of work can actively promote women's participation in various democratic spaces, including in women's liberation movement. Lastly, this paper also examines that the democratization of work is a form of liberating empowerment itself. In other words, the process of democratizing work within the community can pave the way for real women's liberation.

To answer the problems, this paper uses a qualitative research design because of its advantages in providing an in-depth explanation of social phenomena (Bryman 2008). Data collection techniques are carried out through observation, interviews, and literature studies (Bryman 2008; Delamont 2013).

### **Observations and interviews were conducted in a village in Majalaya, West Java in July 2017.**

The selection of the village as the location of the study was made due to the fact that most women in the village work as workers in a factory for sweaters and socks under "the putting-out system". In the *putting-out system*, women workers do the same work as the other workers in the factory. However, in this system, the factory machinery is moved to their homes and female workers also work from inside the house (Fajerman 2013).

In Majalaya, the *putting-out system* itself is better known under the term *maklun* that is taken from the Dutch word *makloon*, which means wages or costs of production (Safaria 2003, p. 79). In this *maklun* system, companies or factories subcontract their machines to villagers who act as business unit owners so that workers who work under this system face uncertainty about their work status (Safaria 2003).

Interviews were conducted to seven informants. Four of them were female workers who worked under the *putting-out system*, while the other three were labor union activists (males) in that location. Meanwhile, the literature studies started from 2017 onwards.

This paper is divided into several parts. After the introduction, the first issue assessed will be about 'women's work' and the women's participation in democratic spaces. After that, the second part of this article will assess the connection between work democratization and the concept of liberating women's empowerment. This paper will be concluded with a conclusion regarding the relationship between the women's work problem and the idea of democratization of work for a liberating women's empowerment.

### **"Women's Work" and Women's Participation in Various Democratic Spaces**

The construction upon women's work, which alienates women from social life and is considered as something natural, is inseparable from the surrounding social, economic and political conditions. Under the intertwining capitalism with patriarchy, democratic aspect in determining women's work does not exist (Bhattacharya 2017; Federici 2012; Fraser 2017; Mies 1998; Mohandesi & Teitelman 2017). Capitalist cultures interpreting or organizing motherhood in ways that emphasize sexual differences and lead the root of cause to sexual asymmetry (Coontz 1986, p. 12). In Indonesia, the patriarchal social construction also stipulates women's work around "wells, kitchen, mattresses," (Rahayu 2015).

In relation to that, under capitalism, the work around the wells, kitchen, and bed, fall under the realm of social reproductive work.

Social reproduction works in the household/family's domain such as cooking, washing clothes, cleaning house, taking care of children and husbands, are usually positioned as free work, and are not considered a job, although it has vital position under capitalism (Fraser 2017; Mohandesi & Teitelman 2017). In the context of capitalism, it is only through social reproduction work that capitalism could ensure its sustainability. Capitalism cannot produce labor force, both the skilled labor and reserve army of labor, without social reproduction's works (Fraser 2017; Mies 1998). In addition to that, paid tasks - such as production and social reproduction work that is not within family's domain, such as teaching work in schools or nursing in hospitals - cannot exist without the presence of unpaid social reproduction work at homes (Fraser 2017; Mies 1998). However, capitalists take their hands-off from any responsibility upon social reproduction work and place the responsibility into family institutions (Fraser 2017).

Therefore, the construction of social reproduction work as women's work makes reproductive work more often seen as an activity of caring or preserving for something rather than an actual work. As a result, reproductive works, especially in the household/family area, have become 'a hidden work of women', which are compensated by the rhetoric of love and virtue given by women for their families (Fraser 2017, p. 23; Staples 2007). In fact, the social reproduction works within household/family cannot be categorized as activities carried out as leisure activities (Federici 2006). In relation to that, in reality, social reproductive works within household/family, such as cooking, washing, cleaning the house, taking care of children, and so on, are intensive and time-consuming works (Izzati 2019). Therefore, it cannot be classified only as an affective labor (Federici 2006).

According to Federici (2006, p. 6), the classification of reproductive work—including the work of social reproduction—as affective work, as conceptualized by Negri and Hardt, only repeating mystification upon reproductive work (Federici, 2006, p. 6): that the people who do these works only produce "emotions" and "feelings," and therefore negating the vital position of reproductive work for capital accumulation.

As the consequence of hiding social reproduction works in the household/family from the broader political and societal contexts, then domestic territory become an official locus of women's work (Fraser 2017). As a

result, when working in productive areas, women are only considered as additional income earners. Therefore, using the Graeber's analogy (2018, p. 15), women's work in social reproduction within households can be categorized as 'shit job', where women work extremely hard but have low self-esteem precisely for that specific reason. The gender pay gap in almost all parts of the world also shows how the latent construction upon women's work has brought impact to women's working conditions and welfare (Mohanty 2003). Furthermore, various conceptions regarding labor under capitalism are also tend to be associated as productive work — the production of surplus-value — a male dominated work (Mies 1998).

Therefore, women assume many of vulnerable positions in the labor market. Patriarchal construction that places women as an obedient and amiable worker has become the grand narrative of feminization of works (Arizpe 1981; Elson & Pearson 1981; Mezzadri 2016; Pratap 2014). The feminization of work discloses the process of extracting surplus values that is supported by patriarchal values (Mezzadri 2016). In relation to that, the feminization of works has been coexisted with the intensive process of surplus value's extraction from many vulnerable women (Mezzadri 2016). In the feminization of work, women enter and involve in the labor market because of the patriarchal construction attached to them and the conditions of poverty that are experienced by women (Mezzadri 2016). In other words, the feminization of work questions the inclusion of women into labor market due to the patriarchal values in the society, as well as the living material condition of women who tend to be poorer than men.

In this regard, feminization of work deepens the double work-burden of women, especially those who come from the poor working-class background (Mezzadri 2016). In this case, women who enter the feminization of work are mostly poor working-class women. These women bear heavier double work-burden compare to the middle-class female workers in urban areas. As an illustration, the female middle-class urban workers in Indonesia are more capable to recruit domestic workers to help them with their social reproduction work at home. Meanwhile, the majority of female workers who are from the poor working class, tend to perform their social reproduction work in their homes after they finish their work in the production area or social reproduction outside of their homes (Izzati 2019).

This condition is also intensified along with the emergence of home-based work that shows the side

of capitalism, that is very adaptive to the condition of a patriarchal society. The idea of home as a flexible workplace for women has allowed women to join productive work at the same time as when taking care of children and other domestic tasks also have created a female-dominated home-based work (Staples 2007). Related to that, Mies' statement (1998, p. 38) is proven to be accurate that, "Capitalism cannot function without patriarchy."

In this context, capitalism also utilizes the patriarchal construction that is attached to women in the other work systems, that is the *putting-out-system* (Fajerman 2013; Staples 2007). In the putting-out system, a company subcontracts its factory machinery to people's houses. The reason is so that women can work from their home flexibly while taking care of their children and families (ET 2017, interview July 15, 2017; RS 2017, interview July 14, 2017). However, in reality, these women continue to work all day as they would have done it in factory (ET 2017, interview July 15).

In fact, under the putting-out system, workers are required to bear the work's risk by themselves. As an illustration, a female labor in Majalaya who works under this system said that when she was pierced with a needle, she had to buy iodine using her own money and she could not ask for reimbursement from the company she works for (ET 2017, interview July 15). This phenomenon indicates that the company applies the work system in order to shift all of the responsibility of all costs and risks to the workers.

A similar incident but in a different form also happens to those who work in online stores. Some of them work as resellers of various products by opening online stores via their respective social media accounts, such as Facebook and Instagram; others become drop-shippers; or workers in the online store itself (Izzati 2019). Many women, including homemakers, enter and involve in the online store business for imagining the flexibility that can be had if they do the work from home through their smartphones (Izzati 2019). However, those are not the case because in reality managing a business requires full attention and cannot be paired with social reproduction work at home and vice versa.

The construction of women's work that is resulted in various work systems that domesticating women have hindered the women who work under the system to involve in any democratic space. They do not join union because they are atomized in their own homes rather than working in workplace. They also cannot be actively involved in any women's movements or other social

movements because they are preoccupied with the women's workload in their daily lives. This atomization has in the end alienated women from knowledge about their rights as workers, citizens, and so on. As the result, female workers are more vulnerable than male workers. Besides that, as citizens, women are also tended to be marginalized in general daily democratic spaces, including within the women's movement.

On the other hand, not all of female workers who work in productive areas join labor unions (Arifin 2015). Although they join any union, most women workers usually face obstacles to participate actively in the unions because of the double workload - in the area of production and social reproduction - that they must bear have taken most of their time and lives (Arifin 2015). Furthermore, the number of women who become leaders in unions or any other social organizations are still limited (Arifin 2015). Again, the roots of the problem stem from the construction upon women's work. The construction upon women's work that place women's works under the social reproduction within households to be considered not as work, meanwhile women's works within the production fields are considered only as additional income, have resulted in the false assumption that women have no skill of leadership, unable to lead or unable to make any organizational decision. The situation is far different with men who are usually considered as leader in every chance and generally to assumed to have leadership skill, just because they are considered to do hard work in the production field, not piecemeal work such as washing, house cleaning or cooking, as done by women within households/ families (Dalla-Costa & James 1972)

### **Efforts Towards Liberating Women Empowerment through Work Democratization**

To overcome the various problems of women, several development institutions - such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and also state - then compete to launch various women's empowerment programs, from micro-credits for women, up to leadership training programs for women (Keating, Rasmussen & Rishi 2010). Those models of empowerment programs have become the widely-known standard concept of women's empowerment.

Some feminist scholars have criticized those globalized standard models of women's empowerment. According to Sardenberg (2008, p. 18), the idea of women's empowerment originally came from feminist thinking. However, in its development, the term

empowerment has been adopted by the government and various international development institutions to impose their agenda and interests upon women. She defines this empowerment type as a liberal empowerment. Sardenberg (2008) argued that various development institutions that apply this liberal empowerment always see women's empowerment as an instrument to facilitate various priorities in development, including in poverty alleviation.

According to Sardenberg (2008), this liberal empowerment is in line with liberal ideas that focus primarily on individual growth/development, but from an atomistic or individualist perspective, which means that any action or conduct that are undertaken by social actors are made based on individual interest. Under this type of liberal empowerment, various efforts to empower women often put women as passive objects, which leads to a depoliticization of women (Sardenberg 2008). In this case, the liberal empowerment model always assumes that women and other marginalized groups in developing countries as voiceless parties who cannot help themselves (Mohanty 1988; Sardenberg 2008).

In this case, the various women's empowerment programs that were launched by these development institutions mostly place women as consumers of the programs that they created and designed. One of the programs that takes a liberal empowerment approach is, for example, is a development program that invites women to be more involved in the economic field. This type of empowerment sees that only through the labor market and production site that women can be empowered (Razavi & Miller 1995). In fact, women's experiences in various parts of the world, particularly in third world countries, show that women can also be empowered in fields other than economics (McEwan 2001).

The liberal empowerment's orientation that is proclaimed by developmental institutions tend to impose the empowerment concept on women rather than finding out the meaning of empowerment according to women themselves (Sardenberg 2018). The empowerment that is imposed by those developmental institutions also contain paradoxes. On the one side, these various developmental institutions want to empower women. However, at the same time, inequality and marginalization experienced by women are resulted from various policies made by these international institutions. Here is the paradox: the same development institutions that creating inequality to women then want to empower women through various programs, among

others including micro-credit and entrepreneurship programs (Keating, Rasmussen & Rishi 2010).

In micro-credit program, liberal empowerment can be seen in the way from which various developmental institutions provide access to capital and markets for women in developing countries. Access to these capitals is then used by women as a source to meet their needs, which were subsidized by the state before the existence of Structural Adjustments Programs (SAPs) (Keating, Rasmussen & Rishi 2010). SAPs are a consequence of neoliberalism. In this case, every country that receives developmental funding assistance from various international developmental institutions must run SAPs programs in their respective countries. One form of the SAPs programs is subsidy cut (Davis 2004).

Therefore, according to Keating, Rasmussen & Rishi (2010) this initiative should be seen as an effort to individualize and at the same time to depoliticize poverty and neoliberalism. Meanwhile, through entrepreneurship programs, women in developing countries are encouraged to have jobs and become self-employed. This essentially shapes the view that poverty is a personal problem and not a structural problem of capitalist development (Keating, Rasmussen & Rishi 2010). In this liberal empowerment approach, society (including women) are required to take responsibility upon their own lives. That means if they are poor, it happened because they are lacking from an entrepreneurial spirit (Harvey 2005; Hickey 2010).

In general, the agenda of women's empowerment that is carried out by those developmental institutions provide a gimmick for market-based solutions to overcome poverty. The existing women's empowerment programs then depart from the position as if women do not have their own agendas. Meanwhile, women have their interests (women's interest) and their own agenda (women's questions) (Mies 1998). In this liberal empowerment, various interests and agendas of women are not considered because women are categorized as homogeneous/singular entity, detached from geographical and class differences (Mohanty 1988). Furthermore, liberal empowerment also has no intention to create any transformation to change inequality in the society that cause marginalization of women (Sardenberg 2008).

Therefore, it is important to move beyond this liberal empowerment by creating a liberating empowerment (Sardenberg 2008, p. 23). The aim of liberating empowerment is the elimination of patriarchy and any relation that lead to other inequalities, using women's

autonomy as the main instrument (Sardenberg 2008). The focus of the liberating empowerment is the organizing of women and women's collective actions, although it still does not deny the importance of empowering women at the individual level (Sardenberg 2008). In this case, the key to liberating empowerment is the active participation of women themselves. The active involvement of women to revive democratic spaces - such as unions and social movements, including the women's movement - is the key to this liberating empowerment.

However, the undemocratic division of labor in the society has created opportunities' loss to women to actively involved in democratic spaces, including within women's movement itself. Women's attention is preoccupied by social reproduction work in the household/family or their work in the production area, which is also still burdened with social reproduction work in their household/family. Therefore, it is crucial to take a step towards a liberating women's empowerment through a process to democratize work that refers to the process of socialization of work - that is constructed as women's work by nature - as a shared responsibility within the society. In this case, the transfer of women's work from private to public cannot resolve the root of the existing unequal relations (Dalla-Costa & James 1972). It is the elimination of natural functions of women that can answer these problems.

In Italy, women who were part of the social movements have begun the struggle for work democratization through the fight for "wages for housework" or social reproduction wages for household work since the 1970s (Mayday Rooms 2019). Meanwhile, in Scandinavian countries, the idea for democratizing work can be seen from the number of daycares provided by the state in various locations (Chung 2016). The existing maternity leave were offered not only to women but also men, is an essential step in process of democratizing work, as shown in Sweden (Dhani 2017). With provision of leave for men/couples who give birth like in Sweden, the process of democratizing work practically can be started, that the responsibility of taking care of children is no longer only left to women but is carried out together with men/their partners.

With the commencement of such efforts, the work democratization's process in the form of division of labor inside of the community to socialize reproductive social work will find its success path. The socialization of social reproduction work to become a shared responsibility of the society is the key to work's democratization for several reasons. First, it can change the construction

upon women's work (Federici 2012; Rowbotham 2010). Second, the democratization of work can become a material condition that allows women to make various choices, including choices about work, in a way this is more flexible and freer. Through work's democratization like this, women can be freed from the double-burden problem that has hindered women's participation in various democratic spaces, including in the liberating women's movement. On the other hand, the process of work's democratization can also be identified as a form of women's liberation, it is because work's democratization requires a change in social relations within the society.

With the democratization of work, women will no longer struggling with problems that constrains them in the domestic space within households, but also to other problems that still confine women's lives. Work's democratization will allow women to be actively involved in the women's liberation movement because women are no longer trapped in the construction of women's work that bounds women. With work's democratization process, women can freely gather, organize, and collectively mobilize to voice various women's interests and agendas. Thus, women could also transform their lives, including to fight against flexible labor markets, feminization of work, and various forms of discrimination against women, therefore women can participate in everyday democracy (Rowbotham 2010), which will lead to the actual women liberation.

## Conclusion

Under patriarchal capitalist societies, women can never democratically make decision upon their work. Women's work, which is constructed by patriarchy as the works within the area of social reproduction is then considered as work's nature of women. Consequently, women's work tends to undergo domestication then women's work in the production area are transferred into domestic spaces such as house. This can be seen in the *putting-out system*, *home-based work*, and also online shops' business.

As the result, women are also in a vulnerable position in the labor market, which can be seen, for example, through the feminization of work. Moreover, women are detached from the idea of association and assembly due to the atomization within their own houses. On the other hand, few numbers of women who work in the productive area have joined labor union. In fact, after unionizing, women still face obstacles participate actively due to women's double workload that is time-consuming. As

a result, women are in a more vulnerable position than men. Aside from that, women are also marginalized from the daily democratic spaces, including from women's movement.

To overcome the various problems faced by women, different women's empowerment programs are launched by many development institutions, including the state. However, those women's empowerment programs have neglected women's involvement. As the result, women's empowerment falls far from women's interest, especially of those who are most marginalized. Furthermore, empowerment that is also referred to as liberal empowerment, has depoliticized and atomized women as parties who have their own interests and agendas.

Therefore, feminist scholars who criticize the liberal empowerment proclaim the importance of challenging the empowerment concept by creating a liberating empowerment. The aim is to create a more democratic social condition for women so that women can democratically determine their decisions, both concerning work issues and also other issues in women's lives. In this regard, the process of the democratizing work in the form of socializing women's work as a society's joint responsibility—not merely as women's responsibility—is an effort that can be done to pave the way for empowerment that liberates women.

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YAYASAN  
**YJP**  
JURNAL  
PEREMPUAN

Jl. Karang Pola Dalam II No. 9A  
Jati Padang, Pasar Minggu,  
Jakarta Selatan 12540  
INDONESIA  
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