

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. PROBLEM BACKGROUND

Malaysia as one of a strong and sophisticated country in South East Asia is an interesting country to be analyzed in the international relation studies. It is a multiethnic society but lives in as a symphony of harmony in which Malays become the majority ethnic. It consists of 62% Malays, 24% Chinese, 8% Indians, others 7.8%¹. Although shares in the same flags of nation and tries to live in harmony, it can not be denied that as a majority, Malays ethnic usually holds most of the source of life sectors.

For example, the political matter is one of important aspects dominated by the majority ethnic through hegemonies regime on each rounds of political sector in Malaysia. The National Front or usually famous as *Barisan Nasional* formatted on 1974 is the coalition of 15 political party and dominated the political sector of Malaysia. The National Front also becomes the coalition of ethnic party representatives through Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) and also the major party of United Malays National Organization (UMNO). UMNO as the biggest party is representing the Malays ethnics' interest in which it always gets the major voice both in the executive and legislative election.

¹ www.wikipedia.com/malaysia (Acessed on October 03,2008 / 15.00)

In the matter of legislative body, Malaysia has another story about women's political participation for the legislative seats. Although many Malaysia political parties do not restrict the chance for women to join with the political party but the number of women who enter legislative branch still low. For example in the legislative election of 2004, woman in Malaysia only fulfilled 9.1% from the 219 of the total legislative seats.

Table 1.1.
Women's participation on the Parliament of Malaysia from 1955 to 1999

Year of election	Total voted	Women's representative	Percentage
1955	52	1	02.00 %
1959	104	3	2.90 %
1964	104	3	2.90 %
1969	144	2	1.38 %
1974	154	5	3.25 %
1978	154	7	4.54 %
1982	154	8	5.19 %
1986	177	7	3.95 %
1990	180	11	6.11 %
1995	192	15	7.80 %
1999	193	20	10.36 %

Source : Ibrahim, Wan Azizah. (2008). *“Perempuan dalam politik: Refleksi dari Malaysia.”* Accessed on: October 03,2008 / 15.00 from http://www.idea.int/publications/wip/upload/CS_Malaysia_Azizah.pdf

If we compared to international statistic, woman in Malaysia also nominated on the low level of woman political participation on the legislative seats. For example in Rwanda there was 48.8% of woman political participation in the legislative body. United Kingdom as the mother country of Malaysia placed 19.8% of woman political participation on the legislative seats. Australia as other country of British realm placed 24.7% of woman's representative in the legislative body.

Table 1.2.
International Statistic of Women's parliament representation on 2005

Country	Woman's percentage
Rwanda	48.8%
Sweden	45.3%
Norway	37.9%
Finland	37.5%
Denmark	36.9%
Cuba	36.0%
Spain	36.0%
Costa Rica	35.1%
Mozambique	34.8%
Belgium	34.7%
Austria	33.9%
Iceland	33.3%
South Africa	32.8%
New Zealand	32.2%
Australia	24.7%
United Kingdom	19.8%
Vietnam	27.3%
Laos	22.9%
Philippines	15.3%
Indonesia	11.3%
Thailand	10.6%
Cambodia	9.8%
Malaysia	9.1%

Source : Jung-Sook Kim. (2006). "Women's Political Participation and Strategies for Greater Equality." Accessed on: Desember 03, 2008 / 15.00 from www.capwip.org/paperscongress/Womenspoliticalparticipationdrkim.pp

According to Abraham Lincoln, democracy is the governmental from peoples for peoples.² Democracy also acknowledges the concept of political participation in which consists of passive and active participation. The passive participation is the right for vote and the active political participation is the right to be voted. The biological sexual differences is one point which becomes the excuse for some one or some group to legalize them having precious right then another or in the other words, another as the second class. So, women are the group which are usually placed on thus marginalizes position. Although if we stand on the declaration of Human Right, we could find that peoples were born equal without distinction of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.³ So, it is undoubted for women to have the right on the political participation both passive and active one.

The legislative body is usually identified as the highest body which collects and aspirates people's voice from all of peoples groups and races to create the justice legislation. Women are also one of people group which have interests and needs for taking part in legislative body to reach the justice legislation.

From the explanation above, the writer is getting interested in researching the phenomena faced by women in entering the political life of Malaysia which is unique and complex by its characteristic in which hegemonies by Barisan Nasional and

² Budiyanto. (2003) "Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Tata Negara." Jakarta: Erlangga. pages. 38

³ Declaration of Human Right. Article 2 . Accessed on: November 17,2008 / 10.00 from www.un.org/Overview/rights.html

UMNO as the biggest power of political party. Therefore, the writer is getting interested in writing the objectives of “women’s political participation in the legislative seats in Malaysia”.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

According to the background of the study, the research question raised deals with: **“Why is the woman’s political participation in the legislative seats in Malaysia low?”**

C. PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The research aims to:

1. Uncover the motives behind the low level of women’s political participation in the legislative seats in Malaysia.
2. Implement the theories to understand the problem of gender discrimination on the political sector in Malaysia.

D. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory and concept will be used in this thesis as tools to analyze the phenomena. According to Mohtar Mas`oed, theory is the most general explanation to identify the rising of the research question. While concept is abstraction which represents an object, attribute of an object, or a specific phenomena.

1. Institutional, Practical and Normative

Mona Lena Krook believes that there was strategic concept to analyze about woman in Politic called Systemic Institutions, Practical and Normative concept.⁴

1.1. Systemic Institutions

Institution is the centre concept to study about politic. According to David Easton, Institutionalism is a concern with how political ideals embodied in particular connection between rulers and ruled, the connecting links between peoples and governments are political parties, interest, pressure group and administration.⁵ The Institutional theories recognize that government structures of legislature, parties, bureaucracy take on lives of their own and powerfully shape the behavior and attitudes of the people who live under and work in them.

More specifically related to Systemic Institutional, Mona Lena Krook believes that the existing studies on women in politics most often use the term institution to refer to formal features of a political system, like electoral rules, ballot structures, district sizes, and number of political parties.

1.2. *Practical institutions* related to formal and informal party practices guiding political recruitment, namely *de jure* requirements for candidacy and *de facto*

⁴ Krook, Mona Lena. (2003). “*Not All Quotas Are Created Equal: Trajectories of Reform to increase Women’s Political Representation.*” Columbia University, New York. Accessed on: Desember 03, 2008 / 15.00 from <http://www.columbia.edu/~mlk22>

⁵ Apter, David E.. (1981). “*Introduction to political analysis.*” New Delhi India: Prentice-hall.

requirements that reflect a party's demands and preferences regarding candidate selection. More specifically, Practical institutions include *de jure* requirements for candidacy ,such as : age, party affiliation, collection of signatures, and financial resources. The *de facto* requirements could be : party service, formal qualifications, legislative experience, speaking abilities, financial resources, political connections, kinship, name-recognition, group networks, organizational skills, and ambition for office or incumbency status. The De Jure and De Facto requirements may reflect a party's demands and preferences regarding candidate selection.

Political parties are the prior bridges to political office, although party selection procedures vary widely across countries, and sometimes even across political parties in the same country, to the degree that they involve local party organizations, groups organized within the party, party members, and citizens who are not members of the party. While specific criteria for selection may also differ, the selection process itself invariably produces distortions between characteristics of the candidates and characteristics of the electorate. More specifically, legislatures worldwide tend to include a larger share of affluent, male, middle-aged, and white-collar members than exist proportionally in the electorate.

1.3. Normative institutions are formal and informal principles that define the moral bases and goals of political recruitment. More specifically, Normative institutional include the definitions of political equality and political representation enshrined formally in constitutions, legal codes, electoral laws, and party statutes, as

well as more informally in party platforms, political ideologies, and voter opinions and values.

Normative institutions affect systemic institutions by providing the theoretical motivations and justifications for choosing certain electoral rules, ballot structures, and district sizes. Normative Institutions shape practical institutions by defining the goals of the selection process, as well as by drawing limits around the ways in which recruitment criteria can be conceived and redefined. Normative reforms include amending constitutions, legal codes, and party statutes to recognize equality of results, as well as legalizing the means necessary to achieve such equality. Whether or not Normative institutional are written down, they embody the hegemonic interpretations of equality and representation that enlarge or constrict the potential to adopt candidate gender quotas.

2. The gender concept will be used to analyzing the case of women. Gender here is not referring to biological differences between man and women which is usually associated to biological and sexual matters. According to J. Ann Tickner, Gender was referring to a set of culturally shaped and defined characteristic associated with masculinity and femininity which can across time and place.⁶ What happen in society is that people believe about women as the second class, the existence of women was only for being the slave for man. It was clearly spoken since in the ancient by Aristotle as the philosophical master who told that woman is immature man proved by their sexuality which was undeveloped well through

⁶ Tickner, J. Ann. (1992). *Gender in International Relations* “. Columbia University Press. New York

biological differentiation between man toward women. Until nowadays, this dogmatist though becomes the social framework to see the relation between man and women. Men usually claimed their self superior and dominated women also use them as an object and tools to achieve their purpose. Men also dominates the public sector of social interaction and places women only in the domestic sector, as a good wife and serve their husband in the kitchen, bathroom and bedroom which has no right to chose the best way for their life because their husband is the right one for it. The basic point of the relation between men and women in the family then grow up to become **patriarchal culture** of society which only creates and concerns for achieves man's purpose . It also creates a patriarchal system in many aspects especially in the political sector.

E. HYPOTHESIS

Based on the problem raised in research question, we can see some factors influencing women's political representation in legislative seats in Malaysia, namely:

1. Systemic institutions obstacle.
2. Practical institutions obstacle.
3. Normative institutions obstacle.

F. METHOD OF RESEARCH

This qualitative research will use a common method to sustain and arrange the data by collecting the data from:

- Library research, this method used as secondary data to study the relevant sources in order to discuss the problem.
- Media research, collecting the data from media such as internet, newspaper, magazines, scripts, electronic journal in order to find references as the source of the matter.
- Data analysis, the writer tries to interpret the data gained from library and media research checked with the real facts happening in the world today in order to be used as the source of the thesis.
- Proving hypothesis will be taken from the discussion of the problem and analysis of the data.

G. SCOPE OF RESEARCH

In this writing thesis, the writer will limit the scope of the discussion from the first women's participation in legislative seats until the latest election of 2008. The time limitation is used in order to avoid the complexity of the observation and analysis.

H. SYSTEM OF WRITING

The system of writing will be used by the writer as the important items of the scientific research. So that in the process of writing the thesis will not deny the structure and formal rules of scientific research's thesis.

In writing the thesis, the system of writing will consist of some chapters

CHAPTER I

In Chapter I the writer will explain the Background and the problem of matter.

CHAPTER II

In Chapter II the writer will focus on the political system in Malaysia, The electoral system of Malaysia, The political party of Malaysia, the women's participation on the political sector of Malaysia especially in the legislative seats through the political party.

CHAPTER III

In Chapter III the writer will analyze the systemic institutions obstacle of women's political participation in the legislative seats in Malaysia.

CHAPTER IV

In Chapter IV the writer will analyze the practical institutions obstacle of women's political participation in the legislative seats in Malaysia.

CHAPTER V

In Chapter V the writer will analyze the normative institutions obstacle of women's political participation in the legislative seats in Malaysia.

CHAPTER VI

Chapter V will consist of Conclusion.