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Women Politics in Türkiye and the Reflection for Indonesia's Village Governance

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Abstract: Although there has been significant progress in women's rights in recent decades, traditional gender roles remain deeply embedded in Indonesia and Türkiye, particularly in rural areas. This study investigates a real-world instance of how women contribute to Turkish decision-making. The theoretical framework examines how gender dynamics, state policies, and leadership styles affect governance results in rural areas by incorporating two primary theories: participatory feminism and intersectionality. The first female Muhtar (elected village head of Türkiye), Gül Esin, made a name for herself as a role model for women across Türkiye, which had a lasting impact on village administration. This historical perspective highlights the increasing recognition of women's perspectives within the village administration. This study uses library research to analyze Gül Esin's leadership, village governance, and gender studies in Indonesia and Türkiye. This study uses document analysis to investigate the conceptualization and application of women's leadership within Indonesian village governance. The findings underscore the critical role of women's participation in village decision-making processes and demonstrate how their leadership contributes to more inclusive and effective governance. The study also offers policy recommendations, advocating for gender-sensitive policies and intersectional assessments in village governance, with a focus on marginalized communities. The results provide valuable insights into measures that can be implemented in similar situations regarding how village-level governance can be maximized to enhance women's empowerment, particularly in the Indonesian context.

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I. Introduction

More people are realizing that increasing gender equality and sustainable development needs granting women the authority to participate in village-level decision-making. In rural communities where traditional norms and patriarchal institutions often dominate, including women in governance is not just a matter of equity but also a means of ensuring that diverse perspectives are considered in community development (Celis & Childs, 2024). Women usually have significant roles in communities that preserve social harmony (Kantola & Lombardo, 2017).

Many countries, including Türkiye and Indonesia, have laws and international accords mandating the inclusion of women in administrative roles. These accords, among them the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasize the importance of gender parity to governance as a whole (Afridi et al., 2017; Ferguson, 2017). To fulfill these obligations and demonstrate adherence to global standards for equality and human rights, one way is to ensure women's participation in village governance (Gostin et al., 1994).

Türkiye, with its unique blend of Eastern and Western traditions, provides an intriguing framework for examining gender and governance (Atasü-Topçuoğlu, 2022; Coşar & Yeğenoğlu, 2011). It offers insights into the historical evolution of women's leadership, such as the pioneering role of Gül Esin. Indonesia, meanwhile, represents a dynamic setting where recent data show an increase in women's participation in local politics, including village governance (Hillman, 2018; Wieringa, 2015).

Gül Esin, who became the first female village head (muhtar) in Türkiye in 1933, followed legal reforms that granted women the right to vote and be elected in local elections (Kandiyoti, 2010). Türkiye's experience is particularly relevant because it shows how legal reforms, when effectively implemented, can open opportunities for women's leadership even within traditional and rural communities. Drawing from this example provides a comparative perspective to understand the factors that can either hinder or support women's leadership in similar contexts, such as Indonesia.

Even though women's rights have progressed significantly in the last few decades, conventional gender roles—socially constructed expectations that prescribe specific behaviors, responsibilities, and opportunities for men and women—remain deeply entrenched in Indonesia and Türkiye, particularly in rural regions. In these contexts, men are often expected to be the primary breadwinners and decision-makers, holding leadership positions both within the household and in community governance (Wardana & Magriasti, 2024). Meanwhile, women are traditionally expected to fulfill domestic roles, focusing on child-rearing, household management, and providing emotional support, which limits their opportunities to engage in public leadership or political decision-making.

These culturally rooted perceptions of gender roles contribute to resistance against women's participation in leadership, as female leadership is often viewed as conflicting with established norms of authority and responsibility. Moreover, in rural areas where adherence to traditional customs and patriarchal values tends to be stronger, women's involvement in decision-making processes is frequently marginalized or dismissed altogether.

According to data provided by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection in 2023, only 24 regions in Indonesia, or approximately 4% of the total, are currently led by female regional heads. At the village level, the percentage is similarly low, with only 5% of villages being led by female village heads (Biro Hukum dan Humas KemenPPPA, 2023). The lack of female leadership in village governments is not merely a matter of representation; it also raises concerns about the effectiveness and inclusivity of governance.

The absence of women in leadership roles may result in policies and programs that are less responsive to the needs of women and marginalized groups, thereby hindering social and economic progress at the village level (Howell, 2014). Furthermore, the male-dominant leadership structure may perpetuate gender biases in decision-making processes, limiting innovation and inclusivity in governance. Therefore, addressing the leadership gap is essential not only to promote gender equality but also to

enhance the performance and effectiveness of village governance (Brown, 2014).

This research seeks to spotlight the challenges and successes of women's empowerment at the village level by analyzing case studies from Gül Esin, one of the well-known female characters in Türkiye. It will examine the sociocultural barriers that women still encounter in addition to the part that governmental programs, non-governmental organizations, and legal frameworks play in promoting gender equality. The findings will contribute to our understanding of how village-level governance can be optimized to improve women's empowerment, particularly in the Indonesian setting.

With an emphasis on women's involvement in village governance in Türkiye and Indonesia, this study will look at the relationship between gender and local governance. The main focus will be on applying feminist political theories, including intersectionality and participatory feminism, to understand the challenges and opportunities faced by women in these professions. This study also highlighted Gül Esin best practices and lessons learned that can be applied in many contexts to support gender-sensitive governance.

The term of "women's leadership in village governance" describes how involved and influential women are in village-level decision-making (Antlöv et al., 2016; Sembiring et al., 2023; Tang, 2015). This covers both their official positions—such as village chiefs, or kepala desa in Indonesia—and their unofficial leadership positions—such as those they hold in local initiatives and community organizations. The topic covers the advantages and challenges faced by women in these roles, the impact of their leadership on the development of the community, and the wider implications for social justice and gender equality.

The patriarchal structures that have long excluded women from public life are challenged by the emergence of female leaders in village administrations (Bouzghaia, 2020; Tailassane, 2019). By taking on leadership roles, women can challenge and modify current structures, leading to more profound societal change. Turkish villages are significant in this comparison because, like many Indonesian villages, they have historically been shaped by patriarchal norms and traditional

gender roles. This can help with activism and policymaking in both nations as well as other settings with related problems.

This study offers three research questions, namely: 1) How does portraying the leadership roles of Gül Esin affect village governance in Türkiye? 2) How is Gül Esin's contribution reflected in Indonesian society? 3) How can analyzing women's leadership in Türkiye and Indonesia from a feminist political theory and participatory feminism perspective contribute to understanding the issue?

The novelty of this research lies in its dual focus on historical exemplars and contemporary practices of women's leadership at the village level. This research bridges past and present perspectives to demonstrate how historical breakthroughs can inspire contemporary efforts toward gender equality. By connecting this historical case to the present-day challenges faced by women in Indonesia, this approach also strengthens the application of feminist political theories, such as intersectionality and participatory feminism, by examining how historical and contemporary experiences intersect and contribute to the ongoing struggle for gender equality in leadership.

II. Methods

The research is mostly based on library research, which entails the methodical collecting and analysis of existing literature, records, and archival materials on Gül Esin's leadership, village governance, and gender studies in both Indonesia and Türkiye. This comprises academic publications, journal articles, government reports, and relevant legal papers which explored about the gender discussions in Türkiye and Indonesia. The qualitative research approach is ideal for exploring the complexities of social phenomena such as women's leadership in village governance—it allows for an in-depth understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by women leaders as well as the larger cultural and societal contexts in which these phenomena occur (Caretta & Riaño, 2016; Fine & Torre, 2019).

Thus, rather than treating the comparison as one between a single individual and multiple leaders, the study focuses on the principles,

strategies, and societal impacts of Gül Esin's leadership in Türkiye and contrasting it with the collective experience of women leaders in Indonesia. This research identifies shared challenges, such as patriarchal barriers and cultural constraints, as well as context-specific strategies that have enabled women to succeed in leadership roles. Additionally, it will add to the conversation on gender equality in governance by offering suggestions for laws and procedures that will increase the representation of women in village leadership. In order to examine women's involvement in village governance, the theoretical framework incorporates three primaries theory, namely 1). Leadership theories, 2). Participatory governance, and 3). Feminist political theory. The framework attempts to investigate how gender dynamics, state policies, and leadership styles impact governance outcomes in rural contexts by looking at the experiences of women leaders in Türkiye and Indonesia (Lamb et al., 2019).

III. Results and Discussions

A. Gül Esin: History and Her Contribution

Women in rural Türkiye were traditionally barred from formal village government responsibilities and kept essentially private. However, the government began pushing for modernization and secularization in the early twentieth century, especially when the Republic of Türkiye was established in 1923. These included improvements that aimed to strengthen women's rights. Even in rural areas, these reforms gradually began to modify public ideas about gender roles (Soylu & Ekmekci, 2024). For example, the introduction of mandatory schooling for females progressively raised the percentage of literate women, so enabling them to take a more active role in community conversations.

As the first female muhtar (village head) in Türkiye, Gül Esin is a notable figure in Turkish history (Karakuş & Çoksever, 2019; Şahin & Açıkalın, 2024). In the highly patriarchal rural Turkish society of the 1930s, she achieved a remarkable feat when she was elected in the village of Karpuzlu in the Aydın Province. She campaigned on issues that directly addressed the needs and concerns of the villagers, such as combating social problems like gambling and

promoting public order. Her practical approach and focus on improving local conditions gained her respect, including men who valued her leadership qualities.

Despite these advantages, Gül Esin faced significant challenges stemming from entrenched patriarchal attitudes and skepticism toward female leadership. As a woman seeking a leadership position traditionally held by men, she encountered resistance from those who believed that governance was exclusively a male domain. Understanding the factors that enabled Gül Esin's election and the challenges she overcame provides valuable lessons for contemporary efforts to enhance women's leadership, particularly in rural and patriarchal societies like those found in parts of Indonesia today.

Her election was especially significant because it took place before women in Türkiye were given full voting rights in 1934, making her a pioneer in the field of women's local government participation (Sarısaman, 2023). In this research, positioning Gül Esin as a historical lens helps to understand broader challenges and solutions.



Figure 1. Gül Esin's photograph. Sourced: Aydın Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi

The 1934 legislation providing women the ability to vote and run for office was a significant historical turning point for women's empowerment in village administration in Türkiye (Kaşıkırık, 2022; Soylu & Ekmekci, 2024). Despite being a nationwide reform, the effects of it varied depending on whether one was in an urban or rural setting. In rural places with well rooted patriarchal practices, women were slow to take on major administrative posts. However, in some villages, women began to be elected as Muhtar in the 1950s and 1960s, signaling a significant shift in local government. The historic Gül Esin election demonstrated the potential for women's empowerment in rural administration.

Gül Esin's story is directly related to the topic of women's empowerment through gender-based decision-making at the village level. Her participation exemplifies the value of women in leadership positions at the village level, since this can result in more equal and inclusive administration that considers the interests and perspectives of all community members (Şahin & Açıkalın, 2024). Her impact on women's emancipation, both practically and symbolically, is what distinguishes her, particularly in rural areas where traditional gender roles are strongly embedded. Gül Esin's election called these preconceptions into question, demonstrating that women may hold traditionally male-dominated leadership roles (Sarisaman, 2023).

Gül Esin contributed to the greater movement for gender equality in Turkey by taking on a traditionally male role. Her election signaled the beginning of a gradual transition in how society viewed women's responsibilities and skills. Although her position as a Muhtar came before women's suffrage was extended countrywide in Türkiye, it probably had an impact on the larger movement for legislative changes that allowed women to vote for public office. Gül Esin's success in overcoming societal barriers to become the village head was driven by a combination of personal leadership qualities, and community support. The legal changes, like the 1930 Municipal Law, gave women the right to vote and hold office, but Gül Esin also had to overcome cultural norms that excluded women from leadership. Kaşıkırık & Dokuzcan, 2022; Şen & Yavçan, 2022)

Gül Esin was able to shift the focus of village governance from economic and agricultural issues to social concerns like health and education due to several factors (Şahin & Açıkalın, 2024). First, the Turkish Republic's socio-political reforms encouraged a more progressive approach to governance, including women's participation. Second, Esin's personal vision emphasized the long-term benefits of investing in human capital, such as education and public health. Finally, her ability to gain community support by demonstrating the practical benefits of these changes allowed her to prioritize social well-being. This example can inspire Indonesian women leaders, to adopt a more holistic approach to governance, focusing the social needs of their communities.

This was a significant breakthrough because it demonstrated how women's leadership might introduce fresh ideas and goals to governance. Her efforts in public health and education undoubtedly motivated other women to take more active positions in communal affairs, whether via formal or informal ways (Karakuş & Çoksever, 2019; Sarisaman, 2023).

B. From Türkiye to Indonesia: What Should be Learnt?

The majority of village leadership roles in Indonesia have historically been held by men, which is a reflection of broader cultural norms that emphasize male leadership in public and political spheres (Syukri, 2021). The village government structure in Indonesia has undergone significant transformation since Law No. 6/2014 on Villages regulation went into effect, which is including selecting their own leaders and distributing funds. The law also quietly advances gender equality by encouraging women's participation in village government groups such as the Village Consultative Body (Badan Permusyawaratan Desa, or BPD) and in the creation and implementation of village development initiatives (Rinaldo, 2019).

Gül Esin's leadership in Türkiye demonstrated how women might influence village-level decision-making by placing a higher value on public health and education than on other issues, which were usually ignored in institutions of government where men predominated (Fine & Torre, 2019; Warner et al., 2018). In Indonesia,

rural women often make substantial contributions to communal decision-making but receive little recognition for them, particularly when it comes to issues of family and community welfare. The Village Law of 2014 is one of the strategies the Indonesian government is employing to attain gender equality; it encourages women to serve on village councils (Tang, 2015).

The experiences of women like Gül Esin and their Indonesian counterparts underscore the need for further efforts to eliminate institutional and cultural barriers that impede women's full participation in governance. Institutional barriers were initially addressed through legal reforms, like the 1930 Municipal Law, which allowed women to vote. Cultural barriers were more entrenched, as societal norms in rural Türkiye at the time viewed women as unsuitable for leadership. For Indonesian women, similar barriers exist, but Esin's example shows that overcoming these obstacles requires demonstrating leadership based on merit, not gender.

By reflecting on these shared experiences, we can better grasp the global reach of the struggle for gender parity in rural governance and extract lessons that might inform policy in Indonesia and Türkiye aimed at empowering women. What ultimately unites Türkiye and Indonesia in this context is the realization that women's empowerment at the village level entails more than just raising the proportion of women in the community—rather, it also entails changing governance to become more inclusive, responsive, and sensitive to the needs of all members of the community.

Women's participation in leadership roles remains a considerable barrier, especially in rural governance. Learning from Gül Esin's experience, participatory feminism can serve as a framework for enhancing women's participation in village administration. By accurately representing women as capable leaders, it can motivate young girls to pursue leadership roles. Highlighting women who have overcome such barriers can challenge these views and encourage more women in rural Indonesia to take on leadership positions.

Table 1. The contextualization of Gül Esin's leadership

No	Primary Cases	Contextualization
1	Breaking Cultural Barriers	Esin faced several traditional norms in rural Turkish society that restricted women's leadership opportunities. In this way, Gül Esin's success serves as a model for women contexts, where traditional gender roles may still restrict women's leadership opportunities. Similar to the traditional norms that Gül Esin overcame in Türkiye, many Indonesian villages still adhere to cultural practices that limit women's roles to domestic spheres.
2	Policy and Legal Reforms	Indonesia can take cues from Türkiye's early progressive policies that allowed women like Gül Esin to run for office. Ensuring that laws and policies not only permit but actively encourage women to take up leadership roles in village governance is crucial. The Village Law of 2014 encourages women's participation in village governance, but cultural norms, patriarchal attitudes, and socio-economic barriers still limit their leadership (Sembiring et al., 2023).
3	Intersectionality in Governance	Esin's leadership emphasized social well-being, addressing healthcare, education, and welfare dominated governance. Her success illustrates the importance of an intersectional approach, recognizing how gender, class, ethnicity intersect to create unique challenges for leaders. For Indonesian women in rural areas facing similar barriers, adopting an intersectional perspective can help them develop inclusive policies that address prioritize the needs of marginalized groups.
4	Educational and empowerment initiatives	One of Esin's significant impacts was her advocacy for girls' education, a critical factor in long-term empowerment. Esin could advocate for girls' education because of her position as a village head, which provided her with formal authority and a platform to influence local policies. This aligns with Indonesia's historical tradition of women leadership, exemplified by figures such as Raden Ajeng Kartini and other women leaders, who served as role models in their time.

Reflecting the table above, to cultivate a future of inclusive governance, it needs to encourage local initiatives where women can actively participate in decision-making processes, just as Gül Esin demonstrated in Türkiye. Some actionable steps are shown in Figure 2.

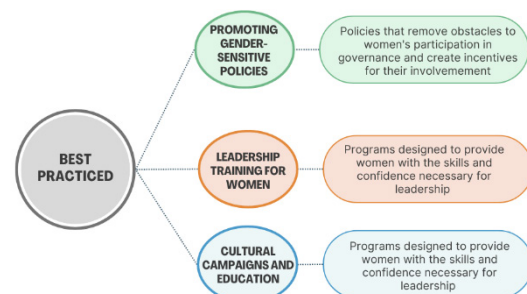


Figure 2. Gül Esin and The good-practiced for women empowerment

To successfully implement best practices like gender-sensitive policies, leadership training for women, and cultural education, several factors are needed. These include supportive legal frameworks, political will, and institutional commitment to gender equality. Programs must also be culturally adapted to local contexts, considering beliefs and values. Additionally, regular monitoring and evaluation are necessary to assess effectiveness, ensure accountability, and make improvements.

Gül Esin's leadership in Türkiye is an inspiring example of participatory feminism in action. For Indonesia, adopting these lessons and applying the principles of participatory feminism in village governance could lead to more inclusive, equitable, and effective leadership structures that uplift entire communities. Gül gained trust and support by demonstrating competence, engaging with the community, and addressing the immediate needs of marginalized groups. Indonesian women can learn from Esin's approach by focusing on community engagement, proving leadership through action, and being persistent in overcoming cultural and institutional barriers.

C. Gül Esin and the Analyzing from Feminist and Participatory Political Perspective

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those pertaining to gender equality (SDG 5) and decreasing disparities (SDG 10), depends on women's leadership in village administration. Villages can draft more sensible and successful development plans if they guarantee women's participation in the decision-making process (Kalbuana et al., 2022; Oksala, 2016). Social justice demands that women be given equal chances to take part in village government.

Previous studies have demonstrated that gender-diverse leadership can foster more cooperative decision-making processes, which can improve the results of governance. When it comes to making decisions, women are more likely to be inclusive leaders who ensure that all community voices are heard (Hudson et al., 2015; Kalbuana et al., 2022). Women in leadership positions can assist initiatives that specifically focus on the economic empowerment of women, such as microfinance, career training,

and entrepreneurship programs. Women who are prominent in positions of leadership are idolized by younger generations. This visibility could inspire more women and girls to pursue leadership positions and volunteer work in the community (Bhalotra & Clots-Figueras, 2014; Holman & Schneider, 2018).

According to previous research, when women participate in governance, the outcomes are typically more equitable and long-lasting (Afridi et al., 2017; Fine & Torre, 2019; Howell, 2014). Due to their long-term benefits for community development, women leaders are more likely to concentrate on problems like social services, healthcare, and education. Having them in leadership roles can help lessen corruption and increase local government accountability and openness. Village development plans are usually more inclusive and comprehensive when women are involved because they are often more attentive to the issues that underprivileged groups, including women and children, face (Frye, 2015). Gül Esin exemplified substantive representation through her leadership. She did not merely hold a position of power but used her role to address the unique challenges faced by women, making her leadership substantively meaningful (Collins, 2017, 2019).

In Indonesia's context, having women in leadership positions is not enough—those leaders must also work to advance gender equity. Substantive representation requires that women in village governance actively address issues such as gender-based violence and access to education (Aspinall & Rohman, 2017; Sembiring et al., 2023). Indonesian society can learn from Gül Esin's example by encouraging female leaders to not only hold office but also champion policies that bring about tangible improvements in women's lives.

In addition to these studies employ the theory of intersectionality. Term of "intersectionality" was first used historically by Kimberlé Crenshaw in her paper entitled, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex," to characterize the marginalization of black women's experiences in feminist and anti-racist discourses, which tended to emphasize the experiences of white women and black men, respectively (Aguilar, 2015; Al-Faham et al., 2019; Warner et al., 2018; Yuval-

Davis, 2016). Kimberlé Crenshaw created the crucial idea of intersectionality in feminist political theory in the late 1980s. It offers a paradigm for comprehending the ways in which different social strata—such as those based on sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, or class—intersect and interact to produce certain kinds of privilege and discrimination (Nash, 2016; Smooth, 2016).

The relevance of intersectionality to this study lies in its ability to provide a nuanced analysis of women's leadership within rural communities in Indonesia and Türkiye, where social identities are not experienced in isolation but are interwoven with various factors such as culture, religion, socioeconomic status, and regional context. This approach will help to formulate strategies that are not only gender-sensitive but also sensitive to other intersecting social identities that may impact leadership opportunities and outcomes.

According to the theory of intersectionality, people experience life via a combination of many identities rather than just one, such as gender or race (Alexander-Floyd, 2017; Brown, 2014; Davis, 2014). The complexity and multiplicity of discriminatory experiences arise from the combination and perpetuation of various repressive frameworks. (Laperrière & Lépinard, 2016). This theory highlights how several oppressions, including racism, classism, and sexism, are interrelated and cannot be examined in isolation (Nash, 2016). Experiences of discrimination are intricate and multidimensional due to the overlap and reinforcement of these oppressive systems.

Since its inception, intersectionality has expanded beyond the investigation of race and gender to incorporate additional dimensions of identity (Davis, 2014). In policy research, intersectionality is a tool used to investigate how different individuals are affected by laws and policies based on the intersections of their identities (Holman & Schneider, 2018). This outcome is in line with the urgent requirement that women take part in village-level governance.

Furthermore, this study has benefited from the participatory feminism theory, which highlights the need of engaging women in all levels of political decision-making (Afridi et al., 2017; Alexander-Floyd, 2017; Syukri, 2021). It encourages inclusive governance frameworks

that ensure women's ideas are heard and their contributions are recognized in both formal and informal political processes. In favor of a more egalitarian approach that shares authority, it rejects traditional, hierarchical forms of government that usually marginalize women (Jackson, 2018; Pertiwi et al., 2019).

Combining these two concepts provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing and promoting women's leadership in village governance; intersectionality ensures that the unique challenges faced by women from different backgrounds are recognized and addressed, while participatory feminism focuses on creating inclusive governance structures that allow these women to participate fully and equally. By using these concepts, we can identify the specific challenges faced by different groups of women in village government in Türkiye and Indonesia and come up with solutions.

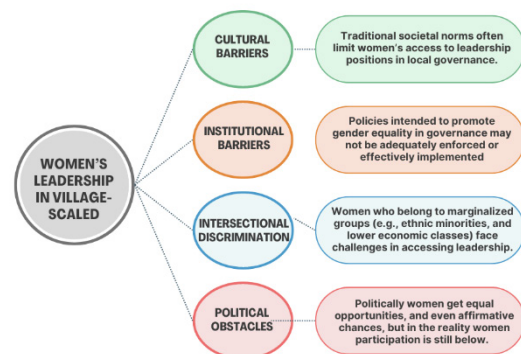


Figure 3. Women's leadership in village scaled and the various barriers.

Additionally, this study emphasizes state intervention and advocates for the state to have a more aggressive role in guiding economic development. This means regulating markets to preserve fair competition and prevent exploitation in addition to investing in infrastructure, healthcare, and education. According to the philosophy of new developmentalism, inclusive development is essential to guarantee that the benefits of economic advancement are dispersed fairly across all aspects of society (Bresser-Pereira, 2010). The argument backs up the claim that women's involvement in decision-making is

essential to make sure development strategies take into account the demands of every member of the community (Prillaman, 2023).

The experiences of Gül Esin, demonstrate how government-sponsored initiatives for empowerment can alter long-standing political structures and promote more inclusive development. Indonesian village government reforms have increased women's opportunities to participate in decision-making, yet there are still barriers standing in the way of gender equality (Mahmood, 2001; Nash, 2016; Sawer, 2014). The experiences of Gül Esin in Türkiye and the current battles in Indonesia for women's empowerment in village administration serve as a reminder of the potential and obstacles that women in rural leadership encounter universally in a variety of cultural and geographic situations.

Table 2. The contextualization of Gül Esin's leadership in Indonesia

No	Focusing Field	Contribution
1	Improvement of women's rights	Esin likely built a strong reputation within her community through her commitment to social issues such as child welfare, health, and education. Demonstrating practical benefits for the community likely earned her credibility and support.
2	Public health and social reforms	By prioritizing tangible issues that directly affected her community, especially women and families, Esin demonstrated her capability to address neglected areas of governance, which may have appealed to voters.

Regarding the political representation theory, which encompasses descriptive representation and substantive representation, these studies elaborate on the contribution of Gül Esin as well as her role from a political perspective. When applied to the case of Gül Esin, these theories help us understand her role as a groundbreaking figure in promoting women's participation in local governance. They posit that once women reach a certain threshold in leadership positions, they can begin to influence the political agenda, bringing attention to issues that uniquely impact women and the broader community.

A key lesson from Gül Esin's example is that even the presence of a single female leader can inspire broader change, encouraging other women to pursue governance roles. While the increased presence of women in leadership can create opportunities for greater inclusivity and

policy shifts, it is important to recognize that other factors, such as political will, institutional support, and broader societal attitudes, play a significant role in shaping policy outcomes.

IV. Conclusion

This study has investigated the significance of women's leadership in village administration, particularly in the contexts of Indonesia and Türkiye. The study employed feminist political theory, with an emphasis on intersectionality and participatory feminism, to show how intersecting identities such as gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class impact women's experiences in governance. It also demonstrated how crucial it is for women to participate in village decision-making processes and how their leadership fosters effective and inclusive governance.

In the case of Gül Esin, her leadership offers significant insights into how individual women can overcome longstanding societal and cultural barriers that typically limit their participation in governance and leadership roles. As a woman in Türkiye, Gül Esin navigated a traditional and patriarchal society that often restricts women's roles to the domestic sphere. Despite these constraints, Esin managed to break through these barriers through her active advocacy for girls' education, a cause that directly challenges gender norms and traditional cultural expectations. By championing the education of young girls, Esin not only worked to elevate their educational opportunities but also promoted the broader message of gender equality, helping to shift societal attitudes toward the role of women in public and political spaces.

Moreover, Esin's ability to confront and challenge these deep-rooted cultural norms is a crucial aspect of her leadership. While many women may face societal pressure to conform to the established roles defined by tradition, Esin's example shows that one woman's determination can serve as a catalyst for broader societal change. Her leadership exemplifies how a single individual's actions, especially when combined with a clear purpose and advocacy, can begin to shift collective mindsets and inspire others to follow suit. However, Esin's example illustrates that overcoming these limitations is possible,

especially when women have the tools and support to challenge traditional expectations.

The primary emphasis of this research is village governance in Türkiye and Indonesia, which may restrict the applicability of the findings to other nations with distinct socio-political situations. The research may not fully examine all potential intersections, even while it uses an intersectional lens to analyze the overlapping identities (gender, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic position) of women in leadership roles. Related to the policy framework recommendation, more comprehensive policies that support gender equality in village governance should be developed and implemented by the Indonesian government.

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