

**BESSH-16****Perceived Barriers toward Women Participation in Managerial Positions in Higher Education Institution (Evidence from Indonesia)**Herri<sup>1</sup>, Nikita Maarty<sup>2</sup>, Rebi Fara Handika<sup>3</sup><sup>1, 2, 3</sup> *Andalas University, Indonesia*

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**Abstract**

This study aimed at exploring the barriers that were perceived to be obstacles to the advancement of female lecturers in managerial positions in Higher Education Institutions (HEI). The issues were investigated through a qualitative study in Andalas University - one major university in Sumatra region, Indonesia. An in-depth interview with lecturers who hold managerial position designed to explore their perception toward obstacles that hinder women lecturers to participate in managerial position. The analysis revealed two general factors that prevent female lecturers being promoted to managerial position: external and internal factors. External factors defined as outside influences that can become obstacles for women and internal factors refers to the personal way of thinking, behavior, and attitude of women that might impact their decision.

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*Keywords*— Women, Managerial Position, Leadership, Higher Education Institutions (HEI)

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**Introduction**

In order to successfully achieve their goals, organization needs to maximize the utilization of their resources. Human resource as one of main resources in organization plays an important role in determining organizational success. Human resource Management (HRM) can help the organization to determine the best people that suitable in certain job and position to achieve organizational goals. Through HRM practices organizations can maximize the talent utilization that available inside them, including gender diversity management and career development. With those practices organization can achieve their goals well because it will provide benefit for the both side, organization and their people.

In higher education institution, teaching is the main product of organization so it is requires the organization to hire professional educator to provide best learning experiences in its university. In the other hand, to compete with another university, organization needs to be managed by professionals who understand the internal and external aspects of its university.

Women, their number of participation in higher education has dramatically increased. They have been participating mainly as students, faculty members, and support staff at higher educational institutions (Mohajeri, Mokhtar and Balash, 2015). Catalyst (2013) reported that women earn nearly 60% of all bachelors and masters degrees and 50% has doctorate degrees and Morley (2013) also added that the undergraduate enrolment of female students now exceeds than their male peers. But their research showed that the number of women is not fairly proportioned in the top administrative positions as compared to men. It means, although the amount of women as the students and lecturers has increased over the time. Also, even their level of education can show their competencies to manage the university, the women still less participated in administrative position in level of faculty and university management.

Several studies show that women in higher education institution hold fewer leadership positions than men (Madsen and Cook, 2010; Ryan and Haslam, 2011). The under-representation of women in senior management positions within Educational Institutions continue to be a matter of concern, particularly as the teaching force is largely dominated by women (Cubillo and Brown, 2003). Hoobler, Lemmon, and Wayne (2011) pointed out that highly qualified and experienced women may not apply for the upper-level positions. As a result, the organizations lose the opportunity to capitalize the skills and talent of a portion of their workforce.

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In Indonesia, the proportion of women entering work place especially those who work as civil servants in state offices is increasing. Based on Central Agency on Statistics (BPS) year 2015, the number of female civil servants shown an increasing trend from year to year. In 2011 the number of civil servants among men and women is almost equal (51% : 49%). The increased number of women civil servant is an effect of the implementation of government rules and laws on gender equality. But in fact, almost all echelon positions in all departments are dominated by men (69.4%) while women have only 30.6 % (BPS, 2014). At the higher education institution (both state and private universities), girls constitute 50.35 percent of students (Kemdikbud, 2012). These statistics summarize that women and men are attaining almost equal levels of education and structural position. Furthermore, this also points to a hopeful future of gender gap in the workplace can be reduced and women can gain participation in managerial position in many sectors. However, there is little documentation of the experiences of female academic 'leaders' in higher education institution in Indonesia, particularly within Andalas University – A major university in Sumatra region that is located in Padang, West Sumatra.

The management of university consists of one Rector and four vice Rectors that responsible for a certain area: Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, Finance and Employee Affairs, Student Affairs, and Vice President for Development and Cooperation. All faculties in Andalas University has one Dean and three vice Deans and each faculty commonly has more than one department headed by the Head Department and Secretaries whereas in charge of the day-to-day operation within the department.

All lecturers in Andalas University can be given additional duties as Rector, Vice Rector, Dean, Vice Dean, Head and Secretary of the Department. In order to be promoted to higher level of management, lecturers must fulfill various requirement such as has several years of prior managerial experiences in upper mid-level position, has been educated in doctoral degree and preferred to hold the Professor title for Rector candidate and master degree for Dean and vice Dean candidate. All of these candidates will be selected and approved by University Senate Members. (UNAND, 2013)

For the past years, the top leaders position in the university dominated by men. According to university data base-Lecturer List of Position (2015), most female lecturer at least hold master degree and has middle-to-high administrative grade in civil servant stratification and they even took their study outside Indonesia in order to support their career path. So it can be seen that although women possess the requirement to hold a managerial position, they still have less participation in such position. Cannella and Hillman (2007) support this condition in their previous study, they stated many female lecturers are very competent in their field, but women remain significantly underrepresented at the top of the corporate hierarchy.

Davies (2011) stated that when women are so under-represented on corporate boards, companies are missing out, as they are unable to draw from the widest range of possible talent. Evidence suggests that companies with a strong female representation at board and top management level perform better than those without and that gender-diverse boards have a positive impact on performance (Davies, 2011). It means, in order to obtain high quality output, all actors inside and outside the institution should be involved and to build a good relationship among the community of university requires a good way of managing people and other resources. The new concept of effective leaders, for example transformational leadership (Avolio, Bass, Berson, and Jung, 2003) which emphasizes the empowerment of employees, has broadened women's opportunity to be hired as leaders. The reason behind this assumption is that women's leadership styles have transformational characteristics, such as caring, supporting, loving, gentleness, or simply being good listeners (Blackmore and Sachs, 2000). These characteristics are beneficial for the development and for the establishment of good relationships with the community. Thus, from this good relationship will emerge a better university environment which will affect the performance of students (Blackmore and Sachs, 2000).

By engaging more women with their unique managing styles in middle-level management or top positions in higher education institution, it would be expected that the output of university would be improved. However, from the data of university shows distribution of male and female lecturers in all faculties almost had similar number, but female lecturers has low numbers participation in faculty management. So, this study tries to explore what are the perceptions of academic administrators toward barriers hinder female lecturers to participate in managerial positions.

## Materials and Methods

### *Literature Review*

#### *Managerial Position in Higher Education Institution*

According to Moore and Sagaria (1982), the administration of higher education institution at least divided into 3 areas: (a) academic leadership position, (b) student affairs, and (c) administrative affairs. Academic leadership position includes position such as: Rector, vice Rector, and academic Dean, and head of department. In this study, the

managerial position in higher education refers to faculty and university administrator such as Rector, Vice Rector, Dean, vice Dean, and head of department.

Gardner explains leadership as ‘the ability to influence – either directly or indirectly – the behavior, thought, and actions of a significant number of individuals’ (as cited in Leon and Jackson, 2009). The real issue in leadership differences lies in the equity in selecting the right person with the appropriate skills and qualities to ensure the effectiveness and success of the organization (Bass and Avolio, 1994 as cited in Avolio, Bass, Berson, and Jung, 2003).

Spendlove (2007) illustrates that the attitudes and behaviors for an effective leadership in higher education tends to lean more towards people-oriented than task-oriented. However, Pounder (2001) found that the styles of leadership that reflects a combination of transactional and transformational dimensions may be most effective in providing the university with the flexibility it needs to make subsequent changes. New systems of management that emphasize behaviors such as nurturing and caring, interpersonal sensitivity and preference for open and cooperative relationships, have been advocated as the most effective response to change in an organization’s environment (Colwill and Townsend, 1999). Nevertheless, based on the previous literature, the traits and behaviors of the leader are determining the effectiveness of the leadership, in all organization sectors.

#### *Gender Gap in Managerial Position at Higher Education Institution*

In higher education area - both in teaching and management - women are still a long way from participating on the same place as men. Women have made some progress in achieving parity in teaching but are grossly under-represented in higher education management (UNESCO, 2002). Women are being appointed at the lecturer level but often get stuck at that level or dropped out from academic level, because they unable to combine family and academic commitments (UNESCO, 2002).

The leadership and management composition of universities is highly skewed in favor of men (Obura, Wamahiu, Bunyi, Chege, and Njoka, 2011 as cited in Xiu and Tommie, 2014). The gender imbalance in higher educational institutions is spotlighted by the dominance of men in most senior decision-making positions (Seshamani and Shalumba, 2011) and only a very few women hold senior academic administrative positions (Lie, Malik, and Harris, 1994 in Murniati, 2012). Cited in UNESCO workbook, Dines (1993) summarized research findings from different countries (West Africa, Arab States, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, the South Pacific, Peru, the United States, the Caribbean, Finland and France) on the status of women in higher education management and factors hindering their participation in higher education management. She observed that country after country, women held less than 50% of academic and administrative posts in higher education institutions. Representation varied between about 10 and 20 % at middle management level and from 0 to 10% at senior management level.

Women are systematically, through institutional culture and structure, eliminated from frontline leadership and management posts, and placed to middle management positions (Xiu and Tommie, 2014). Additionally, for women who achieve senior leadership and management positions, professional and institutional factors may intersect with gender that mostly hinder their progress (Healy, Bradley, and Forson, 2011) by exploiting their low self-perceptions, entitlement and worth (Valian, 2005).

Lie and Malik (1994) stated that in many Asian countries, numerous obstacles such as the revival of fundamentalism and radical Islam, economic crises, and political turmoil hamper the government’s effort to address gender inequality and prevent women from fully exercising their rights (as cited in Murniati, 2012). Consequently, woman obscured into background positions where they are less visible and underrepresented in top management position.

Scholars have identified a number of explanations for why women have difficulty in achieving high level leadership posts including: heavy workload at the workplace, political appointment, family demands draw excessively to jeopardize performance, lack of confidence among women, world male dominance, lack of experience (Onsongo, 2004); poor self-image, lack of assertiveness, less career orientation, poor performance, discrimination (Mathipa and Tsoka, 2001); lack of support from mentors, and recruitment problem (Gaus, 2011).

#### *Barriers in the Participation of Women in Managerial Positions*

Güney, Gohar, and Akinci (2006) explain several typical assumptions about women in the workplace like: Firstly, women work for supplemental income; as a result, they lack the necessary drive to succeed in business. Secondly, women tend to place family demands above work considerations. They have children to care for; thus, they lose time for, and interest in their jobs. Thirdly, women take negative feedback personally rather than professionally. Lastly, women are unsuitable for top management positions because they are too emotional and lack aggressiveness.

In this research, the researcher tends to focus on feminist theory, which is appointed 3 perspectives that might become possible barriers for woman to advance their managerial career in higher education: Personality factors, Socio-cultural factors, and Institutional factors (Cubillo and Brown, (2003); Bond, (1996); Smulders, (1998); Neidhart and Carlin, (2003)).

#### *Personality Factors*

According to Bond (1996) and Smulders (1998), they found that the first perspective is person-centered in which the paucity of women is attributed to the psycho-social attributes, including personality characteristics, attitudes and behavioral skills of women themselves. The problem focused on the individual and she adapted traditional-male-concept within the academy. Among personal factors are lack of self-esteem and self-confidence, limited aspiration in the field of management, lack of motivation and ambition to accept challenges to advance their career, the paradigm regarding woman's low potential in leadership, being less assertive, less emotionally stable and lacking ability to handle a crisis.

Neidhart and Carlin (2003), they suggested that some women in management carefully assess career decisions due to their own values and beliefs. For these types of women, the obstacles were not lack of confidence, but rather than they prioritize what is really important to them personally. Another individual barrier is directedness. Women are generally more concerned about how they are perceived by others in their group.

Other individual barriers found by Cubillo and Brown (2003) includes: the tendency among women to avoid where they risk facing criticism or receiving negative feedback; fear of failure and hence a reluctance to voice their opinions; excess responsibilities and fear of conflict and loneliness; self-doubting; and a different (feminine) style of management.

#### *Socio-cultural Factors*

Smulders (1998) explores the culture-centered approach which links gender centered and organizational structure perspective. Her analysis is concerned with the social construction of gender and the assignment of specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations to women and to men. Higher education institutions reproduce gender differences via their internal structures and everyday practices because of the cultural perceptions which determine the attitudes and behaviors of individual men and women and form barriers to the equal participation of women in senior management. She concluded that cultural paradigm will influence the subordinates, colleagues, and other individual involved in the organization about the participation of women in managerial position.

Neidhart and Carlin (2003) also indicates about women's identities and roles have traditionally been associated with parenting and caring, while men's have been associated with paid employment as well as becoming public and industrial managers. The socialization process shaped men and women to implement respective and different roles. Added by Livingstone and Pollock (2004), domestic duties that women are still expected to do for their families take more time and energy than men. He adds these situation become disadvantages for woman when they are seeking opportunities for advanced education and career advancement.

Cubillo and Brown (2003) explained socio-cultural barriers refer to entrenched hegemonic cultural traditions of a region or country that women are generally required to follow. These cultural expectations often put women in a disadvantaged position compared to men in trying to advance their careers. Apart from family responsibilities, women are also required to follow particular cultural traditions imposed by the society in which they live. For example, in a study on how women's career paths and opportunities are shaped by the intersection of cultural values and structures, and legal systems of the state in four countries in South East Asia, Luke (2000) found that Asian values or Asian culture promotes a specific concept of femininity. The stereotype ideal of women's roles is as dutiful wives, mothers, and homemakers (Stivens 1998a, b, cited in Luke 2000). As a result, women have to perform an 'Asian sense of what it means to be womanly' or else 'you will lose face' (Luke 2000).

According to Setiadarma (2003), the challenge for Indonesian women now is quite different. Women struggle more in cultural and domestic activities rather than in the political domain. Limited opportunities in the labor force can be horizontal (type of work) and vertical (possibilities for reaching the top). There are still very few women who hold important positions such as Dean of a faculty or president of a university. There are several factors which hinder the advancement of a woman's career in higher education. In addition to the socio-cultural factors, people generally believe that men are considered superior to women, providing the necessities of life, thus to work outside the home. On the other hand, it is generally accepted that women are managers at home, serving their husbands and children. As a result of these norms, men have far more opportunities than women in many cases. From the literature in Indonesia also explained about women representation in leader position from the view of culture. For example, in the culture of

*Minangkabau* – local tribe in west Sumatra - describe the position of women which is called *Bundo Kanduang* – Mother - as the leader of *Rumah Gadang* – traditional house - not in the institution itself (Idris, 2005).

#### *Institutional Factors*

Bond (1996) defined the third perspective is structure-centered paradigm which could increase the point of view of disadvantageous position for woman in organizational structure (few numbers, little power, and limited access to resources). The underlying premise of this perspective is that men and women are equally capable and committed to assuming positions of leadership. But in fact, he still found that the structure itself still maintain the behavior of inappropriate discrimination toward woman. Among structural factors may be listed: discriminatory appointment and promotion practices; male resistance to women in management positions; absence of policies and legislation to ensure participation of women; and limited opportunities for leadership training and for demonstrating competence as a result of the power structure in the workplace.

As well as Neidhart and Carlin (2003), they mentioned about institutional or organizational barriers which include: entrenched cultures and norms; the way power is defined and exercised; selection procedures; lack of appropriate mentor schemes; exclusion from informal networks; failure of senior leaders to assume accountability for women's advancement; job requirements; facilities; organizational climate; and placement. The cultures of organizations have been shaped by men (Neidhart and Carlin, 2003), which means the culture considered men are more experts than female.

Cubillo and Brown (2003) said that the teaching profession is dominated by women; but despite the large numbers of women in the profession, they are greatly under-represented in positions of management. The common belief is that women need to be trained up to the level of men, arguing equal opportunities training, rather than value what they bring to organizations. Teaching has traditionally been seen as a "suitable" job for women; unfortunately, it has not been easy to get rid of this role assigned on them and to enter into the perceived "masculine" world of leadership. The problem that most aspiring women school leaders encounter is not the lack of rights to earn those positions but the access given to them.

Based on the finding from Parry and Sinclair (1996) as cited in Gaus (2011), the less participation of women in top position of administrative roles, especially at higher education is caused by intrinsic factor of the system of Indonesian society. A male-dominated society has created a gendered social life for women. The traditional assumption of effective leaders was born from the masculine criteria of leadership and feminine characteristics are seen as ineffective styles in leadership roles. Men described their leadership qualities by ignoring the uniqueness of women's leadership styles, which has been proven to be more effective when used as a new way of managing people.

#### *Methodology*

This research tries to explore social phenomenon that happened in public educational institution, especially in Andalas University. Therefore, qualitative research method was selected as research design. By using qualitative research, the researcher can interpret human perception and understanding regard to the topic (Stake, 2010).

In qualitative studies, only small sample of individuals, groups, or events are invariably chosen (Sekaran, 2003) because it enable the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of participant experience and to develop a thick, rich description of that experience (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009, as cited in Mason, 2010). Therefore, the sample of this study comprised 11 representative lecturers who hold the positions of vice Rector, Dean, vice Dean and head of department of all faculties in Andalas University, as the people who understand and already experienced becoming a lecturer and academic administrators. Both male and female academic administrators were included as informant for this study in order to avoid gender bias in the perception toward this topic. Further, to collect the data the researcher conducted direct interaction through individual in-depth interview and applied open-ended question. The data was analyzed by using qualitative software, Atlas.ti. To analyze the information, the researcher used open coding technique, which the phenomena will be categorized as the attribute of dimension (Adnan, 2014). The most repeated words gathered from informant was used as the code and categorized to significant themes. Several codes like family, experience, norms & beliefs, motivation & confidence, women's personal characteristic, found as the most repeated words in all interviews. Then, the code was sorted into several categories, for example external and internal factors. From the Code Families, the researcher build themes and select important quotations (particular sections from transcriptions) and it presented interesting ideas of informant's perception toward female in managerial position within higher education.

## Results and Discussion

### *Research Result*

The informants of the study consist of 11 academic administrators (5 male and 6 female) from varied management level including, head of department, vice Dean, Dean, and vice Rector. All of the informants have been married. Their educational background ranged from master degree to doctoral degree, most of them obtained the degree in Indonesia and several obtained it overseas.

Through an in-depth interview with 11 informants, by questioning about the proportion of women participation in structural position within the University, most of the informants claimed that the participation of woman still has low number for both faculty and university level. Meanwhile, the rest of them argued that many women got fairly comparable proportion with men in structural position, proved by the increasing tendency in financial division. But still, the people who hold structural position in University are dominantly male. Here, academic administrators explained their perception about the low participation rate of woman that caused by several influences, which will be categorized through the themes bellows:

### *Family is a Key Obstacle in the Advancement of Women's Careers*

All the participants in this study explained that one of the most challenging aspects of woman lives was trying to balance the personal and professional roles. At home, women were primarily mothers and wife. They were in charge of all domestic duties. At work, these women were both lecturers and administrators that handled varied responsibilities. Based on their point of view, all of them claimed that family well-being would always be the priority in woman perception. For example, when the interviewer asking about factors affecting passive participation of woman, one of our informant mentioned that:

“Women have to deal with the time at home such as doing household and also at the office by doing her responsibility towards academic work, despite women’ moral responsibility will be more at home. When the children was sick, the moral responsibility of women will shows, she will take care of their children first rather than take care of their job, that caused the institution or organization were forced to apologize her. After all, I believed that woman won’t sacrifice her time in an institution if it would jeopardize the condition of her household, because there are too many consequences will come up if she left her family behind, such as the children education will be displaced.”

Other informant also explain why the proportion of women in university management has small number compared to men, she explained that:

“It may cause by several factors such as the nature of women itself, although she is a lecturer, she is also the housewife, taking care of their family and children. If women placed as a leader in an institution, it may take a lot of time to share her time between family and her career. Unless, when there will no family priority and everything has settled, for example their children already grown up, there is a tendency of women want to pursue her career on campus. Sometimes, in my work environment, many female colleagues were appointed to be a head of department or faculty, but they avoid or reject it because of their time for family could be decreasing, even they are capable for that position, they still prioritized her family.”

But when the researcher asked about the barrier hinder women to participate in managerial position, several informants stated that:

“As the female vice Dean, I felt really lucky because my family gives all support for my career in campus and household responsibilities are shared for each other.”

Another stated that

“I had enough time to accomplish my duties at workplace because my children already grown up, my career was supported by my husband and also all of my family are well educated so they can understand with my decision to develop my career.

### *Woman's Personal Characteristics Hinder the Opportunities to Advance their Managerial Position*

When we talk about the woman's personal traits, it will be based and also concerned with family affairs. Woman can be described as the person who has multiple roles in their life and that situation makes her personality and behavior more complicated to be understood. When woman tries to advance their career, they has many consideration regarding to her personal life and their future career, which is makes them seems slow in taking a decision and incapable to lead an institution. The most commonly characteristic among woman is their way of thinking that prefers emotional feelings. For example, the informant explained:

“The nature of women tend to be emotional and has a higher emotional sensitivity than men, it proved when woman hold leadership position, there is a tendency of talkativeness, emotional, and in a hectic situation they cannot be consulted, whereas those expected people who suitable in top managerial position is people who calm under any circumstances, remains calm in any problem. Most in reality, woman will show her temper in front of other people cannot control their anger, which can cause a mess mental-situation to her.”

Other informant compares the way of thinking of male and female. He said that:

“Men do something with calculation. Meanwhile, women brings more her feeling. In performing tasks, as well as to advance their career, women better to put feelings behind, like family problems”

In the other side, regarding to personal traits of women, several informant disagreed that men often use rational than women. The informant stated that:

“I am a rational person and being too rigid in many ways. Women have a maternal instinct, I am not only concerned with rationality, but tried to approach the people with motherly touch. Only in certain contexts, women use emotional feelings that makes process becomes longer.”

Another informants also added, they believed the essential aspect that should have by academic administrators is their skills of managing the existing resources, the ability to handling emotional-stability and able to work professionally, not depend on gender. But most women have too many considerations in deciding their personal interest, so the chance for them to achieve potential career passed. In sum, these informants believed both family and career could be well-balanced.

#### *Lack of Motivation and Confidence Prevent Woman' Willingness to Participate in Managerial Position*

Basically, woman has many potential to be positioned in leadership position. Most of the informant mentioned about woman competencies in some aspects, in terms of their highly educational background, both from Indonesia and overseas university, the decision-making skills, and their dedication to the institution. But in fact, woman often felt did not confident when deciding to participate in structural position like Dean, Vice Dean or Head of Department because of some aspects that make her motivation to participate decreasing. One informant stated that:

“As a female vice Dean, I really eager to move forward my career development, but there is no need to achieve something extraordinary. For lecturers, it is better to gain more lecturing experiences and a structural position only an additional duty. “

Other also added:

“In my faculty, many potential female lecturers do not want to participate or being chosen in structural position, they are not really interested to join in. Sometimes, some of them feel uncomfortable in workplace because her mind stuck at family thing.”

Other informant stated:

“When job characteristic and job responsibilities are too heavy, women are less motivation in accomplishing their duties and cannot work properly.”

Meanwhile, one informant explained that:

“The most important aspect for participating in management system is the willingness of the people itself. For leadership, there is no difference between men and women, but clearly, female lecturers had less time to join in routine activities in the faculty because they are more concerned to go home after lecturing. During that time, there are lots of opportunities provided by an institution but women makes mental-blocking by their own. To overcome these obstacles, women need to establish some networking, because in a leadership of institutions, one cannot be a single fighter in doing something. Even though we are a senior lecturer, professors or top manager, people would not be willing to help if we do not have a good relationship. So, if one have good partnership and networking, participate in non-routine activities, people definitely pursued that kind of people become someone who capable to lead this institution.”

#### *Norms and Belief Affect the Mindset of Audience and Women in Attaining Managerial Positions*

In Indonesia, most of the population is dominated by Moslem. Moslem believes the term ‘leader’ should be represented by men, because Islam already mentioned it in the literature (QS. An-Nisa [4]: 34). As well as in Indonesian culture, especially in *Minangkabau tribe* in West Sumatra. The position of women in *Minangkabau* tribe is categorized in domestic role such as educating children, as the owner of *Rumah Gadang* (tribe house) and collecting treasure heritage. These concepts already passed in so many years which it could influence the future condition of woman leader candidate.

Almost all male informants in this research discussed about the influence of religion and cultural understanding towards woman leader and they clearly described each idea with some example, like:

“Based on the Islamic literature, woman has limited space and their places are not in the public sector, domestic precisely. So as the leader, it is better to choose male as a leader. There is a social perception, women still never equal to men because of the basic perception that women has to be in domestic (household) sector only. One example, if a girl decided to be a career woman, her household will be neglected.”

One informant also revealed about public's point of view regarding to the appropriateness of women become a leader.

“As Cultural Study lecturers, I see most people still refuse to be managed by woman, religious beliefs already mentioned it in Al-Quran that only man can become the leader for woman. Some people still do not allow women to participate in activities related with organizational and career development. For cultural aspect, in *Minangkabau*, woman has an authority in *Rumah Gadang* and treasure heritage, but their role is only at domestic sector, while in public sector is handled by male. Even if woman should participate in structural, yet in this modern leadership, woman could be placed in domestic style profession, like financial department, because some people considered woman is more accurate and diligent compared to men.”

Several informants explained that, as a female academic administrator, they still heard several stereotyping about impropriety of woman in holding structural position. There are people preferences, which are audiences still like male to lead an institution. Audiences already have stigma within themselves to choose men because they generally have a paternalistic cultural tendency, as long as male candidate still available, the audience will prefer males as top manager. The informants described that some male lecturers assumes women are too weak and has not feasible if positioned in managerial. Because of her emotion, woman will take too much time to decide urgent things and cannot stand to hard punishment and those audiences believes that male has greater time available compared to women.

Differently, there is one informant stated that:

“As a female vice Dean, I believes leaders are supposed to be a men. Personally, I did not have an ambition to become a top leader, because as a woman we have to respect the man. I agree that the nature of women to serve men.”

The statement also supported by other informant:

“I agree that our eastern culture generally uses paternalistic system, and the patterns of leadership in Indonesia are believed that men are more competent, has more ability, and have plenty of time to become a leader, which it means Indonesia' leadership tendency is prefer to men. Thus system makes the audiences habitual to choose men as a leader of the country and community. Also, somebody that should be going to work is a man in *Minangkabau tribe*, women just take care of *Rumah Gadang* (tribe house) and keeps treasure heritage.”

#### *Poor Work Experiences of Woman within and Outside the University Influence the Preference of Audiences*

Lecturers in Andalas University can be given additional duties as Rector, Vice Rector, Dean, Vice Dean, Dean, Head of department, Secretary of Department, etc. Following Unand's statute, the election of structural position is consists of 2 types of requirement; general requirement and specific requirement. The requirement includes have a managerial experience at least 2 years as a Head or Secretary of Department, at least hold Master degree, had occupied Lectureship and has a good work assessment for the last 2 years. The audience who will choose those candidates is their colleague, a lecturer. They will form an election committee, take a vote, and give valuation of compliance for each requirement.

Mostly, the informants of this study gave an audience' point of view, which were claimed women are not yet fulfill the requirement being in managerial position. Several of the informants stated that:

“Most female lecturers are not really engaged to build good networking with colleague in order to reach a super-team, this behavior makes woman got low potentiality to achieve managerial position because their outcomes are not proved yet by others.”

“The audiences still doubt with women's credibility to manage the organization, because they afraid those women cannot give her full-time to the job, which is makes the opportunities for advance their career become lower.”



“Some women were not elected in top managerial because of people cannot see her success and capacity so far, in term of the outcome in her faculty. Further, the relationship with the people (student and another lecturers) in her environment are also influenced audience’ preferences.”

“Lack of competencies and experiences of women hinder them to participate in structural position, according to the choice of people.”

### *Discussion*

From the analysis, several themes that explained before can be grouped into two main factors, external and internal factor. The external factor defined as an outside influences that become the barriers for female lecturer to participate in managerial position. Meanwhile, an internal factor described as the reactions of personal behavior of women that will affect their decision to certain aspects. The explanation as follows:

#### *External Factors*

##### *Norms and Belief Affect the Mindset of Audience and Women in Attaining Managerial Positions*

The results indicate that female academic administrator have some traditional beliefs regarding women’s roles, career interests and opportunities. Both male and female informants discussed about the socio-cultural understanding that might influenced the audiences and women itself as to be participated in managerial position. According to Setiadarma (2003), Indonesian women struggle in attaining managerial position because people generally believe that men are more superior to women, as the result, men has more opportunities in many cases. In West Sumatera, the *Minangkabau* culture already described the position of women which called *Bundo Kanduang* as the leader in *Rumah Gadang* (Idris, 2005). In Islamic literature also stated that man should be the leader for woman. It means, many people believe that woman’s place is limited, which is make the audiences doubt to choose women for top managerial and middle level management.

From the finding in the informant explanation, the proportion of women in managerial position in Andalas University is influenced by norms and beliefs of the people within the institution. Most of informants agreed that women are much suitable in domestic sector, which refer to household activities. Because of Indonesia’s leadership tendencies preferably choose male for doing work and to lead an organization, the perception of those norms developed into one idea of preferences, which is someone who should actively participate in management is man and women should give first priority to the family. Instead, in higher education institution, women are not discriminated in continuing their study and advancing their management career, but as long as she does able to divide her time and separate between job and family problem, the opportunities are widely open. Clearly, when it is related with the social perception about women, researcher found some informants wanted fair opportunity between male and female to be promoted in management level by suggesting women to be positioned in financial department, it will be more appropriate because they are used to handle domestic activities and more capable than men in that area.

##### *Family is a Key Obstacle in the Advancement of Women's Careers*

When looking at the action and perception among informants, female informants showed more tendencies towards family than male informants. As a lecturer, it cannot be denied that they are also as a housewife in her family. Those multiple roles made them hard to advance career in university management, since most women won’t sacrifice her time in the workplace if it would harm their family life. Proved by Livingstone and Pollock (2004), women take more time and energy in handling domestic duties than men, this situation become disadvantages for women when they are seeking opportunities to continue study and advance their career.

The results indicate that having developing family and little children makes an impact for career advancement for female lecturers. When asked, half of the female informants change their career goals in order to balance family and work. But, it’s different if the family got settled and children are grown up. There is a tendency for female lecturers to achieve their targeted career. The time available for family also one of the consideration for female lecturers, when women unable to separate work time and family problems, it will disrupt her performance and the outcome of the organization. One of the informant realized the importance of encouragement from family, many women cannot well-balanced her career and family life because they got lack of motivation from their relatives. As the result, most women unable to join in career development activities because were considering her household activities.

##### *Poor Work Experiences of Woman within and Outside the University Influence the Preference of Audiences*

Because the product of its organization is teaching activities, so level of education of educators is really important to support the performance of the institution. Also, to participate in the management of the university, there is some qualification that should be fulfilled by candidates, such as work experiences.

Based on the result of informant's perception, these experiences concluded into several ideas; education and managerial experiences. Stated by Lahti (2013), education is one of the key factors for women to better their possibilities to be leaders. Fortunately, female lecturers in Andalas University educated from different universities both inside and outside Indonesia, also many of them took master and doctoral degree in European universities. But in terms of management skills, people still doubt that women potentiality in structural position.

In the managerial skills, the ability of female lecturers in building good networking is not shown by others that influenced from their passive participation in non-routine activities inside and outside the university. When someone try to influence and convince other people to follow him/her, that shows their leadership capabilities, but many female lecturers do not take that relationship as the opportunities for advancing their career because she think the core responsibilities is lecturing. We know, with good management skills, someone can get used to work under pressure and able to work in teams, yet most female lecturers rarely proved her competencies in management area. Furthermore, according to Statute of Unand (2013), the expected managerial experiences to becoming Dean, vice Dean or even Rector should be at least 2 years along with minimal education level is master degree, but most female lecturers tend to focus on continuing her studies and did not take some opportunities to participate in structural position, while considering the heavy workload that could come if they join in structural. As a whole, even their level of education already high, it is not guarantee their competencies in management area is good enough. Aspects that determine the competencies in management is their experiences in that area, whereas most female lecturers in Andalas University still has less participate in those experiences.

#### *Internal Factors*

##### *Woman's Personal Characteristics Hinder the Opportunities to advance their Managerial Position*

Most of the informants revealed about some characteristics of women that could hinder them to participate in managerial position. Those personality can be turn into good and bad characteristic, it depend on the situation and how well they could control those characteristics. Several personal factors justified by Smulders (1998) are lacking ability to handle a crisis and less emotionally stable. While in this study, those characteristics found as the one of the reason why women have less participation in attaining managerial position.

Based on the summary of the informant's perception, women indeed has higher emotional feeling than men and precisely they do not want to be bothered with many problems, but sometimes it bothered in certain condition. When women deal with decision-making situation, the process becomes longer because she takes too much time and considerations. Also, there is a tendency of talkativeness and high tempered emotion, sometimes cannot be controllable. Besides, as the leader, many women are too sensitive in accepting critic and suggestion from other people. The researcher concluded those characteristics could disadvantage the women herself and the people around them, as for developing good relationship among university or faculty member cannot be maintainable.

Some informants argued that, women has 2 ways in approaching her people, not only by emotional but also could be her rational thinking, even it takes longer time. Otherwise, as the women who had maternal approach, they are considered as the wise negotiator and a peacemaker who will be useful in leadership area. In sum, informants hoped women could work professionally by putting high emotional characteristics behind if they want to be accepted in the workplace environment.

##### *Lack of Motivation and Confidence Prevent Woman's Willingness to Participate in Managerial Position*

The result of the interviews found the willingness of most female lecturers to participate in structural position is very low. They had been provided and being facilitated to higher education as the basic to develop her career, in terms of lecturing and to help improving the outcomes of university, but reluctant to help in management. Cited in UNESCO work book (2002), Singh (2000) reported that in a workshop conducted for women in higher education management in Malaysia, the participants in the workshop identified disabling personal factors that prevent women to participate in managerial position. Several factors included: women's less assertiveness or aggressiveness, lack of personal conviction and unwillingness to express opinion.

There are several perceptions regarding to the motivation and confidence to women participation in managerial position. The researcher found the intention of most female lecturers only in teaching activities because they has no passion in management area, even being forced by another faculty members they thought the job characteristic and responsibility are burden them. It means, female lecturers in Andalas University still has low self-confidence and has no desire to move forward for her career development. Because of that situation, the chance to be promoted in structural position is also decreased. Moreover they were pleased with their comfort zone and do not obtained some motivation from their relatives. Some informants suggested women to have some fighting spirit and eagerly involve in organization activities, as the opportunities are available in many sectors. The researcher concluded that female lecturers in Andalas University got lack of internal and external motivation to participate in structural position, which

is their ambition is only for teaching and household activities and the external motivation like aspiration from another female academic administrators were less provided by the institution.

### Conclusion

This research is a qualitative study that conducted to analyse the perception of academic administrators in HEI about possible barriers that hinder female lecturers to participate in structural position, especially in Andalas University – A major university in Sumatra region, Indonesia. The data used in this research are primary data collected through a direct interview to the informants. There are several important things that can be concluded from the research. First, related to proportion of female lecturers in managerial position. Most of the informants in this study claimed that women participation in structural position, both in faculty and university management level has lower number than men. Male lecturers are still dominantly hold middle management (vice Dean) and top managerial position (Dean, vice Rector, Rector). But female lecturers have more participation in lower level of management like Head and Secretary of Department. Second, related to barriers hinder female lecturers to participate in managerial position. There are two general factors that prevent female lecturers being promoted to managerial position: external and internal factors. External factors defined as outside influences that can become obstacles for women, including norms and belief, family, and poor work experience. The internal factors related to the personal way of thinking, behavior, and attitude of women that might impact their decision including personal characteristics and lack of motivation and confidence. Third, there are several strategies to overcome the lack participation of female lecturer in managerial position like: institution should more aware and appreciate the competencies of female lecturers in managerial position by providing good environment and facilities to encourage their participation, such as mentoring and training program. Besides that, female lecturers need eagerness and realize their ability to develop their career.

The limitations of the research is the study only focused on the perception of academic administrators toward barriers hinder female lecturers to participate in managerial position in one university. So, the findings of this study were not representing the situation of female lecturers in other university. Scope of this study only focused on middle-high level management of academic administrators. Thus, the results were not representing the perception of lower level academic administrators and non-academic administrators.

For future research, researcher can disseminate more informants by collecting data and information from several level of position in order to develop new perspectives. Combining both quantitative and qualitative analysis also can be used to produce an accurate and comprehensive description and explanation without any verbal bias from the respondents. There are more variables that become barriers for women to participate in managerial position and it still need to be explored, like job characteristics. In the end, future research can choose other higher education institutions setting, so the results can be compared.

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## APPENDIX

Table 1:  
*Summary of Informants Personal Background*

Name	Gender	Marital Status	Educational Background	Position	Managerial Experience
Informant 1	Male	Married	Master degree, Indonesia	Vice Dean	-
Informant 2	Female	Married	Master degree, Indonesia	Vice Dean	Secretary of Department
Informant 3	Female	Married	Master degree, Indonesia	Head of Department	Secretary of Department
Informant 4	Female	Married	Master degree, Australia	Head of Program	-
Informant 5	Female	Married	Doctoral degree, Indonesia	Vice Dean	Secretary of Department
Informant 6	Male	Married	Doctoral degree, Indonesia	Vice Dean	Head of Department
Informant 7	Male	Married	Doctoral degree, Indonesia	Vice Dean	Head of Department
Informant 8	Female	Married	Master degree, Indonesia	Vice Dean	Education Coordinator of Department
Informant 9	Male	Married	Doctoral degree, Indonesia	Vice Dean	Secretary of Postgraduate Program
Informant 10	Male	Married	Doctoral degree, Malaysia	Vice Rector	Vice Dean
Informant 11	Female	Married	Doctoral degree, Australia	Dean	Head of Postgraduate Program