

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF MINAHASA WOMEN IN SOCIAL, POLITICAL,  
AND EDUCATIONAL CONSTRUCTION**  
**“A Socio-Historical Study on the Role of Maria Walanda Maramis”**

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**Abstract**

The research examines the contributions of Maria Walanda Maramis, a prominent Minahasan woman, in shaping social, political, and educational frameworks in early 20th-century Indonesia. Despite her significant role in advocating for women's rights and education, mainstream historical narratives often overlook her contributions. This study explores her influence on the emancipation of Minahasan women and the broader socio-political development in the region. The research employs a qualitative ethnographic method, collecting primary data through interviews, observation, and secondary sources from literature and internet searches. The findings highlight Maria Walanda Maramis's leadership in founding PIKAT, an organization focused on women's empowerment through skills training and advocating for women's political rights. Her efforts in education and advocacy not only contributed to gender equality but also laid the foundation for the women's emancipation movement in Indonesia. The implications of this study underscore the need for a deeper acknowledgment of local female figures in national development narratives, offering insights into the role of women in the democratization process and their ongoing influence on contemporary issues of gender equality and social change.

**Keywords:** Maria Walanda Maramis; Minahasa; Women's Education; Women's Empowerment; Gender Equality

**Introduction**

In the postmodern era, like today, society in the Minahasa region, North Sulawesi, faces the challenge of competing and mastering science and technology as a response to rapid changes. This often marginalizes national identity and mentality issues, including social, political, and educational values. Although success has been achieved in many aspects, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, continues to underline the importance of the Mental Revolution as a program to strengthen awareness of national values and to appreciate the services of heroes (Kaunang, 2017).

However, in North Sulawesi, especially in Minahasa, the neglect of remembering local figures and heroes, including Maria Walanda Maramis, is clearly visible. Maria Walanda Maramis, a Minahasan woman who played a role in the national independence struggle, is often forgotten in academic discourse as well as in formal or informal activities related to the commemoration of heroes. Names such as Sam Ratulangi, Mr. A.

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A. Maramis, and Arnold Mononutu are more frequently mentioned, while the contributions of Maria Walanda Maramis rarely receive attention. This shows that there is an urgent need to revive the role and contribution of Minahasan women, especially the role of Maria Walanda Maramis, in building social, political, and educational structures. Maria Walanda Maramis, also known as Maria Josephine Catherine Maramis, lived and was active in an era when Minahasa was undergoing transformation due to colonialism and Christianization. She is someone who must be mentioned in the history of the struggle for the liberation of Minahasan women from the hegemony of feudalism and the new class structure, as well as the claim for civil rights, namely Maria Walanda Maramis. She was not only a fighter for emancipation and an early modern education figure who boldly broke through the culture of female domestication and the new feudal system established by the colonialists in Minahasa—but also a figure of the liberation movement and social transformation that had a broad impact on the democratic order in Indonesia. She was one of the Minahasan female figures who played a significant role in fighting for women's rights and building her community. Together with the women's organization she founded, PIKAT, Maria Walanda Maramis became a phenomenal figure in the context of colonialism. Through PIKAT, Maria Walanda Maramis and her fellow women upheld modern ideals and fought for issues such as education, health, and women's political rights.

Although many writings have discussed the role of Maria Walanda Maramis and PIKAT, their focus is often limited to her contributions in the fields of education and health. These writings have not fully explored colonialism as the backdrop of Maria Walanda Maramis's life and her struggle in establishing PIKAT and fighting for women's political rights. Colonialism itself remains a part of the traumatic memory for the present generation, and its treatment in history is often ambiguous. Although it brought radical changes to society, the fact of colonialism also triggered the emergence of awareness of justice, equality, and independence, which in turn gave rise to various forms of resistance. Even though Maria Walanda Maramis was one of the female figures who bravely challenged injustice and actively fought for women's rights as well as advancing the education sector in Minahasa, her contributions and influence are often forgotten in the broader historical narrative. Therefore, this research aims to delve deeper into the role of Maria Walanda Maramis and other Minahasan women in shaping social values, political dynamics, and the development of the education system in the region.

The spirit of struggle inherent in Maria Maramis, along with her role and contributions, is intriguing to study and re-examine in order to uncover global-mondial as well as local socio-cultural factors that influenced her life and struggles. This is essential to determine whether there is a correlation with the lives of people in Indonesia's democratic era today and to explore the relevance of Maria Maramis's struggles and ideas in the context of contemporary female socio-political leadership—particularly in responding to access and participation in society as part of the democratization process in Indonesia, especially in North Sulawesi.

Through a deeper understanding of the socio-historical role of Maria Walanda Maramis, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to preserving and narrating the important historical legacy of women in local community development. Thus, this study will not only fill a gap in historical literature but also provide valuable inspiration and lessons for building a more inclusive and sustainable future for the Minahasan society.

Therefore, through this research, we aim to explore in greater depth the contributions of Minahasan women, particularly the role of Maria Walanda Maramis, in shaping social, political, and educational structures in the region. Our study will trace Maria Walanda Maramis's struggles in a historical context and how they influenced the construction of social, political, and educational frameworks in Minahasa. Thus, this research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of history and the role of women in local community development, as well as its relevance within a broader global social and political context. This research also aims to investigate Maria Walanda Maramis's role from a socio-historical perspective, with a focus on her contributions to the social, political, and educational structures in Minahasa. By gaining a deeper understanding of the role of Minahasan women in history and the development of society, politics, and education, we can appreciate the rich cultural and historical heritage while broadening our insight into the role of women in creating significant changes across various aspects of life.

In Indonesian historical discourse, the contributions of local female figures like Maria Walanda Maramis have often been overshadowed by more widely recognized male figures. Despite her pivotal role in education, politics, and women's rights in the Minahasa region, her legacy remains largely marginalized both in public memory and academic literature. This limited recognition underrepresents the social and political impact she had during the colonial period—a time when societal structures actively suppressed women's roles beyond the domestic sphere.

Maria Walanda Maramis fought not only against patriarchal norms but also challenged colonial domination through educational and political empowerment of women. While she founded one of the earliest women's organizations in Indonesia—PIKAT—and played a key role in advocating for women's suffrage, her contributions are often confined to brief mentions in history textbooks. There is a pressing need to uncover the depth of her work, especially as a lens through which we can better understand local resistance movements, gender empowerment, and the formation of modern Indonesian civil society.

The urgency of this research lies in the necessity to reclaim and recontextualize the narratives of female leaders in Indonesia's socio-political development. Amid growing awareness of gender equality and inclusive historical narratives, the story of Maria Walanda Maramis offers a timely and empowering perspective on how local cultural values and female leadership contributed to national progress. Her legacy provides a valuable model for contemporary female empowerment movements, especially in regional communities that still experience gender disparity.

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Previous studies focused on Maria Walanda Maramis' contribution to women's education, highlighting her efforts to promote household and health education through PIKAT. These works underline her role as an advocate for women's welfare, but they tend to isolate her from the broader socio-political transformation in Minahasa during colonial times.

Watupongoh (2018) and Tanjung & al. (2018) Explored the formal education efforts of Maria Maramis and her influence in securing women's voting rights. However, their studies are mostly descriptive, lacking a critical lens on how her actions intersected with colonial resistance and the transformation of local governance systems.

Pinontoan (2022) deepens the discussion by contextualizing Maria's struggle within colonialism, showing how her organization was a form of resistance. However, his analysis still centers on her leadership alone, rather than considering the collective agency of Minahasan women and the evolving gender dynamics within the local socio-cultural setting.

While earlier research acknowledges Maria Walanda Maramis' contributions, it rarely situates her activism within her time's complex colonial, cultural, and gendered tensions. There is a lack of in-depth, ethnographic analysis examining how her work catalyzed systemic social, political, and educational transformations for elite women and those in rural Minahasa communities.

This study offers a unique contribution by employing ethnographic methods to analyze Maria Walanda Maramis's role not only as an individual actor but also as a symbol of broader female mobilization in the Minahasan community. It connects her legacy to contemporary gender equality issues, regional empowerment, and identity reconstruction within Indonesia's democratization process.

The primary objective of this research is to explore Maria Walanda Maramis's socio-historical contributions to constructing the social, political, and educational frameworks of Minahasa, thereby understanding her influence in promoting women's emancipation and her enduring legacy in contemporary Indonesian society.

This research contributes to a richer, more inclusive historical narrative highlighting regional female figures' roles in national development. It can serve as an educational resource, inspire future policy frameworks in gender and education, and support cultural revitalization efforts that celebrate local heroes as models of progressive leadership.

### **Research Method**

This study employs a qualitative ethnographic research method, which is particularly suitable for exploring the cultural and historical context of the Minahasa ethnic community through the lens of Maria Walanda Maramis's legacy. Ethnography, as described by researchers, is deeply rooted in the immersive observation and interpretation of naturally occurring behaviors within a specific social group. In this research, the ethnographic approach allows the researcher to capture the lived experiences, values, and social norms of the Minahasa people in their natural setting—Tateli Village, Mandolang District, North Sulawesi.

The data collection methods used in this research reflect the key principles of ethnography, involving both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was obtained through direct observation and in-depth interviews with members of the Minahasa community, offering firsthand insights into cultural practices, perceptions, and historical narratives. Secondary data was gathered through literature reviews and internet searches, which provided broader context and academic framing for the field findings. These diverse sources enriched the researcher's understanding and interpretation of the socio-cultural dynamics surrounding the role of Maria Walanda Maramis in Minahasan society.

To analyze the collected data, the researcher adopted a standard qualitative data analysis technique as proposed by (Sugiyono, 2019; D. Sugiyono, 2018; M. Sugiyono, 2015; P. Sugiyono, 2017), which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. This systematic process helped to refine and focus the data into meaningful patterns, allowing the researcher to draw valid conclusions about the cultural and historical contributions of Minahasa women. The ethnographic approach captured the observable actions and delved into the meanings and symbolism embedded in community practices, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the Minahasan socio-political landscape from a historical and gendered perspective.

## **Results and Discussion**

Based on the results of a literature study on Minahasan women, particularly through the figure of Maria Walanda Maramis, it was found that Minahasan women have played a crucial role in shaping social, political, and educational aspects. In this context, it is essential to understand how Maria Walanda Maramis's contributions impacted her era and laid the foundation for future generations of women in Minahasa and Indonesia in general.

Maria Walanda Maramis, as a pioneer, founded the organization Percintaan Ibu Kepada Anak Temurunya (PIKAT). This organization was not merely a platform but also a movement focused on women's empowerment. Through the training programs conducted by PIKAT, Minahasan women were taught various practical skills, ranging from handicrafts to cooking and sewing. These training sessions not only enhanced individual capabilities but also had a positive impact on family and community well-being. For instance, women previously confined to household tasks could produce goods for sale, allowing them to contribute financially to their families. This significantly transformed societal perceptions of women's roles. A community that once viewed women solely as homemakers began to recognize them as agents of social change with the potential to contribute to community development.

This shift in perspective did not happen on its own. Maria Walanda Maramis actively engaged in campaigns to educate society about the importance of women's roles. She utilized various methods, such as seminars and discussions, to disseminate ideas on women's empowerment. Through these efforts, she successfully created collective awareness among Minahasan women that they had equal rights and responsibilities in

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building society. Thus, Maria Walanda Maramis was the founder of an organization and a leader who could inspire and motivate women to take on more active roles in social life.

In the political sector, Maria Walanda Maramis's contributions were highly significant. At that time, women did not yet have the right to vote, but she did not allow this to hinder her struggle. Through the media, particularly the newspaper *Tjahaja Siang*, Maria Walanda Maramis voiced the importance of education and the role of women in public decision-making. In her writings, she argued that education was the key to raising political awareness among women. She emphasized that women should be involved in discussions and decisions that affect their lives. In this way, she planted the seeds of political consciousness among Minahasan women and encouraged them to participate in the political process, even without the right to vote.

Maria Walanda Maramis's visionary ideas became an inspiration for many Minahasan women. She demonstrated that despite the restrictions imposed by a patriarchal society, women could still fight for their rights. Through her writings and campaigns, she successfully paved the way for women to participate more actively in politics and governance. This was particularly important in regional development, where women's perspectives were often overlooked. By educating women on the importance of their involvement in politics, Maria Walanda Maramis contributed to forming a more aware and empowered generation of women.

In the field of education, Maria Walanda Maramis's contributions cannot be overlooked. She recognized that education was a powerful tool for women's emancipation. Therefore, she worked to open various learning opportunities for Minahasan women. Through her initiatives, many women gained access to formal education, which might have been previously out of reach. This education was not limited to basic schooling but included skills training relevant to societal needs. For instance, she encouraged women to learn about health and nutrition to contribute to improving their families' quality of life. In this way, Maria Walanda Maramis focused on academic education and practical and applicable learning.

The legacy of Maria Walanda Maramis's struggle became the foundation of the Minahasan women's emancipation movement. She paved the way for women in her time and laid the groundwork for future generations to continue the fight. The impact of her efforts can still be seen today, as Minahasan women are increasingly active in various aspects of life, both locally and nationally. For example, many Minahasan women now hold leadership positions in various fields, from politics to business. They have brought women's voices into decision-making spaces that men previously dominated.

In conclusion, Maria Walanda Maramis's role as a Minahasan female figure shaped social, political, and educational aspects. Through the PIKAT organization, she empowered women to contribute to the well-being of their families and communities. In politics, she fought for women's rights through the media, encouraging them to be more active in decision-making. Meanwhile, in education, she created learning opportunities for women, enabling them to improve their quality of life. All these efforts and struggles had a significant impact during her time and served as an inspiration for future generations

of women to continue the fight for emancipation and equality. Thus, the legacy of Maria Walanda Maramis remains alive and continues to exert a positive influence on the lives of Minahasan and Indonesian women as a whole.

## **Discussion**

### **The Role of Minahasan Women in Social Construction**

Minahasan women play a highly significant role in the social construction of their community, which is reflected in various aspects of daily life (Manembu, 2017b, 2017a; Tindangen et al., 2020). In the egalitarian Minahasan culture, women not only hold equal status with men but also actively contribute to social, economic, and cultural activities. Concepts such as *tetendean* (a place to lean on), *kasende* (a dining companion), and *siesa* (a soulmate) serve as important symbols demonstrating that the role of women in Minahasan society is inseparable from broader social life. For instance, in the context of *tetendean*, women often function as a refuge for family and community members, showing that they are the pillars that uphold social well-being.

Furthermore, the concept of *kasende* illustrates the harmonious relationship between men and women while sharing meals, which represents a profound form of social interaction. This signifies that women are not merely providers of food but also play a key role in strengthening relationships among community members. In many traditions, Minahasan women also hold vital roles in rituals and customary ceremonies, where they often serve as organizers and executors of events, ensuring that cultural values are preserved and passed down.

Minahasan women are also known for their active involvement in environmental preservation through the tradition of mutual cooperation known as *mapalus*. In this practice, they collaborate in various activities such as constructing irrigation channels, opening agricultural land, and developing community infrastructure (Handayani, 2023; Liando et al., 2020; Pesik et al., 2022; Samuel, Aldiano F et, 2018; Tumoka et al., 2020; Wayan Arini, 2015). For example, in irrigation channel projects, women are not only involved in digging and arranging the channels but also in planning and organizing these activities. This demonstrates that they possess valuable knowledge and skills in maintaining the sustainability of natural resources and improving the quality of life within the community.

During the colonial era, Minahasan women demonstrated resilience and resistance against the patriarchal dominance brought by the colonizers. One important figure in this history is Maria Walanda Maramis, who fought for women's rights, particularly in the field of education. Through her efforts and dedication, Maria successfully inspired many women to pursue education and restore gender equality in society. By increasing access to education for women, she not only paved the way for a new generation but also changed the way society viewed the role of women in everyday life.

Furthermore, Minahasan women showed active participation in governance and village development. Many of them held leadership positions at the local level, where they were involved in decision-making and community development efforts. For

example, in several villages, women have successfully attained positions as village heads or council members, allowing them to influence policies and programs that directly affect the lives of the community. This affirms that Minahasan women are not only supporters but also key drivers in the process of development and social change.

These contributions confirm that Minahasan women play a crucial role in building and maintaining the social construction of their community. They are agents of change who contribute not only in social and economic aspects but also in the preservation of culture and the environment. Through various initiatives and active participation, Minahasan women have proven that they are an integral part of society that cannot be overlooked.

In conclusion, the role of Minahasan women in the social construction of their community is complex and multidimensional. From cultural concepts that emphasize gender equality to active participation in environmental preservation and resistance against patriarchal dominance, Minahasan women demonstrate that they are the main pillars of society. By acknowledging and valuing their contributions, we can better understand the importance of women's roles in building a more just and sustainable society.

### **3.2.2 The Role of Minahasan Women in Political Construction**

Maria Walanda Maramis played a crucial role in the political reconstruction of Minahasan women in the early 20th century. Amidst a society dominated by patriarchal norms, Maria emerged as a courageous and visionary figure. She founded the organization Percintaan Ibu Kepada Anak Temurunnya (PIKAT) in 1917, which not only served as a platform for enhancing women's education and skills but also as a medium for advocating women's rights in social and political contexts. Through PIKAT, Maria sought to empower Minahasan women by providing training in various household skills and basic education. This effort was particularly significant at the time, as education for women was still considered taboo and irrelevant by many circles.

The skills taught in PIKAT encompassed various aspects, ranging from sewing and cooking to basic knowledge about health. These training sessions were not merely intended to improve women's abilities in carrying out domestic duties but also to equip them with knowledge applicable to daily life and beneficial to society. For instance, training on health and nutrition was highly important, given that family health largely depended on the role of women as household managers. Thus, Maria not only imparted skills but also instilled awareness of the crucial role women play in maintaining the health and well-being of their families.

Maria was also actively engaged in writing articles for local newspapers, an effective means of disseminating progressive ideas regarding women's roles. In her writings, she voiced the importance of education for women, emphasizing that education is the key to improving family welfare and, more broadly, society. She encouraged women not to be content with traditional roles but to explore their potential in various

fields. Through her writings, Maria successfully reached a wide audience and fostered awareness of the importance of women's emancipation within Minahasan society.

One of Maria's greatest achievements was her success in advocating for women's voting rights in the election of members of the Minahasa Representative Council in 1921. At that time, political access for women was highly restricted, and many doubted their ability to participate in politics. However, Maria persistently proved that women had the capacity to be involved in decision-making processes that affected their lives. Through her struggle, women's suffrage was not merely a symbol but also a recognition of their capabilities and contributions to society.

The granting of voting rights was a significant step in increasing women's representation in the local political sphere, which had previously been dominated by men. Through her contributions, Maria paved the way for Minahasan women to become more involved in politics. This also became a momentum for women in other parts of Indonesia to begin fighting for their rights. Maria's influence was not limited to Minahasa but also inspired the women's emancipation movement across Indonesia. In a broader context, her struggle reflected the spirit of the era that demanded social and political change, where women began to take active roles in various aspects of life.

Maria Walanda Maramis' influence on the women's emancipation movement in Indonesia cannot be overlooked. She became a symbol of women's struggle to obtain their rights and to be recognized as an integral part of society. Through PIKAT, Maria not only created a space for women to learn and develop but also encouraged them to speak up and take action. In many ways, PIKAT became a pioneer for other women's organizations that later emerged in Indonesia, also focusing on women's empowerment and education. Maria Walanda Maramis also served as a bridge between tradition and modernity. She valued the traditional values within Minahasan society but also encouraged women not to be confined by those limitations. By prioritizing education and empowerment, Maria helped women take on stronger positions in society without having to abandon their cultural identity. This was a highly wise approach, as she understood that sustainable change had to be carried out in a way that respected local wisdom.

Maria's contribution to the political reconstruction of Minahasan women was also evident in the way she motivated younger generations to engage in social change. She often conveyed the message that the future of women was in their own hands and that they had the power to change their destinies. This message was highly relevant, especially for young women seeking their identity and role in society. By providing inspiration and support, Maria successfully instilled a fighting spirit among young women to continue striving to achieve their dreams.

Ultimately, the legacy left by Maria Walanda Maramis is immensely valuable. She was not only a pioneer in education and women's empowerment but also a figure who inspired many to fight for justice and equality. Through PIKAT and various other initiatives, Maria paved the way for women to participate in various aspects of life, including politics. Her contributions were not only felt in Minahasa but also throughout Indonesia, where the women's emancipation movement continues to grow.

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Maria Walanda Maramis' journey in advocating for women's rights in Minahasa in the early 20th century is a true testament to strength and courage. Through the establishment of PIKAT, skills training, writing articles, and fighting for voting rights, Maria left a profound mark on the history of women's struggles in Indonesia. She not only opened the door for women to engage in politics but also inspired generations of women to continue fighting for equality and justice. The legacy left by Maria will always be remembered and serve as a source of inspiration for many in the pursuit of women's emancipation and empowerment in the future.

### **The Role of Minahasan Women in the Construction of Education**

Minahasan woman Maria Walanda Maramis was a highly influential figure in the field of education, particularly in advocating for women's rights in Minahasa in the early 20th century. In her view, education was not merely a tool for acquiring knowledge but also the key to enhancing the role of women in a society that was still highly patriarchal at the time. By founding the organization Percintaan Ibu Kepada Anak Temurunnya (PIKAT) in 1917, Maria demonstrated her commitment to women's empowerment through education, focusing on household skills, culinary arts, and family financial management. Through this approach, Maria aimed not only to equip women with the skills necessary to be competent homemakers but also to enable them to serve as educators who could instill good values and knowledge in their children.

Maria Walanda Maramis understood that formal education for women at that time was still considered a low priority. With great determination, she fought for the importance of formal education through PIKAT. Within this organization, Maria introduced various training programs designed to enhance women's skills and knowledge, enabling them to contribute more significantly to society. For instance, in the culinary program, women were taught not only how to cook but also how to manage food resources efficiently and healthily. This was crucial because, in addition to providing practical skills, the education also instilled awareness of the importance of health and nutrition for their families.

Maria was also actively writing articles in local media, advocating for the importance of women's involvement in education as agents of social change. In her writings, she elaborated on how educated women could become pillars of both the family and society. She provided concrete examples of how women with good education were able to educate their children to become high-achieving individuals. In other words, women's education was not just an investment for the individual but also for future generations. Through her writings, Maria successfully inspired many women to pursue education and participate in various social activities.

Moreover, Maria Walanda Maramis played a significant role in expanding access to education for women from lower economic backgrounds in Minahasa. She recognized that many women from underprivileged backgrounds lacked opportunities for a proper education. Therefore, through various training programs organized by PIKAT, Maria provided opportunities for women from diverse social backgrounds to develop their skills

and actively participate in public life. For example, PIKAT held training sessions in sewing and handicrafts, which not only enhanced women's skills but also provided them with opportunities to generate additional income.

Maria's efforts in expanding access to education for women from lower economic backgrounds became a crucial foundation in fostering collective awareness that education is a right that should be equal for all genders. She believed that education could change destinies and improve the quality of life for women, enabling them to contribute more significantly to society. Through her various initiatives, Maria Walanda Maramis planted the seeds of change that profoundly transformed society's perception of women's roles in education.

Maria Walanda Maramis' contributions to education in Minahasa were not limited to the establishment of PIKAT but also encompassed various efforts to raise awareness of the importance of education for women. With a holistic approach, Maria successfully demonstrated that education is a right that must be fought for by all, regardless of social and economic background. Through education, women can become influential agents of change within their families and communities, creating a better generation and a more progressive society. Thus, the legacy left by Maria Walanda Maramis will always be remembered as a pivotal milestone in the struggle for women's rights in Indonesia, particularly in Minahasa.

According to Mahmud et al. (2015), the social environment plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's character through interactions and prevailing societal values. Social environment education aims to provide an understanding of cultural diversity, social interaction patterns, and group dynamics within a society. This is essential in fostering collective awareness and a sense of responsibility for the sustainability of culture and social values in the face of globalization. Maria Walanda Maramis was one of the prominent female figures who significantly contributed to the construction of social, political, and educational structures in Minahasa in the early 20th century. In the social sphere, Maria recognized the importance of empowering women through the organization she founded, *Percintaan Ibu Kepada Anak Temurunnya* (PIKAT), in 1917. This organization focused on developing women's skills, particularly in culinary arts, household management, and family health, with the aim of creating women capable of supporting family and societal well-being on a broader scale. Maria's efforts were not confined to the domestic sphere but also extended to cultural transformation, providing greater opportunities for women to actively engage in social life (Anjani et al., 2019).

In the book *Politik Pendidikan*, Tamin & al. (2019) and his colleagues explain that politics plays a strategic role in determining the direction of educational policy in a country. Educational politics encompasses the planning, implementation, and evaluation of educational policies aimed at creating an inclusive and high-quality education system. In this context, politics also serves as a tool to address social and economic inequalities through equitable access to education for all societal groups. In the political sphere, Maria Walanda Maramis became a pioneer in advocating for women's political rights in Minahasa. She fought for women to be granted the right to vote in elections, and her

struggle bore fruit in 1921 when women were granted the right to participate in the election of members of the Minahasa Representative Council (Tanjung & al., 2018). This was a crucial step in opening opportunities for women to take part in political decision-making. Maria also utilized local media to advocate for the importance of women's participation in public life, positioning education and political involvement as two mutually reinforcing elements.

Sutirna (2022), emphasizes the importance of education as a tool to build critical awareness in society. Social environment education not only teaches students about environmental and social issues but also encourages them to become active agents of change in their communities. By understanding social dynamics and environmental problems, individuals can contribute to sustainable development focused on collective well-being. In the field of education, Maria was acutely aware that education is the key to building a better society. Through PIKAT, she provided informal educational access to women, especially those from lower economic backgrounds. Additionally, she advocated for the importance of formal education for women so they could become independent individuals and compete with men in various fields of life. This effort not only raised collective awareness of the importance of women's education in Minahasa but also created a model that inspired other regions in Indonesia.

Maria Walanda Maramis' contributions in the social, political, and educational spheres had a significant impact on improving the position of women in Minahasa. Her struggle not only changed the community's view of the role of women but also laid an important foundation for the women's emancipation movement in Indonesia.

## **Conclusion**

Maria Walanda Maramis played a crucial role in advocating for women's education in Minahasa during the early 20th century, a time when societal norms confined women to the domestic sphere. As the founder of the *Percintaan Ibu Kepada Anak Temurunnya* (PIKAT) organization, she not only provided skills training like sewing and cooking but also fought for women's access to formal education. These initiatives aimed to boost women's self-confidence, independence, and economic empowerment. Through programs such as sewing training, women could generate additional income, improving their financial status and that of their families.

Maria's efforts to establish educational opportunities for women faced societal skepticism, but her perseverance led to the creation of schools accepting female students. Her advocacy not only changed the societal view of women's roles but also became a cornerstone for the women's emancipation movement in Indonesia. Education became the foundation for gender equality, enabling women to participate in various aspects of public life, including politics and the economy. Maria's leadership and vision inspired future generations, empowering women to pursue higher education and professional careers. Her legacy remains a powerful reminder of how education can drive social change and promote equality.

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