The Success of Women's Participation in Resolving Conflicts in Liberia

Dewi Masitoh

Master of Political Science Departemen, Faculty of Social and Political Science Diponegoro University
dewimasitohlty117@gmail.com

Abstract: *The Civil War that occurred in Liberia has been going on for a long time, where there are two rebel groups, they are: Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL). Both of these rebel groups have caused gender inequality in Liberia continuously, especially women who have been victims of this war. However, with the efforts and participation of women from Liberian society, the war was successfully reconciled without creating violence. This research is aimed at realizing that women are not only victims of gender inequality, but can also be 'agents of change' in creating peace and better change for the future of a country. This research will use qualitative research methods, that emphasize the observation and understanding of a social phenomenon, where data is collected through secondary data and literature review. This research will analyze the case using three concepts: Feminism, Gender Equality, and Peace. The research concluded that there have been several efforts that have been made by women to resolve conflicts in Liberia by creating and building peace sustainably so that peace can be stable for a long time. The efforts that have been made by Liberian women are by creating several organizations and affiliations, they are: Woman in the Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET), Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET), Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL). This long-term peace can improve gender equality in several sectors of Liberian society, such as the economy and political sectors that are getting better and more effective from year to year.*

Keywords: women's participation, conflicts, movement, democracy, liberia

Introduction

The Liberian Civil War has been going on for fourteen years from 1989 to 2003. The Liberian Civil War was one of the bloodiest wars in the history of the African region. This war was divided into two parts, they are: first, from 1989 to 1997 and second, from 1999 to 2003 (Rashed, 2019).

In this research will be more focus on Liberia's Second Civil War, from 1999 to 2003. In this Civil War there was a group of rebels who opposed President Charles Taylor. This rebel group is called Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) with a Muslim majority and led by Sekou Conneh who has taken control of the entire Liberian countryside. They have committed

several acts of ethnic violence against the people of Liberia (Parajon, 2007).

Then, came another rebel group called Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), which is a faction that separates parts of Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD). This movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) has also captured several villages and cities in southeastern Liberia by killing and raping women. In 2003, these two groups, namely LURD and MODEL, had good intentions to stop hostilities with President Taylor by holding peace negotiations, but President Taylor threatened to treat them cruelly and imprison both groups for opposing his government (Parajon, 2007).

President Charles Taylor has also supported the rebels named The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in carrying out their actions. This was done by assisting and conspiring with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels during the war in Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2002. As a result of his actions, he had killed tens of thousands of civilians and had resulted in several other cases such as rape, terror, murder, sexual slavery, looting, violence, and coercion of children into the army (BBC, 2012).

However, this conflict has finally succeeded in peace without violence. This peace action has been carried out by the participation of women in Liberia, spearheaded by a female activist named Leymah Gbowee. The method that has been implemented by women to achieve peace in Liberia can be said to be successful, because Liberia has focused their efforts to touch all levels of society. Thus, the Liberian development process

will become more durable in the future (Koziol, 2019).

Referring to the research entitled "Womens Participation in Peacebuilding: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle?" and has been carried out by Mary K. McCarthy from the University of Pennsylvania. In his research discusses some of the wars that Liberia has experienced and the effects of those wars. There are several roles of women, namely by becoming a negotiator in resolving the war. But this woman's role is felt to be still not very effective in resolving conflicts (McCarthy, 2011). Referring to the research entitled "Women, Transitional Power-Sharing, and Post-Conflict Democratization: Evidence from Liberia" which was written by Kathrin M. Baumann from the University of Heidelberg. In his research, women are always victims during conflicts and civil wars. Before women were always underestimated and never contributed, then, finally there was gender equality. Where women have become one of the main actors who are important in the post-conflict transitional government. This can be a supporting factor to increase the chances of democracy in Liberia (Baumann, 2018).

The important role of women in Liberian peace, this research will discuss novelty by combining three concepts, they are: feminism, gender equality and peace to analyze how the success of women's participation in resolving conflicts in Liberia without violence by comparing how the conditions pre and post-peace situation in Liberia from the economic and political sector from year to year. Then, in the final sub-chapter will discuss the post-conflict peace situation in Liberia and answer whether the peace

is merely an effort to create peace during the conflict. Or as an effort for sustainability in building post-conflict peace by ensuring that all people in it can have the same opportunities and opportunities for obtaining benefits from resources as well as increasing their capabilities in various sectors, both political and economic sectors.

There are several objectives of this research, they are: *First,* this research aims to be able to contribute to the study of gender politics towards efforts to successfully contribute to women in handling the Civil War in Liberia. *Second,* this research is aim to realize that women are not only victims of gender inequality, but can also be 'agents of change' in creating peace and better change for the future of a country. *Third*, this research is aim to be an evaluation material for the Government of Liberia and other Government of countries in resolving gender discrimination and valuing women's participation in any sector to advance a country.

Methods

This writing will use qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are research methods that emphasize the observation and understanding of social phenomena, which is then interpreted and explained through words. The object of this research method is human, relationship with interaction and the relationship (McCusker, 2015).

K. McCusker and S. Gunaydin in their book by the title "Research Using Qualitative, Quantitative Methods or Mixtures and Choices Based on Research" explained that qualitative method is suitable for answering questions 'how' 'according to phenomena. This method is subjective and inductive and does not use statistical mechanisms (McCusker, 2015).

This qualitative method is very suitable to be applied in this research, which is discussed in relation about 'how' to analyze the success of women's participation in conflict peace in Liberia by using three concepts, they are: 'Feminism', 'Gender Equality' and 'Peace'. And 'how the situation when the pre and post-peace in Liberia from the economic and political sector'.

The qualitative method is a research method that is flexible and dynamic, which means that it is open to changes, both approved and changed during the research process (McCusker, 2015). The qualitative methods can be done by taking case studies of existing social problems. This method is also done by developing values and making conclusions based on the processes and data that have been obtained (Direktorat, 2019).

The qualitative research methods can be done in two ways, they are: *First,* exploratory by knowing in detail about the objects and problems regarding the success of women's participation in resolving the Liberian conflict. From the explorative way in this research, the author takes three concepts in answering and analyzing the success of women's participation in resolving conflicts in Liberia. The three concepts that have been taken by the author, namely: Feminism, Gender Equality, and Peace. Of these three concepts, the author has a limitation in the discussion so that it is not too broad in writing.

Second, descriptive is the continuation process after explorative, in which this research process aims to describe the object or phenomenon that will be examined and that will be discussed in detail. From the descriptive method in this writing, the authors describe the three concepts (Feminism, Gender Equality, and Peace) by analyzing the efforts and strategies of Liberian women's participation, so that they can successfully resolve conflicts that have been happened for a long time, from 1989 to 2003.

After that, the author will discuss how the post-conflict situation in the economic and political sectors, whether the success can prosper the entire Liberian society or not. This will be supported by some data that will show how effective Liberia has been since the post-conflict conflict to the present.

Then, after using the two previous research methods, they are: explorative and descriptive ways, the author will explain an object, so that a conclusion will be drawn as a result and essence of this study (Hancock, 2009).

By using this qualitative method, the author can give some explanations of some objects in detail. The results from qualitative methods can be proposed and result in the development of concepts, interpretations, suggestions, solutions, or evaluations of problems that have been discussed by the authors. And in the end, the authors will take conclusions as a result and essence of this research (Hancock, 2009).

The technique of retrieving data in this research will use a method of retrieving secondary data. Secondary data is a method obtained through literature by searching the data that has been processed by observing, collecting and taking some references or sources that already exist, such as books, data, journals, and articles through the internet. Related, in this study will be discussed in detail by conducting a review of some reliable data via the internet. Then, the data in this research also narrative, which is a sentence that discusses the complexity of the problem (Cochran, 2007).

Some secondary data used in this research, are: *First,* Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Growth of Liberia from 2000 to April 2020 which has been taken from the official website of Trading Economics. *Second,* The Number of Liberian Unemployment Rate from 1999 to 2019 which has been taken on the official website of Statista. *Third,* Liberia's Global Gender Index Ranks for Several Sectors, they are: Economic and Participation and Opportunity, Political Empowerment and Overall (Global Index). The third data has been processed by the authors themselves by taking and combining two data sources, they are: The official website of Knoema, which is the most comprehensive source of global decision making data in the world and a report from the World Economic Forum in 2018 by the title 'Insight Report: The Global Gender Gap Report 2018.'

So, from these three data, the author will see and found at how the post-conflict situation in the economic and political sectors, whether the success can prosper the entire Liberian society or not. And how effective the success of Liberia since the post-conflict until now. By using the set of method the author have described above, some reseach questions

will be answered comprehensive during the following discussion.

Result and Discussion
Analysis of the Concept of 'Feminism' and 'Gender Equality' towards Women's Participation in Conflict Peace in Liberia Feminism

This research will use the concept of 'feminism', which is an ideology that believes that it is necessary to fight for the rights of women so that they get the same rights and so they do not get discriminated in society. This "feminism" arises because it aims to erase patriarchal values which have long been protected by functional structural culture. This "feminism" movement first emerged in the West in the 1770s, which was spearheaded by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Marquis de Condorcet, when the renaissance in Italy that brought change and awareness of the citizens of Europe. At that time, humans are just aware about gender equality and respect for men and women as individuals who are free to use their reasoning and free from killing the church (Marzuki, 2008).

The women were aware of the violence and oppression which they had experienced in society, such as in their families, social status and workplaces. This concept of "feminism" does not agree with the patriarchal values and culture that originally appeared from the family, where men were given privileges and could rule in the family. Thus, this causes inequality for women, where property, access and control of resources can only be owned by men (Puspitawati, 2013).

The concept of 'feminism' aims to erase the patriarchal system which has been legitimized by structural-functionalists which will ultimately provide benefits and equality for men and women. This concept is very suitable to be implemented in this research because it will discuss about the rights of women that have been sidelined, causing gender inequality or discrimination. The concept of 'feminism' was raised because it aims to protect women's rights from various violations that often harm women. This concept emphasizes more on how to position women's subjects in certain societies. The concept of "feminism" has championed two very important things for women, namely about gender equality with men and autonomy in determining what is best for them (Soetjipto, 2013).

Referring to the concept of 'Feminism' towards women's participation in resolving Liberia's conflict, which during the Liberian conflict women severely disadvantage and intimidated by men. So, after rising the feminist movement of Liberian women, Liberia became free from discrimination and patriarchy (Krisbiyantoro, 2016).

The feminism concept has encouraged a movement to seek gender equality to be free from all forms of oppression and stereotypes. With the experience of women in Liberia who experienced gender inequality and felt oppressed by men. The Liberian women created a 'Feminism Movement' that was initiated by Leymah Gbowee, she is a female activist and social worker who supports and fights for rights women in Liberia (Rashed, 2019).

The 'Feminism Movement' that occurred in Liberia, it can be said as 'Liberal Feminism'. 'Liberal Feminism' is a

view that women position to gain freedom completely. The 'Liberal Feminism' has been motivated by a sense of oppression from men, so the women can't be free for doing something. 'Liberal Feminism' has several principles, they are: human nature has the same rights and role between men and women, equality, individual ownership, autonomy, dignity and independence and should not be distinguished. 'Liberal Feminism' aims to be able to form a society that is good, equal, fair and prosperous, so that women must fight for it because it's a rational creature (Krisbiyantoro, 2016).

The 'Liberal Feminism' has been applied by women in Liberia, emphasizes on freedom and equality which is rooted in rationalism by upholding some values of autonomy, equality, morality. So, get the same opportunities and rights for each individual, including women based on equality and existence as rational beings. The 'Liberal Feminism' movement in Liberia has been initiated by Leymah Gbowee who has fought in various political, economic and social sectors to get their votes, rights and obligations as citizens. In the political sector, women have the right to express their opinions by choosing or being elected. In the economic and social sector, women have the right to have a career, generate income freely and live as they wish (Krisbiyantoro, 2016).

The feminists said that the 'Feminism Movement' is a movement that began in the consciousness of women, where they are always oppressed and exploited. Therefore, this oppression and exploitation must end immediately. The 'Feminism Movement' in Liberia happened because of social changes, so

that made them have to fight for their rights as a social class. Liberian women reject injustice as a result of a patriarchal society and government. Patriarchy is a social system, that men have privileges that have dominated and become holders of power in various sectors of society and government (Krisbiyantoro, 2016).

Gender Equality

This research will use the concept of 'gender equality', which first will be explained about gender. Gender is the difference and social relations between men and women in the roles, functions, rights, responsibilities and behaviors that are formed by social values, cultures and customs of community groups that can change at any time and local conditions (Puspitawati, 2015).

Gender different from sex, sex is used to understand the differences between men and women attached to themselves biologically and cannot be exchanged because it is obtained by the nature of God. Example: The men produce sperm, the women produce ovum and can giving birth (Siti Azisah, 2016).

Gender can be interpreted as a trait that has been used as a basis in is identifying differences between men and women that can be seen from various aspects and social, cultural, psychological and other non-biological aspects. A Gender is a form of engineering or social construction that can change at any time. Example: men have some characteristics, such as; handsome, strong and the women have some characteristics, such as; beautiful, motherhood and so on. But, all of these characteristics are not permanent and can change at any time

because they are not from the nature of God (Siti Azisah, 2016).

Gender can be regarded as an important social variable and a tool to classify in society to be able to analyze the difference between men and women in several ways, they are: responsibilities, roles, needs, opportunities and obstacles (ILO, 2005). Gender can be influenced by several other variables, such as: class, caste, ethnicity, race, age, geographical, political and economic environment. Within gender itself, there are several gender norms and values that should be done by men and women (Suriyasarn, 2005).

'Gender equality' is equality related to the same rights, responsibilities, opportunities, treatment and judgment between men and women. This 'gender equality' can be in the form of equal human rights and worker rights, as well as equal values of opportunity, workload, responsibilities, decision making and fair income, Thus, 'gender equality means that all of the people and all of the ages have the opportunity to get a better quality of life and can develop their full potential (Suriyasarn, 2005).

Women are not only seen as victims, recipients or disadvantaged sides, but they can contribute equally in joint development with men. Therefore, 'gender equality' must be able to guarantee that everyone can have equal control and access to equal and fair resources and benefits. Thus, everyone can get benefit from these resources and participate in development (Suriyasarn, 2005).

Referring to the concept of 'Gender Equality' towards women's participation in conflict negotiations in Liberia, where

gender equality is a way to facilitate ways of oppressing women with race, gender, class, section and ways to support. The success of women's participation in resolving Liberia's conflict has demonstrated the necessary needs of the concept of 'Gender Equality', where women are not only seen as victims and aggrieved parties, but women are parties who can provide equal participation and help in joint development with men. The role of women Liberia has guaranteed everyone, both men and women have control with equal access to resources and benefits that are appropriate and equitable (Suriyasarn, 2005).

What was happened in Liberia is gender inequality since The Liberian War, which has been occurred in two periods: *First,* from 1989 until 1997 and *Second,* from 1999 until 2003 (Rashed, 2019).

The participation of women in Liberia emerged which has created gender equality by facilitating women to bring about justice and peace in the Liberian conflict, so that each individual has a better quality of life. With the struggle of these Liberian women, gender equality has been created in all circles, ages and genders. Related every individual has the right to responsibility, roles, opportunities, participations and discussion in any case (Marzuki, 2008).

The Gender equality efforts that have been occurred in Liberia can be resolved well because of the feminism initiated by Leymah Gbowee, which she struggled in fighting for women's rights so that they could be shared with men. Associated, representing gender equality can help every individual get the same opportunities and rights as humans in carrying out various activities in several

sectors of the development of society, such as: politics, economy, social-cultural, etc (Siti Azisah, 2016).

The achievement of gender equality can be practice with the support of the country's policies, such as the establishment of law on gender equality. Gender equality that occurs in Liberia has also been supported by a country's policies, to guarantee the achievement of justice and gender equality at all levels of society (Marzuki, 2008).

To achieve gender equality in Liberia, the feminism movement initiated by Leymah Gbowee supports to create gender equality from policies in the previous country. The Liberian Government policy never supported women and discriminated against women. The realization of state policies can support gender equality in Liberia, Liberian women have made several efforts that also have initiated by Leymah Gbowee.

The effort to achieve gender equality in Liberia was carried out in two ways:

First, by replacing the position of President of Liberia, President Charles Taylor during the Liberian war conflict, because he had experienced difficulties in creating peace and gender equality in their respective countries. Because of this, President Charles Taylor did not support peace and exacerbating the Liberian conflict, which he opposed both Liberian rebel groups, they are: LURD (Liberians for Reconciliation and Democracy) and MODEL (Movement for Democracy in Liberia). Both of these groups dominated and controlled several villages and cities in Southeastern Liberia by killing and raping women. In 2003, these groups had

good intentions to hold peace negotiations with President Taylor by negotiating peace, but he opposed to treat them cruelly and imprison the two groups for opposing his government (Parajon, 2007).

President Charles Taylor has also supported the rebels named The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in carrying out their actions. This was done by assisting and conspiring with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels during the war in Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2002. As a result of his actions, he had killed tens of thousands of civilians and had resulted in several other cases such as rape, terror, murder, sexual slavery, looting, violence and coercion of children into the army. So, from the mass pressure from the participation of Liberian women, the International Court of Justice in Den Haag has decided that President Taylor is guilty because of several cases of extraordinary violence and crime, so he was jailed about 80-year prison term (BBC, 2012).

Second, by choosing the President of Liberia from women, namely President Johnson Sirleaf, who is the first female president in Africa. Where, the event of this election is a historical effort because it was the first election conducted freely, fairly and democratically by the people of Liberia. So, this can be used as a way for women to participate more in the political and economic sectors in Liberia. President Johnson Sirleaf makes Liberian peace and reconciliation a long-term goal, to strengthen the vision and mission of the Liberian people (Foundation, 2013).

The explanation of the concepts of 'Feminism' and 'Gender Equality' towards the successful participation of women in

conflict peace in Liberia is very suitable to be applied in this research.

First, the concept of "Feminism" has the aim of removing the patriarchal system which has been legitimized by structural-functionalists which will ultimately provide benefits and equality for men and women. This concept is very suitable to be implemented in this research because it discusses the rights of women that have been sidelined, causing gender inequality or discrimination (Puspitawati, 2013).

Second, the concept of "Gender Equality" is equality related to the same rights, responsibilities, opportunities, treatment and judgment between men and women. This "Gender Equality" can be in the form of equal human rights and workers' rights, as well as equal values of opportunity, workload, responsibilities, decision making and fair income. (Suriyasarn, 2005).

By applying the concepts of 'Feminism' and 'Gender Equality', Liberian women have succeeded in forming a feminist movement to achieve gender equality, so that in the end it can create the peace from Liberian conflict

The feminism movement in Liberia has constructed gender relations and the state. This is because the state as a means of domination is owned by the rules of the elite class (Krisbiyantoro, 2016).

The efforts have been made to create the feminism movement in Liberia for resolving conflict Liberia by forming organizations and institutions by Liberian women, who have been initiated by Leymah Gbowee. This effort is a strategy to achieve gender equality and justice through planning and implementing policies that have a gender perspective on

organizations and institutions. What has been done by the feminism movement in Liberia aims to fight for human rights and transform a social system and structure that was previously unjust to be more just and equal for men and women. Some explanations of the organizations and institutions that have been formed by Liberian women can be explained in the following points below:

First, Woman in the Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) was founded in 2002 by Leymah Gbowee. Leymah Gbowee was born on February 1, 1972 in Monrovia, Liberia. She was a social worker who supports and fights for women's rights in Liberia. The life motivation of Leymah is as (Rashed, 2019):

> *"For their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and women's rights to full participation in peace-building work."*

WIPNET is an organizational branch of West African Network for Peace Development (WANEP). WANEP was formed in 1998 in response to the first civil war of 1989. WANEP duty to build peace and focus on the debate on human rights. Then, WANEP established WIPNET to encourage women in Liberia to unite and develop peace (WANEP, 2016).

From the WIPNET organization formed by Leymah, she won to mobilize peace, which is to work together and create a coalition with women from Christianity and Muslims to play an important role in the battle of the war in Liberia. The union of both religions took place for the first time and never happened before in Liberia (Theobald, 2012).

In her life, Leymah has dedicated herself as a social worker and helped people who are psychologically

traumatized, such as children, especially women during the civil war in Liberia. In 2006, Leymah was one of the founders and Executive Director of the African Women Peace and Safety Network (WIPSEN-A) based in Ghana which has been supported for six years. WIPSEN-A is a Pan-African non-profit organization that focused on women's participation and leadership in government and security negotiations on the African continent. Many of the organization's programs have changed the lives of many women in Liberia (Rashed, 2019).

In 2008, Leymah's story was told in a documentary by the title: "Pray the Devil Back to the Hell.". Then, in 2011, her book has published entitled; "Mighty Be Our Powers," which contained lectures, experiences and discussions with various groups that had motivated many people around the world (Gbowee, 2011).

In 2011, Leymah Gbowee won a Nobel Peace Prize because she was able to end the years of war in Liberia. In 2012, she also founded a new organization, that called: "Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa" based in Monrovia, Liberia. This organization has provided opportunities for the education sector and leadership for women, from children to adults. Besides, Leymah was also the Director of "The Nobel Women's Initiative", "The Gbowee Peace Foundation", "The Peace Jam Foundation" and a member of "The African Women Leaders Network for Reproductive Health and Family Planning (Rashed, 2019).

There is an event organized by WIPNET, so that women's voices are heard more, namely a radio program called: "Voice of Women", which aired once every two weeks. The program is being held in seven cities in Liberia, so that it can provide space for women to talk, gain recognition of their contribution to peace. There was also the program, namely: "The Rural Women's Peace Initiative", which has been operating in all regions of Liberia, it can reduce the gap between rural and urban women (WANEP, 2016).

Second, the establishment of Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET) is a group of women who are struggling to implement democracy in Liberia. This organization has contributed to the Liberian Conflict. MARWOPNET also works to empower women to take part in Liberia, by providing training in economic sectors, such as trade. Then, MARWOPNET also helps to improve legal expertise to guarantee protection for women and children. Improving, this organization can integrate women in the political and economic sectors which will increase gender equality in Liberia. Regarding, by fighting for women's rights, full participation in the democratic process and achieve peace. MARWOPNET's achievements, this organization has received a prize from the United Nations (UN) in the field of Human Rights in 2003 (Parajon, 2007).

Third, The Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL) is a women's movement formed since the first Liberian war, a group of female lawyers in the Capital of Liberia, Monrovia. They focus on various cases of rape, in which women are often victims during the war. AFELL has documented some of the experiences of women victims during the war and gave their advice. Previously, only state attorneys were permitted to prosecute these rape cases. However, in 2000 AFELL

was given the right to sue the rape cases. Thus, AFELL also gained the influence of legislation in drafting a new bill that could increase the penalty for raping case (Theobald, 2012).

AFELL is very important in the Liberian conflict, because this conflict has made women victims, consisting of rape, forced abortion, human trafficking, sex slavery and the spread of HIV / AIDS through sexual relations. Then, women must also have to bear their own lives because they have been left by their husbands who died from the war. And some women have been kidnapped and forced to fight with armed groups. However, some women decide to become warriors and survive (Theobald, 2012).

Analysis of the Concept of 'Peace' towards Women's Participation in Conflict Peace in Liberia

This research will use the concept of 'Peace', which is a collective agreement to end hostilities for those who are hostile or at war to create a safe and prosperous country. The concept of 'peace' can also be called a political condition that guarantees justice and social stability through formal, informal situations and practices and norms (Olanrewaju, 2013).

According to Galtung, peace and violence are interrelated with one another. Violent conflict has disrupted and polarized society, so it can be disrupted social structures and gender roles. Thus, successful conflict resolutions can improve gender equality, eliminate gender violence and lead to sustainable peace (USIP, 2013).

According to Galtung, peace is a condition, where no violence must be used as the main goal to achieve peace.

The concept of peace can be divided into two, they are:

First, The Negative Peace is a situation where there is no war and violence at the macro level, but there is still violence and other discrimination, such as at the level of policy and social systems and discrimination of certain ethnic and cultural groups. The negative peace is still weak because on one side it's already peaceful, but on the other hand there are still policies that are unfair and discriminatory. The examples of negative peace policies, they are: multilateralism, international conventions, arms control and balance of power strategy (Galtung, 2009).

Second, Positive Peace is a condition in which not only the absence of war and violence, but other violence such as structural violence, social systems and discriminatory policies must also disappear. Positive peace will create equality, social justice and long-lasting peace. The Positive Peace also can be implemented with several policies, such as: increasing human understanding through communication, peace education, international cooperation, arbitration, dispute resolution and conflict management (Grewal, 2003).

Referring to the concept of 'Peace' towards women's participation in resolving Liberia's conflict. This research will use the peace concept from Galtung.

In the case of resolving conflict in Liberia, it has used 'Positive Peace', which not only the absence of war and violence, but other violence such as structural violence, social systems and discriminatory policies must also disappear. The Positive Peace will create

equality, social justice and long-lasting peace (Grewal, 2003).

The Positive Peace, which has been implemented by Liberian women by managing conflict properly. Some of the efforts that have been made by Liberian women to resolve the conflict by creating sustainable peace and will create long-lasting peace stability. With the long-lasting peace, will improve the quality and gender equality in several sectors of the Liberian society, such as politics and economy sectors will be better and more effective from year to year.

To create 'The Positive Peace' in resolving conflict in Liberia, Liberian women have made several efforts and strategies in managing conflict well. Some efforts and strategies will be explained as follows:

The efforts have been spearheaded by Leymah Gbowee, who has led a mass protest by demanding peace "Peace for Liberia Now!" for weeks to get the attention of the international media when they demonstrate. In addition to demonstrations, they also fast and refuse to have sex with their husbands (Koziol, 2019). Leymah and her female troops did not give up by wearing white shirts and demonstrations every day in Monrovia. From these protests, they could force President Charles Taylor to discuss peace actions with the rebels in Accra, Ghana. Previously, President Taylor opposed peace and threatened the rebels, namely LURD and MODEL would treat cruelly and imprison these two groups for opposing President Taylor's government (Rashed, 2019).

After collecting money, Leymah led a Liberian women's delegation to Ghana to suppress the conflicting factions during the peace process. Leymah and thousands of Christian and Muslim women who have been formed, they formed a force to prevent representatives of President Charles Taylor and rebel warlords who were discussing peace forbid for going out to eating or any reason to get out of the meeting room, before getting a peace agreement with Liberia's opponents (Tavaana, 2010).

At that time, Leymah was almost arrested by security forces, but Leymah threatened them, that if she arrested, she would take off her clothes. Where, the act of undressing is believed by Liberians in their traditional beliefs, which will cause a curse or bad luck for men. Leymah's threat has been successful and has brought the peace agreement process for Liberia (Tavaana, 2010).

After a few weeks later, President Charles Taylor had resigned from the presidency and gone into exile place. Then, in May 2012, he was sentenced by the International Court for fifty years in prison for his cruelty during his time as president. After that, in 2003, a peace agreement called "The Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement" was signed, namely a peace agreement in Liberia and a transitional government (Crossette, 2012).

After the peace agreement has been agreed, the women from the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) organization formed by Leymah has changed, which previously duty to resolve and mobilize conflicts in Liberia, now to build peace. WIPNET has also played a role in the political sector. This was done by launching a campaign and ensuring that women in Liberia participated in the elections in 2005. Previously, many

women still unaware and don't care about the importance of voting because they assumed that whoever the leader would not provide the benefit for their lives. In this case, WIPNET has succeeded to manage and change the Liberian women's mindset and results of more than 7,400 women voted in the election five days before the election ended (Parajon, 2007).

This election event was a historical effort, because after the peace of the Liberian conflict, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as a female President for the first time in Africa was elected in 2005. The election of President Johnson Sirleaf is also the first election held in free, fair and democratic manner by Liberians. So, this can be used as a way for women to participate more in the political and economic sectors in Liberia. President Johnson Sirleaf makes Liberian peace and reconciliation a long-term goal, so it can be strengthened the vision and mission of the Liberian society (Foundation, 2013).

The peace in Liberia was initiated by a female activist named Leymah Gbowee, a social worker who supports and fights for women's rights in Liberia. Leymah's effort to resolve the conflict in Liberia is by leading a non-violent movement (Crossette, 2012).

From the explanation of the efforts and strategies by women in the management of the Liberia conflict in the end it has succeeded in implementing 'The Positive Peace' without violence. 'The Positive Peace' which has been implemented by Liberian women is by managing conflict well. With 'The Positive Peace', Liberia can create sustainable peace and the long-lasting peace, so that the peace can be stable and enduring. The long-lasting peace can improve the quality and gender equality in several sectors of Liberian society, such as the economy and politics that are getting better and more effective from year to year. Liberia has also reached an agreement to end conflict and war, to create a safe, orderly and controlled situation.

Post-Conflict Peace Conditions in Liberia in the Economic and Political Sectors

Liberian women have made undeniable and highly influential contributions for achieving peace and recovery in post-conflict situations. For almost fourteen years, Liberia has experienced a civil war, which resulted in the majority of women being victimized. Besides women being victims, they also can be agents of change in resolving conflicts and building peace without violence. Previously, Liberians considered that women were not important to make and build peace agreement. But, after women succeeded in making a peace agreement, they realized that women's contributions and participations were very important in the process of creating and building peace sustainably (Vriscilasari, 2013).

The role and contribution of women in this research are very influential in all of the steps, both in the creation and development of peace to obtain social justice, equal rights and gender equality. So, with the efforts made by a group of women in Liberia, it can be seen that Liberia can achieve a stable peace. Stable peace is a condition that can create positive peace, those with the support of social, religious, ideological, economic and political systems that can

reduce inequality and increase opportunities for society towards stable and long-term peace (Vriscilasari, 2013).

After the Liberian conflict was successfully reconciled in 2014, Liberia was stricken by a crisis again, namely: an Ebola outbreak that has killed more than four thousand Liberians. The Ebola outbreak also hampered post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, hampered economic growth and foreign investments (Koziol, 2019).
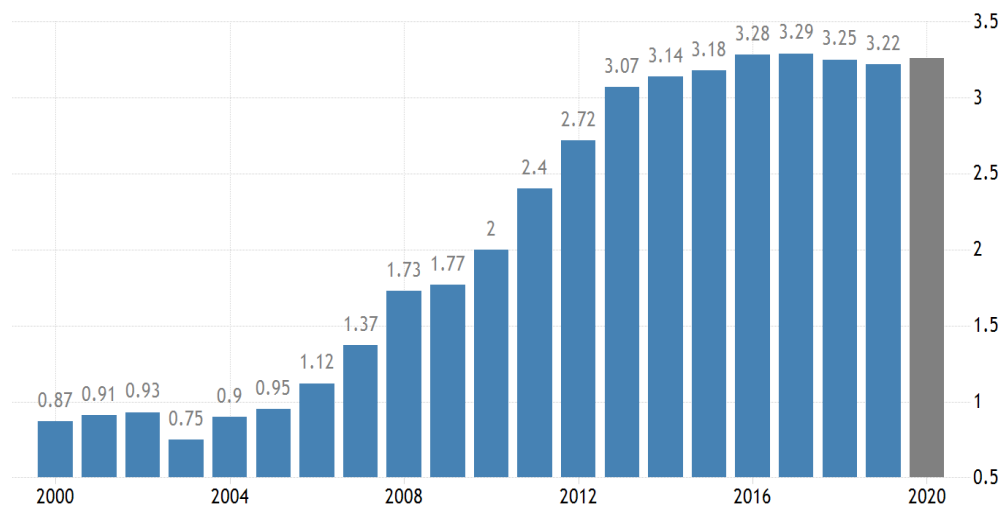
In May 2015, because of some efforts of the administration from the first female President, Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia was able to fight to be free from The Ebola outbreak and return to be a normal condition. Interestingly, Liberia became the first country in the West African region to be free from The Ebola outbreak. After the Ebola outbreak has over, Liberia can focus their efforts on the peace building and the economic sector (Koizol, 2019).

Interestingly, Liberia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Growth in 2014 when The Ebola outbreak did not decline and continued to increase until April 2020. The growth of Liberia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased from 2000 until April 2020, although sometimes decreased, but not too significant.

As seen on the graphic, that Liberian GDP has increased from year to year. In 2019, Liberia reached 3.22% Billion US Dollars. Where, previously in 2017, it had reached the highest record, amount to 3.29% Billion US Dollars. Meanwhile, Liberia has been ranked as low as 0.75% Billion US Dollars in 2003. Liberian GDP growth can be seen in the graphic below (Economics, 2020):

Graphic 1.
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Growth of Liberia (2000-April 2020)

Source (Economics, 2020)

After the conflict peace, Liberians increasingly got the benefit from the employment and economic sectors. This can be evidence, that in 2018, the World Bank stated that women's participation in the economic sector in Liberia was

increasing, where 53% of the number of women in Liberia have worked in the agricultural sector and 77% of women as entrepreneurs (Parajon, 2007).

Besides, the number of unemployed people in Liberia decreased from 1999 to 2019. The number of

Liberian unemployed decreased to 2.03% in the same year from 2017, 2018 and 2019. The lowest unemployment was 1.96% in 2008. The highest number of Liberian unemployed amount to 2.78% in 1999. This can be seen in the graphic as below (Plecher, 2020):

Graphic 2.
Number of Liberian Unemployment Rate (1999-2019)

Source (Plecher, 2020)

According to "The Global Gender Gap", report from 2014 to 2018, overall Liberia's ranking in several sectors has improved among the number of countries, such as economic participation and

opportunity and political empowerment sectors, which is 149 countries in the world. The table can be explained as below (Index, 2018) (Forum, 2018):

Table 1.
Liberia's Global Gender Index Ranks for Several Sectors (2014-2018)

INDICATOR	MEASURE	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Economic Participation and Opportunity	**Rank**	94	99	103	58	41
	Score	0,64	0.62	0.61	0.70	0.73
Political Empowerment	**Rank**	46	47	46	45	47
	Score	0.21	0.22	0.23	0.24	0.24
Overall (Global Index)	**Rank**	111	112	114	107	96
	Score	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.67	0.68

Source (Index, 2018) (Forum, 2018)

Rank: Based on the number of countries as many as 149 countries in the world. Rank: 1 Highest Gender Equality (INDICATOR). Score (0-1): 1 Highest Gender Equality (INDICATOR)

Previously, it should be noted that the 'Measure' (Rank and Score) is getting closer to the value of 1, the mean the 'Indicator' is getting better. On the contrary, if the 'Measure' (Rank and Score) is getting away from the value of 1, the mean the 'Indicator' is getting worse. When viewed from the ranking (Global Gender Gap Index) in these two sectors from 2014 to 2018, it can be concluded as below (Index, 2018) (Forum, 2018).

The economic participation and opportunity sector from 2014, ranked 94th and increased in 2018 to 41th from 149 countries. From 2014 to 2018 it was almost stable and close to value 1, with a score of 0.73, the mean, the economic participation and opportunities sector has got better from year to year (Index, 2018) (Forum, 2018).

The political empowerment sector from 2014 to 2018 was also stable, where in 2014 it was rank 46th. In 2018, it occupied 47th out of 149 countries. Liberia's position in the political empowerment sector can be said to be good because it is among the top 50 from 149 countries. Then, Liberia also gets a stable score from 2014 with a score of 0.21 and in 2018 with a score of 0.24 (Index, 2018) (Forum, 2018).

From both sectors before: the economic participation and opportunity and political empowerment sectors. These two indicators can result in the overall (Global Index) of Liberia has got better and better in gender equality. This can be seen in 2014 with the rank of 111st and it has increased further with a rank of 96th from 149 countries in the world in 2018. Then, the score from 2014 to 2018 was also stable, where in 2014 it has score 0.65 and in 2018 has score 0.68, which will approach value 1. So, it can be said, that the rank and score Overall (Global Index) in Liberia was good (Index, 2018) (Forum, 2018).

By looking at some graphs and tables previously which has been explained, they are: "Graphic 1. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Growth of Liberia (2000-April 2020)", "Graphic 2. Number of Liberian Unemployment Rate (1999-2019)", "Table 1. Liberia's Global Gender Index Ranks for Several Sectors (2014-2018)." So, from three data, it shows that Liberia has been increased and getting better from year to year. This can be happened because of three strategies and efforts as follows:

First, 'The Feminism Movement', which initiated by Leymah Gbowee and the participation of Liberian women has been succeeded in dealing with the Liberian conflict. Where, the feminism movement aims to eliminate all the forms of oppression and stereotypes. The feminism movement carried out by Liberian women is 'Liberal Feminism', which aims to create a good, equal and prosperous society (Krisbiyantoro, 2016).

Second, 'The Gender Equality' efforts that have been undertaken by Liberian women also have been successful by equalizing the rights of men and women. Thus, gender equality has become a universal responsibility and general obligation because the community has constructed the nature, roles, division of works and the scope of

gender, which have different cultures (Siti Azisah, 2016).

Related to the gender equality efforts, which has made the roles and rights between men and women are same in several sectors, such as: participation and economic opportunities and political empowerment. See at {"Table 1. Liberia's Global Gender Index Ranks for Several Sectors (2014-2018)}." In the political sector, women have the right to present their opinions by choosing or elected. And in economic sector, women can have career, get income freely and live as they wish. Regarding to these sectors, Liberia has made Overall (Global Index) getting better in equality gender from 2014 to 2018 (Index, 2018) (Forum, 2018).

Third, the role of Liberian women has succeeded in achieving 'The Positive Peace', by managing conflict well. This 'Positive Peace' creates peace in a sustainable, stable and long-lasting. With 'Positive Peace', Liberia can improve their quality by increasing several sectors, such as: making Liberia's GDP improve from 2000 to April 2020 by looking at {"Graphic 1. Gross Domestic Product Growth (GDP) of Liberia (2000 - April 2020)}." Besides that, Liberia also has succeeded in reducing unemployment in Liberia from 1999 to 2019 by looking at {"Graphic 2. Number of Liberian Unemployment (1999-2019)}." Liberia also has succeeded in increasing its position Overall (Global Index) which is getting better in terms of gender equality in 2018 which has occupied the position of 96 out of 149 countries in the world, can be seen clearly in {"Table 1. Liberia's Global Gender Index Ranks for Several Sectors (2014 -2018)}. "

With the success of these three strategies and efforts, it can be seen that women can provide participation and contribution equally in joint development with men. The role of women in Liberia has guaranteed everyone, both men and women have equal control and access to resources and benefits that are equal and fair (Suriyasarn, 2005).

Conclusion

The civil war and conflicts have been successfully reconciled by the participation and contribution of Liberian women by being initiated by Leymah Gbowee as an activist woman and social worker, who supports and fights for women's rights in Liberia. The successful peace efforts, which initiated by Leymah Gbowee have impacted to the world with the emergence of Leymah as a global leader, which her participation is needed in the meeting of the United Nations Commission related to the status of women and other International Conference (Rashed, 2019).

By using three concepts, they are: 'Feminism', 'Equality Gender' and 'Peace' it can result that the role and participation of women as evidence of gender equality is a very important thing in the process and peacebuilding. Thus, it was proven that women can be considered as 'agents of change' with their capacity and ability to handle the problem and conflict.

Liberia has succeeded in creating and building peace, in creating peace, where Liberia can negotiate, mediate and make peace agreements to end the armed conflict.

Liberia also has succeeded in building peace after the conflict by

restoring the original situation as before the conflict by seeing the economic participation, political empowerment and overall (Global Index) have become better and more stable. Therefore, with the existence of 'Feminism', 'Gender Equality', and 'Peace', it must be able to guarantee that everyone all of sexes and ages has the opportunity to get a better quality of life and can to develop their potential completely. Then, everyone is also entitled to have equal control and access to equal resources and fair benefits, so that they can participate to develop the country (Suriyasarn, 2005).

The research concluded that there have been several efforts that have been made by women to resolve conflicts in Liberia by creating and building peace sustainably, so that peace can be stable for a long time. The efforts that have been made by Liberian women are by creating several organizations and affiliations, they are Woman in the Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET), Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET), Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL). This long-term peace can improve the equality gender in several sectors of Liberian society, such as the politics and economic sectors, that are getting better and more effective from year to year.

The suggestions for further research are to analyze the policies of the Liberian government in gender equality, especially towards women, whether there are still policies that cause women to be discriminated against. And analyze how to play the role between women and men by discussing several sectors, such as the social and political economy sectors.

About Author

Dewi Masitoh is a Master student of Political Science Department, Faculty of Social and Political Science from Diponegoro University, Semarang, Indonesia.

References

Baumann, K. M. (2018). Women, Transitional Power-Sharing and Post-Conflict Democratization: Evidence from Liberia. *Research Gate*, 1-2, 21.

BBC. (2012, Mei 04). Charles Taylor Dituntut Hukuman Penjara 80 Tahun. Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/dunia/2012/05/120504_liberianpresident_taylor_trial

Cochran, M. Q. (2007). A Guide To Using Qualitative Research Methodology. *Medecins Sans Frontieres*, 4-9.

Crossette, B. (2012, Juli 19). Liberia's Peacebuilder. The Nation. Retrieved from https://www.thenation.com/article/liberias-peacebuilder/

Direktorat, J. K. (2019). Artikel DJKN: Memahami Metode Penelitian Kualitatif. Maret. https://www.djkn.kemenkeu.go.id/a

rtikel/baca/12773/Memahami-Metode-Penelitian-Kualitatif.html

Economics, T. (2020). Trading Economics: Liberia GDP. April. https://tradingeconomics.com/liberia/gdp

Forum, W. E. (2018). The Global Gender Gap Report: 2018. *Insight Report*, 11-14.

Foundation, D. T. (2013). Desmond Tutu: Peace Foundation. Mighty Be Our Powers: How Sisterhood, Prayer, and Sex Changed a Nation at War. Agustus. http://www.tutufoundationusa.org/2013/08/22/mighty-be-our-powers-how-sisterhood-prayer-and-sex-changed-a-nation-at-war/

Galtung, J. (2009). Cultural Violence. *Journal of Peace Research (SAGE Publications, Ltd. collaborating with JSTOR), Vol. 27, No. 3*, 291-303.

Gbowee, L. (2011). *Mighty Be Our Powers How Sisterhood, Prayer and Sex Changed A Nation at War.* United States: Perseus Books Group.

Grewal, B. S. (2003). Johan Galtung: Positive and Negative Peace. *Affiliation: School of Social Science, Auckland University of Technology* , 1-6.

Hancock, B. E. (2009). An Introduction to Qualitative Research. *National Institute for Health Research (NHS)*, 6-7.

ILO. (2005). Meningkatkan Kesetaraan Gender dalam Aksi Penanggulangan Pekerja Anak serta Perdagangan Perempuan dan Anak. *Organisasi Perburuhan Internasional (ILO), Program Internasional Penghapusan Pekerja Anak (IPEC), Kantor Subregional untuk Asia Timur*.

Index, Global Gender Gap. (2018). Knoema: Global Gender Gap Index Liberia. November. https://knoema.com/GGGI2015/global-gender-gap-index-2019?country=1000760-liberia

Koziol, K. B. (2019). Beyond Intractability: A Case Study of Post-Civil War Peace Building Efforts in Liberia. November. https://www.beyondintractability.org/casestudy/koziol-liberia

Krisbiyantoro. P. L. (2016). *Feminisme Sebagai Teori dan Gerakan Sosial.* Research Gate Journal. Semarang: Universitas Negeri Semarang.

Marzuki. (2008). *Studi Tentang Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Berbagai Aspek.* Yogyakarta: Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta.

McCarthy, M. K. (2011). *Women's Participation in Peacebuilding: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle?* United States: University of Pennsylvania.

McCusker, S. G. (2015). *Research Using Qualitative, Quantitative or Mixed Methods and Choice Based on the Research.* New York: New York Medical College.

Olanrewaju, I. P. (2013). The Conceptual Definitions of Peace and Conflict. *Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution*, 2.

Parajon, D. B. (2007). Womens's Role in Liberia's Reconstruction. *USIP (United States Institutes of Peace) Journal,* 1-4.

Plecher, H. (2019). Statista: Liberia Unemployment Rate From 1999 to 2019. September. https://www.statista.com/statistics/808768/unemployment-rate-in-liberia/

Puspitawati, H. (2013). Konsep, Teori dan Analisis Gender . *Departemen Ilmu Keluarga dan Konsumen (Fakultas*

Ekologi Manusia - Institut Pertanian Bogor), 4-5.

Puspitawati, H. (2015). Pengenalan Konsep Gender, Kesetaraan dan Keadilan Gender. *Pusat Kajian Gender dan Anak-LPPM-IPB dan Tim Pakar Gender Pusat Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI*, 8.

Rashed, H. (2019). The Nobel Prize. November. https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2011/gbowee/biographical/

Siti Azisah, et al. (2016). *Buku Saku: Konstektualisasi Gender Islam dan Budaya.* Makasar: Seri Kemitraan Universitas Masyarakat (KUM) UIN Alauddin.

Soetjipto, A. (2013). *Gender Dalam Hubungan Internasional: Sebuah Pengantar.* Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.

Suriyasarn, N. H. (2005). Meningkatkan Kesetaraan Gender dalam Aksi Penanggulangan Pekerja Anak serta Perdagangan Perempuan dan Anak. *Organisasi Perburuhan Internasional (ILO), Program Internasional Penghapusan Pekerja Anak (IPEC),*

Kantor Subregional untuk Asia Timur, 11-13, 51, 92-94, 108.

Tavaana. (2010). Tolerance Project: How the Women of Liberia Fought for Peace and Won. November. https://tolerance.tavaana.org/en/content/how-women-liberia-fought-peace-and-won

Theobald, A. (2012). *Women and Peace: The Role of Women in Making and Building Peace in Liberia.* German: Ibidem Press.

USIP United States Institute of Peace. (2013). USIP's Work on Gender. *USIP*, 1-2.

Vriscilasari, K. A. (2013). Strategi Diplomasi Organisasi Non-Pemerintah dalam Resolusi Perang Sipil: MARWOPNET di Liberia 2000-2003. *Program Studi S1 Hubungan Internasional, Universitas Airlangga*, 15-18.

WANEP West Africa Network for Peacebuilding. (2016). Peace Insight. September. https://www.peaceinsight.org/conflicts/liberia/peacebuilding-organisations/wanep/