



Gender Gap in Education in West Kalimantan: Analysis of the Regency/City Human Development Index in the 2021-2023 Period

M Zainul Hafizi

Social Science Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
Tanjungpura University

Corresponding Author: m.zainul.havizi@fkip.untan.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the gender gap in education in West Kalimantan through an analysis of the Human Development Index (HDI) for the 2021-2023 period. The goal is to identify the differences between men and women in the education sector in different districts/cities, as well as explore the factors that cause these inequalities. With a descriptive approach and secondary data analysis from the Central Statistics Agency, it was found that most districts/cities still experience significant gender inequality. For example, Bengkayang Regency recorded the largest gap with a difference in HDI between men and women of 12.03 points, while Sambas Regency showed a smaller gap with an increasing trend for women. This study emphasizes the importance of more inclusive policies to improve access and quality of education for women, especially in disadvantaged areas. In addition, raising awareness of the importance of gender equality in education is considered important to create sustainable change. The results of this study contribute to the development of a more equitable education policy in West Kalimantan.

INTRODUCTION

Human development is one of the important indicators used to assess the progress of a country or region. The Human Development Index (HDI) is the most commonly used tool to measure people's well-being based on three main dimensions: health, education, and living standards. In Indonesia, the Human Development Index (HDI) is an important reference in formulating development policies, because it provides a comprehensive picture of the quality of life of the community. However, despite efforts to improve the overall Human Development Index (HDI), gender gaps in several aspects of development, particularly in education, remain a major challenge in various regions.

Gender equality has been a major topic in various development discussions over the past few decades. In the context of education, gender equality means giving equal access and opportunities to men and women to obtain quality education. Education plays an important role in human development, as it enhances an individual's ability to participate in social, political, and economic life. However, in many developing countries, including Indonesia, women often face greater barriers than men in accessing proper education.

In West Kalimantan, one of the provinces in Indonesia consisting of various districts and cities, Human Development Index (HDI) data shows that there is gender inequality in the education sector. This gap reflects not only the difference in access to education, but also the quality of education received by women compared to men. Some districts in West Kalimantan show more significant disparities than others, reflecting social, cultural, and economic factors that affect women's opportunities to participate in education.

The Human Development Index by gender provides a clearer picture of how human development develops in different regions. Gender-based Human Development Index (HDI) data shows that women in many districts/cities in West Kalimantan have lower scores than men, especially in education indicators. This inequality reflects the need for more specific interventions to improve gender equality in education, especially in disadvantaged areas.

Education is a human right that must be owned by every individual, both men and women. In Indonesia, efforts to achieve gender equality in education have been incorporated into various national policies. Programs such as scholarships for women, the construction of schools in rural areas, and campaigns to increase women's participation in education have been implemented. However, challenges remain, especially in areas with limited access to education and inadequate infrastructure.

In addition to infrastructure factors, local culture also has a great influence on gender equality in education. In some areas of West Kalimantan, cultural norms that limit women's role in society can have an impact on women's low participation in education. This is often exacerbated by economic factors, where families with limited resources are more likely to prioritize education for men over women. As a result, women are more likely to be trapped in a cycle of poverty that makes it difficult for them to access higher education.

The gender gap in education not only affects the individual concerned, but also has a long-term impact on the social and economic development of the area. Women who do not have access to adequate education tend to have lower economic opportunities, which ultimately impacts the well-being of families and communities as a whole. Lower women's education can also affect the health of the next generation, as educated mothers tend to be better able to provide better care for their children.

This study aims to analyze the gender gap in education in West Kalimantan using Human Development Index (HDI) data based on gender from 2021 to 2023. The main focus of this study is to identify the districts/cities that have the largest gap between men and women in the education sector and explore the factors that contribute to the gap. By understanding the root causes of this inequality, it is hoped that more effective solutions can be proposed to reduce the gender gap in the future.

An analysis of available Human Development Index (HDI) data shows that the gender gap in education varies among districts/cities in West Kalimantan. Some districts showed significant improvements in women's Human Development Index (HDI), but there were still districts that showed large differences between men and women. For example, in Bengkayang Regency, the gender gap in education is more visible compared to other districts. Meanwhile, Sambas Regency shows a more positive trend in women's participation in the education sector.

This research will also explore the policies that have been implemented by local and national governments in order to increase gender equality in education. The policy includes affirmative programs aimed at encouraging women's participation in secondary and higher education, as well as direct intervention in areas with larger gaps. In addition, the study will also highlight the role of civil society and non-governmental organizations in supporting gender equality in the education sector.

Through a descriptive approach and secondary data analysis, this study will identify the pattern of gender gap in West Kalimantan. This analysis will provide a clearer picture of areas that need greater attention in efforts to improve women's education. In addition, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of more inclusive and sustainable education policies in the region.

One of the main objectives of this study is to provide data-based recommendations on education policies that can be applied to reduce the gender gap. The recommendations are expected to assist local governments and educational institutions in designing more effective and targeted programs to increase women's participation in education.

By understanding the gender gap in education through the analysis of the Human Development Index (HDI), it is hoped that opportunities can be identified to improve access and quality of education for women in West Kalimantan. The study also aims to reinforce the argument that gender equality in education is not only important for human development, but also for broader social and economic development.

The conclusions of this study will provide a comprehensive overview of the condition of women's education in West Kalimantan and provide insight into the steps that need to be taken to achieve better gender equality in the education sector. Through more inclusive policies and well-designed programs, the gender gap in education can be minimized, resulting in a fairer and more equitable society in the future.

This approach also emphasizes that women's education is not only about achieving higher participation rates, but also about giving them the opportunity to contribute fully to society. Therefore, it is important for all stakeholders to work together in creating an environment that supports women's participation in education at all levels. This research will provide a solid foundation for the development of better policies and more inclusive education programs, which will ultimately have a positive impact on the quality of life of the people in West Kalimantan as a whole.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on the gender gap in education have been carried out in various countries, especially in the context of human development. According to a UNESCO report (2020), education is a fundamental right that must be accessed equally by all individuals, regardless of gender. Inclusive and equitable education is one of the main goals in *the Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), especially in Goal 4 which focuses on quality education, and Goal 5 which emphasizes gender equality. However, despite significant improvements in access to education for women, many countries, including Indonesia, still face a stark gap between men and women in the sector, especially in areas with limited educational resources (UNESCO, 2020).

Several studies show that the gender gap in education is not only related to access to education, but also to the quality of education that women receive. According to Hasan and Rifai (2021), although the number of women participating in primary education is increasing, they often lag behind in terms of academic achievement compared to men, especially in rural and remote areas. The study also reveals that social, cultural, and economic factors, including traditional norms that limit women's role in society, are the main causes of this disparity. These factors are often exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure, lack of supportive educational facilities, and inequities in the allocation of educational resources (Hasan & Rifai, 2021).

In addition, education policies at the national and regional levels also play an important role in overcoming or exacerbating the gender gap in education. A study by Nurdin (2019) highlights that affirmative policies, such as the provision of women-specific scholarships and inclusive skills development programs, can help reduce the gender gap in the education sector. However, the implementation of this policy is often uneven in various regions of Indonesia, especially in more geographically isolated areas. Therefore, Nurdin (2019) recommends a more targeted and local approach in education policies to ensure that women in remote areas also get equal access to quality education.

METHODOLOGY

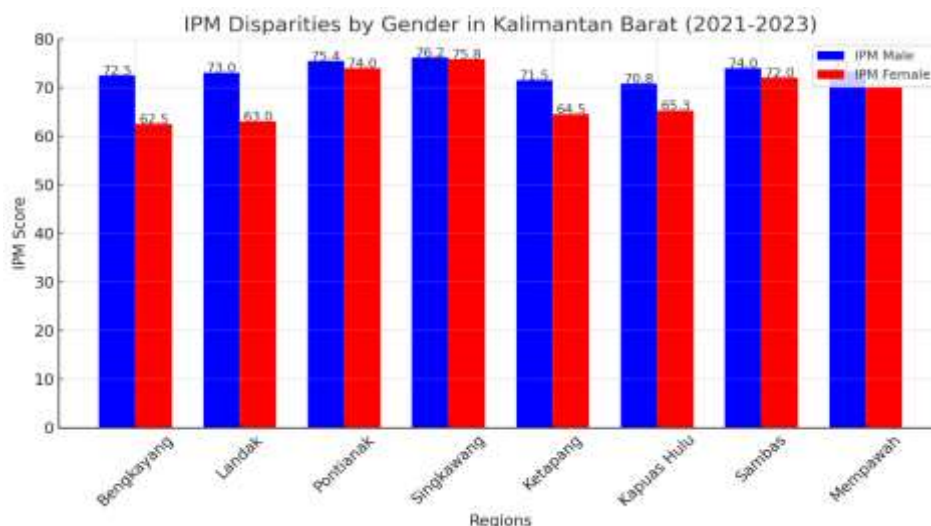
This study uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach to explore the gender gap in education in West Kalimantan during the period 2021-2023 (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015; Silverman, 2020). The qualitative approach was chosen to deeply understand the social, cultural, and economic factors that affect the difference in the Human Development Index (HDI) between men and women in various districts/cities. The secondary data used in this study comes from the official report of the Central Statistics Agency (Statistics, 2023) on the Human Development Index (HDI) based on gender, which is analyzed narratively to identify existing gap patterns.

In addition to secondary data analysis, the study also involved semi-structured interviews with key informants, such as education officials, school principals, and representatives of non-governmental organizations. This interview aims to gain additional insights into the barriers women face in accessing education and the effectiveness of local policies in reducing the gender gap. Thematic analysis techniques were used to identify the main themes from the interview results, which were then compared with secondary data to strengthen the research findings.

To improve the validity of the results, a data triangulation technique was used by comparing findings from various sources. According to Patton (2015), triangulation is a useful technique in qualitative research to verify the consistency of findings from various data sources. This process helps ensure consistency of findings and provides a more comprehensive picture of the gender gap in education in West Kalimantan.

RESEARCH RESULT

This research reveals that gender gaps in education in West Kalimantan are still highly visible in various districts/cities, based on the Human Development Index (HDI) data from 2021 to 2023. During this period, although there is an overall increase in HDI, significant differences between males and females are still evident, especially in the education indicator. The data shows that in some districts/cities, the HDI for males in education is higher than that for females, reflecting inequalities in access, quality, and educational outcomes for both genders (BPS Kalimantan Barat, 2023).



One of the main findings of this study is that districts such as Bengkayang and Landak exhibit larger gender gaps compared to other areas. In 2023, the Human Development Index (HDI) for males in Bengkayang in the education category was recorded to be 10 points higher than females. This inequality indicates the presence of structural barriers faced by women in accessing education, particularly at the secondary and tertiary levels. Factors such as cultural norms, lack of supportive educational facilities, and traditional gender roles in these regions may be the main causes of this disparity.

Conversely, some districts such as Pontianak and Singkawang show smaller gender gaps in education. Data indicates that in these regions, women are starting to have better access to secondary and tertiary education, and there is a significant increase in their participation in formal education. This is due to several factors, including affirmative policies at the local level, scholarship programs, and efforts made by educational institutions and non-governmental organizations to support women's participation in the education sector. (Kemendikbud, 2021).

However, this study also found that despite the increase in women's participation in some areas, women still tend to be trapped in an informal work cycle that does not support their socio-economic advancement. In areas such as Ketapang and Kapuas Hulu districts, for example, although there has been an increase in the Human Development Index (HDI) for women in education, its impact on their economic improvement is still limited. This indicates that better access to education does not necessarily lead to significant welfare improvement for women in these regions.

Furthermore, the findings of this study indicate that locally-oriented education policies have a significant influence on the improvement of the Human Development Index (HDI) for women in some areas. In Singkawang City, for instance, a women's empowerment program through vocational education has provided significant positive impact on the improvement of the Human Development Index (HDI) for women in education. This program is designed to provide practical skills to women that they can use to obtain better jobs and contribute to the economic well-being of their families.

Moreover, this study found that support from the community and family is crucial in enhancing women's participation in education. In Sambas district, for example, family support to encourage women to pursue higher education is strong, especially among the more educated communities. Conversely, in more remote areas, social norms that hinder women's education are still strong, resulting in low participation rates of women in secondary and higher education.

Data also reveals that economic barriers are one of the main factors limiting women's access to education. In Mempawah Regency, for example, many families have to choose between educating their sons or daughters due to financial constraints, and often prioritize boys. This situation further exacerbates gender inequality in education and perpetuates the cycle of poverty among women.

Interviews with education officials in several districts/cities indicate that local governments have started to recognize the importance of gender equality in education. In Pontianak City, for instance, policies promoting gender equality in education are being increasingly implemented, with a focus on providing scholarships for women and designing mentoring programs specifically aimed at improving women's access and quality of education.

However, this study also found that policy implementation often varies across West Kalimantan. More remote areas such as Kayong Utara and Melawi Regencies still face challenges in terms of educational infrastructure and community awareness of the importance of education for women. This highlights the need for more targeted and locally-based policy interventions to reduce gender gaps in education in these regions.

Overall, this research concludes that despite some progress in increasing women's participation in education in West Kalimantan, gender inequality remains a significant issue, particularly in rural and remote areas. To address this problem, more integrated efforts from local governments, educational institutions, and communities are needed to create a more inclusive environment for women to access quality education. The findings of this study provide a deeper understanding of the factors influencing gender gaps in education in West Kalimantan and highlight the importance of more specific and localized interventions to achieve gender equality in the education sector.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that gender gaps in education in West Kalimantan remain a significant issue, despite an overall improvement in the Human Development Index (HDI) values during the period 2021-2023. Gender disparities are particularly evident in certain districts and cities, such as Bengkayang and Landak, where the difference in HDI values between males and females in the education indicator exceeds 10 points. This indicates that access to and quality of education received by females lag far behind males in these areas, which can impact their opportunities to contribute to the economic and social sectors.

One possible factor contributing to gender gaps in education in these areas is social and cultural norms that still limit the roles of women in society. In some regions, women are still considered to have more limited roles in household settings, resulting in education not being prioritized for them. Additionally, the limited educational infrastructure and resources in rural areas further exacerbate this situation. These limitations affect women's ability to pursue higher education, thereby reducing their chances of actively participating in the formal labor market.

Conversely, in some districts and cities such as Pontianak and Singkawang, the gender gap in education is relatively smaller. These findings indicate that local policies supporting female education and empowerment programs have successfully increased female participation in education. One effective program is the provision of scholarships for women and improved access to education in rural areas, enabling women to pursue education at the

secondary and tertiary levels. The success of these initiatives demonstrates that locally designed policies can have a significant impact in reducing gender disparities.

However, despite the increase in women's participation in education in some areas, its impact on women's economic well-being remains limited. As seen in areas such as Ketapang and Kapuas Hulu, although the Human Development Index (HDI) for women in education has improved, many women remain trapped in informal jobs that do not offer economic stability. This indicates that better education is not always followed by better economic opportunities for women, especially in areas with limited access to formal employment and relevant skills training.

In addition to economic barriers, gender gaps in education are also influenced by the level of awareness in society regarding the importance of education for women. In areas like Sambas, family and community support for women's education is strong, especially among the more educated population. However, in more remote areas, this awareness is still low, resulting in low participation of women in secondary and higher education. Therefore, increasing community awareness about the importance of education for women needs to be a priority in efforts to reduce gender gaps.

It is also important to note that despite progress in some aspects, the implementation of education policies in West Kalimantan is still uneven. In more remote areas such as North Kayong Regency and Melawi, limited infrastructure and educational facilities make it difficult to effectively implement affirmative policies that support women. This highlights the need for more targeted interventions that are based on the local context to ensure that women in more remote areas also have equal access to quality education.

The success of local policies in several regions, such as Singkawang City, can serve as an example for other districts/cities that still experience significant gender gaps in education. Programs that focus on empowering women through vocational education and skills training can help women obtain better jobs and improve their quality of life. The success of these programs demonstrates that locally-based interventions, tailored to the needs and conditions of the region, are highly effective in reducing gender gaps in the education sector.

Overall, this discussion shows that gender gaps in education in West Kalimantan are not just issues of access, but also related to social, cultural, economic, and local policy factors. To address these gaps, a more comprehensive approach is needed, involving improvements in educational infrastructure, community awareness, and more inclusive and locally-based policies. Only through an integrated and collaborative approach can gender gaps in education be minimized, enabling women in West Kalimantan to actively participate in social and economic development.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study shows that the gender gap in education in West Kalimantan is still a significant issue, despite an increase in the Human Development Index (HDI) during the 2021-2023 period. This gap is most pronounced in rural and remote areas, such as Bengkayang and Porcupine, where women have more

limited access to education than men. In contrast, in urban areas such as Pontianak and Singkawang, the gender gap is smaller, largely due to affirmative programs and local policies that support increased access to education for women.

These findings highlight the importance of local-based and inclusive education policies. Programs that provide scholarships, vocational skills training, and women's empowerment have proven effective in some areas, but infrastructure challenges and resource constraints still hinder their implementation in remote areas. Therefore, more intensive efforts are needed from local governments to improve educational infrastructure and overcome social barriers that limit women's participation in education.

To address this gender gap, local governments, educational institutions, and community organizations need to work together to create an environment that supports women's education. Public awareness campaigns, especially in rural areas, must be carried out to change social norms that still limit the role of women. With these steps, it is hoped that the gender gap in education can be minimized, so that women in West Kalimantan can play a more active role in social and economic development.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Subsequent research should focus on the evaluation of affirmative policies and vocational training programs in increasing women's participation in remote areas of West Kalimantan. In addition, there is a need for a study on the influence of culture and social norms that limit women's access to education and the implementation of community-based interventions to change public perceptions. This research is expected to be the basis for formulating more inclusive and effective education policies, especially in regions that face social and economic challenges.

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