

GENDER EQUALITY IN PERSPECTIVE CULTURE: A STUDY OF ROLES AND CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN IN ENDE REGENCY, EAST NUSA TENGGARA

Fatma Wati^{1a*}, Lely Suryani^{2b*}, Kristianus Jago Tute^{3c}

^{1,2,3}Universitas Flores, Ende, Indonesia

^a fatmawatiuniflor@gmail.com

^b lelypane@gmail.com

^c jtutekristian@gmail.com

(*) Corresponding Author:

fatmawatiuniflor@gmail.com

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 01-10-2025

Revised : 25-10-2025

Accepted : 15-11-2025

KEYWORDS

*Gender,
Local culture,
Ende women,
Patriarchy,
Equality*

ABSTRACT

Gender equality is an issue crucial to the development of social and economic conditions in Indonesia, including in Ende Regency, East Nusa Tenggara. This region is still heavily influenced by the culture of patriarchy that places women in subordinate positions. Condition This limits women's access to education, employment, and public employment decisions, although they play a significant role in the economy and family. Research This aim analyzes the role of Ende women in social, economic, and cultural contexts, identifying obstacles faced, as well as exploring strengthening strategies for gender equality. Research This use approach is qualitative and quantitative (case study). Data collected through a survey (questionnaire) on women active in various fields, reinforced with interviews, together figure customs, communities, and gender activists, as well as studies documentation. Quantitative data analysis is mainly done using simple linear regression with the R-squared model to measure the influence of culture and the ANOVA test to compare different variables. Findings study show that mark culture local in a way significant influence formation roles, gender barriers still exist strong, and policy government area new give contribution partial. Therefore, achieving gender equality in Ende Regency requires synergy between public policy, community support, and transformative culture. This effort must include strengthening the capacity of women to be able to participate actively in development. Approaching structural and cultural in a simultaneous way is required. To realize sustainable gender equality in Ende Regency.

This is an open access article under the CC-BY-SA license.



INTRODUCTIONS

Gender equality is a key issue for the global and national development agenda. In Indonesia, efforts to realize equality are often hampered by local culture (Habibie et al., 2024; Zaenudin et al., 2023). Ende Regency in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) is a region with rich natural resources. strong traditions, where culture has a significant local influence on social construction and the role of women in society. Strong cultural norms of patriarchy in the NTT region (including Ende) often put women in subordinate positions, both in the domestic and public spheres (I. Harahap, 2019; Modiano, 2021; You, 2019).

This gender gap is evident in a factual way in Ende Regency. Although Ende women show a very active role in the sector economy, it looks from the Female Labor Force Participation Rate (TPAK), which reached 72.86% in 2024, that this figure still shows a significant gap. Female TPAK is 9.18% lower compared to the TPAK for men, which reached 82.04% (Sakernas, 2024). In addition to the gap economy, deep-rooted restrictions from culture are also seen in the realm of politics. Other research shows low representation of women in the Ende DPRD, which is caused by obstacles in social

culture that are still strong, where men tend to evaluate women as only responsible for household matters (Nago, 2024). This difference in access messages, though, shows that women in a way work hard (high TPAK), indicating that the local system culture in a way effectively becomes a structural barrier to the creation of full gender equality in Ende Regency. This condition generally limits opportunities for women to participate fully in the fields of education, economics, and decision-making (Dewi et al., 2025; N. Harahap & Jailani, 2024; Iriansyah, 2017; Thania, 2024).

Dynamics gaps dominated by the cultural factors above indicate that efforts towards gender equality in Ende require understanding in-depth, culturally sensitive research. Therefore, this research departs from the need to elaborate on deeper cultural and structural aspects that have not yet been identified in a clear way. This study aims to understand how women in Ende Regency negotiate the role they are in within the local culture framework, as well as identify obstacles and strategies taken in fighting for gender equality. The results of this study are expected to provide recommendations based on local (emic) and sustainable perspectives for government areas as well as stakeholders' interests in formulating virtue empowerment for women in Ende.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative and quantitative approaches. using a case study design. The research location is in Ende Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, with a focus on communities representing a dynamic local culture. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with key figures, including traditional leaders, community leaders, and women active in various fields. In addition, observation, participation, and documentation studies were also conducted to enrich understanding of the context. Data analysis techniques used simple linear regression with the R-squared model to explain the influence of gender equality in perspective culture: a study of the role and challenges of women in Ende Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, and the ANOVA test.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

1) The Influence of Local Cultural Values on the Role of Women

Regression test results show that local mark culture is very influential in the formation of women's roles in the domestic, customary, and social environment of life in the community in Ende Regency, with a contribution of 94% (R Square = 0,940). This shows that cultural values still become the dominant factor in determining the position and role of women. Culture's inherent patriarchy, such as the distribution of traditional gender roles and the emphasis on domestic obligation, as well as limited involvement in public space, strengthens the social construction that places women in subordinate positions.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Local_Cultural_Values	80	23,00	39,00	37,7625	1,71548
The Role_of Women	80	23,00	42,00	39,8000	1,93829
Valid N (listwise)	80				

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Square Change	F Change	df 1	df 2	Sig. Change	F
1	,970 ^a	,940	,940	,23761	,940	1232,538	1	78	,000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), NZX

b. Dependent Variable: NZY

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	69,587	1	69,587	1232,538	,000 ^b
	Residual	4,404	78	,056		
	Total	73,991	79			

a. Dependent Variable: NZY

b. Predictors: (Constant), NZX

Findings This massive quantitative data ($R\ Square = 0,940$) is reinforced by qualitative data originating from in-depth interviews and observations. Results of interviews with key figures, customs, and women show that interpretation to mark tradition, like Sa'o Nggua (traditional house), and values descent (patrilineal) explicitly put authority for taking decisions highest in males (Mosalaki). Although women are recognized as the main guards of culture, for example, as weavers who produce inheritance customs, the roles they are in in the realm of customs are still framed as implementers, not determiners of policy. Observations also show that, in the meeting community, women tend to speak only if requested by the character men. This fact directly explains why the culture's own strength is an almost perfect explanation (94%) against the role of women in Ende.

The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Suryakusuma et al. (2011), that states that patriarchal culture in Indonesia is still very strong in influencing gender relations in the realm of family and society. In addition, the findings Huda & Dodi (2020); Sakir et al. (2024), confirm that local culture-laden traditional marks often hinder women from participating fully in the public realm.

2) Obstacles Faced by Women in Fighting for Gender Equality

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
GENDER_EQUALITY	80	23,00	42,00	39,8000	1,93829
LOCAL_CULTURE	80	23,00	39,00	37,7625	1,71548
Valid N (listwise)	80				

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Change	Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change
1	,970 ^a	,940	,940	,23575	,940	1232,538	1	78	,000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), NZX

b. Dependent Variable: NZY

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	68,499	1	68,499	1232,538	,000 ^b
	Residual	4,335	78	,056		
	Total	72,834	79			

a. Dependent Variable: NZY

b. Predictors: (Constant), NZX

Analysis results show the existence of significant obstacles as big as 94% ($R\ Square = 0,940$) faced by women in the struggle for gender equality in the midst of a patriarchal culture. Obstacles in the form of:

1. Restrictive social norms room movement for women.
2. Limited access to education and employment.
3. Lack of support from family and community for women's in the public room.
4. Double burden: demands domestic at a time economy.

The height numbers that explain This obstacle (94%) is a direct consequence of strong cultural influence (point 1). Interview data with women who are active in the field economy (such as MSMEs) shows that point (d), Double Burden, is the most felt obstacle. A source person stated, "Money is earned in the fields or markets, but when you return home you still have to cook and take care of the children; the husband doesn't help, that's our responsibility." Observation data also confirms this. point (c) Lack of family support: women attending off-site village training often must ask permission repeatedly and are questioned by the family. This is compared This is in contrast to several other studies

Amalia (2020); Juwairiyah et al. (2022); Mutmainah (2020); Swastuti (2013), that show that women start getting more space in the activities economy through MSMEs. This difference confirms that in Ende, the obstacles culture (social norms and lack of support) is still more dominant than the incentive economy. These results are in line with research Ernanda (2023); Qurrata'AYun et al. (2024); Rokhimah (2014), that emphasizes that gender gaps are maintained by social norms and patriarchal power structures.

3) The Role of Regional Policy and Social Support

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Standard Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Change	Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change
1	,745 ^a	,555	,550	,64938	,555	97,462	1	78	,000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), NZX

b. Dependent Variable: NZY

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41,099	1	41,099	97,462	,000 ^b
	Residual	32,892	78	,422		
	Total	73,991	79			

a. Dependent Variable: NZY

b. Predictors: (Constant), NZX

Data obtained confirm that policy in the government area and social support contribute 55,5% (R Square = 0,555) to strengthening achievement of gender equality. This means that existing policies start to have an impact but are not yet fully effective without strong support from society and family.

Empowerment programs for women and training skills, as well as facilitation of business capital that has been done in the government area, of course, open opportunities. However, the implementation is still constrained by local culture and the level of literacy of women.

The results of this study are in line with a study conducted by Tackling Social Norms a Game Changer for Gender Inequalities United Nations Development Programme (2020), which shows that policy gender affirmative action is only effective if accompanied by changes in social norms and improvements in public awareness.

4) Improvement Policies and Strategies Gender Equality

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41,099	1	41,099	97,462	,000 ^b
	Residual	32,892	78	,422		
	Total	73,991	79			

a. Dependent Variable: NZY

b. Predictors: (Constant), NZX

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Change	Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change
1	,739 ^a	,546	,540	,66244	,546	93,677	1	78	,000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), NZX

b. Dependent Variable: NZY

ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41,108	1	41,108	93,677	,000 ^b
	Residual	34,228	78	,439		
	Total	75,336	79			

a. Dependent Variable: NZY

b. Predictors: (Constant), NZX

The test results show an existence contribution of 54.6% (R Square = 0.546) in the policy government area and support social in strengthening achievement strategies for gender equality. Meanwhile, 45.4% the rest is greatly influenced by the women's own internal strategies, such as improving self-capacity, solidarity between women, and the courage to negotiate a role in the middle culture patriarchy.

The results of this study are in line with the findings Basiroen et al. (2024); Rosyidi & Rofiq (2025), which emphasize the importance of combining public policy, community support, and individual strategies for women in pushing social transformation toward gender equality.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that local mark culture plays a very large role in determining the position of women in Ende Regency. With the contribution by 94%, cultural patriarchy that emphasizes the traditional division of labor, domestic obligations, and limitations on public space for women becomes the dominant factor in constructing gender relations. This strengthens analysis Huda & Dodi (2020); Sakir et al. (2024); Suryakusuma et al. (2011), about the role of patriarchal culture as an inhibitor of gender equality in Indonesia.

Obstacles are significantly experienced by women, also 94%, not only in the form of social norms but also limited access to education and employment, as well as the burden of a double existence. This finding is in line with Ernanda (2023); Qurrata'Ayun et al. (2024); Rokhimah (2014), who stated that the gender gap is perpetuated by patriarchal social structures, although it differs from the results of Amalia (2020); Juwairiyah et al. (2022); Mutmainah (2020); Swastuti (2013), which show more open space for women through MSMEs. This difference confirms the importance of local cultural context in determining women's participation in opportunity.

From the side policy, support for government areas contributed 55,5% to improved gender equality. However, the effectiveness of the policy is still limited because it is hampered by the value of culture and low literacy among women. Tackling Social Norms a Game Changer for Gender Inequalities United Nations Development Program (2020), emphasizes that policy gender affirmative action is only effective when accompanied by changes that mark social awareness collectively. Thus, the policy's structural need must walk along with the cultural changes so that the results are more significant.

This study also found that women's internal strategies play an important role. With a contribution of 45,4%, efforts like improving self-capacity, solidarity between women, and the ability to negotiate in a patriarchal culture become public support policy successes. This is in line with Basiroen et al. (2024); Rosyidi & Rofiq (2025), confirm the need for synergy between policy, community, and individual strategies to achieve social transformation.

Thus, the achievement of gender equality in Ende Regency requires a holistic, encompassing reconstruction of the culture, improvement of literacy for women, strengthening of internal strategies, and implementation of a more effective affirmative action policy. Combined change, structural and cultural, becomes key to speeding up the realization of sustainable gender equality.

CONCLUSION

The local patriarchal culture in Ende Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, is a major obstacle, contributing 94% to maintaining women's subordinate position. This cultural dominance is reflected in the traditional division of labor and restrictions on public spaces, which cause women to face significant challenges also at 94% including limited access to education and employment. Although local government policies provide support (55.5%), their effectiveness is limited due to clashes with cultural norms and low female literacy. These challenges underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions that empower women and promote gender equality. Community engagement and education initiatives could play a crucial role in shifting perceptions and breaking down the barriers imposed by entrenched cultural practices.

Therefore, gender equality in Ende requires interventions that go beyond a purely structural policy framework. Achieving sustainable gender equality requires a holistic approach that synergizes change at three levels. First, cultural

reconstruction to negotiate patriarchal norms. Second, strengthening women's internal strategies including increasing personal capacity and solidarity (45,4% contribution) acts as pillars supporting policy success. Third, more rigorous implementation of affirmative action policies accompanied by increased literacy and collective social awareness. By combining structural and cultural changes, Ende Regency can accelerate the realization of meaningful and transformative gender equality.

REFERENCE

- Amalia, A. A. (2020). Prototipe Desain Ruang Produktif Kelompok Ibu Rumah Tangga Nelayan di Kampung Ujung Kassi Kelurahan Barombong Kota Makassar. *Jurnal Pengabdian Dan Pengembangan Masyarakat*, 3(1), 400–409.
- Basiroen, V. J., Mahmudah, H., Hidayat, A. A., Judijanto, L., Laksono, R. D., & Ilma, A. F. N. (2024). *Women Empowerment: Women's Journey to Empowerment*. PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia.
- Basiroen, V. J., Mahmudah, H., Hidayat, A. A., Judijanto, L., Laksono, R. D., & Ilma, A. F. N. (2024). *Women Empowerment: Women's Journey to Empowerment*. PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia.
- Dewi, A. K., Septiani, R. E., Rahmah, S., Aini, S. S. Q., & Dewantara, G. F. (2025). Pengaruh Pendidikan Perempuan terhadap Kemiskinan di Indonesia: The Impact of Women's Education on Poverty in Indonesia. *Economic and Education Journal (Ecducation)*, 7(1), 137–148.
- Ernanda, M. Y. (2023). Feminisme dalam Konteks Etika Kritik dan Refleksi terhadap Pemahaman Tradisional. *Literacy Notes*, 1(2).
- Habibie, S. Y., Saragih, H. J. R., & Suwarno, P. (2024). BUDAYA KEPEMIMPINAN STRATEGIS DALAM MENGHADAPI ANCAMAN NON TRADISIONAL DI INDONESIA MELALUI PENINGKATAN PARTISIPASI PEREMPUAN PESISIR. *NUSANTARA: Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, 11(8), 3290–3303.
- Harahap, I. (2019). *Posisi Perempuan Dalam Sistem Kekerabatan Patriarkhi*. Bypass.
- Harahap, N., & Jailani, M. (2024). Eksistensi perempuan dalam budaya patriarki pada masyarakat muslim. *Education and Social Sciences Review*, 5(2), 80–88.
- Huda, H. M. D., & Dodi, L. (2020). *Rethinking peran perempuan dan keadilan gender: Sebuah konstruksi metodologis berbasis sejarah dan perkembangan sosial budaya*. CV Cendekia Press.
- Iriansyah, H. S. (2017). Tantangan dan peluang perempuan dalam berpolitik di Indonesia: Masyarakat patriarki. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan (JIP) STKIP Kusuma Negara*, 8(2), 1–14.
- Juwairiyah, I., Andrianto, M., & Syafitri, R. (2022). Peran perempuan dalam membangun umkm di kota tanjungpinang. *Jurnal Humaya: Jurnal Hukum, Humaniora, Masyarakat, Dan Budaya*, 2(2), 150–160.
- Modiano, J. Y. (2021). Pengaruh Budaya Patriarki Dan Kaitannya Dengan Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga. *Sapientia Et Virtus*, 6(2), 129–140.
- Mutmainah, N. (2020). Peran perempuan dalam pengembangan ekonomi melalui kegiatan UMKM di Kabupaten Bantul. *WEDANA: Jurnal Kajian Pemerintahan, Politik Dan Birokrasi*, 6(1), 1–7.
- Nago, S. R. (2024). *Analisis Rendahnya Keterwakilan Perempuan di DPRD Kabupaten Ende*.
- Qurrata' Ayun, N., eka Pratiwi, S., Sari, D. A., & Noormala, S. (2024). Menggugat Kekuatan Patriarki: Hak-hak perempuan dalam transformasi menuju kesetaraan gender. *Interdisciplinary Explorations in Research Journal*, 2(2), 677–694.
- Rokhimah, S. (2014). Patriarkhisme dan ketidakadilan gender. *Muwazah*, 6(1), 132–145.
- Rosyidi, L., & Rofiq, A. (2025). Peran Perempuan Dalam Pembangunan Ekonomi dan Penguatan Kesetaraan Gender. *Jurnal Istiqro*, 11(1), 20–34.
- Sakir, A. R., Amaliah, Y., & Lukman, J. P. (2024). The Village Government's Strategy to Enhance Women's Participation in Development in Desa Poleonro, Lamuru District, Bone Regency. *Hulondalo Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan Dan Ilmu Komunikasi*, 3(1), 12–22.
- Suryakusuma, J. I., Katjasungkana, N., Notosusanto, T., & Chabibah, U. (2011). *Ibuisme negara: Konstruksi sosial keperempuanan orde baru*. Komunitas Bambu.
- Swastuti, E. (2013). Peran Serta Perempuan dalam Pengelolaan Usaha Dagang Kecil dan Menengah (UDKM) di Jawa Tengah. *Media Ekonomi Dan Manajemen*, 27(1).
- Tackling social norms a game changer for gender inequalities United Nations Development Programme. (2020). In *United Nations Development Programme*. <https://www.undp.org/arab-states/publications/tackling-social-norms-game-changer-gender-inequalities>
- Thania, T. (2024). Perempuan Dan Pendidikan Membangun Generasi Masa Depan BAB. *Perempuan Dan Pendidikan: Membangun Generasi Masa Depan*, 82.

You, Y. (2019). Relasi gender patriarki dan dampaknya terhadap perempuan hubula suku dani, kabupaten jayawijaya, Papua. *Sosiohumaniora*, 21(1), 65–77.

Zaenudin, A., Riono, S. B., Sucipto, H., Syaifulloh, M., & Wahana, A. N. P. D. (2023). Penguatan Peran Perempuan dalam Menggerakkan Ekonomi Desa melalui Edukasi UMKM Produk Lokal. *Era Abdimas: Jurnal Pengabdian Dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Multidisiplin*, 1(4), 1–14.

Skripsi:

Nago, S. R. (2024). *Analisis Rendahnya Keterwakilan Perempuan di DPRD Kabupaten Ende*.

Online journal:

Tackling social norms a game changer for gender inequalities United Nations Development Programme. (2020). In *United Nations Development Programme*. <https://www.undp.org/arab-states/publications/tackling-social-norms-game-changer-gender-inequalities>

Sakernas, B. (2024). *Tingkat Partisipasi Angkatan Kerja (TPAK) Menurut Kelompok Umur Kabupaten Tanjung Jabung Barat - Tabel Statistik - Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Tanjung Jabung Barat*. <https://tanjabarkab.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/2/NDA5IzI=/tingkat-partisipasi-angkatan-kerja-tpak-menurut-kelompok-umur-kabupaten-tanjung-jabung-barat.html>