



The Influence of Cultural and Family Factors on Gender Discrimination in Female Entrepreneurs

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ABSTRACT

Gender discrimination remains a global issue where disparities in opportunities between men and women persist across various social, educational, and economic contexts. This research aims to analyze the influence of cultural and family factors on gender discrimination, particularly in shaping women's access to education and entrepreneurship. Using a qualitative descriptive method with a literature review approach, the study explores historical and contemporary perspectives, beginning from ancient Greek civilization to the struggles of R.A. Kartini in advocating for women's rights in Indonesia. The analysis employs egalitarian theory, which emphasizes justice as equality—highlighting the right of women to receive the same educational opportunities and the freedom to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors. The findings reveal that cultural norms and family structures significantly affect women's opportunities for equal education and participation in business, with similar patterns identified across several countries despite differing socio-cultural contexts. The study concludes that culture and family influence women's opportunities to obtain equal education and their rights to become female entrepreneurs, and this occurs in several countries. The implications of this research suggest the need for education reforms, family-based empowerment programs, and the promotion of egalitarian values to foster women's independence and active participation in social and economic development.

Keywords: Culture; Family; Gender Discrimination; Female Entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION

Gender differences remain a problem in several areas, such as discrimination in work groups, both in companies and in organizations other than companies (Pace & Sciotto, 2021; Young et al., 2023). Gender discrimination is not the only issue, but sometimes the mindset of society and the culture within a country or region can also exacerbate the discrimination. An act of discrimination can be said to be an act that differentiates one object from another, or an act of discrimination can also be associated with the morals of an individual towards another individual or towards another group. In a study conducted by, it was (Widarwati et al., 2019) stated that discrimination is unequal treatment of a person or group of people in the field based on certain attributes such as race, religion, and social class. The emergence of this inequality is caused by a wrong perception of other people or other groups of people who come from different backgrounds. Discrimination can occur anywhere, both at home and abroad. The underlying cases of discrimination vary; they can originate from the workplace, or a cooperative relationship between parties, but gender discrimination, especially in a job, still often occurs. Discriminatory treatment and inequality can cause harm and can reduce the welfare of life for the parties involved, until now gender-based

discrimination is still felt almost throughout the world including in countries where democracy has been considered achieved, in this context women are the ones who are most likely to experience discriminatory treatment (Akbar et al., 2021). In an act of discrimination there are main indicators that can be the cause of the emergence of such discrimination, namely if there is an unbalanced proportion of members of certain groups who hold less desirable positions in an institution without considering their preferences or abilities, this can occur in cases of discrimination in the workplace. (Caleo et al., 2020; Ryan et al., 2023; Hing, 2023; Birkelund, 2022; Widiastuti, 2024; Kaur & Mann, 2021; Verniers & Vala, 2018; Manzi, 2024; Zhang & others, 2023; Bue et al., 2022)

The history of discussions about women has existed since the era of Greece, Rome, India and China, where in the social context women were still placed as second humans or as secondary humans. Around the Middle Ages, women experienced a phase of chaos and turmoil in status that was the peak of Greek civilization. In the Jewish view, the dignity of women was equal to that of servants. In Hindu and Chinese civilizations, the right to life for a married woman must end at the time of her husband's death, the wife must be burned alive when her husband's body is burned, until this tradition ended in the 17th century AD (Afida Hilyatul Sumayyah, 2023). Discussions about women are also inseparable from discrimination that also occurred in Indonesia such as during the time of RA Kartini, an interesting turning point from RA Kartini's era was regarding discrimination in the opportunity to get education for all women at that time, the mindset of the community motto that said that women were not allowed to have desires or ideals, where they could only submit and obey existing regulations then there was only one ideal that a woman could have, namely marriage, a bond that did not guarantee a woman would get her freedom (Pramudawardhani Ira & Estiana Eni, 2019). If seen from the explanation, it can be said that culture can also be a factor in discrimination such as in India where women are not required to attend school and end up being married at a young age, because in Indian culture women are responsible for working at home and taking care of their household chores only while men are responsible for working to earn a living outside the home and have the freedom to pursue education. This can be linked to gender stereotypes where gender stereotypes are an idea related to gender differences, such as in a Nabdan women's culture originating from Ghana in a study conducted by (Adom & Anambane, 2020) where women are expected to be gentle, shy, quiet and less conscious of money, not ambitious but hardworking. They are expected to be more of a homemaker than a breadwinner for the family therefore they are considered incapable of handling activities related to wealth creation or in order to meet the needs of their family's life. In addition to gender stereotypes there is a patriarchal culture where the culture believes men as the dominant power holders in all aspects of society this can produce certain assumptions about women that influence the restrictions on women's rights and freedoms, which in turn these restrictions give rise to issues of gender inequality that lead to discrimination against women (Aprilianda & Krisnani, 2021). Patriarchy itself views the distribution of power that outperforms men as in patrilineal lineage, the rights of the eldest son, personal sovereignty in social relations, participation in public roles, for example in politics, religion, and occupation. From the culture of stereotypes and patriarchy can lead to gender discrimination against women as happened to women in Sri Lanka by a study conducted,

(Setyawan, 2020) namely one of the factors that also caused gender discrimination in Sri Lanka was the various traditions and cultures that grew and developed long before the country's independence. This discriminatory tradition has become increasingly deeply rooted for more than hundreds of years, the consequence is that it is very difficult to eradicate from the midst of the conditions of Sri Lankan society that holds beliefs and maintains its traditions for generations, almost all groups in Sri Lanka strongly oppose efforts to gender equality. Patriarchy can also occur in a family that occurred in Nepal as explained by (Xheneti et al., 2019) namely in the context of the family, patriarchy acts through hierarchical control of structures, where age and gender significantly influence freedom of choice and access to labor and household resources.

Gender discrimination in Indonesia has been regulated in Law No. 7 of 1984 which contains the ratification of the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in Indonesia, although it has been regulated by a regulation, it still occurs, especially in the employment sector. This study was conducted to determine the factors that can influence gender discrimination against women who work as entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs themselves are individuals who run businesses by seeing opportunities and running their businesses with the hope of their business sustainability, in this study are female entrepreneurs. In a study conducted by (Welsh et al., 2021), (Hafeez et al., 2023), (Cheema et al., 2024) explains in Arab countries or countries that adhere to several Arab cultural principles that a female entrepreneur can run her business well if given the opportunity to start a business regardless of the culture in her country. This research is in line with that conducted (Acevedo-Duque et al., 2021) in Latin America which is still thick with the culture and traditions of the country, where this study explains that with a balance between tradition or culture and business opportunities given to female entrepreneurs without gender discrimination, this can help the family economy and equal opportunities in the business world. This opinion is also in line with research conducted by (Hafeez et al., 2023) explaining that gender discrimination negatively moderates the relationship between women's entrepreneurial orientation and business performance. However, in research conducted by (Ramadanti et al., 2021) explaining that to be able to achieve company goals, gender discrimination against female employees must be avoided because with gender equality in the company, company goals will be achieved. (Hafeez et al., 2023; Akhter, 2023; Singh, 2022; Bastian, 2019; Acevedo-Duque et al., 2021; Nassif et al., 2025; Koch et al., 2025; Pierli, 2022; Noor, 2025; Arja et al., 2022)

The purpose of this research is to analyze the factors that influence gender discrimination against women, particularly those working as entrepreneurs, by examining the roles of culture, family, and social structure that shape women's opportunities in education and business. This study seeks to explore how cultural traditions, patriarchal family systems, and societal stereotypes limit women's access to equal treatment in the workforce and entrepreneurship, despite the existence of regulations such as Law No. 7 of 1984 on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The expected benefits of this study are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it contributes to the development of gender studies, particularly by linking egalitarian theory with real-world challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in various cultural settings. Practically, the

results of this research are expected to serve as a reference for policymakers, educators, and business institutions in formulating strategies that promote gender equality, strengthen women’s entrepreneurial capacity, and create an inclusive social environment where women have equal opportunities to pursue education, career, and economic independence.

METHOD

This study used a literature review method to identify, evaluate, and interpret relevant research related to the topic (Enita & Wening, 2023). The literature review summarized and analyzed previous research findings to compare with this study's focus. Data sources included international and national articles related to the topic. From 100 articles found using the same keywords, 70 were relevant, and after a thorough review, 12 articles were selected as references. Articles were searched using Google Scholar and the Publish or Perish application.

Table 1. Previous Research

No	Research Identity	Method	Variables	Results
1	(Sifrainsani et al., 2023) The ILO's Role in Addressing the Gender Wage Gap in Indonesia in 2020. Indonesian Scientific Articles, December 2023 Vol 12(3)	Qualitative with Secondary Data	ILO, Labor Wage Gap, Gender, Indonesia	When discriminatory conditions apply to an individual, wage inequality persists. Therefore, the Indonesian government continues to struggle to equalize wages for female workers. Indonesia must overcome many challenges, including eliminating societal stereotypes about women, as they are essentially equal.
2	(Widyanti Rahmi & Basuki, 2023) The Influence of Cultural Factors and Gender Roles on Female Entrepreneurship in MSMEs. Business and Management Communication Articles, July 2, 2023 Vol 10 (2)	Quantitative with Questionnaire and Interview Data (Primary)	Masculinity Level, Gender Gap, Indonesia (Banjarmasin)	There is no relationship between masculinity levels and business type. Masculinity levels do not appear to be a cultural dimension that directly influences entrepreneurship levels in MSMEs, indicating that there are no significant differences in gender roles across these business types. This is despite the sample showing balanced masculinity levels, reflecting a society that places a high value on stereotypical masculine values such as assertiveness, ambition, power, and materialism, and where a wider gender gap might be expected.
3	(Setiadi Teguh et al., 2023) Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in Urban Slums: An Action Research Approach. Civilization Service Articles, Vol 4 (2) 2023	Descriptive Qualitative	Empowerment, Women Entrepreneurship, Urban Slums, Indonesia	Empowering women entrepreneurs in urban slums is a crucial effort to achieve sustainable development. This study demonstrates how various factors, such as product innovation, utilization of local resources, training and capacity building, and social and cultural

No	Research Identity	Method	Variables	Results
				factors, play a crucial role in advancing women's roles in business in communities that may face significant economic and social challenges.
4	(Ramadanti et al., 2021) The Influence of Cooperation Between Superiors and Subordinates on Gender Discrimination at AICE Group Indonesia UPN Veteran Jakarta Article, 2020	Qualitative	Cooperation, Aice Group, Gender Discrimination, Employment, Indonesia	Cooperation between superiors and subordinates within the Aice Group plays a crucial role in achieving company goals. Goals will not be achieved if company members do not work in harmony. It is understandable that goals will be more easily achieved if each individual collaborates. Therefore, it can be concluded that uniting employees, both superiors and subordinates, can be done through cooperation, which is the most effective way to achieve company goals with good results. Through cooperation, the needs and desires of many parties can be achieved.
5	(Karningsih, 2022) Elimination of Discrimination Against Female Workers from a Gender Perspective Scientific Magazine of FISIP UNTAG Semarang, Vol 1 (22) April 2022	Qualitative	Elimination of Discrimination, Labor, Women, Development, Indonesia	Gender becomes an issue because it brings various disparities in the situation of men and women in various fields, and gender will become a problem if there is injustice for men and women, for example, one gender is disadvantaged, one gender is differentiated in status, one gender is treated lower, and is less competent than the other gender and legal protection for workers is a manifestation of efforts to realize general welfare.
6	(Singh & Dash, 2021) Gender Discrimination in Accessing Finance by Women-Owned Businesses Journal of International Women's Studies, Vol 22 (9) September 2021	Qualitative (Literature Review)	Gender Discrimination, Financial Institutions, Access to Credit	Our research findings indicate that women-owned firms are more likely to be creditworthy than men-owned firms in terms of financial penetration and financial market restrictions. Our key findings focus on evaluating the gender-subordination approach adopted by financial service providers to women-led businesses in their efforts to secure financing.
7	(Xheneti et al., 2019) Negotiating Business and Family Demands Within a Patriarchal Society – The Case of Women Entrepreneurs in The Nepalese Context	Qualitative	Informal Entrepreneurship, Gender, Patriarchal Culture, Nepal	This research contextualizes the process of negotiating business and family demands by highlighting how women legitimize their business activities, respond to family/community expectations, and mobilize support to find fulfillment in their businesses.

No	Research Identity	Method	Variables	Results
	Entrepreneurship & Regional Development An International Journal, Vol 31 (31) December 2019			Overall, our research contributes to a direct family business perspective that incorporates the everyday practices of entrepreneurial activity among those disadvantaged in terms of resource access within a specific sociocultural context.
8	(Hafeez et al., 2023) The Moderating Impact of Gender Discrimination Between Women Entrepreneurial Orientation and Venture Performance Research Foundation For Humanity, Vol 12 (3) 2023	Quantitative with Survey Data (Primary)	Glass Ceiling, Entrepreneurship, Women Entrepreneurs, Gender Discrimination, Business Performance, Pakistan	This study found that <i>the glass ceiling</i> partially mediates gender discrimination, negatively moderating the relationship between women's entrepreneurial orientation and business performance. It also suggests that reducing the <i>glass ceiling</i> and gender discrimination could improve women's entrepreneurial performance and potential in Pakistan. Furthermore, this study provides practical implications for policymakers, practitioners, and educators to support and empower women entrepreneurs in their businesses.
9	(Cheema et al., 2024) Unmasking Inequities: Addressing Discrimination and Challenges Confronted by Women Entrepreneurs During Pandemics, With a Roadmap For Future Empowerment Sunbul Naem Cheema Remittances Review, Vol 9 (1) January 2024	Qualitative with Questionnaire Data	Women Entrepreneurs, Covid-19, Post-Pandemic Recovery Preparation, Pakistan	This study found that there are very serious economic and financial problems faced by women entrepreneurs due to the spread of the coronavirus and the lockdown in Pakistan, especially in major cities like Lahore and Karachi. This situation has created sustainability challenges and minimized business opportunities for women-owned businesses. This study also highlights the resilience and tenacity of women in entrepreneurship by examining how the pandemic has impacted them and how they have overcome these obstacles. The analysis reveals a range of challenges, including caregiving duties, financial instability, and adapting to digital transformation.
10	(Adom & Anambane, 2020) Understanding The Role Of Culture and Gender Stereotypes in Women Entrepreneurship Through The Lens Of The Stereotype Threat Theory Article Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies, Vol 12 (1) 2020	Qualitative with Interview Data	Culture, Female Entrepreneurs, Gender Stereotypes, Ghana, Sub-Saharan Africa	The main finding of this study is that culture, through gender stereotypes, acts as a "push" or motivating factor for women entrepreneurs, leading to more necessity-driven women entrepreneurs than opportunity-driven ones. However, gender stereotypes have been shown to be a barrier to the success of some

No	Research Identity	Method	Variables	Results
				women-owned businesses. Because of gender stereotypes, many women entrepreneurs hesitate to venture into "unknown sectors"—unfamiliar sectors—and run larger businesses that might generate higher profits.
11	(Shastri et al., 2019) Motivation and Challenges of Women Entrepreneurs (Experiences of Small Businesses in Jaipur City of Rajasthan) International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, Vol 39 (5) 2019	Qualitative	Women, Institutional Theory, Motivation, Entrepreneurship, Challenges of Women Entrepreneurs, Jaipur India	The study revealed that pull factors, including the drive for creativity, innovation, self-identity and independence, and community service, are the primary motivations for women entrepreneurs to start their businesses. From an institutional theory perspective, the primary challenges faced by women entrepreneurs stem from informal institutions. A significant challenge is the inadequate recognition of their professional entrepreneurial abilities by society. Furthermore, cultural norms reflected in gender-specific role distributions result in work-life balance issues. A challenge arising from formal channels is that these institutions appear to be non-integrative and gender-differentiated.
12	(Berguiga & Adair, 2021) Funding Female Entrepreneurs in North Africa: Self Selection Vs Discrimination International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship, Vol 13 (4) 7 July 2021	Quantitative	Bank Loans, Discrimination, Entrepreneurship, Gender, North Africa	Neither self-selection nor discrimination impacted female owners compared to male owners or co-workers, while female managers self-selected. While the WBES sample of women includes some bias, this study ultimately emphasizes the importance of the under-surveyed informal sector, which includes the majority of (micro)enterprises, and the loan funding provided by the microfinance industry to female entrepreneurs' businesses. Microfinance filled the working capital gap but not the fixed asset gap. Business size was the primary factor explaining self-selection and discrimination.

source: author (2025)

From the research results in the table, it was evident that gender discrimination against women still occurred in various countries, with multiple contributing factors. In Indonesia, wage equality for female workers did not match the wages received by men. Research by (Sifraingsani et al., 2023) explained that addressing the wage gap for female workers remained a government

challenge. Similarly, in African countries, gender stereotypes strongly influenced women and often led to discrimination. However, in some cases, these challenges motivated women to overcome adversity by starting their own businesses. Research by (Adom & Anambane, 2020) found that culture, through gender stereotypes, acted as a driving force that motivated female entrepreneurs, with many driven by necessity rather than opportunity.

Another key factor contributing to gender discrimination was patriarchal culture, which upheld the belief that only men had the right to lead. This was apparent in Nepal, where patriarchal norms persisted both in communities and families. Research by (Xheneti et al., 2019) noted that family and community influences could both reinforce gender discrimination and inspire women to prove themselves capable by building their own businesses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. PRISMA 2020 Diagram – Systematic Study Selection Process

PRISMA Stages	Number of Articles	Information
Identified articles	1,270	Initial search results from Google Scholar, SINTA, DOAJ
Duplicate & irrelevant	846	Duplication, years outside 2020–2025, irrelevant
Filtered through abstract	100	Checked the suitability of variables and study types
Full-text articles reviewed	70	Checked for suitability of methods, indicators, and data validity
Articles analyzed	32	Final articles to be analyzed and coded in this SLR

source: author (2025)

a. Gender discrimination

Gender discrimination is an unequal treatment between men and women that affects an individual's life experience. Gender discrimination is one of the most common forms of discrimination in everyday human life, acts of gender discrimination can easily be found in various places (Kasih et al., 2024). According to data from UNICEF published in 2023, 1 in 4 women aged 15-19 years are not employed or do not receive proper education compared to 1 in 10 men, from this it can be said that gender discrimination still occurs, especially against women. Although technological developments and changing human needs cannot eliminate acts of gender discrimination experienced by women, changes in mindsets that occur do not make gender discrimination against women disappear. However, with changes in human mindsets that think that women have the same opportunities as men, such as in terms of getting the opportunity to get a proper education or in the world of work. In the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, it has been regulated regarding the equality of rights between citizens, namely in Article 27 paragraph (1) which states that all citizens have the same position in law and government and are obliged to uphold the law and government without exception, this means that there is no difference between the rights received by women or men because in equality all Indonesian citizens have the same rights. Justice that is created without any distinction even though it has been regulated in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, gender discrimination still occurs among women,

case after case occurs to women in Indonesia in particular. Cases of discrimination can occur by bringing up religious and cultural issues as the main factors causing discrimination, then patriarchal traditions can also cause gender discrimination against women. As explained in the research, (Sulistiowati Yuni, 2020) the emergence of injustice against women under the pretext of religion is caused by the wrong implementation of the teachings of religion itself, which is caused by the influence of historical factors, environment, culture and patriarchal traditions in society, thus giving rise to individual attitudes and behaviors that from generation to generation determine the status of women and gender inequality.

b. **Businessman**

A successful business is not determined by who runs it, but by how it grows and develops. There is no gender discrimination in running a business, and all parties involved must participate in its development. While many women have successfully developed businesses in various fields, gender discrimination is undeniable. Some people label or stereotype women who develop their businesses, believing that their businesses are unfit to compete in the male-dominated business world. This is in line with research conducted by (Sarina et al., 2021) explaining the societal belief that women should take care of the household, a stereotype that women working outside the home disrupts household harmony. This is not unique to Indonesia, but also persists in other countries, such as several Arab countries, Pakistan, and India, which adhere to the belief that women's work is confined to the home and that they have fewer rights than men. However, the existence of gender discrimination actually encourages women to rise up and prove themselves that women can start their businesses and develop their businesses just like men. In a study conducted by (Ahmed, 2024) stated that working women must struggle hard to create a work-family balance because they are burdened by family duties and childcare due to common traditions from this statement women play a big role in family life and their lives as individuals.

Causative factor

c. **Culture**

Culture can be a strong factor in the emergence of gender discrimination against women, in particular. The strong cultural values that exist in each region will further encourage the emergence of such acts. One culture that can encourage the emergence of discrimination is patriarchy, where this culture is a belief that the structure of roles carried out by men has the most important role. This is also in line with research conducted by (Gracia et al., 2020) the study, which explained that patriarchy gives special rights to men and burdens for both men and women. This social system marginalizes men and women in their respective portions. In one of the tribal cultures in Indonesia, namely patrilineal and matrilineal cultures, patrilineal itself, according to research conducted by, (Rahmayanty et al., 2023) is a line of descent originating from the father. Descendants from the father (patrilineal) are considered to have a higher position, seen from their rights, and the child

will also receive more rights. Then, in the patrilineal system, men are also viewed as the dominant party and ignore the role of women in the social order, thus giving rise to gender discrimination.

d. Family

The family is the first place for a person to learn before pursuing education in the outside world, and that's where the family plays a crucial role in providing a child with the necessary skills. Research has shown (Kiram, 2020) that family attitudes and behaviors regarding gender significantly influence the formation of a society, as the family is the smallest unit within it. Furthermore, the family also performs several important functions within society, including being the first agent of socialization for children, providing emotional and practical support to its members, and providing social identity to family members. The idea of gender must also be rooted in the family because the family is the first environment of trust where children are socialized with knowledge about gender. This can be a legacy that determines a person's adult behavior that is not easily changed over time (Umumararungu & Kabera Bazubagira, 2020). However, the family can also be a factor causing gender discrimination against women, as happened in Balinese society which adheres to a patriarchal culture where in a study conducted by (Hasan Nur & Maulana Robby, 2014) stated that discriminatory treatment against women still occurs in terms of receiving equal education, as well as a mindset where men have a high position in community life or in other words Balinese women are treated differently in obtaining opportunities to get an education because the value of boys is higher than that of girls.

CONCLUSION

Gender discrimination affects many women across various countries, influenced by both internal factors like family and external factors such as culture. Achieving equality requires not only equal access to education but also equal opportunities to start and grow businesses, which can enhance individual abilities and contribute to family and national economic growth. Interestingly, in some regions, gender discrimination has motivated women to overcome barriers by launching their own businesses, with several female-led enterprises achieving rapid success compared to those run by men. Future research should explore the mechanisms through which gender discrimination can act as a catalyst for female entrepreneurship and identify strategies to replicate these positive outcomes in different cultural contexts.

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