

Public Perception on Women's Economic Empowerment in Kutai Kartanegara Regency

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ABSTRACT

Empowering women necessitates the support and understanding of the community. This research seeks to: (1) determine the public perceptions of women's economic empowerment; (2) determine the problems and needs for women's economic empowerment; and (3) develop strategies for women's economic empowerment. This research employed a combined method (quantitative-qualitative) and surveyed the residents of Kutai Kartanegara Regency through face-to-face interviews. In this research, the entire population of Kutai Kartanegara Regency was analyzed. Using the Slovin formula, a sample size of up to 420 individuals was calculated. The analysis was conducted using descriptive quantitative methods. The result of this study shows that majority of people in Kutai Kartanegara Regency believe that women should work so that they can contribute to the family's economic well-being. However, they want women to be able to work in the informal sector, such as entrepreneurship, which offers flexible hours and does not interfere with family time. In the economic sector, government intervention has been implemented to empower women. The economic sector is empowered through the development of skills and the provision of capital. This form of intervention is partly in line with community needs, but the process of women's empowerment requires additional, more comprehensive policy interventions.

Keywords

Women's economic empowerment;
public perception;
Kutai Kartanegara regency.

1. INTRODUCTION

Empowerment is a process and effort to obtain or provide power, strength, and ability to weak individuals and communities so that they can identify, analyze, determine needs and potential, as well as problems faced, and at the same time choose alternative solutions by optimizing their own resources and potential. (Mardianto and Soebianto, 2013). The purpose of the empowerment process is to assist individuals in escaping destitution and precarious conditions. Women are regarded to be a vulnerable group. Empirical facts indicate that the quality of life of women is still lower than that of men. In other words, despite the fact that quite a few Indonesian women have demonstrated their ability to compete and make no less significant contributions in

various fields of development, beginning with science, technology, politics, economics, social, and even defense and security, there are still a great number of Indonesian women who have not been able to reveal their full potential and identity due to structural, cultural, and natural constraints and poverty. Kutai Kartanegara Regency has a population of 729,382, with nearly half (348,322) being female (BPS Kutai Kartanegara Regency, 2022). The Gender Development Index (IPG) and the Gender Empowerment Index (IDG) are, however, still below the national average. In 2021, the IPG for Kutai Kartanegara was 79.12, well below the national IPG of 91.27. In 2021, the value of IDG in Kutai Kartanegara will be 62.76. IPG is an indicator that evaluates achievements in human development by taking gender into account. The composite measure is comparable to the Human Development Index (IPM) in terms of health, education, and economics, but concentrates on inequality factors at various levels between men and women. IDG demonstrates whether women can play an active role in economic and political life. IDG emphasizes participation by measuring gender inequality in political participation, decision-making, and economic resource

accessibility. Inversely proportional to the Anugerah Parahita Ekapraya award garnered by Kutai Kartanegara Regency from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection are the IPG and IDG achievement scores. Kutai Kartanegara Regency received the APE award in the main category in 2020, one level below the highest category, which is mentor. The Parahita Ekapraya Award (APE) recognizes the commitment and role of leaders of ministries, institutions, and regional administrations in achieving gender equality and justice through gender mainstreaming strategies. In discussions with BPS East Kalimantan, it was revealed that the women's income composite was one of the lower pulleys of the East Kalimantan IPG and IDG values. In the meantime, the APE evaluation is based on seven gender mainstreaming prerequisites, including commitment, policies, institutions, resources, tools, disaggregated data, and community participation. The complexity of this composite on women's empowerment merits serious consideration. It is anticipated that all strategies for empowering women can operate in an integrated and comprehensive manner, considering economic, social, educational, cultural, and political factors. The community's understanding of women's empowerment in various disciplines must be identified and mapped. For local governments to devise strategies to maximize the role of women in each field, in accordance with societal needs and expectations.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Empowerment

Empowerment is the transformation of power relations between men and women on four distinct levels: family, society, the market, and the state. (Zakiyah, 2010). The position of women will only change when women can be independent and exercise control over their own lives. Women's empowerment is a crucial strategy for enhancing women's independence and ability to work by enhancing their own potential. The women's program approach in development began to reflect the increasing awareness of women's roles. This is predicated on the notion that women require independence for development to be felt by all parties. Women are extremely valuable human resources; therefore, their position must be incorporated into development. Two characteristics define women's empowerment. First, as a manifestation of emancipatory interests that encourage society's participation in development collectively. Second, as the process of involving individuals or societies in the process of enlightenment, awareness, and collective organization in order for them to participate (Zakiyah, 2010).

According to Nugroho (2008), the following are the goals of the women's empowerment program:

- 1) Increase the capacity of women to become active participants (subjects) in development programs, so that they do not merely become objects of development as has been the case thus far.
- 2) Enhance the capacity of women in leadership positions to enhance their bargaining position and participation in every development as planners, implementers, and monitors and evaluators.
- 3) Increase the capacity of women to manage household-scale businesses, small industries, and large industries in order to support rising household requirements, and to create productive and independent work opportunities.
- 4) Expanding the role and function of women's organizations at the local level as a forum for empowering women so that they can participate actively in development programs in their communities of residence.

Women's empowerment is a strategic method for enhancing women's potential and expanding their positions in both public and private spheres. According to Zakiyah (2010), the following strategies can be used to empower women:

- 1) Dismantling the notion that women are household complements.
- 2) Provide diverse abilities to women.
- 3) Providing as many opportunities as feasible for women to participate in or pursue as broad an

education as possible.

The objective of women's empowerment is to support and expedite the attainment of quality of life and equality between men and women in all fields or sectors. These indicators demonstrate the achievement of women's empowerment (Suharto, 2003):

- 1) There are adequate facilities to encourage women to pursue the maximum amount of education feasible.
- 2) There is an increase in the participation and zeal of women in their pursuit of education and instruction for themselves.
- 3) The increasing number of women attaining advanced degrees, so that women have more opportunities to pursue careers on par with males.
- 4) The number of women in legislative, executive, and government institutions is increasing.
- 5) Increase the participation of female activists in educational empowerment campaigns for women.

2.2. Perception

Perception is the process of organizing and interpreting stimuli received by an organism or individual so that they become meaningful; it is an innate activity. Individuals can adopt a variety of responses in response to their perceptions. The stimulus that elicits a response from an individual depends on the individual's attention. Individuals do not share the same sentiments, cognitive abilities, and experiences when perceiving a stimulus; consequently, the results of perception can vary from person to person (Bimo Walgito, 2004).

3. METHOD

This research was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative method utilizing survey techniques and questionnaires. The qualitative approach, meanwhile, employs in-depth interviews. This study's population consists of the residents of Kutai Kartanegara Regency in 18 sub-districts with a combined population of 729,382 (BPS Kutai Kartanegara Regency, 2022). Using the Slovin formula, the sample size was calculated to be 399 (adjusted to 400 individuals). The analysis and discussion method are carried out using a quantitative-descriptive approach. The analysis was carried out descriptively based on the average perception value.

Table 1.
Sampling Technique Per Sub-District

Sub - district	Population (people)	n=400			
		Sample/District (95%)			400 Sample
Samboja (23 village/urban village)	67306	36,70	37	40	4 village
Muara Jawa (8 village/urban village)	42001	22,90	23	20	3 village
Sanga-Sanga (5 village/urban village)	19767	10,78	11	10	2 village
Loa Janan (8 village/urban village)	68067	37,11	37	40	4 village
Loa Kulu (15 village/urban village)	52459	28,60	29	30	3 village
Muara Muntai (13 village/urban village)	19432	10,60	11	10	1 village
Muara Wis (7 village/urban village)	9398	5,12	6	10	1 village
Kota Bangun (21 village/urban village)	36883	20,11	21	20	3 village
Tenggarong (14 village/urban village)	106553	58,10	59	60	6 village
Sebulu (14 village/urban village)	41014	22,36	23	20	2 village
Tenggarong Seberang (18 village/urban village)	67912	37,03	38	40	4 village
Anggana (8 village/urban village)	33183	18,09	19	20	2 village

Muara Badak (13 village/urban village)	46945	25,60	26	30	3 village
Marang Kayu (11 village/urban village)	26934	14,69	15	10	1 village
Muara Kaman (20 village/urban village)	46819	25,53	26	30	3 village
Kenohan(9 village/urban village)	11664	6,36	7	10	1 village
Kembang Janggut (11 village/urban village)	25775	14,05	15	10	1 village
Tabang (19 village/urban village)	11514	6,28	7	10	1 village
Kutai Kartanegara(237 village/urban village)	733626	400	410	420	
Sample of Kutai Kartanegara Regency (95%)	399,78202				
Rata Rata	40757				
Average	5999427				

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Respondent Characteristics

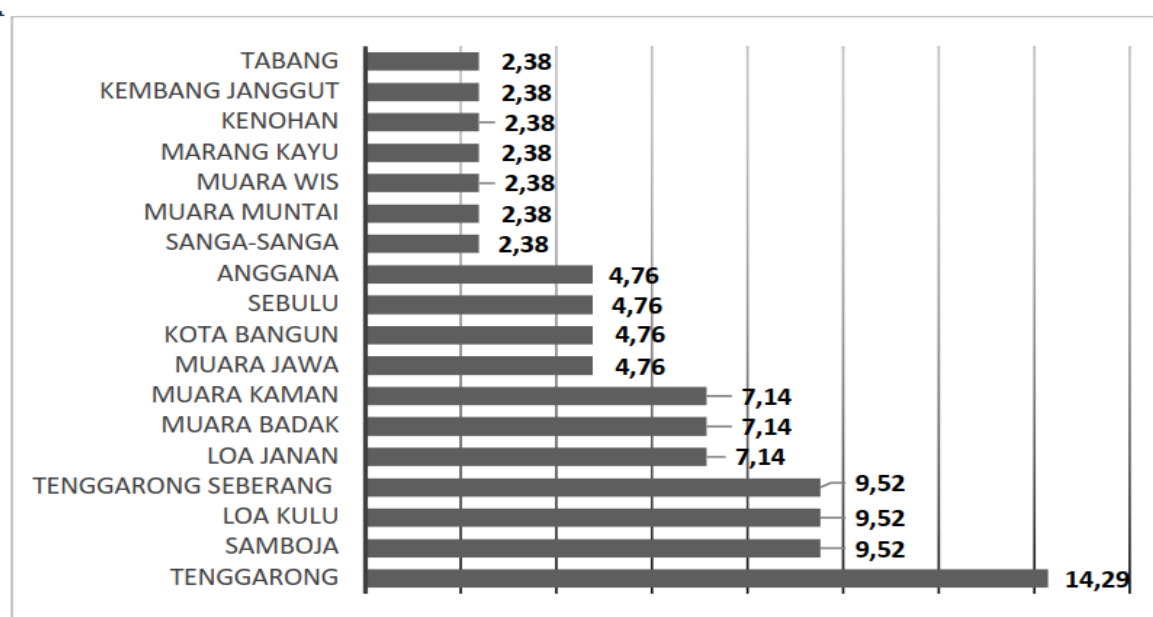


Figure 1.

Distribution of Respondent Based on Location

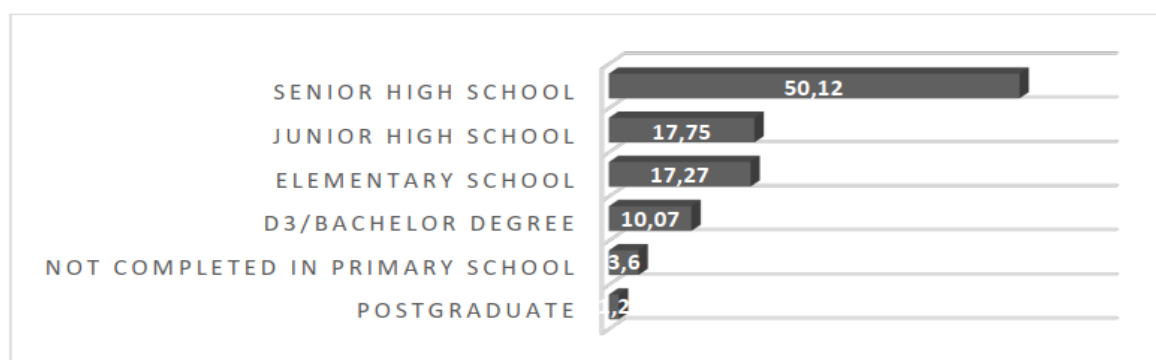


Figure 2.

Distribution of Respondent Based on Education

Presentation of Public Perception on Women's Economic Empowerment in Kutai Kartanegara Regency

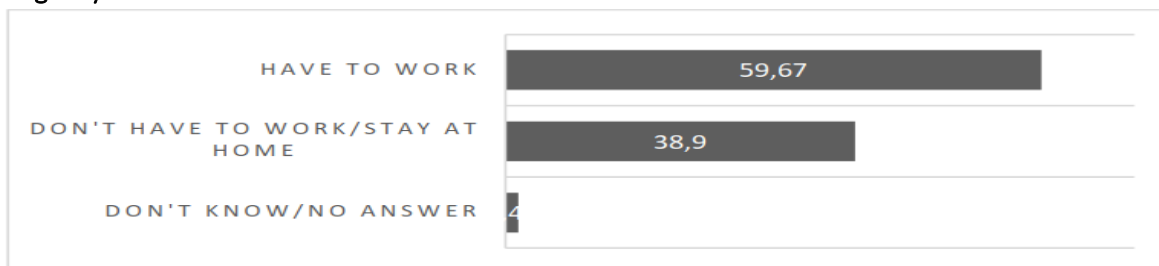


Figure 3.
The Necessity for Women to Work

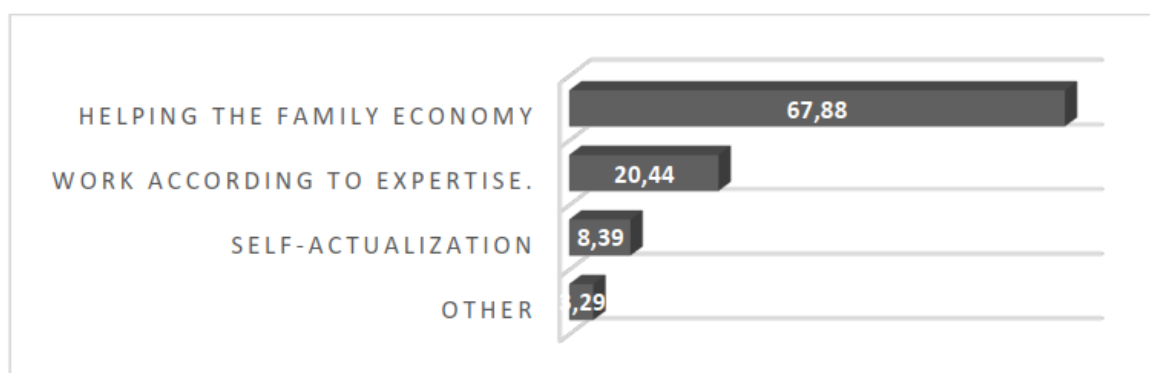


Figure 4.
Reasons for Agreeing with women working

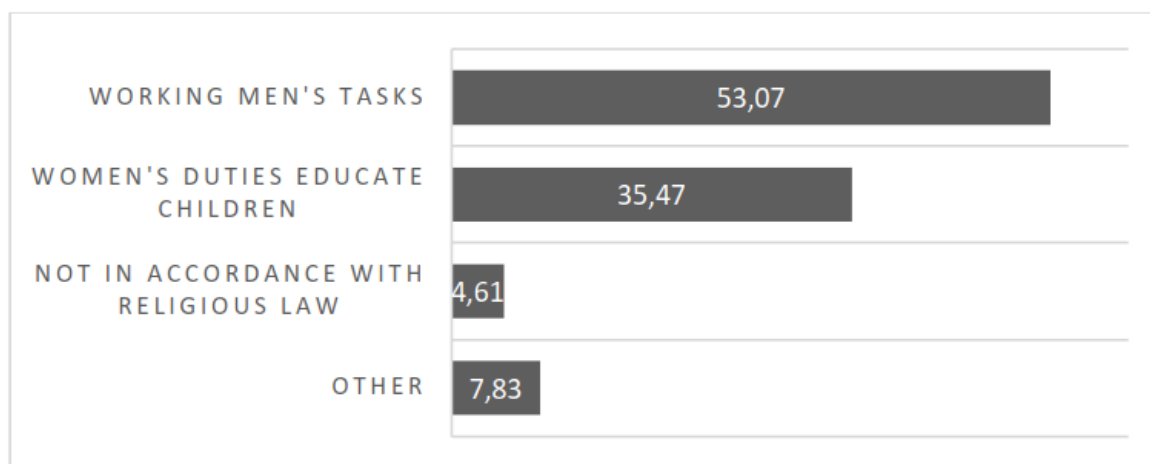


Figure 5.
Reasons for not agreeing with women working

To successfully empower women, the support of the surrounding environmental conditions is very influential. A person's perception of something tends to be positive if he is in an environment where he is used to seeing and feeling that thing. Of the total respondents, 56.37% stated that the average number of women in their environment worked. Of the 50% female respondents, 40.08% were working. The sector of work undertaken is work in the informal sector (65.62%), one of which is as an entrepreneur (9.82%). Meanwhile, the other 34.38% work in the formal sector.

The culture that is developing in society is still not in favor of women, resulting in women who work having a double burden, namely acting as workers (public- productive) as well as acting as housewives (domestic-reproductive). Women are required to be able to maximize these two roles.

When respondents were asked whether women's work interfered with their role in the urban village, 78.83% agreed to answer no, while 21.17% answered yes. The reason that women's work interferes with their role in the family is because the family's time is reduced (66.67%).

The entry of women into the public sector is caused by various factors. For women with higher education, the reason for working is to improve their existence. Meanwhile, for women who have low education and come from families who are not well off, the most classic reason is to earn income to meet family needs. This is in line with survey results, which state that women's work is beneficial for the family, including increasing income (52.63%), improving the family economy (41.30%), and also improving family status (5.67%).

The survey collects data about the jobs that respondents want. From data per sub-district, the majority want a type of entrepreneurial work whose time is flexible and can be combined with housework or while looking after children, such as trading, catering, or online shops. However, specifically for Kota Bangun sub-district and Marang Kayu sub-district, the dominant jobs desired are formal jobs in companies or as educators or health workers. Although there are still those who choose not to work, the number is small and spread across Samboja (11.11%), Loa Kulu (15.79%), Tenggarong (27.27%), Sebulu (7.14%), Tenggarong Seberang (5.26%), and Tabang (20%).

Table 2.
Jobs Desired Per Sub District

Sub district	Formal	Informal	Enterpreuner	Not Working
Samboja	16,67	0,00	72,22	11,11
Muara Jawa	0,00	0,00	100,00	0,00
Sanga-sanga	0,00	0,00	100,00	0,00
Loa Janan	16,67	8,33	75,00	0,00
Loa Kulu	26,32	0,00	57,89	15,79
Muara Muntai	0,00	0,00	100,00	0,00
Muara Wis	0,00	0,00	100,00	0,00
Kota Bangun	55,56	0,00	44,44	0,00
Tenggarong	13,64	4,55	54,55	27,27
Sebulu	21,43	0,00	64,29	7,14
Tenggarong Seberang	36,84	0,00	52,63	5,26
Anggana	10,00	0,00	90,00	0,00
Muara Badak	30,77	7,69	61,54	0,00
Marang Kayu	75,00	0,00	25,00	0,00
Muara Kaman	0,00	0,00	100,00	0,00
Kenohan	20,00	0,00	80,00	0,00
Kembang Janggut	20,00	0,00	80,00	0,00
Tabang	0,00	20,00	60,00	20,00

Women's economic empowerment is present as one of the efforts towards gender equality, poverty alleviation, and inclusive economic growth. Investment (empowerment) in women can expand women's access to education and various employment opportunities. When girls and young women have better access to education, they can have better careers. Women's increased participation in the labor market can boost the country's economic growth. The government's role in investing in and empowering women is an important thing to do. Government programs related to women's empowerment, especially in the economic sector, are an accelerated effort to increase economic growth. Regarding government programs for women's economic empowerment, the survey showed that 51.67% of respondents said there were and 48.38% said there were none. Many programs are varied, such as skills training (48.37%) and capital assistance (36.18%). It is hoped that these various women's economic empowerment programs can produce good urban outcomes for women entrepreneurs, such as increasing the scale of business (75.55%),

making the production process easier (80.72%), and increasing the value or form of business results (80.44%) and make it easier to market business results (77.43%). All kinds of support for increasing business from the government, both in the production and marketing processes, ultimately result in an increase in income, which can later improve the family economy. From the survey results, many respondents (80.18%) stated that the government's economic empowerment program could increase income and improve the family economy.

Problems and Needs for Women's Economic Empowerment in Kutai Kartanegara Regency

Table 3.

The Need for Women's Economic Empowerment in Kutai Kartanegara Regency

Empowerment Sector	Detail of Needs
Economic Sector	Business capital assistance
	Business skills guidance
	UMKM Guidance
	Economic sufficiency
	Basic food and money assistance
	Stabilization of prices for basic necessities
	Equal distribution of jobs and training
	Ease of doing business

Table 4.

Problems of Women's Economic Empowerment in Kutai Kartanegara Regency

Empowerment Sector	Problem Details
Economic Sector	Economic problems
	Lack of business capital
	Necessities are expensive.
	Lack of employment opportunities
	Lack of skills or training
	Lack of business coaching
	The amount of living costs
	Business opportunities for women
	Market for product marketing

4.2. Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy

The women's empowerment strategy is an effort to solve the problems faced by society so that it can fulfill society's desires and needs in a better and more advanced direction. From the survey results, it was determined that many people in all sub- districts in Kutai Kartanegara Regency were aware of the implementation of the economic empowerment program carried out by the government, although in several sub-districts there were quite significant numbers regarding their ignorance about the government's program, such as Loa Janan, Loa Kulu, and Kembang Janggut. From the data in Table 4, it can be identified that community problems related to women's economic empowerment are economic problems, capital, employment, basic needs, business skills and training, etc. The identification of these problems is important in formulating appropriate strategies in each sub-district. In detail, empowerment strategies that can be implemented to address the problems and needs of the community in Kutai Kartanegara Regency are as follows:

Table 6.
Economic Empowerment Strategy of Kutai Kartanegara Regency

No	Empowerment Sector	Sector Problem	Empowerment Strategy
1.	Economic Sector	Lack of business capital	Provide capital strengthening or facilitate obtaining capital loans without collateral, either through banks or other microcredit facilities.
		Lack of business skills or training	Entrepreneurship training based on local and regional potential Production and management/administration technical training
		Lack of business guidance	Assistance with business activities, from the production process to marketing. Development of small industrial centers in an area Guidance for certain business fields and regions through KUB (joint business groups) and cooperatives.
		Economic problems (high prices of basic necessities, cost of living, etc.)	1. Stabilization of prices for necessities BLT (Direct Cash Assistance)
		Ease of Doing Business	Simplification of business licensing procedures Improvement of facilities and infrastructure
		Lack of employment opportunities and business opportunities	Training through BLK Internship program. Training through community education Informal course coaching Development of information centers Strengthening the implementation of labor policies that accommodate gender equality

5. CONCLUSION

Majority of people in Kutai Kartanegara Regency believe that women should work so that they can contribute to the family's economic well-being. However, they want women to be able to work in the informal sector, such as entrepreneurship, which offers flexible hours and does not interfere with family time.

Government intervention in empowering women has been implemented in the economic, political, and social fields. Empowerment in the economic sector is carried out through skills training and capital assistance.

Identification of the problems of women's empowerment in Kutai Kartanegara Regency in the economic sector: 1) lack of business capital; 2) lack of business skills and training; 3) lack of business development; 4) economic problems; 5) ease of doing business; and 6) lack of employment opportunities and business opportunities.

Economic empowerment strategies that can be applied to overcome the problems faced in Kutai Kartanegara Regency are as follows:

- 1) Provide capital strengthening or facilitate obtaining capital loans without collateral, either through banks or other microcredit facilities.
- 2) Entrepreneurship training based on local and regional potential
- 3) Production and management/administration technical training
- 4) Development of small industrial centers in an area

- 5) Guidance for certain business fields and regions through KUB (joint business groups) and cooperatives
- 6) Stabilization of prices for necessities
- 7) BLT (Direct Cash Assistance)
- 8) Simplification of business licensing procedures
- 9) Improvement of facilities and infrastructure
- 10) Training through BLK
- 11) Internship program
- 12) Training through community education
- 13) Informal course coaching
- 14) Development of information centers
- 15) Strengthening the implementation of labor policies that accommodate gender equality.

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