Accelerating the Macroeconomics of SDG - 5: An Analysis of the Impact of the Gender Development Index and Gender Empowerment Index on the Economic Development of Central Java Pro

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Abstract

Based on the 5th Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), gender equality is an important instrument that supports national development. In Indonesia, women are still experiencing gender gaps or inequalities in the form of violence, double burdens, and subordination. In this case, it is hoped to identify the factors causing gender inequality and its consequences, especially for women, in realizing economic development in Indonesia. This study uses a literature analysis approach by dissecting the factors causing women in Indonesia to face gender inequality in carrying out domestic and public roles in the social environment. In the literature analysis, it can be seen at a macro level, that indicators from the United Development Programme (UNDP) such as the Gender Empowerment Index and the Gender Development Index. Judging from the results of the analysis based on related indicators, from the regencies in Central Java, there are still Gender Development Index and Gender Empowerment Index values that are not optimal in their implementation. Therefore, there is a need to increase gender equality for women to encourage economic development in Indonesia in order to achieve sustainable development and foster an adaptive attitude towards the social environment.

Keywords: *Gender Development, Double Burden, Economic Inequality, SDGs – 5, IDG, IPG.*

INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality is experienced by almost all countries and has become a major issue in every nation, particularly in Indonesia, regarding the implementation of National Development. According to Hayya et al. (2025), gender inequality refers to the unfair differences between women and men in accessing resources, opportunities, as well as in fulfilling social and economic rights. Women are frequently victims of gender inequality and experience a double burden within their households. This is aligned with Sudirman & Susilawaty (2022), who state that women and children are considered marginalized communities who have lost their basic rights and opportunities. Furthermore, Maretha et al. (2025) also emphasize that gender inequality in the workforce is reflected in various aspects, ranging from differences in labor participation rates and income gaps to

limited access to decision-making positions and structural roles.

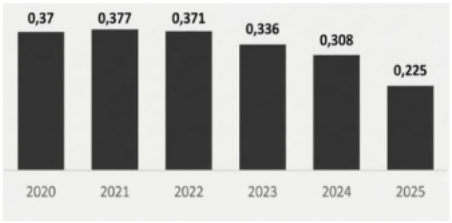
Gender equality represents a balance of treatment between men and women, ensuring the absence of discrimination and patriarchal attitudes in both domestic life and the workplace. As explained by Tue et al. (2023), gender equality also signifies the opportunity to have equal access to and control over decision-making. Gender equality will serve as the most fundamental pillar in development efforts, particularly within the economic sector in Indonesia. The empowerment of gender across all regions is crucial to ensure that regional economic development can be optimally realized. Women need to be a priority of focus because they possess the greatest potential to support the SDGs.

According to Hasibuan et al. (2025), the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Index (GEI) serve as key composite indicators to assess gender equality from two complementary perspectives. The Gender Empowerment Index (GEI) will play a crucial role in mitigating the phenomenon of gender inequality in Central Java Province. Human development progress in Indonesia can be measured based on the achievements of the Human Development Index (HDI); however, from a gender perspective, measurements using the Gender Development Index (GDI) serve as an important indicator when evaluated through the lens of biological sex (Annastasya, 2024). Nonetheless, efforts toward gender empowerment will certainly face both internal and external challenges. As noted by Maslakhah et al. (2025), gender inequality is particularly salient in developing regions where women face structural barriers in accessing education, formal employment, financial services, and healthcare.

Based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Jawa Tengah (2025), it can be observed that the Gender Inequality Index value in Central Java Province has experienced a significant decline.

Table 1.

Development of the Gender Inequality Index in Central Java Province.



Source: Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025.

The graph above indicates that a value closer to 0 signifies lower gender inequality and an increase in gender equality. However, from 2020 to 2021, the Gender Inequality Index experienced an increase from 0.37 to

0.377, as that period was still affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequently, from 2022 to 2025, the gender inequality figure in Central Java Province continuously and significantly declined, reaching 0.225 in 2025. This demonstrates that economic growth in Central Java Province has increased substantially, and gender empowerment has operated optimally, particularly for women, who hold the most significant influence in navigating the economy.

Based on data from BPS (2025), in addition to optimal gender empowerment, improvements in reproductive health can also influence regional development. This is evidenced by the proportion of women aged 15–49 who gave birth to live-born children outside of health facilities (MTF). Meanwhile, the proportion of women aged 15–49 at their first live birth who were under 20 years old also experienced a decrease of 0.023. Subsequently, this figure rose from 0.249 in 2024 to 0.266 in 2025. Furthermore, improvements in the labor market for women were also observed within the legislative environment. In 2024, women's representation in the legislature stood at 17.65%, which then increased to 20.34% in 2025, representing a growth of 2.69%. This indicates that the gender gap between men and women in Central Java Province is progressively narrowing.

This study utilizes a literature review approach with secondary data obtained from literature studies to analyze gender equality across regencies and cities in Central Java Province, using the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Index (GEI).

Subsequently, secondary data were obtained from the Central Bureau of Statistics (Badan Pusat Statistik) of Central Java for the year 2025. The literature study was conducted by gathering data from sources retrieved from Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and the Central Bureau of Statistics, spanning the last 5 years with relevant topics. The findings obtained were used to analyze economic growth across regencies and cities in Central Java Province through the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Index (GEI). Furthermore, in reviewing gender inequality in Central Java Province, it is necessary to utilize the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Index (GEI) to facilitate the measurement of gender development and gender empowerment achievements.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The results of the analysis regarding the acceleration of achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 related to gender equality reveal a correlation between the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Index (GEI) toward economic development and the implementation of regional policies in conducting gender mainstreaming, as well as the role of education in empowering women within the political sector and community environments.

1. **Gender mainstreaming (GM) and the implementation of gender-responsive policies at the regional level in Central Java Province.**

   The analyzed literature indicates a significant correlation between gender and macroeconomic policies within each region. Researchers reveal that Banjar City has established highly crucial policies in running public services to achieve inclusive development. Similarly, Kebumen Regency has innovated a program called *Wani Lemper* (*Wanita Melek Perencanaan* / Women Planning Literate) with the objective of creating women-friendly villages in the border areas of Nunukan Regency. This program is expected to mitigate gender-based violence and empower women's resources in village development. Furthermore, the Special Region of Yogyakarta has established the PUG Working Group (POKJA), Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (PPRG) teams, and specialized institutions for gender empowerment that have been integrated by macro-regions in the respective areas. However, Pandeglang Regency still experiences limitations in gender-responsive human resources.

2. **Macroeconomic impacts driven by the Gender Development Index and the Gender Empowerment Index.**

   Based on previous literature, Gorontalo Province exhibits a significant positive correlation with economic development within its region. Furthermore, the GEI (Gender Empowerment Index) of Gorontalo Province also indicates an increase, showing that the role of women is highly influential in economic decision-making. Women also receive equitable treatment in achieving SDG targets, particularly regarding their bargaining power within the family and social environments. Subsequently, the regions of Central Java and North Kalimantan have created local crafts and entrepreneurship programs that exert a significant positive influence on gender equality. However,

Sukabumi City still experiences gender inequality due to a decline in women's active participation within the economic and political sectors, which has driven a decrease in the region's GEI. Nevertheless, economic data from the area indicate that Sukabumi City has experienced an increase in its GDI.

3. **The role of education and inclusive leadership in regional development.**

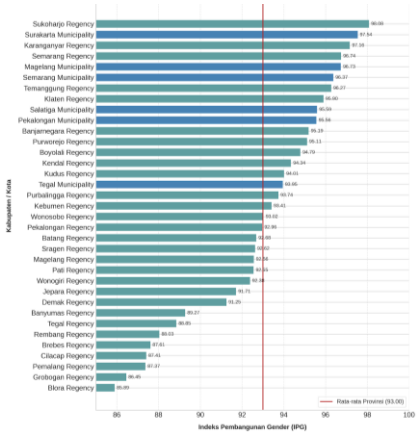
Education represents one of the most critical indicators in gender empowerment. Early education serves as the central axis in sustainable development efforts, particularly for women, where skills act as an instrument to boost the Human Development Index (HDI), especially in underdeveloped regions. The implementation of inclusive leadership can significantly help reduce structural biases, particularly when women engage in economic decision-making. In realizing SDG 5, the emergence of patriarchal cultural norms and social stigmas creates barriers that slow down sustainable development. Furthermore, informal workplace rules, low paternal involvement in domestic caregiving, and a lack of access to education for children lead to friction in cultural transformation. In this regard, the government is expected to prioritize women as active agents in macro-integration into the national development discourse to optimize economic impacts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Index (GEI) have measured the achievements of gender empowerment across each regency and city within Central Java Province. Furthermore, data from the Central Bureau of Statistics indicate that gender inequality in Central Java Province has experienced a significant decline. This demonstrates that the policies implemented by the Central Java government have exerted a highly significant influence, enabling the optimal attainment of gender balance.

Based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics, regencies and cities have experienced significant growth in terms of economic development. This is driven by the policies provided by the Central Java Provincial Government to the Local Governments within Central Java Province to ensure an increase in the Gender Development Index outcomes. Below, we present a graph illustrating the influence of the Gender Development Index on the progress of economic development in Central Java Province for the year 2024, as updated on March 13, 2026.

Table 2.
Distribution of the Gender Development Index in District / Cities in Central Java Province in 2024



Source: Badan Pusat Statistik, 2026.

Gender inequality is experienced by almost all countries and has become a major issue in every nation, particularly in Indonesia, regarding the implementation of National Development. According to Hayya et al. (2025), gender inequality refers to the unfair differences between women and men in accessing resources, opportunities, as well as in fulfilling social and economic rights. Women are frequently victims of gender inequality and experience a double burden within their households. This is aligned with Sudirman & Susilawaty (2022), who state that women and children are considered marginalized communities who have lost their basic rights and opportunities. Furthermore, Maretha et al. (2025) also emphasize that gender inequality in the workforce is reflected in various aspects, ranging from differences in labor participation rates and income gaps to limited access to decision-making positions and structural roles.

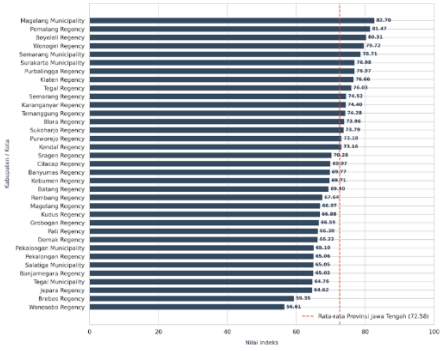
Furthermore, the graph above indicates that several regencies and cities have not yet optimized their economic development alleviation efforts, such as Blora Regency, Pemalang Regency, Brebes Regency, and Grobogan Regency. According to the Gender Development Index assessments conducted in these regions, one of the contributing factors is the low Female Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR), particularly since the proportion of women working in the formal sector remains low compared to those who are housewives.

Based on the GDI calculation results, relying solely on this index to assess the level of gender inequality across regencies and cities in Central Java Province is still considered less than optimal, as development progress is not influenced by gender empowerment alone. Salsabila and Hendrawan (2021) state that while the GDI measures the development gap between men and women within the economy, the GEI measures the equality of roles between women and men in economic, political, and managerial or decision-making domains.

A review is required by examining the calculation of the Gender Empowerment Index (GEI) in Central Java Province. Below, we present a graph of the Central Java Province Gender Empowerment Index calculations for the year 2024, which illustrates the level of gender inequality across regencies and cities within Central Java Province.

Table 3.

Gender Empowerment Index by Regency / City in Central Java in 2024



The graph above indicates that Magelang Regency is the region with the highest GEI in Central Java, holding a score of 82.70, followed by Pemalang Regency with a score of 81.70, and Boyolali Regency with a score of 80.31. Conversely, Wonosobo Regency records the lowest GEI score at 56.61, followed by Brebes Regency at 59.35. This implies that among the 35 regencies and cities in Central Java Province, a fairly significant gender inequality still persisted in 2024.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of previous literature and observations of data obtained from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), it can be concluded that accelerating macroeconomic progress to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) targets in Central Java Province has yielded a significant positive outcome. Central Java Province successfully reduced its Gender Inequality Index (GII) to 0.225 in 2025 by prioritizing gender mainstreaming (GM) through the education and healthcare sectors. Furthermore, the province has implemented government policies that provide opportunities for women to contribute to parliament and the political sphere.

Sukoharjo Regency, Karanganyar Regency, and Surakarta City demonstrate an optimal level of gender equality. This is evidenced by the growing presence of women in the formal labor market and their ability to generate business opportunities utilizing the skills acquired through education. However, several regions with low GDI and GEI scores are still found within Central Java Province, such as Blora Regency, Grobogan Regency, Brebes Regency, and Wonosobo Regency. These respective areas exhibit a low female Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR). Furthermore, the Expected Years of Schooling (EYS) remains highly deficient,

compounded by the persistent patriarchal culture experienced by women. The government is expected to formulate implementable policies to support regional fiscal policy and establish gender-responsive education, addressing the economic urgency of women for sustainable development across all regions in Central Java Province.

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