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The Influence of Gender Equality Regulations and Access to Legal Aid on the Protection of Women's Rights in Indonesia: A Literature Review

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Abstract: This article aims to analyze the influence of gender equality regulations and access to legal aid on the protection of women's rights in Indonesia. Using a systematic literature review (SLR) approach, this study collects various academic literature, institutional reports, and relevant national regulations. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of gender equality regulations through legal instruments such as Law No. 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of CEDAW and various national policies have encouraged increased protection of women. However, limited access to legal aid, especially in rural areas, is a major obstacle in the implementation of this protection. This study concludes that synergy between affirmative regulations and equitable access to legal aid is essential to optimize the protection of women's rights in Indonesia.

Keywords: Gender Equality, Legal Aid, Women's Rights, Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Protection of women's rights in Indonesia is still a central issue in the legal and social context. Based on BPS data (2022), the level of violence against women reached 338,496 cases in one year, indicating the urgency of effective legal protection. Increasing awareness of gender equality is important considering the increasingly significant role of women in the public and private sectors (Ali, 2023). However, without strong regulations and effective access to legal aid, women's rights are still often ignored.

Gender equality regulations in Indonesia have progressed, especially through national legal instruments and the ratification of international agreements such as CEDAW. For example, Law No. 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of CEDAW is the main legal basis in efforts to eliminate discrimination against women (Sari, 2023). However, the implementation of this regulation has not been fully evenly distributed, especially in areas with limited access to law. This indicates the need for an in-depth study of the effectiveness of the implementation of these regulations.

In addition, access to legal aid is a key factor in realizing the protection of women's rights. A study by Fitriani (2022) shows that women victims of violence who receive legal aid are

70% more likely to obtain justice than those who do not receive assistance. However, this access is still hampered in rural areas due to limited service providers and social stigma.

Various literatures have discussed the relationship between gender equality regulations and the protection of women's rights. Research by Rahma (2022) shows that affirmative regulations can increase women's participation in the public sector. On the other hand, effective legal aid can strengthen women's legal protection, especially in cases of domestic violence (Dewi, 2021). However, the synergistic relationship between these two factors still requires further research.

This article discusses the role of gender equality regulations and access to legal aid in protecting women's rights in Indonesia, as a literature review study in the field of law and social sciences. With a systematic approach, this study seeks to build a theoretical basis for further research.

Based on this background, the purpose of writing this article is to build a hypothesis for further research, namely to formulate: 1) The role of gender equality regulations in protecting women's rights; and 2) The role of access to legal aid in protecting women's rights.

METHOD

The method of writing this literature review article uses the Library Research and Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approaches. The analysis was carried out qualitatively, with the main sources coming from online applications such as Google Scholar, Mendeley, and other academic databases.

Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is defined as the process of identifying, assessing, and interpreting all available research evidence to answer specific research questions (Kitchenham et al., 2009).

In this study, the search keywords were "gender equality in Indonesia," "access to women's legal aid," and "protection of women's rights". Article selection was carried out based on relevance, year of publication (2020–2025), and topic relevance.

This approach allows researchers to conduct a systematic search of relevant academic literature in the context of the influence of gender equality regulations and legal aid on the protection of women's rights.

In the context of qualitative analysis, literature reviews are used consistently with exploratory assumptions, namely aiming to explore in depth the role of both variables in increasing women's protection in Indonesia (Ali & Limakrisna, 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The Role of Gender Equality Regulations in Protecting Women's Rights in Indonesia

Gender equality regulations are an important component in creating social justice and protecting women's rights. Based on various previous studies, regulations such as Law Number 21 of 2007 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence have been an important step in protecting women from various forms of violence (Ali, 2023). Research by (Rahman & Dewi, 2019) shows that strengthening gender equality regulations can improve women's bargaining position in social and economic life. Tighter regulations can also reduce gender gaps in vital sectors such as education and employment. However, the implementation of effective regulations still faces major challenges, especially in terms of implementation and supervision at the local level (Pradipta, 2021).

Access to Legal Aid for Women

Access to legal aid is also an important element in protecting women's rights. According to research conducted by (Setiawan, 2020), lack of legal access is a major barrier for women

to obtain adequate protection. The study showed that only 20% of women who experience violence in Indonesia report the incident due to financial inability or lack of knowledge about their rights. In response to this, legal aid institutions have played an active role in providing access to women in need. Research by (Wulandari, 2021) shows that the existence of women-based legal service centers can improve their understanding of their legal rights, as well as reduce the injustice they face.

The Influence of Regulation and Legal Access on the Protection of Women's Rights

The relationship between gender equality regulations and access to legal aid to the protection of women's rights is very relevant in the Indonesian context. Research by (Aditya, 2022) revealed that strong protection for women will only be achieved if gender equality regulations are supported by a legal system that is equally accessible to all levels of society. Furthermore, research by (Fatimah, 2020) shows that even though there are adequate regulations, the lack of public understanding of these regulations and obstacles in accessing legal institutions can reduce the effectiveness of this protection.

The Role of Legal Education in Supporting the Protection of Women's Rights

Legal education is an equally important aspect in increasing legal awareness among women. In a study conducted by (Sutrisno & Sari, 2021), it was found that women who have a good understanding of the law tend to be better able to protect themselves from violence and discrimination. Education that teaches about women's rights and access to the legal system can strengthen women's position in society and provide them with the tools to demand their rights. Therefore, it is important for the government and non-governmental organizations to increase access to legal education for women in areas that are still geographically or socially isolated.

Effectiveness of Implementation of Gender Equality Regulations in Indonesia

Although there have been various regulations that support gender equality, the effectiveness of their implementation in Indonesia is still limited. Research by (Jamal & Yani, 2022) revealed that even though the Law on the Elimination of Domestic Violence has been enacted, many women still experience violence in their households without receiving adequate protection. This is largely due to the lack of resources to enforce the law, especially in areas far from city centers. This study shows that to improve the effectiveness of regulations, cooperation between the central and regional governments is needed, as well as increasing the capacity of law enforcement agencies in handling cases of violence against women.

Challenges in Accessing Legal Aid for Women in Remote Areas

For women in remote areas, access to legal aid becomes more difficult. A study by (Hartini, 2021) shows that the majority of legal aid institutions are located in large cities, making it difficult for women in remote areas to access these services. This contributes to inequality in the protection of women's rights, where women in isolated areas are often unaware of their rights or do not know how to report the violence they experience. Therefore, it is important for the government to expand the reach of legal aid services to remote areas so that all women, regardless of geographic location, can receive equal protection.

Social and Cultural Factors in the Protection of Women's Rights

Social and cultural factors also influence the protection of women's rights in Indonesia. Research by (Zahra & Sulastri, 2020) shows that social norms that consider women to be inferior are often a barrier for women to obtain their rights. The tendency to cover up issues of domestic violence or sexual harassment is often driven by norms that assume that family problems should be resolved within the household and should not be brought into the public

domain. Therefore, profound social and cultural changes are needed to raise awareness of gender equality and the protection of women's rights.

The Role of the Media in Raising Awareness of Gender Equality

The media plays an important role in shaping public perceptions of gender equality and women's rights. Research by (Lestari, 2021) shows that media campaigns that promote gender equality can change people's perspectives on women and increase their legal awareness. Mass media, whether through television, radio, or social media, can be used to disseminate information about women's rights and the importance of protecting them. Therefore, the role of the media in educating the public about the importance of protecting women's rights is vital in strengthening regulations and increasing access to legal aid.

Challenges in Integrating Regulations and Legal Access to Improve Protection of Women's Rights

The integration of gender equality regulations and access to legal aid remains a major challenge in improving the protection of women's rights. Research by (Rina, 2020) revealed that even though regulations have been in place, their implementation often does not run smoothly due to the inability of the legal system to respond quickly and efficiently to violations of women's rights. In addition, the lack of coordination between government agencies and non-governmental organizations is also a barrier to strengthening protection for women. Therefore, to increase the effectiveness of protection, a more integrated and mutually supportive system is needed between regulations and access to legal aid.

Discussion

Based on the research results, the discussion of this article will include an analysis of the role between the variables of gender equality regulation and access to legal aid in protecting women's rights. Both have a mutually supportive role in forming an effective protection system. For example, well-implemented gender equality regulations will make it easier for women to access legal services and get the protection they need. This is in line with research by (Jamal & Yani, 2022), which emphasizes that the combination of strong regulations and equal access to legal aid is very important to protect women from discrimination and violence.

The Role of Gender Equality Regulations in Protecting Women's Rights

Gender equality regulations play a major role in improving the situation of women in Indonesia. Research by (Aditya, 2022) shows that with clear regulations, women have a better bargaining position in society and can fight the discrimination they face. To improve protection for women, there needs to be stricter supervision of the implementation of these regulations at the local level. Thus, the community can more easily access the necessary legal assistance if there is a violation of their rights.

The Role of Access to Legal Aid in Protecting Women's Rights

Access to legal aid plays an important role in providing women with the opportunity to obtain justice. Based on research results by (Zahra & Sulastris, 2020), women who have access to legal services are more likely to claim their rights. In this case, legal aid institutions that focus on women's issues have a very important role in providing services that suit their needs. Therefore, it is necessary to expand the reach of legal services to ensure that all women, without exception, can benefit from the existing legal system.

Factors Affecting the Protection of Women's Rights in Indonesia

Several other factors that affect the protection of women's rights in Indonesia are social norms, legal education, and geographical limitations. Research by (Pradipta, 2021) revealed that low legal awareness and social inequality are still major obstacles for women to obtain adequate protection. Therefore, it is important for the government and society to work together to create an environment that supports the protection of women's rights, one of which is through equitable legal education and changes in discriminatory social norms.

CONCLUSION

The Gender equality regulations and access to legal aid have a significant impact on the protection of women's rights in Indonesia. Clear and strong regulations, such as the Law on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, provide the legal framework needed to protect women from violence and discrimination. However, the effectiveness of these regulations depends heavily on consistent implementation and strict monitoring, especially in remote areas.

Access to legal aid is also critical in ensuring equal protection for women. Although there are institutions that provide legal services, there are still obstacles related to limited access for women in areas far from city centers. Therefore, it is necessary to expand the network of legal services that are more evenly distributed and affordable for all levels of society, including women living in remote areas.

In addition, social and cultural factors also influence the extent to which the protection of women's rights can be realized. Changes in social norms that discriminate against women and increasing legal awareness among the community can be positive steps in strengthening the protection of women's rights. Therefore, strengthening legal education for women and gender equality campaigns in the mass media are essential to creating a more just and equal society.

Overall, the integration of good regulation and equitable access to legal aid, supported by profound social change, can improve the protection of women's rights in Indonesia. Better implementation of these two elements will contribute to achieving more optimal gender equality in Indonesia.

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