

Gender Literacy Among Primary School Teachers In Indonesia and Malaysia: Comparing Gender Concepts, Leadership, Violence, Double Burden, and Classroom Management

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ABSTRACT:

Gender equality in basic education is a strategic global agenda that positions teachers as key actors in shaping the social construction of relations between men and women. This study aims to describe and compare the level of gender literacy among elementary school teachers in Indonesia and Malaysia across five dimensions: gender concept, double burden, gender-based leadership, gender-based violence, and gender-based classroom management. The study employed a comparative descriptive quantitative design with 200 respondents (100 Indonesian teachers and 100 Malaysian teachers) randomly selected from various regions. The instrument was a 45-item closed-ended questionnaire with very high reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.921). Data were analyzed using percentage-based descriptive statistics. The results show that Indonesian teachers scored relatively higher on the dimensions of gender concept and leadership, while Malaysian teachers scored higher on the double-burden dimension. On the gender-based violence dimension, both countries showed a moderate level of understanding with an ambivalent tendency. The findings indicate that conceptual understanding of gender has not yet been fully accompanied by critical awareness of gender-based injustice within a patriarchal socio-cultural context. This study affirms the urgency of strengthening gender literacy in teachers' professional development in order to realize gender-responsive basic education in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: gender literacy; double burden; violence; gender leadership; gender-based learning patterns.

Introduction

Gender equality in education is a global priority affirmed in the Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs), namely quality education and gender equality. Research by experts emphasizes that education not only transfers knowledge but also

transforms social values, including the construction of gender relations and the formation of students' character encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Rulianto & Hartono, 2018; Santika, 2020; Rifaldi, 2023). Ethics education offers several advantages, namely safeguarding indigenous knowledge, fostering harmonious social relations, and upholding both moral values and social institutions (Andriyanto, et al.; 2022). Teachers hold a central role as agents of value socialization and as shapers of the classroom climate, which can either reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes. Respect represents a core element of interpersonal interaction—including that between teachers and students—which entails treating others in the manner we ourselves wish to be treated (Andriyanto, et al.; 2025).

Gender is understood as a socio-cultural construction. Palulungan (2020) explains that gender shapes the roles, responsibilities, and expectations placed on men and women, distinct from sex, which is biological. The traditional division of labor practiced widely in society has come to be perceived as a natural given. This construction influences teachers' expectations of students' abilities and behavior. Vasalampi's (2020) research shows that teachers' gender profiles influence the formation of students' character. Teachers' perceptions and the classroom climate affect the formation of students' academic self-concept in literacy and mathematics, which is often linked to gender stereotypes.

International studies affirm that gender bias remains implicitly present in pedagogical practices and teaching materials. Stereotypical representations of domestic-public roles in textbooks contribute to the formation of gender-based career aspirations (Puchner et al., 2015). Teachers are often unaware that differential expectations — for example, assuming men are more rational or women more emotional — can shape classroom interaction and leadership opportunities (Khan et al., 2012; Scarborough, 2019). On the other hand, reflective and critical gender literacy has been shown to shift both

students' and teachers' perceptions and practices (Friesem, 2017).

Raj et al. (2023) show that exposure to everyday discrimination as well as major discrimination during the pandemic is associated with an increased risk of violence victimization along with symptoms of depression and anxiety. These findings affirm that gender-based violence needs to be understood in relation to systemic discrimination and mental health, not merely as visible physical violence. In the educational context, this understanding is important because schools can be spaces that reproduce discrimination, but can equally function as environments for prevention through pedagogical interaction, teaching materials, and gender-responsive classroom policies.

Elementary school is an important stage for instilling gender understanding and awareness. Teachers are key actors in this task. Research by Darni et al. (2017) and Selinaswati (2018) shows the presence of gender stereotypes in elementary school textbooks. Indonesia and Malaysia share historical and cultural similarities, including the strong influence of patriarchal systems in the division of domestic and public roles. Although Indonesia has implemented the Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) policy since 1985 and Malaysia has women's empowerment policies, the implementation of equality values in education has not been fully consistent. Several studies show that gender equality in Indonesia still faces a gap between normative frameworks and practice. Implementation of gender equality at the education level still faces various challenges (Maulana et al., 2024; Muafiah et al., 2024). The achievement of gender equality in Indonesia, in a broader context, has not yet shown significant structural transformation (Cameron, 2023). Teacher-education curricula and teaching materials also still contain gender bias that covertly reproduces patriarchal values (Nurmansyah et al., 2025; Wahyuni et al., 2024; Darni, 2017). These conditions indicate a gap between the gender equality promoted in theory within education policy and actual practice in the classroom.

Research on gender, particularly in education, has been conducted by several researchers in Malaysia, showing similarities with conditions in Indonesia (Islam & Asadullah, 2018; Zilfa, 2017; Saadat, 2022). Education in Malaysia initially showed gender stereotypes, both in teaching materials and in school interests between boys and girls. However, with government efforts toward gender mainstreaming, changes have occurred. This indicates that

There is a research gap: although studies on gender bias in education are quite numerous, quantitative comparative studies specifically measuring the gender literacy of elementary school teachers in Indonesia and Malaysia remain limited. Cross-country comparison between relatively similar cultural backgrounds but different policies is important for mapping the extent to which the internalization of equality values has occurred within teachers' pedagogical awareness. The novelty of this study lies in the aspects compared, namely not only conceptual literacy, but also extending to violence and classroom learning patterns. This study aims to describe and compare the gender literacy of elementary school teachers in the two countries across five main dimensions: gender concept, double burden, gender-based leadership, gender-based violence, and gender-based classroom management.

Methodology

This study used a descriptive quantitative research design. Creswell (2023) explains that the descriptive quantitative method is used to examine independent variables — whether one or more — without comparing them against one another. Likewise, this study is not intended to test hypotheses but to describe elementary school teachers' understanding of gender and gender mainstreaming (PUG) in classroom learning, covering five variables: gender concept, double burden, violence, leadership, and learning patterns.

Participants numbered 200 elementary school teachers, consisting of 100 teachers from Indonesia and 100 teachers from Malaysia, randomly selected from various regions, from

both public and private schools. Public school teachers were more numerous, at 70%. The distribution of participants by sex was 68% female participants and 32% male participants. The instrument was a 45-item closed-ended questionnaire mapping five dimensions of gender literacy. The reliability test showed very high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.921). The questionnaire “Elementary School Teachers' Level of Understanding of Gender Concepts” was found to be reliable, or consistent, at a near-perfect level.

Data collection used a closed-ended questionnaire technique. The choice of a closed-ended questionnaire gave respondents freedom in completing it without feeling intimidated by any party. Data were analyzed using percentage-based descriptive statistics to describe the level of understanding on each dimension and to compare tendencies between the two countries.

Result

The gender literacy of elementary school teachers in Indonesia and Malaysia was grouped into low, moderate, and high categories. A teacher fell into the low category with a correct-answer score between 1–35. The moderate category corresponded to a correct-answer score of 36–70. The high category corresponded to a correct-answer score of 71–100. The results are described across five topics in accordance with the study's objectives, as follows.

Gender Concept

Gender is defined as a group of culturally formed attributes and behaviors attached to men or women. Butler (2010) opposes the traditional separation between biological sex and the social role of gender. Unlike biological sex, gender is not naturally inherent in individuals but is continuously produced and performed through social interaction and everyday life practices (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Gender construction takes place at the individual, interactional, and institutional levels, thereby shaping patterns of role division, authority, and status between men and women in society (Risman, 2004). The formation of gender is influenced by many contributing factors, which

are then socialized, reinforced, and even constructed through social or cultural means, perpetuated by religious interpretations and myths, and made to appear as a natural, unchangeable fact. Fatimah et al. (2019) offer a simple definition of gender as a social sex that can change in line with the times. In this context, gender functions as a cultural framework that influences how individuals judge, treat, and build social relationships with others (Ridgeway, 2009). Because it is shaped by social, cultural, and historical conditions, the meaning and practice of gender can differ between societies and change over time (Andermann, 2010). Therefore, gender can be simply understood as a dynamic social sex that can change along with the development of society.

Elementary school teachers' level of literacy regarding the gender concept in Indonesia and

Malaysia was explored through 10 statements, namely: (1) sex is the same concept as gender; (2) gender is a natural disposition and a gift from God; (3) men are born with better physical strength than women; (4) men are born with better thinking abilities than women; (5) men are naturally tough and rough; (6) the traits of men and women are shaped by the social environment, not by sex; (7) women are born with better emotional sensitivity than men; (8) women are naturally more short-tempered than men; (9) men are breadwinners, and women are responsible for caring for children at home; and (10) parenting patterns and environment are the root of differences in competence and character between men and women. The percentage understanding of gender among elementary school teachers in Indonesia and Malaysia is shown in the table below.

Literacy	Country	High	Medium	Low
Gender Concept	Indonesia	34	41	25
	Malaysia	34	34	32

The percentage understanding of the gender concept is relatively balanced, with Malaysia 7% lower. A relatively good level of conceptual understanding indicates that exposure to gender-mainstreaming discourse has occurred. However, social construction theory affirms that value transformation requires ongoing critical reflection. Scarborough (2019) shows the presence of egalitarian ambivalence: normative support for equality is not always followed by changes in implicit attitudes. Thus, gender literacy must move beyond definition toward critical awareness that influences pedagogical practice (Friesem, 2017).

Double Burden

Patriarchal culture leaves female teachers bearing a double burden. Winslow (2010) affirms that working women who simultaneously manage the household experience a double burden. Several researchers show that when a working woman is also a mother, childcare and housework become

the woman's responsibility (Mickelson & Marcussen, 2023; Nashruddin et al., 2023). Men tend to assume that domestic tasks are women's tasks, making it seemingly impossible for working women to ask men for help in completing domestic chores.

Elementary school teachers' understanding of the double burden in Indonesia and Malaysia was explored through six statements, as follows: (1) for married couples, when a child is ill, it is the mother who must take paid leave to care for the child; (2) for working couples, responsibility for keeping the house clean remains with the woman; (3) for working couples, responsibility for preparing family meals remains with the woman; (4) for working couples, preparing clean clothing is women's work; (5) the primary commitment of working women is to their family, not their job; and (6) working men also share equal responsibility with women in completing household chores. These six questions produced the following data.

Literacy	Country	High	Medium	Low
Double Burden	Indonesia	32	31	37
	Malaysia	43	31	26

Understanding of the double burden among teachers in Malaysia is better than in Indonesia: 43% for Malaysian teachers versus 32% for Indonesian teachers. The lower level of understanding of the double burden among Indonesian elementary school teachers is further reflected in the higher percentage in the low-understanding category — 37% of Indonesian teachers compared with 26% of Malaysian teachers fall into the low-understanding category on this dimension.

Understanding of the double burden among elementary school teachers in Malaysia is better than among their counterparts in Indonesia. The strong patriarchal culture in Malaysia (Pink, 2020) does not appear to have negatively affected understanding of the double burden there; this data can be taken as evidence that elementary school teachers in Malaysia are better educated regarding the concept of the double burden.

The difference between Indonesia and Malaysia on the double-burden dimension reflects variation in the internalization of the value of women's domestication. Social role theory (Eagly & Wood, 2012) explains that cultural expectations shape a naturalized division of labor. The normalization of the double burden has the potential to be reproduced in classrooms through narratives and social examples. Strong gender literacy needs to affirm that the division of roles is socially constructed, not natural.

Gender-Based Leadership

Women and men have equal opportunities to hold leadership positions. Leadership in general, according to Hutahaeen (2020), is the ability to influence others or subordinates. Fitriani (2024; Teguh, 2025) argues that a leader's competence or strengths constitute the capital that enables the leader to influence others toward achieving certain goals through specific activities, such as caring for, supporting, and motivating subordinates. Leadership in education, according to Blackmore (2013), is highly important, and good leadership brings about important change within an organization.

Elementary school teachers' understanding of leadership in Indonesia and Malaysia was explored through 10 statements, as follows: (1) male leaders are more aggressive and active in taking action than women; (2) female leaders are dependent and cannot make decisions or take action on their own; (3) female leaders are more emotional than men; (4) only men can make rational and objective decisions; (5) male leaders are less easily influenced and more independent in decision-making than women; (6) female leaders are capable of making competitive and responsible decisions; (7) as a teacher, I prefer male students as class leaders over female students; (8) only male students can hold leadership positions; (9) I prefer male students to carry out the duties of class president; and (10) I believe women are as capable as men in leadership.

Literacy	Country	High	Medium	Low
Gender-Based Leadership	Indonesia	38	30	32
	Malaysia	26	43	31

Understanding of gender-based leadership is higher in Indonesia (38%) than in Malaysia

(26%), though the levels are relatively similar overall. Women and men have equal

opportunities to hold leadership positions. The tendency to associate leadership with masculine traits (“think manager—think male”) still influences perception (Robbins, 2015). Implicit bias against women's leadership has been documented in gender studies (Scarborough, 2019). In the elementary school context, this perception can influence the distribution of the roles of class president or group leader, with implications for shaping students' leadership aspirations from an early age.

Gender-Based Violence

Violence can occur against both men and women, stemming from gender injustice. Several researchers (Lomazzi, 2023; Zareen, 2024) show that potential violence can be perpetrated by parties who hold power (superior) over parties who lack power (inferior), thereby causing suffering.

Elementary school teachers' understanding of gender-based violence in Indonesia and Malaysia was explored through 10 statements, as follows:

(1) as a teacher, I do not encourage female students to take part in challenging and dangerous extracurricular activities, such as soccer, rock climbing, or martial arts (pencak silat); (2) in my opinion, culinary subjects as an additional/co-curricular subject are more suitable for girls than for boys; (3) I always tell boys in class not to be a crybaby, not to complain, to be tough, and to be able to endure pain; (4) I am somewhat uncomfortable if a girl displays masculine attitudes; (5) I am somewhat uncomfortable if a boy displays feminine attitudes; (6) I believe male students are better at managing groups than female students; (7) male students have better leadership abilities than female students; (8) I offer boys the first opportunity to lead a group, with girls given the second turn; (9) in teaching materials, girls should play with dolls while boys fly kites; and (10) girls in teaching materials should be represented washing dishes and cleaning floors while boys work in the garden. These 10 questions produced the following data.

Literacy	Country	High	Medium	Low
Gender-Based Violence	Indonesia	32	36	32
	Malaysia	29	43	28

Teachers' understanding of gender-based violence still leaves a figure above 20% in the low category in both countries. Ambivalence in recognizing gender-based violence indicates that its symbolic/implicit forms are not yet fully understood. UN Women (2021) affirms that gender-based violence includes restrictions on participation, stereotyping, and discriminatory practices. Restricting students' activities at school based on gender, or emotional labeling, can be categorized as symbolic violence. Improving gender literacy needs to emphasize this dimension so that teachers are able to identify and prevent the reproduction of injustice.

Kiff et al. (2023) show that school-based interventions represent a strategic pathway for preventing dating and relationship violence (DRV) and gender-based violence (GBV) from a

young age. However, that systematic review also found that evidence on economic evaluation and implementation-cost data remains limited, so that the development of school prevention programs needs to be accompanied by clear implementation design, resource support, and sustainability evaluation. In the context of this study, the level of teacher understanding, which remains in the moderate category, suggests that GBV literacy training needs to be positioned as part of the school's prevention system, not merely as additional knowledge.

Gender-Based Learning Patterns

Elementary school teachers' understanding of gender-based learning patterns in Indonesia and Malaysia was explored through the following statements: (1) I am somewhat uncomfortable if

a female student is dominantly masculine (tomboyish); (2) I am somewhat uncomfortable if a male student is dominantly feminine; (3) I believe male students are better at managing groups than female students; (4) male students are better at leading groups than female students; (5) I give male students the first opportunity to lead their peers; (6) in teaching materials, girls

should preferably play with dolls while boys fly kites; (7) female students in teaching materials should preferably wash dishes and clean floors while boys work in the garden; and (8) boys in teaching-material illustrations should preferably not be involved in kitchen cooking tasks, since cooking is considered women's work, even their natural role. The data obtained are as follows.

Literacy	Country	High	Medium	Low
Gender-Based Learning Patterns	Indonesia	29	46	25
	Malaysia	29	44	27

The percentage in the low category, which remains in the range of 25–27%, shows that a quarter of teachers in both countries still have weak understanding of gender-based learning patterns. This figure is an important indicator that basic education in Indonesia and Malaysia still faces challenges in building inclusive, gender-responsive pedagogy. If this condition is not addressed, schools risk continuing to reproduce gender inequality through everyday learning practices.

These findings are also in line with various international studies showing that although gender-equality policies have developed, implementation at the school level still faces cultural and structural obstacles (UNESCO, 2023). In the Southeast Asian region, gender stereotypes in education are still influenced by family values, religion, and social norms that place men and women in different roles (Asawasakulkrai & Tubtim, 2023). Therefore, strengthening teachers' gender literacy cannot be achieved merely through conceptual socialization but requires a reflective approach capable of dismantling implicit bias in educational practice.

Discussion

The relatively good level of understanding of the gender concept indicates that exposure to gender discourse has occurred. However, social construction theory affirms that value transformation requires ongoing critical

reflection (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Scarborough (2019) shows the presence of egalitarian ambivalence: normative support for equality is not always followed by changes in implicit attitudes. Thus, gender literacy must move beyond definition toward critical awareness that influences pedagogical practice (Friesem, 2017).

The double burden dimension, on the other hand, reveals a difference between Indonesia and Malaysia because of the internalization of the value of women's domestication. Social role theory (Eagly & Wood, 2012) accounts for the naturalized division of labor through culture's expectations. The normalization of the double burden has the potential to be reproduced in classrooms through narratives and social examples. There is a need to raise gender literacy that confirms that roles are not given to women and men, but they are social constructs. Another way to normalise this is by teaching, where textbooks and learning activities can still portray stereotypes and a gender-based division of activities (Islam & Asadullah, 2018; Vu, 2025). Therefore, teachers need to be made more gender literate so they can challenge the narrative, illustration, and social example in the classroom and can assert that the division of roles is not natural but is constructed in society and thus can be changed (Nurmansyah et al., 2025).

Perception is also influenced by the stereotype of “think manager—think male,” which remains a common trend in regard to gender-based leadership (Robbins, 2015). The research on gender studies has evidenced the negative attitude towards women's leadership, which is often called as “implicit bias” (Scarborough, 2019). However, this perception can have implications in the elementary school context by playing a part in how leadership roles such as class president and group leader are distributed, which can impact students' leadership aspirations from a young age. Ambivalence around gender based violence suggests that there is a lack of understanding around gender based violence in its symbolic/implicit forms. GBV in schools can involve stereotypes, norms and unequal power dynamics as well as physical and sexual violence (Tanton et al., 2023; UN Women, 2021). In school, the denial of students' rights and freedoms through gendered and/or emotionalized restrictions on their activities is a form of symbolic violence. Improving gender literacy needs to emphasize this dimension so that teachers are able to identify and prevent the reproduction of injustice.

Mannell et al. (2018) found that storytelling can serve as a mental health tool for Afghan women survivors of GBV, as long as it is created in a secure and empathetic way and is non-judgemental. The narrative approach cultivates a more positive social identity for a survivor, as well as countering and destabilizing patriarchal narratives around gender and violence. The findings suggest that for basic education teachers need to be aware of the manifestations of GBV but also need to create communication in the classroom that is safe and responsive for students to voice that they have experienced discrimination or violence without stigma attached to it.

On gender-based classroom management, teachers' understanding of gender has not yet fully moved from the level of normative knowledge toward critical and reflective understanding. Some teachers have conceptually accepted the idea of gender equality but still find it difficult to recognize and eliminate learning

practices that indirectly perpetuate gender stereotypes.

Gender-responsive leadership focuses on promoting equity and equality through policy, curriculum and practice that are inclusive. The approach is designed to address multiple system-level issues including stereotypes, bias and gender-based discrimination, each of which provides an equal opportunity for individuals to develop (Ayyildiz, 2025; Fitzsimmons, Yates, & Callan, 2025; Tawil, Al-Tarawneh, & Alnoimi, 2026).

The results between Indonesia and Malaysia indicate that there are differences in awareness of teachers regarding paid work and unpaid work in the household. The double burden, as used in this case, is not just a quantitative measure of labour done by women, but represents a lack of equality in the distribution of labour between men and women. This inequality is evident if women perform professional roles in public sphere but are mainly involved in caregiving of children and household workers and family members. Research on female teachers reveals that work–family conflict occurs when job and family demands are incompatible, and that, for female teachers, there is a greater likelihood of conflict from work to family than of family to work conflict (Cinamon & Rich, 2005). These results indicate that the strain that female teachers feel is due both to the number of roles that they have to play and the difficulty they have in balancing the demands of work and family. More and more, women who work in a professional capacity are still expected to take the main responsibility for childcare and home duties. This can lead to a growing overlap between the roles of work and family, and thus lead to an increased possibility of role conflict. Thus, the tendency of conflict to arise from work to family is more prevalent, since the demands of the workplace may intrude into the provision of socially more feminine held home responsibilities.

Comparative findings across the countries also support that factors of culture have an impact on the assessment, lived experience and facilitation of the relationship between professional and

family role of teachers (Ben-Uri et al., 2022). Therefore, the difference between Malaysia (43%) and Indonesia (32%) in the high category should not be interpreted as a difference in literacy level on the issue of injustice in the division of roles, but rather as a difference in level of literacy on the issue of injustice in the division of the domestic burden.

This analysis is supported by a longitudinal study by Stengård et al. (2022) of 1022 teachers. It was found that emotional and quantitative work demands, and unpaid work are higher for female teachers than for male teachers, and that female teachers also have less leisure time than male teachers. The present study is important because it demonstrated that the double burden has material and psychological impacts: reduced recovery time and increased burden can be linked to depressive symptoms. So, where the mother is still required to take time off when the child becomes ill, and prepare food, clothing and household chores, does not just mean personal preference, but it means that an unequal division of care work is becoming normal. Conflict between work and family is not just a matter of attitudes at the individual level, but also of public policy, social norms, and institutional arrangements influencing the work and family roles. Based on a multilevel analysis of data from 20 countries, the authors present results that indicate that mothers experience more work–family conflict than fathers and that support for childcare policies can lower the level of work–family conflict. But non-discrimination in leave does not necessarily lead to a gender equality. This discovery suggests that the discussion on Indonesia – Malaysia should focus on the difference between the literacy of teachers and institutional support, as a high literacy score does not necessarily imply that family and employment policy take for granted that women should be the primary care taker in the family.

Inequality in care work also does not always disappear through education. Tripathi and Zhai (2024) found that wives with equal or higher education than their husbands still spend more time on unpaid care work. This finding is relevant because the study's respondents are teachers —

an educated professional group — yet formal education does not automatically dismantle domestication norms. Meanwhile, Bowling (2025) shows that caregiving obligations can drive women to choose education positions with lower status and rewards, because such work is considered more able to accommodate family responsibilities. The double burden can thus limit female teachers' career development, leadership participation, and wellbeing.

The implication is that teachers' gender literacy regarding the double burden needs to encompass three layers of awareness: (1) the ability to recognize domestic and care work as valuable work; (2) the ability to critique the naturalized division of labor as women's inherent duty; and (3) the ability to connect domestic inequality with mental health, professional performance, career opportunities, and pedagogical practice. Teachers who consider household tasks a natural obligation of women may reproduce that view through examples, language, division of tasks, and role representation in the classroom. Therefore, strengthening gender literacy needs to integrate reflection on the division of housework, partner and organizational support, and a pedagogy that portrays men and women as equally responsible for public and domestic work.

The results show that teachers in Malaysia have a higher level of literacy regarding the concept of women's double burden compared with teachers in Indonesia. This finding does not indicate that women in Malaysia experience a lighter domestic burden, but rather that teachers in Malaysia have a better understanding of the inequality in role division between men and women in the domestic sphere. Thus, the difference found reflects variation in gender literacy more than a difference in women's actual experience. This literacy is important because it will influence how teachers understand, teach, and reproduce the values of gender equality to their students.

This finding is in line with various international studies showing that women's double burden is a consequence of the intersection between demands of productive work and domestic responsibilities that remain disproportionately

placed on women. Cinamon and Rich (2005) explain that conflict between work and family relates not only to the number of roles women fulfill but also to the psychological pressure that arises when women are expected to meet both roles simultaneously. Thus, the double burden is a manifestation of social norms that still position women as the primary party responsible for housework and caregiving, even though they have actively participated in the public sphere.

This perspective is reinforced by Stengård et al. (2022), who show that women spend more time on housework and unpaid care work, resulting in less recovery time, higher levels of fatigue, and greater risk of mental health problems. This finding shows that the double burden is not merely a matter of task division within the family but is also related to women's wellbeing, productivity, and quality of life. These results are also consistent with Tripathi and Zhai (2024), who found that women still perform a greater proportion of domestic work even when they have an equal or higher level of education than their male partners. This condition indicates that the double burden is more influenced by social construction and cultural norms than by level of education.

Overall, these studies show that women's double burden is a multidimensional issue involving the relationship between culture, social structure, and the division of domestic labor. In the context of this study, the higher literacy of teachers in Malaysia indicates a better understanding of this issue compared with teachers in Indonesia. Therefore, strengthening teachers' gender literacy

needs to be directed not only toward mastery of the concept of gender equality but also toward the ability to identify and deconstruct stereotypes regarding women's roles in the family. As agents of socialization, teachers hold a strategic position in building a more inclusive school culture and promoting more equal gender relations in society.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, the findings reinforce social role theory and the social construction of gender within the context of Southeast Asian basic education. Practically, there is a need to integrate gender literacy into teacher education and professional training, conduct gender-responsive audits of teaching materials, and develop reflective modules to identify implicit bias in classroom practice.

Conclusion

The gender literacy of elementary school teachers in Indonesia and Malaysia falls into the moderate-to-high category on the dimensions of gender concept and leadership, but still requires strengthening on the dimensions of double burden and gender-based violence. Conceptual understanding has not yet been fully accompanied by critical awareness of unjust practices within a patriarchal socio-cultural context. Strengthening gender literacy through the continuous professional development of teachers in classroom learning is an urgent need in order to realize gender-responsive and inclusive basic education in the Southeast Asian region.

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