Gender Segregation in the Labour Market in the Indo-Pacific Region: A Case Study of Indonesia, Vietnam, and India

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Abstracts
Gender segregation manifests in two different ways: horizontal segregation, which reflects the disproportionate representation of women and men in specific jobs or industries, and vertical segregation, which is seen in leadership hierarchies where men dominate managerial roles. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) estimates that nearly 100 million women in Asia are degraded due to discriminatory practices. Research from the International Labour Organization (ILO) also revealed job advertisements that were gender-biased and prioritized male candidates, thus perpetuating stereotypical job roles. Focusing on India, Indians, and Vietnam, this research investigates the alarming statistics demonstrating a gender gap. In Vietnam, women hold only a few positions in parliament and face a pay gap based on gender bias. Research in Indonesia highlights that women rarely occupy leadership roles and that working conditions tend to be discriminatory. In India, urban areas experience high gender segregation based on employment gaps. Patriarchal social norms and cultural biases increasingly contribute to women's subordinate roles. Through qualitative research based on library data collection, this research seeks to comprehensively analyze and overcome the complex challenges posed by gender segregation in the labor market in the three Indo-Pacific countries. These three countries are exciting representations of how gender segregation can be seen and depicted in real terms through the very high number of workers in these three countries. This research concludes that gender segregation in the workforce is a fundamental form that is difficult to eradicate. However, a comprehensive multi-sector role can be an alternative form of effort to reduce gender disparities in the workforce.

Keywords: gender segregation, glass ceiling, labor market, Indo-Pacific, the pay gap

Abstrak
Segregasi gender terwujud dalam dua bentuk cara yang berbeda: segregasi horizontal, yang mencerminkan keterwakilan perempuan dan laki-laki yang tidak proporsional dalam pekerjaan atau industri tertentu, dan segregasi vertikal, yang terlihat dalam hierarki kepemimpinan di mana laki-laki mendominasi peran manajerial. Asian Development Bank (ADB) memperkirakan bahwa hampir 100 juta perempuan di Asia terdegradasi karena praktik yang diskriminatif. Penelitian dari International Labour Organization (ILO) juga mengungkapkan iklan pekerjaan yang bias gender dan mengutamakan kandidat laki-laki, sehingga melanggengkan peran pekerjaan yang sifatnya stereotip. Berfokus pada India, India, dan Vietnam, penelitian

ini menyelidiki statistik mengkhawatirkan yang menunjukkan adanya kesenjangan gender. Di Vietnam, perempuan hanya menduduki sedikit posisi di parlemen dan menghadapi kesenjangan upah berdasarkan bias gender. Penelitian di Indonesia menyoroti jaranya perempuan menduduki kepemimpinan dan kondisi kerja cenderung diskriminatif. Di India, wilayah perkotaan mengalami segregasi gender yang tinggi berdasarkan kesenjangan pekerjaan. Norma-norma sosial dan bias budaya yang bersifat patriarki semakin berkontribusi terhadap peran subordinat perempuan. Melalui penelitian kualitatif berbasis pengumpulan data secara studi pustaka, penelitian ini berupaya untuk menganalisis secara komprehensif dan mengatasi tantangan rumit yang ditimbulkan oleh segregasi gender di pasar tenaga kerja di ketiga negara Indo-Pasifik tersebut. Ketiga negara ini menjadi representasi menarik mengenai bagaimana segregasi gender dapat dilihat dan digambarkan secara nyata melalui jumlah tenaga kerja yang sangat tinggi di ketiga negara tersebut. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa segregasi gender dalam lingkup tenaga kerja menjadi bentuk nyata yang sulit untuk dihapuskan, namun melalui peran komprehensif multisektor dapat menjadi bentuk alternatif upaya untuk mengurangi disparitas gender dalam tenaga kerja.

***Kata kunci**: segregasi gender, langit-langit kaca, pasar tenaga kerja, Indo-Pasifik, kesenjangan upah*

INTRODUCTION

Gender segregation is a problem that often occurs in various developing countries in Asia, especially in South Asia and Southeast Asia. Gender segregation refers to the unequal distribution of women and men in specific jobs or industries or the hierarchy of an organization. It presents itself in two different ways. First, it refers to horizontal segregation, the underrepresentation of women and men in specific jobs or industries. Second, vertical segregation refers to the representation between women and men in the leadership category (occupational hierarchy, where men dominate the leadership category while women are seen in non-management roles (Mcallister & Australian Parliament Senate, 2017). Based on this definition, it can be understood that there are no ideal situations based on gender differences, and this primarily occurs in the workplace.

According to research from the OECD, it shows that in Southeast Asia, a Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) score of 39 has an average level of discrimination against women and girls in social institutions that is medium to close to high, which is much higher than the average-world average (29) and for OECD countries (15) (OECD, 2024). This fact looks worse if we talk about 131 years for achieving equality. Meanwhile, according to the ILO, women still earn around 20% less than men (Papuc, 2024). This data shows that there is quite a prominent segregation in the Asian region.

Meanwhile, this research will focus on gender segregation in India, Indonesia, and Vietnam. We focus on those three countries since they have high gender segregation. According to the 2018 gender gap report, the gender segregation that occurs in Vietnam is demonstrated by the fact that women only occupy 26.7% of positions in parliament and 4.2% of ministerial positions. Additionally, there is still a gender pay gap; women only occupy 27.2% of senior positions in the workplace (Plan International, n.d.). Meanwhile, in Indonesia, research shows that finding women who have leadership positions in company structures is infrequent. Apart from that, companies accept female workers with many conditions, such as having an attractive appearance, being unmarried, having to

live in a dormitory, etc. Then, research from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), which quoted from the ILO report, shows that women's wages are 23% lower than men's jobs. The report also found that men still dominate high-paying jobs (ILO, 2020).

Moreover, previous research shows that gender segregation in India as a whole is higher in urban areas than in rural areas. In rural areas, educational segregation is the leading cause of gender segregation, while in urban areas, occupational segregation plays a more significant role (Agrawal, 2020). Societal views, customs, and cultural practices play a significant role in placing women in a lower societal position, denying opportunities generally given to men, who are considered dominant in India (Care India, 2022). Another research by Blackburn et al. (2002) differentiates between vertical segregation, which causes inequality, and horizontal segregation, which shows differences without inequality, and overall segregation results from these two components (Blackburn et al., 2002).

Meanwhile, subsequent research revealed the need for equal opportunity policies closely linked to the specific systems of labor market organization in European member states (Rubery & Fagan, 1995). Previous research focused more on studying how gender segregation can occur. Meanwhile, this research will provide an analysis related to practices in Indonesia, Vietnam, and Indonesia, as well as a bibliometric analysis regarding issues related to gender segregation in these three countries.

Based on the data above, we can state that there are severe problems with gender segregation in those three countries. Therefore, this research analyzes gender segregation in Asia's labor market, specifically in India, Indonesia, and Vietnam.

Glass Ceilings

The glass ceiling often prevents women from having a better career path in several formal and informal work sectors. Carol Hymowitz and Timothy Schellhardt introduced this term. Glass Ceiling refers to invisible barriers impeding women's career advancement. It also refers to situations where a qualified person's advancement within an organization's hierarchy is halted at a particular level because of some form of discrimination, most commonly sexism or racism (Nazmul et al., 2016). These obstacles are unwritten and influence decision-makers in companies that employ women. In many countries, especially in the Southern region, the disparity between women and men in the field of work is visible. This condition is caused by several factors such as access, education, and economic situation. Glass ceiling is also a term used to describe an apparent concern when women cannot reach the highest point in their careers.

Gender differences in the world of work will ultimately lead to inequality. This condition represents differences in access and opportunities to occupy high positions in employment between men and women. There are at least four criteria that cause this glass ceiling effect. The first criterion is a glass ceiling inequality, which represents a gender or racial difference not explained by other job-relevant characteristics of the employees. The second criterion was that a glass ceiling inequality represents a gender or racial difference greater at higher levels of an outcome than at lower

levels. The third criterion was that a glass ceiling inequality represents a gender or racial inequality in advancing opportunities to higher levels, not merely the proportions of each gender or race currently at those higher levels. The last criterion was that a glass ceiling inequality represents inequality that increases throughout a career (Nazmul et al., 2016).

As one of the most effective strategies to suppress the glass ceiling tendency, it is essential to consider the role of women as mentors in the career paths of female workers. Mentoring also offers organizations insight into their employees from perspectives other than those of an employee, their work skills, and their duties on the job. Mentoring helps organizations see their employees more personally and obtain knowledge of their personal and work needs (Washington, 2010). The glass ceiling effect can be seen from a policy perspective in politics. For example, it is commonly argued that insufficiently qualified candidates cause women to be under-represented in top political positions. As these policies can deliver a richer pipeline of qualified candidates to entry-level positions, top positions would then become more equally divided over time (Folke & Rickne, 2016).

The Gender Pay Gaps

The World Economic Forum estimates it will take 202 years to close the global gender pay gap, based on the trend observed over the past 12 years (WEF, 2018). Pay differences between women and men have traditionally been attributed to the limited number of women in the higher-paying upper levels of organizations (Alkadry & Tower, 2006). Economists have traditionally looked to gender-specific factors, such as female shortfalls in human capital or employer discrimination against women, to explain the size of the gender pay gap and its evolution over time (Blau & Kahn, 2003). Job sectors with a higher level of urgency are usually occupied by men who earn higher wages than women. There are several causes of gender pay gaps outlined by the International Labour Organization (ILO). The first needs to be more represented in leadership.

The second is working hours. The involvement patterns of male and female workers often differ, especially in the amount of work time. In the Global Wage Report 2018/2019: What Lies Behind the gender pay Gap, the ILO highlights that women work part-time more than men do in all but five of the 73 countries where data are available (ILO, 2019). Women choose part-time work because of the domestic responsibilities, such as being a wife and mother in the family realm. Third is the level of education. Women still lag behind men in specific occupational fields such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Men, on average, occupy this field of work. Job opportunities in STEM fields will ultimately limit women's ability to get involved in them. Fourth is feminized jobs.

Research Methods

This research uses qualitative descriptive methods to scrutinize the object of the study. According to Kim et al. (2017), this research aims to produce data that describes the who, what, and where of an event or experience from a subjective point of view. To obtain the data, we use literature study data from various sources such as books, journals,

proceedings, reports, news, the internet, and so on. Meanwhile, Miles and Huberman explained that three research steps involve collecting data, and analysis activities include three main lines: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion (Silalahi 2009, 339-340).

Besides using qualitative descriptive methods, we also conduct a bibliometric study on Google Scholar using the Publish or Perish application and VosViewer's application to visualize the data. These steps are done to support our argument in this study that supports

Rohingya refugees even in critical times, like during the COVID-19 pandemic. It does not need ratification on related conventions; it can be done based on humanitarian reasoning.

This research also applies the systematic bibliometric approach using VosViewer software and Publish and Perish to collect the research database from 2017 to 2023. To filter the publications, this study uses the keywords which are:"Gender", "Women", "Labour", "Indonesia", "Vietnam", and "India", as can be seen in figure one.
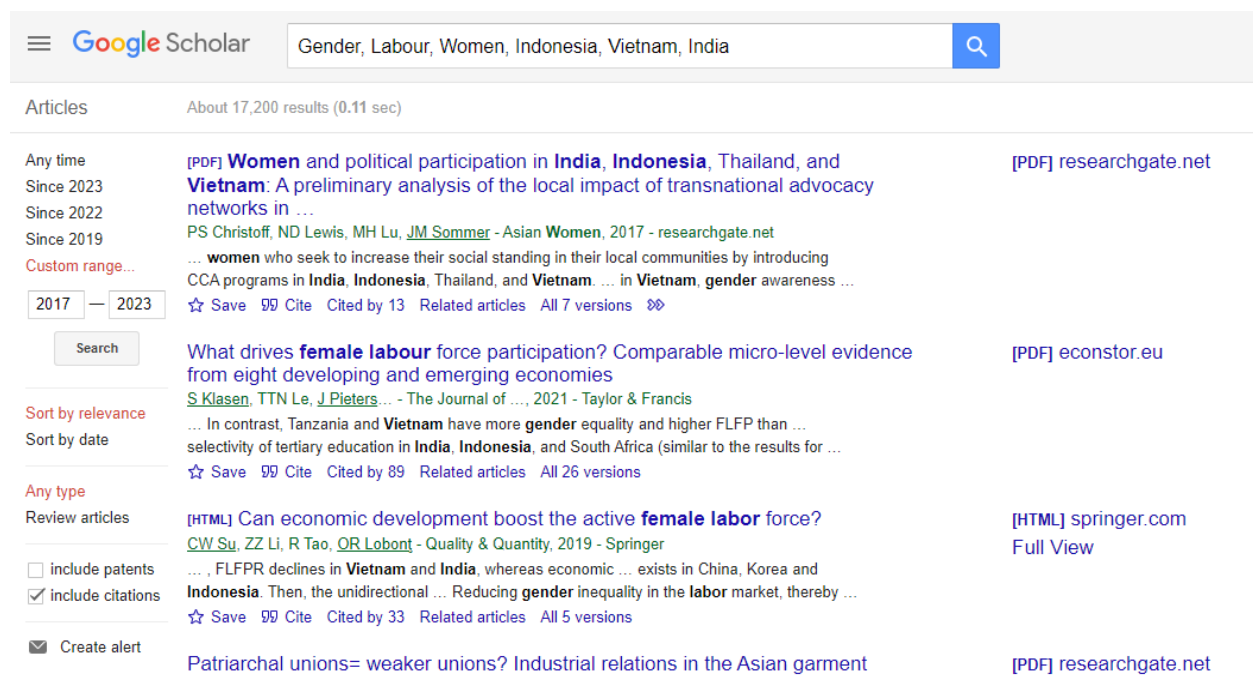
Source: Google Scholar 2022

Figure 1.
Google Scholar Search for Relevant Article

These keywords are deemed significant for our study, as they can effectively limit the related publications used for our data visualization to support our argument. The period from 2017 to 2023 is chosen as this research aims to seek a publication in the last five years to

get the most relevant articles. As a result, 17200 publications were found, but only 994 related articles were taken from Google Scholar using the Publish or Perish application. Figure 2 shows the details of the screening of publications.

74

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Source: Publish and Perish Program 2022.

Figure 2.
Quantity and The Statistics of Publications Used in This Study from Google Scholar from 2017-2023.

The relevant publications database is processed via Vos Viewer to be visualized. This study set the minimum occurrences of a term into 10, which means that ten times of occurrence for a term to be included in this study. There are 5237 relevant terms from this setting, but only 145 meet the threshold.
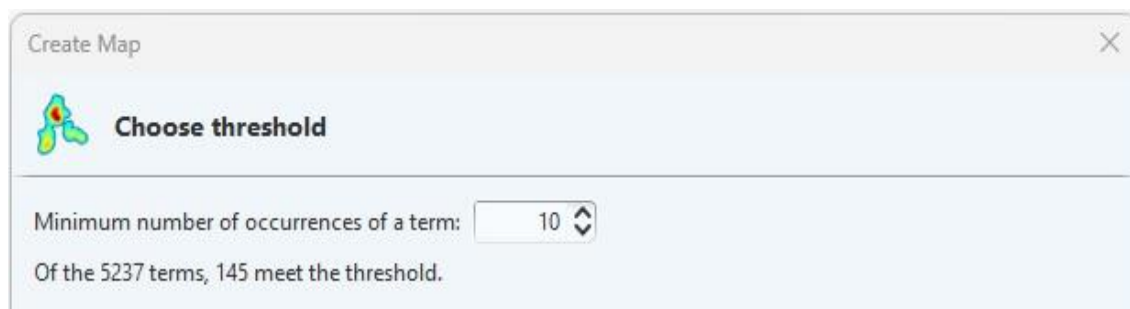
Source: Publish and Perish Program 2023

Figure 3.
Threshold of Occurrences of Terms Related to Network Society In Indonesia 2017-2023.

On to the next phase, the reduction step for the terms is conducted. By default, only 60% of the most relevant terms are included, making only 87 terms qualified from the total 145 terms.

Figure 4.
The Number of Terms to be Selected in The Study.

For the next step, the terms are then processed into a map, which will be displayed in this research's result and discussion section. The projection is reasonably sufficient to support the data analysis using Publish or Perish and Vos Viewer analysis. The visualization of the related keywords is intended to support the argument we built in this article.
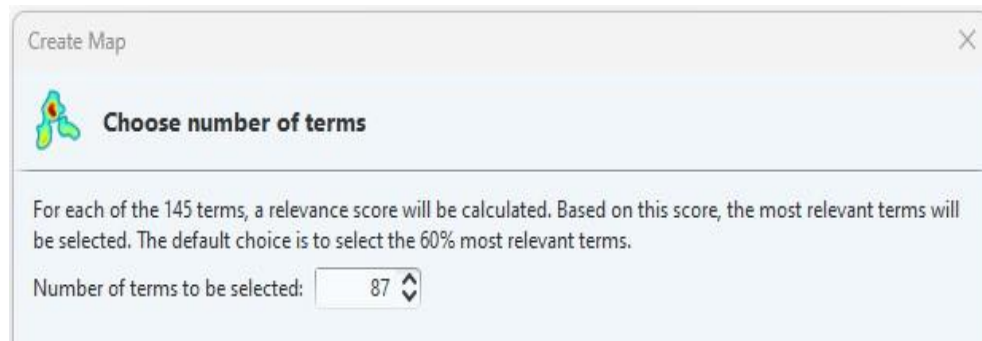
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First, the results of the literature study prove that securitization is not yet significant or deemed important enough to be discussed and used practically to surmount environmental issues in Indonesia. Second, the qualitative analysis will prove the record of success of securitization in solving environmental problems in Indonesia.

Result of Systematical Literature Study on Gender Segregation in the Labour Market in Indonesia, Vietnam, and India

Initially, the research result focuses on mapping the most related terms or keywords on the segregation in the labor market in Indonesia, Vietnam, and Indonesia. Three maps categorized the discussion based on the clusters, time overlay, and density. The first map can be seen in the following figure:

Figure 5.
Network visualization of terms derived from publications related with Gender Segregation in the Labour Market in Indonesia, Vietnam, and India in 2017-2023.

Based on the map above, it can be seen that 5 clusters are divided based on the colors. The map represents the complex relation between the keywords. The word labor connects to various terms, such as migration, which indicates that the scholars also brought the discussion to the context of labor migration. Labor migration is generally defined as a cross-border movement for employment in a foreign country. However, there is no universally accepted definition of labor migration. The term "economic migrant" is sometimes used as a synonym for the term migrant worker (Dakua, 2019).

Meanwhile, the International Labour Organization (ILO) defines a migrant worker as someone who migrates from one country to another to be employed (Loganathan et al., 2019). Furthermore, the map also visualized the terms "equality" and "inequality," indicating that scholars often discussed these terms regarding the labor market in those three countries. The words equality and inequality here emphasize gender segregation in the labor market in those three regions. Related to those terms, there is also the term "violence," which means that violations in the workplace toward women or female workers became the same problems that happened in the labor market in Indonesia, India, and Vietnam. The map also proposed the term "empowerment,"

77

which shows that women's empowerment became the solution offered by scholars in dealing with gender segregation.

Another map also shows the time-based overlay of the terms (Fig. 6), which displays the year of publications related to the topic. The time movement on the map is represented by the color changing from dark blue to yellow. The terms represented by the dark blue color mean that the keywords most discussed earlier. Meanwhile, the green and yellow colors represent the shifting of the most discussed term in specific periods. The detailed information can be seen in the following picture.

Source: Data Visualization from VosViewer.

Figure 6.
Time-based overlay visualization of terms relevant in the research from 2017-2023.

From the map above, it can be understood that around 2017-2018, there were words such as "labour migration" and "gender division." The periods also consist of the words "child" and "child labour," which means that the issues related to gender segregation in Indonesia, India, and Vietnam have a connection on child labour issues. For example, Indonesia's Center for Statistics (BPS) reported that the number of child laborers in Indonesia fluctuates. The number of child laborers in Indonesia in 2017 reached 1,27 million. Even though it decreased in 2018 (1,02) and 2019 (0,92), the number increased to 1,33 million in 2020 (Widi, 2023). Move to the green colors that represent 2019. The most discussed terms are "equality" and "inequality" and "empowerment," which had been discussed in the previous section. The period also consists of the fields related to the labor market, such as "trade", "health", and "agriculture." Then, it also consists of terms such as South Korea,

Australia, Japan, and Singapore that indicate the relationship between gender segregation and other countries.

Last but not least, yellow contains words such as "covid" and "pandemic." It shows that the COVID-19 Pandemic that has hit the world since 2020 has had an impact on gender segregation as well. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the existing gender gap in the Vietnamese workplace, where women face various challenges, such as increasingly tricky working hours and job opportunities. In the last three months of 2020, the ILO reported that women worked 0.8 percent more than in the same period in 2019, while men worked 0.6 percent more (Quy, 2021).

Furthermore, the application also visualized a density map related to the topics. When the density gets thicker, it can be translated that those are the most talked about keywords. The statement can be seen in more detail in the following picture.
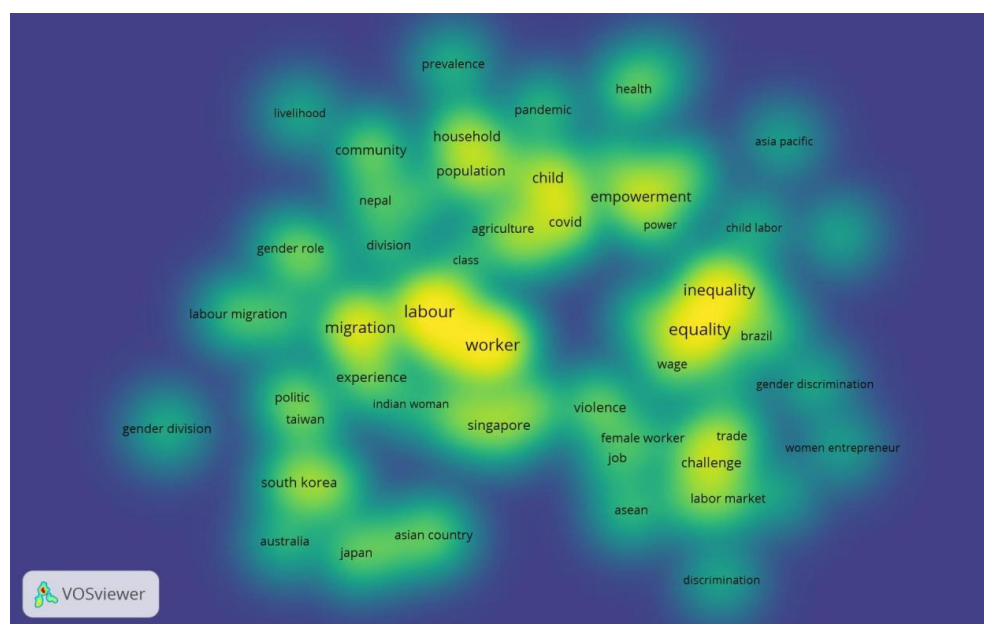
Source: Data Visualization from VosViewer.

Figure 7.
Clusters of Keywords/Terms Relevant in the Study Based on the Visualization Map.

Based on the figure, several words have thick density. Those keywords are migration, labor, worker, inequality, equality, child, and covid. If we can see from the keywords' relation, we can conclude that those keywords talk about social injustice in the workplace. Since it also contains the word 'Covid', it's getting more vulnerable during the pandemic. The claim is based on the conditions in which many laborers work in the informal sector, which will be explained in more detail in the next section.

Furthermore, there are also clusters of keywords relevant to this research, which are displayed in the networking map of the keywords. These clusters classify the keywords into specific different issues. The keywords are grouped in 7 clusters presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1.

Seven Clusters of the Keywords that are relevant to this Research.

No	Clusters	Keywords
1.	**Cluster 1**	ASEAN, Brazil, challenge, child labor, discrimination, economic development, female labor force party, female worker, gender discrimination, gender wage gap, labor force participation, labor market, labor market, South Africa, trade, turkey, wage, women entrepreneur.
2.	**Cluster 2**	Asia Pacific, child, empowerment, entrepreneurship, equality, family, gender relation, health, inequality power, rural Vietnam, violence.
3.	**Cluster 3**	Community, experience, gender norm, gender role, household, Indian woman, Indonesian woman, labour migration, livelihood, migration, Vietnamese, woman.
4.	**Cluster 4**	Access, agriculture, difference, gender difference, government, Indian, Laos, Nepal, politic, population, prevalence.
5.	**Cluster 5**	Asian country, Australia, Japan, Korea, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, worker.
6.	**Cluster 6**	Class, Covid, income, Indonesian, job, pandemic.
7.	**Cluster 7**	Division, gender division, labor.

Source: Data Visualization from VosViewer

Women's Labour–Market Position and Dynamics

India, Indonesia, and Vietnam are three developing countries with promising economic prospects based on labor-intensive industries (Warner, 2011). Industrial development in these countries is inseparable from the flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into these countries (Oatley, 2016). Indeed, during the increase of COVID-19, many countries experienced a severe blow in investment flows, which were one of the main pillars of their economic development. However, the declining trend of COVID-19 cases and the 'Lockdown Policy' hoist in several countries, which limited economic activity, has given a positive trend to FDI flows in 2021 (OECD, 2022).

According to data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), after a steady decline in 2020 that was accelerated by the COVID-19 crisis, global FDI flows jumped 88% in 2021 to reach USD 1,815 billion, surpassing the pre-pandemic level of 37%. Countries with the most significant global economic power, such as the United States and China, are the two countries that enjoy this growth. However, several developing countries enjoy economic growth through FDI (OECD, 2022). The dynamics of global

FDI flows can be seen in Figure 8, with the sharpest decline in 2020, or when the COVID-19 pandemic spread worldwide. Then, FDI flows experienced growth after the declining trend of daily cases of COVID-19 around the world, along with the lifting of several policies limiting community activities.

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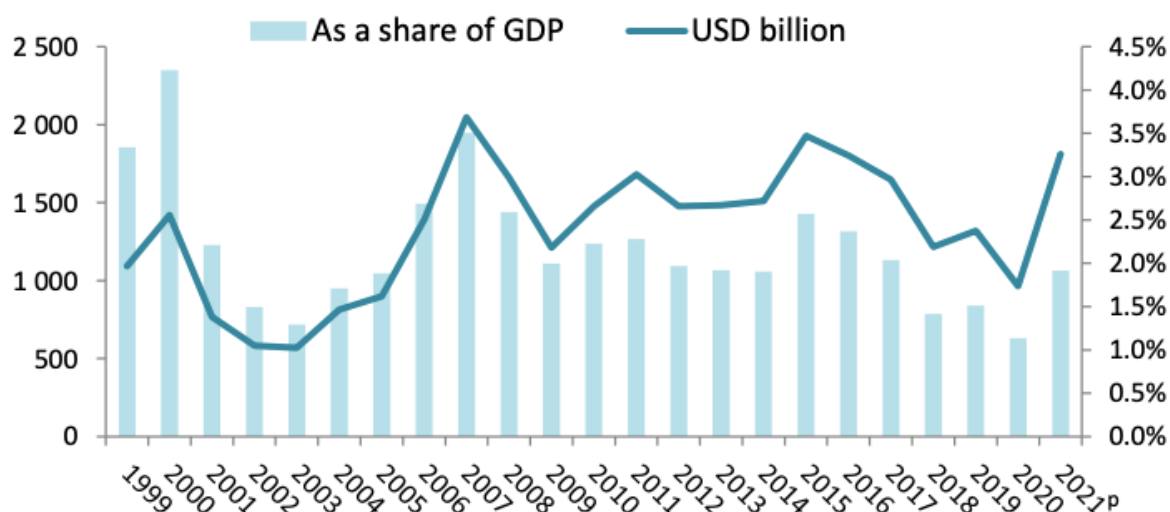
Source: (OECD, 2022).

Figure 8.
Clusters of Keywords/Terms Relevant in the Study Based on the Visualization Map

According to some global FDI data, global FDI growth experienced a positive trend in 2021, with only a slight decline in 2020 due to COVID-19. FDI revenues are dominated by a few large countries, including the United States and China (OECD, 2022). However, several ASEAN and South Asian countries, including India, Indonesia, and Vietnam, have seen a tremendous increase in FDI in their respective geopolitical areas. Table 2 of FDI receipts data shows that India, Indonesia, and Vietnam are the three largest recipients of FDI in their region (UNCTAD, 2022). As labor-intensive non-industrial countries, Indonesia and Vietnam were only battered by Singapore. Indonesia and Vietnam are the two ASEAN countries that receive the most FDI as labor-intensive industrial countries, generally engaged in the textile sector

Table 2.
FDI Inflows to ASEAN and South Asian Countries (in million USD)

Country	2019	2020	2021
Southeast Asia			
Singapore	106,323	75,437	99,099
Indonesia	23,883	18,591	20,081
Vietnam	16,120	15,800	15,660

Malaysia	7,813	3,160	11,620
Philippines	8,671	6,882	10,518
Thailand	4,790	4,849	11,423
Cambodia	3,662	3,625	3,484
Myanmar	2,509	1,907	2,067
Lao PDR	756	968	1,072
Brunei Darussalam	375	577	205
Timor-Leste	75	72	85
South Asia			
India	50,558	64,072	44,735
Pakistan	2,234	2,057	2,102
Sri Lanka	743	434	598

Source: (UNCTAD, 2022)

Labor-intensive industries dominate developing economies such as Indonesia, India, and Vietnam. This condition happened because these three countries have a large surplus population. Table 3 shows an overview of the workforce workers in India, Indonesia, and Vietnam from 2019 to 2021. In which the three countries have the most workers in their geopolitical areas. From these data, more than 13% of the workforce in the three countries work in the industrial sector. Where India has a total workforce of more than 66 million (Chand & Singh, 2022), Indonesia has a workforce of more than 17 million (BPS, 2022). Vietnam has a workforce in the industrial sector of more than more than 11 million (Nguyen, 2023).

Table 3.
Workforce Data of India, Indonesia, and Vietnam (millions of people).

Country	2019	2020	2021	Industrial Labour Force
India	501,044,015	496,925,521	507,714,804	66,002,924
Indonesia	136,201,928	136,106,884	134,381,721	17,469,623
Vietnam	55,877,864	54,751,934	55,034,919	11,200,000

Source: (World Bank, 2022).

This data demonstrates that the three countries, India, Indonesia, and Vietnam, are several FDI destination countries for labor-intensive industries (Ahmed et al., 2022). Labor-intensive industries contribute significantly to the workforce in all three countries. Gender disparities or segregation continue to exist and are one of the barriers to women's development once compared to men (Jose & Sivaraman, 2023). This gender disparity ultimately results in women having less bargaining power than men from the beginning (Rees, 2022). Women appear to be able to fill only the place that has been classified for them (Altuzarra et al., 2021). Ultimately, this condition establishes an

environment where women's income, accomplishments, and status will always lag behind men's (Triggs & Urata, 2020). Women are more likely to be employed in labor-intensive industries because they are considered more conscientious, work neatly, are 'obedient,' and tend not to be involved in labor political movements that can destabilize the company (Wijanarka & Panjaitan, 2021).

In 2022, progress on gender equality was hampered by multiple crises: rising living costs, the gripping COVID-19 pandemic, and the climate crisis (Arntz et al., 2020). Gender equality is no longer the primary concern of governments as they focus on a series of escalating economic and political shocks. Over the last few decades, many women have entered the labor force and worked in labor-intensive industries (Pierre-Richard et al., 2021). In the end, this condition creates several obstacles, including increasingly difficult societal expectations, insufficient legal guarantees, and the loss of guarantees for women. This condition continues to limit women's access to educational opportunities and potential careers because they have been formed only to fill specific jobs (Hausmann et al., 2022).

The Global Gender Gap Index attempts to describe this condition by comparing current gender parity and its evolution across four primary dimensions. The four dimensions are participation and economic opportunities, educational attainment, longevity and well-being, and political empowerment. Since their inception in 2006, some of these criteria have been used to track progress in closing gaps over time. The Global Gender Gap Index scores on a scale of 0 to 100, with scores defining the distance traveled to parity (i.e., percentage gap closed gender) (WEF, 2022).

On a global level, the gender gap has been closed to the percentage of 68.1%. At the current rate of progress, full parity will take 132 years. In terms of regional area, Europe, particularly Scandinavian countries, has the highest level of gender equality. Generally, the percentage of gender equality in the East Asia and Pacific region is classified as medium. Furthermore, it shows stagnation regarding the percentage of The Global Gender Gap Index for the South Asia region (WEF, 2022). This description demonstrates that Southeast Asia regions are several regions that still experience high gender disparities and segregation. Gender segregation still high in these regions, will be more clearly seen in Table 3 below.

Table 4.
The Global Gender Gap Index (2022).

Country	Index	Global Rank
Southeast Asia		
Lao PDR	0,733	53
Timor-Leste	0,730	56
Thailand	0,709	79
Vietnam	0,705	83
Indonesia	0,697	92
Malaysia	0,681	103
Brunei Darussalam	0,680	104

South Asia		
Bangladesh	0,714	71
Nepal	0,692	96
Sri Lanka	0,670	110
India	0,629	135

Source: (WEF, 2022).

According to Table 4, India (0,629) ranks last in the South Asian region regarding gender parity. Meanwhile, Indonesia (0,697) and Vietnam (0,705), despite having gender parity that can be classified as medium, still have several issues that make gender parity challenging to achieve. The stagnation from 2020 to 2022 demonstrates this situation. This stagnation indicates that Vietnam and Indonesia have yet to complete one of the four criteria established by the World Economic Forum (WEF).

The gender gap in the labor force is driven and influenced by many factors, including long-standing structural barriers, socio-economic and technological transformations, patriarchal culture, educational factors, and various other inhibiting factors. India, for example, only places women with a percentage of 10% of the total parliament. In addition, men get higher educational opportunities than women (UNDP, 2021). In fact, in India, more than 60% of women have received no education at all (NIH, 2023). Indonesia and Vietnam collectively place women's participation in politics at only 20%, and in terms of education, they also place women at 15% lower than men (UNDP, 2021).

India ranks lowest among the three countries in terms of women's access to education. Women have limited educational opportunities. One of the reasons why the majority of women can only fill specific jobs, namely labor-intensive industries, is the strong influence of patriarchal culture on limiting women's access to education. This limitation then forces women to be shackled to have better access to jobs than men (Soham & Stephen, 2018). While not as hurtful as India, Indonesia,

and Vietnam have nearly identical conditions. In which women have less access to formal education than men (Jacqueline & Jasper, 2018). In the end, the exact condition boils down to the same situation in India: women with a lower education level than men will experience fewer opportunities in the labor market.

The notion that women are 'housewives' and men are those who should look for work and funds is also at the root of these countries' increased gender segregation. When a patriarchal culture reinforces the concept that 'women should be at home,' women in Indonesia are less likely to think critically in order to obtain a better education and job. One of the barriers to the continued strengthening of patriarchal culture in Indonesia and Vietnam is the cultural conception of independent women who will have "difficulties getting married" if they get better jobs and education than men (Wijanarka & Panjaitan, 2021). The same situation exists in India, where the caste system is frequently an impediment to women becoming 'better' than men in terms of work and education (Taapsi, 2019).

Several of the factors mentioned above eventually make gender segregation in the labor market in the Indo-Pacific region more visible through data from India, Indonesia, and Vietnam. The strong patriarchal culture and women's barriers to education are the two main reasons why women have lower economic participation and opportunities than men. Women in Indonesia earn 23% less than men (UN Women, 2021). Women in India earn 28% less than men (UN Women, 2022). In Vietnam, women earn 3 million Dong

less than men yearly (Chowdhury et al., 2018).

As previously demonstrated by data, women tend to occupy certain positions deemed beneficial to them. A strong patriarchal culture forces women to be concerned for the household instead of taking a job. Women who work are often viewed as a 'complementary economy' for the family. Women's work is often thought to be disproportionate to men's. As a result, this condition eventually shackles and places women in non-strategic jobs (Wijanarka & Panjaitan, 2021), such as being limited to informal sector jobs as one of the effects of FDI flows in India, Indonesia, and Vietnam, three labor-intensive manufacturing industries.

Policy Options for Promoting Gender Equality in the Indo-Pacific Labour Market

Approximately 38.3 million domestic workers over 15 work in Asia and the Pacific, of which 78.4 percent are women. This region is also the largest region of male domestic workers, accounting for 46.1 percent of male domestic workers worldwide (ILO, 2021). That means that women contribute significantly and actively participate in global economic progress. Equally, promoting career advancement to all workers, regardless of gender, can help the organization improve its performance (Wesarat & Mathew, 2017). Politically active women can also mobilize to oppose sex equality policies such as equal rights amendments in national constitutions (Htun & Weldon, 2010).

Women tend to be overre-presented in unpaid care work, particularly in South Asia, South-Eastern Asia, and the Pacific island countries. Estimates suggest that as many as one in 13 female wage earners in Asia and the Pacific are domestic workers – often working in informality, with low pay and other poor working conditions (ILO, 2016). As happened in China, discrimination against female workers has an impact on the injustice felt by these female workers. Even though the law prohibits discriminatory recruitment of workers, several companies still only accept male workers. Even Human Rights Watch found in 2020 that 11 percent of civil service positions advertised in China that year had 'a preference or requirement for men,' (Asia Pacific Foundation, 2023). In responding to these challenges, governments and policymakers in Indo-Pacific countries must review mechanisms and regulations to provide inclusive rules and ensure no discrimination in the labor market for female workers. For instance, international advocacy networks and agreements have more powerful effects in countries that need to please global audiences.

The national government must have open knowledge to understand why women work. The reason is that the choice to become a worker for women must overcome an obstacle known as the 'glass ceiling.' Although the number of women who are business owners and managers has increased, women in Asia and the Pacific remain excluded from economic decision-making on a large scale. A prevailing and persistent 'glass ceiling' prevents women from reaching top positions and breaking into typically male-dominated jobs and sectors (ILO, 2016). There are several main policy options and initiatives that can be used to

promote gender equality in the labor market in the Indo-Pacific region:

Invest in Education and Skills Development

The complex challenge of gender equality in the labor market must be addressed by making systemic changes. The primary system that must be found for a solution in the future is the education system. Designing a series of solutions in this sector cannot be done by just one institution. Nevertheless, it requires much effort from across sectors, such as the private sector, state government, communities, and civil society organizations. A sound education system that is managed holistically and constructively will influence the mindset of learners, ultimately producing graduates with competitive and competitive competencies.

Education has increased employment opportunities for women, helping them gain greater economic independence from men and become financially self-sufficient (Adeyemi, 2015). Education could help eliminate gender stereotypes that hinder women's access to specific work areas. Developing a curriculum that includes material on gender equality, women's rights, and the consequences of gender inequality in society and in the workplace can help change students' views and attitudes towards gender issues. Meanwhile, there is an ongoing debate on the reasons why women, especially young women, continue to have limited opportunities in the labor market in comparison to their male counterparts. While women represent a high majority of the public sector workforce, they occupy a proportionately lower percentage of senior and executive positions. These facts have prompted girls and women to examine their chosen field of study that can impact their skill set, employability, and career track (ECLAC, 2022).

Inclusive education must provide space for women to freely explore their talents so that they are equipped with a roadmap for the future they desire after completing their education. Governments in the Indo-Pacific region must be able to provide training to improve STEM skills and other skills adapted to the demands of the labour market in the modern era to remove the stigmatization that women can only do low-level jobs. However, the success of women in studying at school will be disrupted if the patriarchal culture of their society is still deeply rooted. Often, the education they have received cannot lead them to more professional job choices that fit their passion.

Private Sector Involvement

For companies in the private sector that require a large workforce, it is essential to incorporate a gender perspective into their management system. Commitment to gender awareness in the world of work in the private sector will support the achievement of the goals of the UNDP Sustainable Development Services (SDS) Gender Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion program to advance the sustainable development agenda and foster business performance in gender equality. The program provides a tool for private enterprises to come together and contribute towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (in particular, SDGs 5, 8, 10, and 17) by reducing gender gaps and promoting gender equality and competitiveness

simultaneously for inclusive and sustainable growth (UNDP, 2023)

Private companies can collaborate simultaneously with the government to provide skills development programs for their workers based on a series of programs that can mobilize access for female workers, especially those who want to accelerate career development. Singapore has been actively encouraging women to pursue higher-level management roles. This condition has seen women increasingly represented on the boards of the top 100 publicly traded companies. Vietnam's new labor code will help the country maintain its lead in having the highest female employment rates and one of the most minor gender pay gaps in the region (Nor, 2023). Companies in other Indo-Pacific countries should also maximize this kind of effort.

State Involvement in Skill Mapping of the Future Workforce Market

Technological advances, the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), increasingly rapid human mobility, and the absence of national borders are changing the dynamics of workers required by the labor market in the future. Promoting technology-based job opportunities can be a new opportunity to increase gender equality and economic growth. Women have made tremendous gains in education and now make up 44% of college-educated workers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) occupations. However, a closer look at the underlying data reveals divergent patterns of gender (in)equality within STEM. Men continue to make up the vast majority of degree recipients in STEM fields that are spatially and mathematically intensive —

geoscience, engineering, economics, mathematics, computer science, and physical science — while women are overrepresented in life sciences, psychology, and social sciences (Seneviratne, 2022). Globally, 40 million to 160 million women may face the need to transition between jobs by 2030, often to higher-skilled roles (Wilkinson & Barry, 2020).

If we are seeing these opportunities and challenges, the country should be able to run technology-oriented skills development programs for women. APEC members recognize that the full potential of women's contributions to the Asia-Pacific economy still needs to be explored. Thus, in 2019, APEC ministers endorsed the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth to encourage initiatives across all of APEC's workstreams to advance gender equality and women's economic empowerment (APEC, 2023). This is a progressive step towards realizing gender justice for female workers in the region.

Gender-friendly Employment Policy

The government's role in promoting gender equality can be realized to be critical. Gender equality is revealed by demonstrating equality in economic availability and opportunities, education, and other factors. Apart from the state, companies, as a 'state' with a smaller scope in a social system, must promote gender equality. Given that gender equality in the labor market positively impacts a company's success (ILO, 2021).

The ILO remains the best source of multilateral designs that can ensure gender parity. The ILO developed several criteria to be used as a driving force to achieve gender parity. They kept in mind

that wage disparities, types of employment, patriarchal culture, and a variety of other factors all contribute to the lack of gender parity in the labour market. As a result, there are several guarantee criteria that, through the company's role, can help strengthen gender equality in the labor market. In this case, the company is an extension of the state, providing, assisting, encouraging, and ensuring gender mainstreaming in the labor market. This condition ensures that men's and women's paths are equal and do not diverge. Gender-balanced selection panels, form-blind evaluations, and gender-balanced targets in recruitment and promotion monitoring are examples of this (ILO, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

The authors recognize that the policy derivatives described are still normative. It means that various parties must work together to make this commitment realistic. Commitment to achieving gender equality is meaningless if it is only carried out by one party. Countries, regional and multilateral frameworks, the ILO, and businesses must all work together to create a

'hammer' capable of destroying the 'glass wall,' which remains a barrier to gender parity. It takes complete dedication to accomplish this. Finally, companies can become the primary actors capable of creating a gender-friendly labor market environment.

The Indo-Pacific region's rapid industrial growth is attempting to draw more attention to the gender gap in the labor market. Women have long been limited by a 'special vessel' to specific wage rates, sorts of employment, and occupational strata. Women frequently face more significant barriers than men in obtaining jobs, wage increases, and high positions in a company. One of the root causes of problems in India, Indonesia, and Vietnam is patriarchal culture. One of the drivers of gender disparities is patriarchal culture, which frequently creates barriers to equal distribution of education for women. Especially with the condition that many labor-intensive industries are developing in these three countries. Because of cultural factors that label women only as 'complementary economy,' women are frequently 'forced' to enter this field of work.

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