



School Culture and Gender Equality: Principals' Strategies in Realizing SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4 (Gender Equality)

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Abstract: Gender equality is more than just an issue in Indonesia and globally. In Indonesia, the government launched Asta Cita 4, while at the global level, the UN launched SDG 5. This study aims to describe principals' strategies in creating school cultures that promote gender equality, to achieve SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4 (gender equality). This study used a quantitative survey method. Data were collected via Google Forms using closed-ended questionnaires. The respondents were 177 principals, selected purposively. Data analysis was done with SPSS. The results reveal that there are four strategies of principals in creating school cultures that promote gender equality in realizing SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4: the role of principals in improving gender equality in education; school policies that support gender equality in education; teacher training on gender equality; and the implementation of gender equality in learning. This research concludes that the strategies can promote gender equality. This research's contribution is to raise awareness of the significance of school cultures that promote gender equality, thus achieving Asta Cita 4 and SDG 5. Moreover, this study's results can serve as a guide for creating a school culture that supports gender equality in educational environments.

Keywords: Asta Cita 4; gender equality in education; principals' strategies; school culture; SDG 5

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INTRODUCTION

Gender refers to the characteristics, roles, behaviors, and norms that are socially constructed and associated with being a woman or a man, as defined by society (Kaufman et al., 2023; WHO, 2025). Gender also represents a cultural identity that establishes its societal norms (Wormley et al., 2021) and varies across societies and can change (WHO, 2025). Gender inequality occurs when individuals are treated differently because of their gender, resulting in unequal access to rights and opportunities across social, economic, and educational fields (Zhu, 2022). Gender inequality is widespread globally, and women face numerous disadvantages in many fields that affect their lives (European Commission, 2019; Leal et al., 2023; Milazzo & Goldstein, 2019; UN Women, 2018). Therefore, gender equality is important. Gender equality refers to the situation in which women, men, girls, and boys have the same rights, access to resources, opportunities, and protection (UNICEF, 2019). Gender equality is a basic human right and plays a key role in building a safe, wealthy, and lasting world (United Nations, 2025).

Gender equality is a concern worldwide. According to the World Economic Forum (2024), Indonesia ranks 100th out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Report. Various issues regarding gender equality in Indonesia arise because of the inadequate implementation of gender equality in Indonesia (Noor et al., 2024; Nurdin, 2022; Sari & Ismail, 2021), due to the patriarchal culture (Nurdin, 2022; Rahma, 2023), with society continuing to discuss the role of women (Chotim, 2022; Suhada, 2021). Therefore, gender equality is a priority program of the Indonesian government, as outlined in Asta Cita 4, which includes guarantees for women's education and the enhancement of women's roles (Pojok Prabowo, 2023; Sudrajat, 2024). Asta Cita 4 is part of the Prabowo-Gibran vision and mission, which includes 8 missions (Asta Cita) and 17 priority programs (Satriawan et al., 2025; Sudrajat, 2024).

At the global level, despite progress in recent years, the world is far from reaching gender equality in 2030 (United Nations, 2025). Additionally, cultural, religious, and sociocultural norms continue to prevent women from pursuing higher education (Nengyanti et al., 2025; Shaukat & Pell, 2017). Therefore, gender equality is also emphasized in SDG 5 (Gaur et al., 2024; Malik et al., 2025; Thun, 2020). SDG 5 guarantees equal rights for women to access education and health services, eliminates all forms of cruelty and unfairness, and encourages women to take a part in making important decisions (Malik et al., 2025; United Nations, 2025). Women make up approximately 50% of the global population, meaning half of the global human resource potential belongs to them. Therefore, when women's living conditions improve, the entire community will feel the impact (Beloskar et al., 2024), as women's empowerment and gender equality are crucial factors in social development and building a strong community (UNDP, 2021; Zabaniotou, 2020). Thus, all countries must

collaborate to achieve this goal (Liu et al., 2024; Sari et al., 2024). Gender equality and women's empowerment can be achieved through education (Reddy et al., 2023; Samudrala et al., 2022). Quality education for girls can make a significant difference by changing norms and beliefs and overcoming traditional barriers and gender stereotypes that may have hindered women's choices and aspirations (Asadullah et al., 2024; Nur et al., 2024). Moreover, through quality education, girls can expand their knowledge, skills, and confidence, thereby becoming economically and politically independent women (Cheng et al., 2025; Nur et al., 2025). Quality education equips children and young people with essential skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors that enable them to live fulfilling and productive lives. It should encompass not only basic literacy and numeracy but also broader life skills that empower them to become leaders and agents of change (Plan International, 2025). Whereas, according to UNICEF (2018), every child has the basic right to quality education, that is, an education that enables children to master basic literacy and numeracy skills, participate in the learning process in a safe and supportive environment, and feel valued and involved, regardless of their background.

One factor influencing quality education is school culture. A positive school culture gives everyone in the school chances to work well, feel energetic, stay happy, and keep developing all the time (Jaya et al., 2024; Santia et al., 2024). Besides that, a strong school culture shapes the beliefs, choices, and behaviors of school members (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2024; Jaya et al., 2024). On the other hand, school culture influences gender equality. Schools, teachers, and peers influence students' perceptions of their gender identity (Brussino & McBrien, 2022; Raabe et al., 2019; Zanchi & Watson, 2024). Peer acceptance and popularity become crucial during adolescence, when adolescents seek recognition, a sense of belonging, and social connections, which can be influenced by gender (Cook et al., 2019; Huyge et al., 2015). A school's gender-based culture reflects common beliefs among students (Huyge et al., 2015). Previous studies have shown that attitudes toward gender roles are stronger within schools than across schools, indicating that school cultures regarding gender roles vary across school features (Van Houtte, 2023). Creating a just and equitable school environment requires an inclusive, non-discriminatory environment (Killen & Rutland, 2022). Therefore, support from principals, teachers, parents, and other community members is needed to foster an inclusive culture (Ackah-Jnr, 2022; Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2022; Maciver et al., 2018; Opoku-Nkoom & Ackah-Jnr, 2023).

Gender inequality in education happens because there is no guiding features, minimum academic support, a limited number of competent teachers, a school environment that is not conducive to female students, a lack of attention to girls' needs, a lack of learning strategies to promote gender equality and inappropriate behavior in the school environment (Baten et al., 2021; Belingheri et al., 2021), and the absence of gender equality material in the curriculum (Mustofa et al., 2021). In some regions of Indonesia, societal and religious norms still obstruct girls' access to education, especially during the transition from elementary to middle school (Nengyanti et al., 2025). The absence of gender equality in education results in the denial of human rights for girls and hinders social and economic development (Iqbal et al., 2022). To address this problem, this study aims to describe principals' strategies for creating a school culture that supports gender equality, to achieve SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4. Principals play a crucial role in educational success (Irdiyansyah et al., 2024) and have the authority to implement educational practices that support gender equality (Muafia & Werdiningsih, 2021). Therefore, in carrying out their duties, principals must take the right strategy (Müller et al., 2020). Thus, through the right strategy, principals will be able to realize SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4, namely gender equality.

Jaya et al. (2024) and Santia et al. (2024) have researched school cultures. However, their research does not relate school culture to gender equality, SDG 5, and Asta Cita 4. Thus, this research takes a novel approach by examining research on SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4 through the perspective of principals' strategies related to school cultures and gender equality. This study supports previous studies conducted by Alemu (2024), Sudrajat et al. (2022), Nurwahyuningsih et al. (2024), Chotim (2022), Savitri et al. (2024), and Wigati (2019). This study aims to describe the principals' strategies in creating a school culture that supports gender equality, to achieve SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4, with the following indicators: the role of the principal in improving gender equality in education, school policies that support gender equality in education, teacher training on gender equality, and the implementation of gender equality in learning (Alemu, 2024; Chotim, 2022; Nurwahyuningsih et al., 2024; Savitri et al., 2024; Sudrajat et al., 2022; Wigati, 2019). By implementing these strategies in schools, it is hoped that gender equality will be achieved in the educational environment, enabling the realization of SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4, which focus on gender equality.

METHODS

This research used a quantitative survey method. A survey is a method for gathering data and analyzing information by asking a group of people specific questions prepared in advance. Researchers create a list of questions, send them to participants, collect the answers, and then analyze the responses to learn more about a particular topic. The process includes making the questions, finding people to answer them, giving them the questions, and then reviewing the answers to understand the results (Lave & Lane, 2025). The respondents in this study are 177 school principals in Central Java. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The objective of purposive sampling techniques is to align the sample with the research objectives

and the research criteria, thereby increasing the accuracy and reliability of the research findings (Campbell et al., 2020; Maryono et al., 2025).

In this research, data were collected through an online questionnaire using Google Forms. The online questionnaire was distributed to principals in WhatsApp groups. Before using the questionnaire in the main research, it was pre-tested with 30 respondents. The 30 respondents in this pre-test were randomly selected principals from elementary to high school levels. The differences in age, education, and background of the respondents made the results more accurate and representative. This pre-test was conducted to confirm that each questionnaire item was valid and reliable. The test results revealed that 29 items were valid and 1 was invalid. The instruments used after the validity test are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Instruments used after the validity test

Indicators	Sub-indicators	Items
The role of principals in improving gender equality in education	Principals as a role model	3
	Principals as a mentor	2
	Teacher assignments	2
School policies that support gender equality in education	Access to education for all individuals without gender discrimination	2
	A safe and inclusive school environment	
	Facilities that support gender equality	2
	Empowering women in leadership	2
	Community engagement in supporting gender equality	2
	Training on gender equality behavior	2
	Training on gender-equal pedagogy	2
Teacher training on gender equality	Building students' self-awareness about gender responsiveness	3
	Using gender-neutral language	2
Implementation of gender equality in learning	Implementing gender responsive learning	3

Resources: Alemu (2024); Sudrajat et al. (2022); Nurwahyuningsih et al. (2024); Chotim (2022); Savitri et al. (2024), and Wigati (2019)

The research instrument was a structured questionnaire. This instrument contains 29 questions, organized into four indicators of this research. Indicator 1 consists of 7 items, Indicator 2 10 items, Indicator 3 4 items, and Indicator 4 8 items. Each question item uses a 4-point Likert scale. Point 1 for strongly disagree, point 2 for disagree, point 3 for agree, and point 4 for strongly agree. This point is used to capture respondents' level of agreement with the statements. The Likert scale makes it easier to get quantitative data that can be analyzed using statistical methods (Maryono et al., 2025).

To obtain research results, after data collection, the researcher conducted data analysis using SPSS. Based on the data analysis, 29 of 30 statement items are declared valid, while item 13 is declared invalid. This occurs because $r \text{ count} < r \text{ table}$, which is $0.328 < 0.360$. The product-moment validity test criteria are valid if $r \text{ count} > r \text{ table}$ (Sugiyono, 2018). The validity test results identify items with low validity scores that need to be removed from the final instrument. The reliability test value measures an instrument's stability (Ansari et al., 2024; Govindasamy et al., 2024). The reliability test criterion is that Cronbach's alpha > 0.60 indicates the questionnaire is reliable or consistent (Ghozali, 2021). The data analysis results also show that Cronbach's alpha for the 30-item questionnaire exceeds 0.60, indicating that all 30 items are reliable.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To achieve gender equality, every aspect of education must implement regulations, programs, and strategies that address issues related to gender and gender-biased social norms (Miralles-Cardona, 2025). The findings of the current research reveal four principals' strategies in creating a school culture that supports gender equality in education, to realize SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4, which emphasize the importance of gender equality.

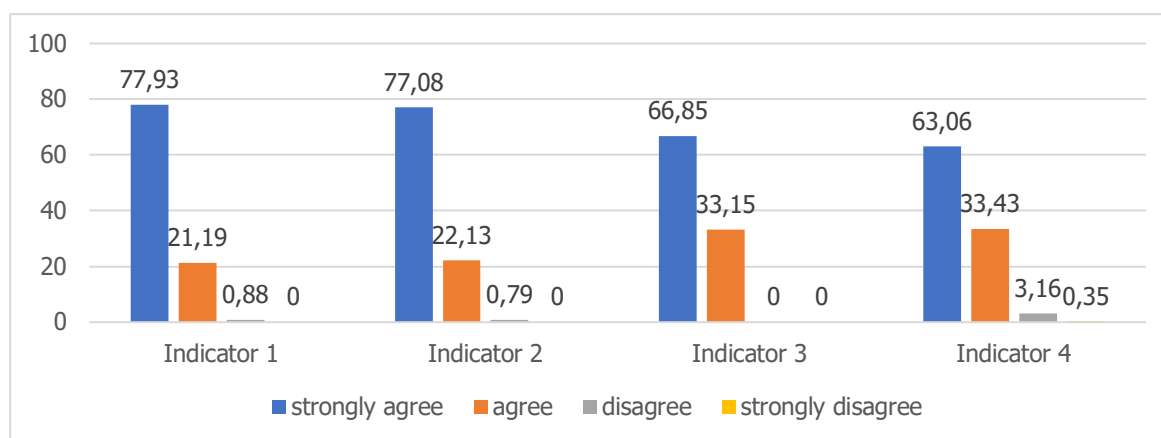


Figure 1. Comparison between indicators

Based on [Figure 1](#), the principal's role in improving gender equality in education (Indicator 1) is known that 77.93% of respondents stated strongly agree; 21.19% agree; 0.88% disagree, and 0% strongly disagree. In this indicator, the observation aspect consists of three sub-indicators: the principal as a role model, the principal as a mentor, and teacher assignments. These results indicate that principals play a crucial role in achieving gender equality in education. Through their leadership style, principals can lead, mentor, and influence the behaviour of people around them, encouraging them to follow the principals' direction. This fosters cooperation based on awareness, willingness, and full commitment to achieving organizational goals ([Asri et al., 2021](#)). This study aligns with [Alemu \(2024\)](#), who examined how female principals contribute to decreasing gender disparity in education, and [Sudrajat et al. \(2022\)](#), who discussed how the principal assigns teachers.

School policies that support gender equality in education (Indicator 2): 77.08% of respondents strongly agree; 22.13% agree; 0.79% disagree; and 0% strongly disagree. This indicator comprises five sub-indicators: access to education for all individuals without gender discrimination; a safe and inclusive school environment; facilities that support gender equality; women's empowerment in leadership; and community involvement in supporting gender equality. This result indicates that the school policies examined in this research can be effectively implemented to support gender equality in education. This study aligns with [Sudrajat et al. \(2022\)](#), which explored the policies of principals that demonstrate gender-sensitive actions, [Savitri et al. \(2024\)](#), which discussed policies and regulations that support gender equality in education, and [Wigati \(2019\)](#), which discussed the social aspects of gender-responsiveness in schools.

Indicator 3, teacher training on gender equality, shows that 66.85% of respondents strongly agree, 33.15% agree, 0% disagree, and 0% strongly disagree. In this indicator, the observation aspect comprises two sub-indicators: training on gender-equality behavior and training on gender-equal pedagogy. These results indicate that teachers need training in gender-equal behavior and pedagogy. Through this training, teachers will learn to treat students equally regardless of gender and to implement learning processes that uphold gender equality. This result aligns with [Nurwahyuningsih et al. \(2024\)](#), who stated that it is significant to provide teachers with training on gender equality, as this can shape teachers' views and challenge gender stereotypes, ultimately influencing students' beliefs through classroom activities.

The implementation of gender equality in learning: 63.06% strongly agreed, 33.43% agreed, 3.16% disagreed, and 0.35% strongly disagreed. In this indicator, the observation aspect comprises three sub-indicators: building students' self-awareness of gender responsiveness; using gender-neutral language; and implementing gender-responsive learning. This finding shows that gender equality in learning is needed to reduce gender inequality in education. The results of this study align with [Widodo and Elyas \(2020\)](#), [Chotim \(2022\)](#), [Sudrajat et al. \(2022\)](#), and [Merma-Molina et al. \(2024\)](#), which discuss how to implement learning that supports gender equality.

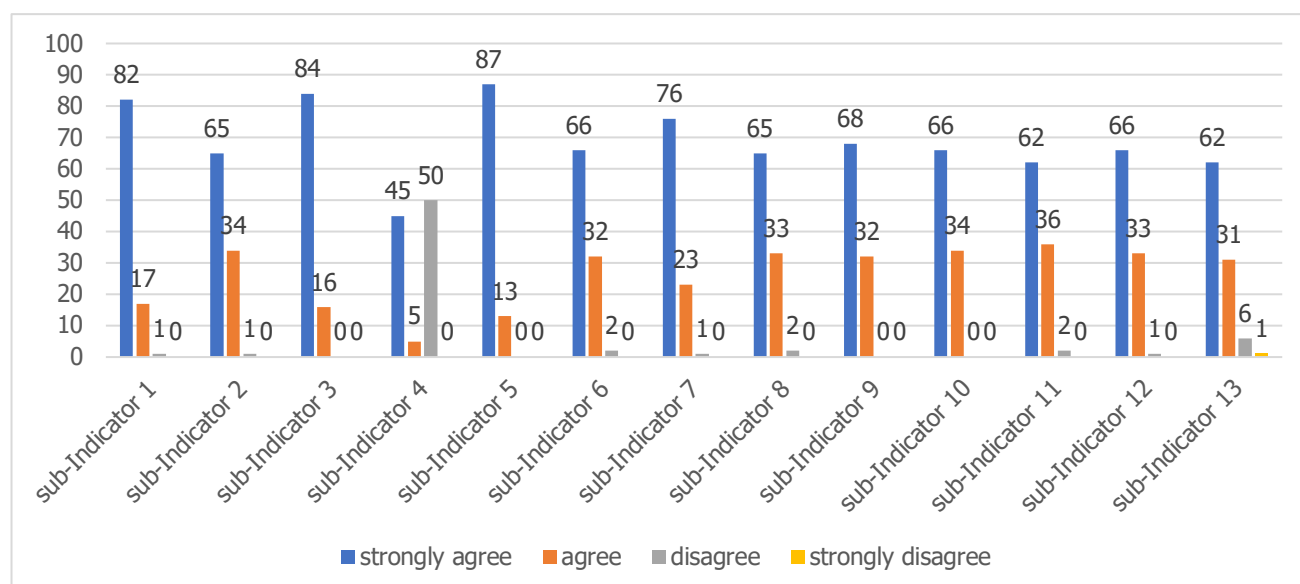


Figure 2. Comparison between sub-indicators

Based on Figure 2, the majority of respondents strongly agree with all sub-indicators in this study. 82% of respondents strongly agree with sub-indicator 1, namely the principal as a role model. This study corroborates Correa et al. (2025), which shows that, across regions and cultures, women still face obstacles in the academic world due to a lack of role models and difficulties balancing work and life. This indicates the need for role models in realizing gender equality. As a leader, the principal needs to be a role model for teachers and students (Putri et al., 2025; Siahaan et al., 2023). This aligns with this study's findings, which show that principals act as role models for teachers and students in advancing gender equality in education. As a role model, the principal encourages female educators to pursue leadership positions, motivates female students to strive for their aspirations, highlights the importance of female teachers and students in societal growth, and demonstrates how to handle tasks typically associated with men (Alemu, 2024). Additionally, as a role model, the principal also fosters the ethics and professionalism of teachers and staff (Khaleel et al., 2021).

Regarding sub-indicator 2, namely the principal as a mentor, Figure 2 shows that 65% of respondents strongly agree. This means that principals, as leaders, not only show authority but also act as mentors. As a mentor, the principal provides guidance and advice to both male and female teachers on both professional and personal matters. In addition, the principal also provides guidance and advice to both male and female students on both educational and personal matters. By doing so, both male and female teachers and students feel comfortable at school, creating a positive school environment. This finding aligns with Alemu (2024), which shows that principals offer meaningful guidance to female educators and students, serve as mentors, and facilitate effective solutions to their concerns.

Regarding sub-indicator 3, namely teacher assignment, Figure 2 shows that 84% of respondents state strongly agree. It means that when assigning tasks to teachers, assignments are given based on teacher performance, not gender. In this way, the principals can act fairly and objectively. On the other hand, the tasks will be carried out optimally because they are assigned to the right person. This result supports Sudrajat et al. (2022), which shows that principals assign teachers based on their abilities rather than gender. Abeng and Farida (2025) also state that assignments are given based on the teacher's potential. Thus, principals can increase teachers' enthusiasm to show their best performance (Lumban, 2017).

Regarding sub-indicator 4, namely access to education for all individuals without gender discrimination, Figure 2 shows that 45% of respondents state strongly agree. It means that every boy and every girl has the same right to education. Providing equitable access to education overcomes obstacles to women's empowerment and creates conditions that promote their growth (Malik et al., 2025). This result supports Savitri et al. (2024), who emphasize the importance of policies that ensure access to education for all individuals, free of gender discrimination. Education for everyone is also recognized in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which asserts that each individual has the right to education and that this education should aim at the complete growth of a person's character while enhancing the appreciation of human rights and essential freedoms (United Nations, 2015). Nur et al. (2024) reveal that equal access to education is correlated with a reduced tendency to think stereotypically, regardless of gender, in which individuals with higher education, both male and female, tend to have lower scores on gender stereotype measurements, thus indicating that education has a crucial role in overcoming traditional gender norms and encouraging a more egalitarian perspective.

Regarding sub-indicator 5, namely a safe and inclusive school environment, Figure 2 shows that 87% of respondents state strongly agree. This indicates that achieving gender equality in the educational environment

requires a safe, inclusive school. In creating a safe and inclusive environment, it is necessary to establish a positive relationship between the principal, teachers, staff, and students so that a sense of comfort, safety, and respect is created, and there are warnings or prohibitions against bullying, threatening, or intimidating other students, which are posted in various corners of the school. This supports [Sudrajat et al. \(2022\)](#), which reveals that in creating a gender-responsive environment, signs discouraging bullying, threats, or intimidation of fellow students are placed in different areas throughout the school. This result also aligns with [Savitri et al. \(2024\)](#), who argue for the creation of a safe and inclusive school environment for all students to support gender equality in education. A safe learning environment can help students become academically successful, regardless of their identity or abilities ([Lowe, 2020](#)). Inclusive education is seen as a fundamental part of building fair and equitable societies ([Graham, 2020](#)). Principals' understanding of inclusive education is an important factor in the establishment and promotion of an inclusive school ([Khaleel et al., 2021](#))

Regarding sub-indicator 6, namely facilities that support gender equality, [Figure 2](#) shows that 66% of respondents state strongly agree. One of the features of schools that foster gender equality is the existence of gender-responsive puberty management, which provides facilities for female students who are having their period, such as a comfortable place with sufficient water availability, covered trash cans, emergency change of clothes, medicines, warm water, and sanitary napkins for female students who suddenly menstruate at school ([Wigati, 2019](#)). However, most educational institutions do not address the specific needs of female students during their period ([Ratnawati et al., 2019](#)). Poor hygiene management during menstruation makes female students feel shame, anxiety, and discomfort, thus lessening school attendance, and ultimately, their learning outcomes are poor ([Miirio et al., 2018](#); [Ssewanyana & Bitanihirwe, 2019](#); [UNESCO, 2017](#); [Vashisht et al., 2018](#)). This is consistent with Agol & Harvey (in [Rollins et al., 2016](#)), which shows that insufficient clean water and toilets cause a high number of girls who drop out in grades 6, 7, and 8 because hygiene and privacy during menstruation are very important for female students. This shows the importance of special facilities for female students to support their education. Furthermore, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) recognizes water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools as vital components of a safe, inclusive, gender-responsive, and effective learning environment. Ensuring access to safe WASH facilities is crucial for supporting students' health and creating a conducive learning environment ([Karim et al., 2024](#); [WHO & UNICEF, 2018](#)). Schools with proper WASH facilities provide clean, well-ventilated air, safe and gender-separated toilets, and handwashing stations equipped with soap and water ([WHO & UNICEF, 2016](#))

In addition to facilities for female students, breastfeeding rooms are also needed for female teachers and staff. Insufficient breastfeeding support, particularly in the workplace, makes it difficult for women to continue breastfeeding ([Rollins et al., 2016](#)). As more women enter the workforce, the time after returning from maternity leave has become a major obstacle to sustaining breastfeeding ([Dagher et al., 2016](#)). Thus, without breastfeeding rooms, women struggle to express breast milk ([Villarama et al., 2024](#)). Therefore, providing workplace breastfeeding support will enhance mothers' ability to breastfeed, as some women wish to continue breastfeeding their newborns while maintaining their jobs ([Maria et al., 2020](#)). This is consistent with the current research's findings, which show that the majority of principals strongly agree with facilities that promote gender equality, including facilities for female students, female teachers, and female staff. This research supports [De Souza et al. \(2021\)](#), who found that breastfeeding rooms help extend breastfeeding duration, enhance both physical and emotional health, enable women to work more comfortably, and promote greater professional recognition by fostering a positive relationship between employees and employers.

Regarding sub-indicator 7, namely women's empowerment in leadership, [Figure 2](#) shows that 76% of respondents state strongly agree. It means that women's empowerment in leadership is crucial to achieving gender equality. There are still very few women in leadership roles ([De Paola et al., 2022](#)). This occurs because of societal norms that prevent women from taking leadership positions ([Gaus et al., 2023](#)). These barriers include a culture that prioritizes men, a lack of institutional support, perceived differences in leadership styles between men and women, pressures from household responsibilities, and personal factors ([Maheshwari et al., 2025](#)). To overcome this, educational institutions must support women in taking leadership roles ([Redmond et al., 2017](#)). This is consistent with current research findings, which show that the majority of principals strongly agree with empowering women in leadership. This result aligns with [Savitri et al \(2024\)](#), who state that policies and regulations that promote gender equality involve enhancing women's roles in leadership and decision-making within the education sector. Women's empowerment can provide the best opportunities for individuals and communities, thereby creating a just and inclusive society ([Cameron, 2023](#); [Davies, 2018](#); [Mitander, 2024](#)).

Regarding sub-indicator 8, namely community involvement in supporting gender equality, [Figure 2](#) shows that 65% of respondents state strongly agree. Community engagement in supporting gender equality, such as parent training and education, is crucial to achieving gender equality in schools. These activities can strengthen the relationship between schools and parents, creating a positive environment for student development, regardless of gender ([Savitri et al., 2024](#)). The current research's findings are the same: the majority of principals strongly agree that community engagement supports gender equality. Schools must build positive relationships with parents by involving them in school life and emphasizing to parents that the school

is also part of their lives (Keating & Baker, 2024; O'Toole et al., 2019). When issues regarding gender stereotypes, bullying based on gender, and violence related to gender arise, schools can provide information and seek assistance from parents (Keating & Baker, 2025). A positive relationship between schools and parents creates a safe environment where students can learn about their own lives and the world beyond them (Keating, 2023).

Regarding sub-indicator 9, namely training on gender equality behavior, Figure 2 shows that 68% of respondents state strongly agree. Sub-indicator 9 is connected with sub-indicator 10, namely, training on gender-equal pedagogy, as shown in Figure 2, where 66% of respondents strongly agree with sub-indicator 10. This indicates the need for teacher training on gender-equal behaviour and gender-equal pedagogy to achieve gender equality in education. The findings of this research support prior research by Nurwahyuningsih et al. (2024). Some teachers have a lack of understanding of gender issues, and this leads to the perpetuation of gender stereotypes in the classroom (Aznar-Martínez et al., 2025). Therefore, to achieve gender equality in education, teachers need to be educated on gender equality through training programs and useful resources. This education will shape teachers' perspectives and assumptions about gender, which, in turn, influence students' attitudes during the learning process (Nurwahyuningsih et al., 2024). Teacher training must go beyond theory to improve teachers' understanding of gender, as teachers must understand how their behaviors, beliefs, and views about gender impact students (Lucas-Palacios et al., 2022).

Regarding sub-indicator 11, namely building students' self-awareness about gender responsiveness, Figure 2 shows that 62 % of respondents strongly agree. This result supports Merma-Molina et al. (2024) and Widodo and Elyas (2020), who discuss how to raise students' self-awareness of gender responsiveness in the classroom. Building students' self-awareness about gender responsiveness can be achieved by providing learning materials that discuss women's issues, such as women who excel in sports, music, science, mathematics, and other fields (Merma-Molina et al., 2024; Tsouroufli & Rédai, 2021). In addition, the school needs to hold gender equality education and training for students. By giving training and education about gender equality, students' awareness, knowledge, and skills will develop, and students can address biases as well as increase cultural change in educational settings (Condron et al., 2025).

Regarding sub-indicator 12, namely using gender-neutral language, Figure 2 shows that 66% of respondents state strongly agree. Using gender-neutral language can be done by: a) teachers get used to using gender-neutral language when delivering lesson material and when communicating with students, and b) male and female students get used to using gender-neutral language when communicating with friends and teachers. The research findings support prior research by Chotim (2022). Gender-neutral language is an approach in communication that seeks to minimize or eliminate gender bias by avoiding terms specific to one gender, using neutral words instead, and promoting inclusivity in both spoken and written forms (Creedon & Wackwitz, 2023). The use of gender-neutral language helps women overcome gender role stereotypes (Brutt-Griffler & Kim, 2018).

Regarding sub-indicator 13, namely implementing gender-responsive learning, Figure 2 shows that 62% of respondents state strongly agree. This means that, to achieve gender equality in educational settings, schools must implement gender-responsive learning. The implementation of gender-responsive learning can be done by: a) teachers using gender-neutral teaching materials (textbooks, audio, video, and other teaching materials), b) teachers using learning methods that ensure that male and female students can participate actively in class equally, and c) teachers implementing mixed seating between male and female students. Gender-responsive learning is a teaching approach that considers gender equality throughout the learning process, from lesson planning and classroom interactions to classroom management and the evaluation of learning outcomes (Chotim, 2022). Implementing a teaching approach that prioritizes gender equality has been shown to improve students' critical thinking skills, build empathy, and deepen their understanding of social justice issues related to gender equality (Waluyo & Anita, 2024). Implementing the strategies mentioned enhances the empowerment of female teachers, staff, and students, thereby creating a school culture that emphasizes gender equality. Consequently, female teachers, staff, and students can feel safe, comfortable, and free from discrimination. This situation allows them to demonstrate their abilities to the maximum. The contribution of this research is to increase understanding of the importance of a school culture that supports gender equality to realize Asta Cita 4 and SDG 5, which focus on gender equality. In addition, the findings of this study can serve as guidance for schools and policymakers in creating a school culture that promotes gender equality in education, thereby facilitating the achievement of SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4.

CONCLUSION

SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4 emphasize the importance of gender equality. Gender equality can be achieved through education by implementing a positive school culture. The results of this study indicate that there are four principals' strategies to create a school culture that promotes gender equality in education to realize SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4 that focus on gender equality: the role of school principals in improving gender equality in education, school policies that support gender equality in education, teacher training on gender equality, and

the implementation of gender equality in learning. The results of this study can serve as a guide for creating a school culture that supports gender equality in educational environments. The importance of this research lies in its contribution to creating a positive school culture that fosters equitable education regardless of gender, thereby helping to realize SDG 5 and Asta Cita 4 (gender equality).

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