

# The Wounds of Patriarchy Amid The Principle of Gender Equality

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## Abstract

Patriarchal culture refers to a social system that places men in dominant roles across familial, professional, and public spheres, perpetuating gender-based power imbalances. In Indonesia, such norms are deeply rooted, and the state has acknowledged their role in sustaining inequality, particularly within household structures. To address this, Law Number 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence was enacted as a legal instrument to support gender equality. However, in practice, these principles often clash with entrenched patriarchal values inherited through generations and normalized within societal traditions. This study explores how patriarchal culture hinders the realization of gender equality in Indonesian family life. Using a normative juridical method, it analyzes the 2004 law alongside relevant literature to evaluate the tension between legal ideals and cultural realities. The findings indicate that legal frameworks alone are insufficient to counter deep-seated patriarchal beliefs, which continue to cause harm. A noted limitation is the absence of empirical field data. Nevertheless, this research contributes to the discourse on gender and family law by advocating a multidimensional approach—integrating education, legal reform, and cultural reinterpretation. Its novelty lies in proposing gender mainstreaming in education and revisiting local values to cultivate a more just and equitable social structure for women.

**Keywords:** *Patriarchal Culture, Gender Equality, Family Law, Domestic Violence, Normative Juridical Approach*

## 1. Introduction

Culture is a wealth that is passed down from generation to generation by humans to preserve their lifestyles. Indonesia, with its diverse ethnic groups, is blessed with a wealth of cultures from various regions, each with its own unique characteristics. However, culture can also be seen as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it can be evidence of a country's wealth; on the other hand, it can be the root of social relation problems, for example, patriarchal culture. Patriarchal culture has long existed in the structure of social life, both nationally and globally. In a national context, this culture is often reflected in everyday life, but people sometimes do not realize that perpetuating patriarchal culture as a pillar of society for social life is not a good thing if maintained continuously. This will be proven through this article, which discusses patriarchal culture as one of the problems of social life in the smallest unit, namely, the household, so that it can become a source of domestic violence (KDRT).

## 2. Methodology

This study on the Wounds of Patriarchy Amidst the Principle of Gender Equality uses a normative juridical research method. This research is based on examining existing legal norms and doctrines. In addition, this study was conducted through a statutory regulatory and a conceptual approach to analyze legal provisions, including Law No. 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence, as well as the legal principles underlying it. The legal materials used in this study include primary legal materials such as laws and other legal documents, secondary legal materials such as relevant literature on the influence of patriarchal culture as a source of domestic violence, and expert opinions. Tertiary legal materials used in this study include legal dictionaries and encyclopedias. The analysis was conducted qualitatively by interpreting and critiquing legal norms to assess the effectiveness of protection provided and its implementation in practice. This method provides a systematic framework for building comprehensive legal arguments in accordance with normative juridical research standards.

## 3. Results and Discussion

Indonesia is ranked the fourth country with the largest number of ethnic groups after Papua New Guinea, India, and Nigeria. According to data from the Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal, and Security

Affairs (Polhukam/Kesbang), the number of ethnic groups in Indonesia is 1,331 (Kementerian Koordinator Bidang Politik, Hukum, Dan Keamanan Republik Indonesia, 2022), with 363 large ethnic groups grouped into them (Kabupaten Bungo, 2016). This makes Indonesia unique due to its ethnic and cultural diversity, inherited from its ancestors and still preserved to this day (Chiquitita, 2025). Each ethnic group has its own stories and values, which are important elements in the development of civilization. However, this diversity not only brings richness but also presents its own challenges, one example being gender equality.

Gender is a social characteristic of women, men, girls, and boys, encompassing norms, behaviors, social roles, and relationships between gender groups in society. Gender is a social construct that can differ between societies and change over time. World Health Organization (WHO), in 2025 In social life, gender is often equated with sex, which refers to biological differences between men and women, such as chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs. These differences are natural, determined at birth, and relatively unchanging. The World Health Organization (WHO) explains that sex is the biological and physiological characteristics that distinguish men and women. (World Health Organization (WHO), 2025)

According to Kamla Bhasin, sex is biological, whereas gender is a social construct formed, taught, and internalized by society from generation to generation. (Bhasin, 2000) A similar view is expressed by Hilary M. Lips, who states that sex refers to biological categories, while gender refers to psychological, social, and cultural attributes inherent in men and women. (Lips, 2017) Furthermore, Judith Butler emphasizes that gender is not a static identity but a performativity, something that is formed through actions that are continuously repeated in a social context. Thus, the distinction between sex and gender emphasizes that many inequalities that occur in society do not originate from biological differences but from social and cultural structures that produce unequal gender roles.

In the customs and cultures of Indonesia's many ethnic groups, gender plays a crucial role in determining the continuity of a tribe. This is evident in the Indonesian kinship system, which divides the family into several categories: patrilineal, matrilineal, and parental. In a patrilineal kinship system, children are related to their fathers through the male line. In this system, inheritance is paternalistic, meaning that descendants from the father's side (male) have a higher status and greater rights. A matrilineal kinship system is the opposite of a patrilineal kinship system—children are related to their mothers and other female relatives through the female line. There is also a parental kinship system that emphasizes the importance of bilateral relationships between children and their parents. Children in this system are connected to relatives on both sides of the family, that is, on the father's and mother's sides. (Info Hukum, 2023)

Based on this classification of kinship systems, it is evident that gender is a crucial variable in a traditional community, ensuring the sustainability and continuity of its social structure. However, in social practice, an excessive emphasis on the gender dimension in maintaining customary order results in gender inequality. This phenomenon is reflected in the emergence of value systems and ideologies that remain patriarchal and matriarchal.

Patriarchy is a widespread gender ideology that places men in control of private and public life. Within the household, the oldest male is recognized as the head of the family, who regulates the activities of women and children who depend on him, as well as their behavior. Family resources, such as money and land, are controlled by the oldest male. Men make decisions, while women are directed to submit. Outside the family, men are given leadership positions throughout society, and women are called upon to play supporting and empowering roles as the marginalized, weaker sex. In contrast, there is the ideology of matriarchy, which places women as rulers of private and public life. In a matriarchal society, women exercise authority over all aspects of social life and control power and wealth. Similar to patriarchy, matriarchy is a gender ideology; however, it is not embedded in the social construction of society but rather understood as a concept or idea, not as a dominant ideology (Hasty, Lewis, & Snipes, 2022). Even in matrilineal kinship systems, although women are the rulers of private and public life,

men are still given priority over women (Alfi Indah Kumala, 2025) when it comes to decision-making. This clearly shows that matriarchy in Indonesia is only understood as a concept or idea.

This issue requires further study, particularly in the context of social and community life. The smallest unit of social life was household relationships. Households are formed through marriage, which is a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife, to form a happy and lasting family based on belief in God Almighty. (Indonesia, 1974) In social studies, households are often equated with families, with the definition of family itself believed to be the smallest unit in society, generally consisting of a husband, wife, and children living under one roof. (Soerjono Soekanto, 1990) Thus, household life is understood as the basic form of family structure in society.

In everyday life, married life often encounters several problems, especially when intertwined with traditional customs. One of the most visible problems is domestic violence. Indonesia already has a legal framework related to cases of domestic violence through Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence (PKDRT Law). The law, which was passed on September 22, 2004, has been in effect for more than 20 years as a regulation and has not been updated to date. Philosophically, this law was born out of the state's desire to protect human rights within the household, recognizing that all forms of domestic violence are violations of human rights and crimes against humanity, as well as a form of discrimination. (Rubaidah, 2022) These human rights points are listed in several articles of the Indonesian Constitution, namely the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, specifically Article 27 paragraph (1) concerning law enforcement without discrimination, (Ade Irma Sakina & Dessy Hasanah Siti A, 2017) Article 28G and Article 28I paragraphs (1) and (2) concerning the protection of dignity from discriminatory acts. In everyday life, cases of domestic violence often arise due to inequality in rights and roles between men and women. Usually, one party has a more dominant position. Thus, the PKDRT Law establishes a number of important principles as the basis for its regulation. Article 3 states that the elimination of domestic violence must be based on the principles of respect for human rights, justice, gender equality, non-discrimination, and protection of victims.

Cases of domestic violence against women in Indonesia remain at a very high level and continue to increase. Data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection's SIMFONI-PPA system up to August 2025 show that there were 17,355 cases of violence in Indonesia, with 14,919 cases or approximately 80.6% of the victims being women. Of the total female victims, 33.7% were in the 13–17 age group, while 26.1% were aged 25–44 years. Most incidents of domestic violence (60.1%) occurred within the household. The National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) reported that throughout 2023, 98.5% of 3,303 cases of gender-based violence occurred in the domestic sphere, confirming that violence within the family remains prevalent. In addition, the number of cases and victims of violence against women in the 2020–2024 period also shows an upward trend. In 2024, there were 12,416 victims, an increase of 704 compared to 2023. The largest increase occurred between 2020 and 2021, when the number of cases increased from 8,685 to 10,241, or by 1,556 cases.

The number of victims increased from 8,764 to 10,364, an increase of 1,600 victims, making it the highest increase during that period. The COVID-19 pandemic situation in 2020–2022 also contributed to the high number of reports of violence against women. In 2024, the distribution of cases of violence against women in various provinces also showed significant variations. The three provinces with the highest number of cases and victims were West Java, Central Java, and East Java. West Java recorded the highest number of cases (1,189) and victims (1,208), followed by Central Java (1,026 cases and 1,038 victims), and East Java (980 cases and 1,022 victims). This data shows that provinces with large populations also face a higher burden of violence cases. (Kementrian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak Republik Indonesia, 2024)

In addition, gender-based violence that results in death or femicide is not fully recognized, especially by law enforcement officials. Although it is the most extreme form of violence, femicide has not been recorded separately by the Indonesian National Police's Criminal Investigation Unit or the Indonesian Supreme Court. According to CATAHU Komnas Perempuan, throughout 2024, cases of femicide

generally occurred after the perpetrator committed repeated and layered violence against the victim. In the context of domestic violence, delays in legal proceedings often lead to femicide or push victims to take their own lives. (Syifa Maulida, 2025)

Domestic violence is a common occurrence in everyday social life; however, it is often ignored because it is considered a private matter. Owing to this cultural perception, domestic violence cases are often resolved amicably through deliberation and consensus. In addition to the method of resolution, the evidence in domestic violence cases also poses a problem. In social life, cases of domestic violence are usually considered as such if there is physical violence and clear signs of physical violence, such as scars, bruises, medical reports, and other evidence. However, according to the Domestic Violence Law, domestic violence is defined as any act against a person, especially a woman, that results in physical, sexual, psychological, and/or domestic neglect, suffering or distress, including threats to commit acts, coercion, or deprivation of liberty against the law within the household. (Indonesia, 2004) Based on the contents of this article, it is clear that the PKDRT Law has broadened the definition of violence, which is no longer limited to physical violence but also includes sexual, psychological, and/or domestic neglect. This demonstrates the flexibility of the regulation to keep pace with developments related to forms of violence.

In several theories regarding domestic violence, one is Sylvia Walby's theory of patriarchy, which, in her view, is divided into two forms: domestic patriarchy (personal sphere) and public patriarchy. Domestic patriarchy refers to patriarchy based on a man controlling women individually and directly within the household. Thus, housework is considered a woman's natural duty, which must be done and cannot be negotiated. (Ardiyansyah, 2025) This is one of the things that is also preserved in the social construction of society, where household chores such as taking care of children, cleaning the house, and other household-related tasks are closely associated with women's identities. On the other hand, it is clearly evident in the slogans commonly heard in society that women's nature is to be in the kitchen, at the well, and in bed. This doctrine is an example of the attachment of domestic patriarchal identity to women, such that if in daily life women do not want to follow this or, conversely, if it is a man who does these things, they will be criticized with negative views from the community and may also be labeled badly by the community for behavior that is considered unusual.

Meanwhile, public patriarchy is defined as a form in which women have access to both the public and domestic spheres. Women are not prohibited from engaging in activities unrelated to housework, such as being allowed to have a job or, in other words, being permitted to become career women. However, this permission does not necessarily eliminate patriarchal oppression because, in practice, women must still perform domestic work, regardless of their involvement in the public sphere. Therefore, women who choose to work outside the home bear the burden of playing dual roles. On the one hand, they work in the public sphere, and on the other, they must still perform domestic work. In addition, the enforcement of public patriarchy continues to position women in a weak position, as seen in the form of real exploitation that exists around them. (Ardiyansyah, 2025) For example, in the workplace, women tend to have lower salaries than men but are still expected to perform equally well or even better. Women are usually given lower-level jobs and are often discriminated against. Given this inequality, female workers are often exploited for various interests in the public sphere.

In the context of Indonesia, women have begun to be involved in several jobs. One example is the expansion of quotas for parliamentary seats, which are no longer limited to men; women can now also occupy seats in parliament. However, on the other hand, public patriarchy still exists. This is because women's access to politics is not accompanied by anti-racism or anti-ethnicity elements. In this case, we can take the example of how women who live in cities or are highly educated have gained this access, while those who live in villages and are not highly educated still experience exploitation, (Feminis, 2022) How the mass media still portrays or depicts female identity, presenting women either as sexually glamorous figures or as housewives, while men occupy positions of power. Thus, this context of thinking is neatly organized in people's memories, and they will practice it in their daily lives.

Ecological theory of violence, developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), explains that violence, including domestic violence, does not arise from a single factor but is the result of the interaction of various factors at several stages. The model consists of four levels: (World Health Organization, 2002).

1. Individual phase: At this level, several factors can influence a person's personal characteristics, which can increase the risk of them becoming perpetrators of domestic violence or victims of domestic violence. These factors can include beliefs in patriarchal gender norms that have become habitual, a history of childhood abuse, low levels of education, or certain psychological problems. This can be seen in everyday life, where a child or family member who frequently experiences domestic violence but does not immediately resolve the issue, even if it is considered normal, will think that violence is normal and acceptable, so that ideologies of gender will be held firmly until adulthood and will become a recurring pattern in their future lives.
2. Relationship or family phase (relationship level), violence can be influenced by dynamics in close relationships; some of these factors include unequal power relations in the household, economic dependence, chronic family conflict, and unhealthy communication patterns. In everyday life, many victims of domestic violence choose not to leave, despite experiencing severe violence. This can be understood through the imbalance of power relations in the household, especially in economic aspects. Economic dependence puts one party—usually women—in a weak position when it comes to making decisions, including the decision to leave a dangerous relationship. This imbalance limits the victim's freedom of movement, lowers their self-confidence, and creates a situation in which the victim feels that they have no viable alternative to the relationship. In this context, power relations take the form not only of physical or psychological domination but also economic control that limits victims' access to resources, employment, and social support networks. This situation causes victims to remain in the relationship because they do not accept violence as normal, but because the socioeconomic system does not provide adequate protection and options. Thus, the victim's decision not to leave is often a reflection of broader structures of inequality, rather than a purely personal decision.
3. Community level: This level covers how social interaction environments, such as neighbors, schools, and workplaces, respond to domestic violence. In patriarchal ideology, domestic problems are often considered private or personal matters. Therefore, if neighbors or other people ask for help when experiencing domestic violence, those who adhere to this ideology usually refuse to help because it is an internal family matter, and they feel they should not help or interfere. Even more alarmingly, in some environments, domestic violence is justified as a form of devotion of a spouse—usually a woman as a wife—to her husband, even though violence is never justified in any way.
4. Societal Level: At this level, domestic violence is influenced by broader social structures, such as entrenched patriarchal culture, gender-biased state policies, economic inequality, and a legal system that does not adequately protect victims. It is important to understand that the thoughts and views of a society are one of the navigational factors for victims of domestic violence to report violence or, conversely, for victims to remain silent. Social and community support are necessary factors in handling cases of domestic violence. When a victim experiences domestic violence, they seek help from those around them. If the people around them are caring and supportive of the victim's liberation from the situation, the victim will have the courage to report it and break free from the cycle of domestic violence. However, if the community adheres to patriarchal principles and blames those who report domestic violence, victims will be afraid to report it and will not be able to escape the cycle, choosing instead to remain silent. This is a serious concern because if left unchecked, it could lead to femicide. Such cases have occurred in Indonesia, which shows that as a society, we should be concerned about issues that we usually consider to be minor.

In indigenous communities that adhere to a patrilineal kinship system or uphold patriarchal ideology, women are usually promoted as the weaker sex. For example, if domestic violence occurs in their community, it usually follows a specific pattern in which the abuse is perpetrated by the more dominant

party in the family, which in this context is the male, while the weaker party, the victim, often becomes a victim and is often resigned to not receiving protection. This is one example of patriarchy, with the stigma that married women are powerless if they do not have a husband or are separated from their husbands, which reinforces domestic violence within the household and is often perpetrated by the husband. This has been going on for a long time, even since ancient times, supported by regulations in the form of the Civil Code in one of its articles, namely Article 1330 concerning competence, which states that a wife who has a husband is considered incompetent (incapable), as evidenced by related articles, namely Articles 108 and 110 of the Civil Code, which emphasize that a wife is considered incapable of acting legally because she is under the authority or guardianship of her husband. Consequently, a wife cannot move freely to take certain actions, especially legal actions, without her husband's consent. (Indonesia, n.d.)

Although this has been revoked through SEMA (Supreme Court Circular Letter) No. 3 of 1963, the circular letter emphasizes that the *Burgerlijk Wetboek* (BW) is no longer treated as an absolute regulation. This document was published in an effort to replace several provisions in the colonial-era BW that were deemed inconsistent with the principles of justice and the development of an independent Indonesian society, and were therefore considered incompatible with national values (Indonesia, 1963). One example of this is wives under the guardianship of their husbands. This is certainly in line with what is stated in the country's constitution, namely in Article 28I paragraph 3, which states that cultural identity and the rights of traditional communities shall be respected in accordance with the development of the times and civilization. (Indonesia, 1945) This is the origin of the stigma in the social construct of society, which believes that wives are weak and powerless if they are abandoned or leave their husbands. It is important to note that social constructs continue to perpetuate this culture, even though times have changed. Despite this, social constructs still emphasize this idea in everyday life. This is also what causes women to be haunted by the fear of separating from or leaving their partners, even though they are aware that domestic violence has occurred.

It should be understood that the forms of patriarchy and matriarchy stigma do not apply specifically because the kinship system adopted by a tribe is more patrilineal or matrilineal. This is because, in theory, patrilineal kinship systems glorify or prioritize men as the stronger sex who determine the direction of life for a custom, while matrilineal systems prioritize women as those who determine the direction of life. However, in reality, even in matrilineal societies, although the position and direction of a custom is based on the female line of descent, when making decisions in daily life, the male side is still given priority. This further reinforces the idea that the roots of patriarchal ideology are an ideology that is preserved by society and dramatized through traditional life so that this ideology remains embedded in social life. Therefore, if some do not want to go along with this ideology, they will be labeled as rebels.

From the implementation of this ideology, it can be seen that psychological violence takes the form of an undue influence, whereby the weaker party feels that what the stronger party says is the truth and must not be challenged. This treatment is a cause for concern because psychological violence is difficult to detect. It is difficult to determine when a person has experienced violence, what they felt when they experienced it, and how long it will take for them to recover from it because there are no visible wounds. Unlike physical violence, the results of psychological violence are clearly visible because they usually leave marks that can be seen and treated directly, making it possible to see when and how wounds will heal.

One factor that causes domestic violence cases to receive insufficient attention is that they are often not immediately visible and are still perceived as personal or domestic. This situation makes victims reluctant to disclose the violence they have experienced because of feelings of shame and fear, especially when their social environment does not provide adequate solidarity and support. In addition, there is an imbalance in power, especially in economic factors. Sometimes, victims of domestic violence, who are generally women as housewives, think twice about separating because of their economic dependence on their husbands who have been providing for them, while the role of mothers at home is only to take care of household (domestic) matters, and they do not have the skills to generate

income. Therefore, this becomes a major consideration in terms of how victims and other parties, such as children in the family, will continue their lives. This makes victims reluctant to report and resolve these issues.

Other obstacles may also arise from the law enforcement process, including reluctant witnesses and the loss of important evidence during the investigation. This situation makes handling domestic violence cases highly structured and complex, even though legal regulations clearly stipulate mechanisms for protecting victims. (Arif, Sari, & Syarif Rindiani Putri, 2025) The regulation on domestic violence explains the rights that victims will obtain if they experience domestic violence. One of these rights is to receive protection and supervision from the authorities. This is a step forward for criminal law in Indonesia, as the regulation no longer focuses solely on punishing the perpetrator but also considers the safety and recovery of the victim. Before the regulation was passed, cases of domestic violence were often resolved through a family system using a method of deliberation to reach consensus. However, in emphasizing this system of resolution, the woman's family was usually indoctrinated with the social stigma that if their child became a divorcee, it would be a disgrace to the family. Therefore, in resolving cases of domestic violence, the woman or wife was generally told to return to her husband, and she would be blamed for causing trouble and embarrassing her husband.

In fact, upon further examination, domestic violence that occurs within a family does not only include violence against wives. According to regulations, the scope of the household is not limited to husbands and wives alone, but also extends to children, people who have family ties with the person referred to in point a due to blood relations, marriage, breastfeeding, foster care, and guardianship, who live in the household; and/or people who work and are considered family members for as long as they are in the household concerned. (Indonesia, 2004) Therefore, if domestic violence occurs, it is not only the wife who is affected; other parties mentioned above can also become victims. This is a serious concern because if domestic violence occurs continuously in a family without being addressed, and it is witnessed by parties other than the husband and wife involved, there is a concern that this will become a serious problem in the form of a pattern of repeated violence. For example, if a child witnesses frequent domestic violence in their family and considers it normal, that child is likely to repeat the same pattern when they grow up. This is based on the belief that domestic violence is normal. (Modiano, 2021)

## **4. Conclusion**

### **4.1. Conclusion**

First, to address this issue, it is necessary to strengthen the implementation of gender equality contextually, particularly through the integration of a gender perspective in education, law, and social outreach. In many indigenous communities, hierarchical gender roles are taught through family socialization and informal educational institutions. If this pattern of socialization is not critically addressed, patriarchal values will continue to be passed down from generation to generation. As Walby asserts, patriarchy operates through six structures: household production, wage labor, the state, violence, sexuality, and cultural institutions, all of which make women vulnerable to discrimination and violence (Walby, 1990). This can be done through counseling and education carried out in the smallest environmental system, namely, in the neighborhood/community environment. Such counseling can be integrated to assess the social conditions of the community, provide training related to social skills and other skills that can help women, who are economically disadvantaged in the family, to become equal partners, so that there is no reason for economic dependence, and to prevent domestic violence. Thus, education that is not gender-sensitive actually contributes to the reproduction of structures of violence.

Second, healing patriarchal wounds requires cultural reform through the reinterpretation of local values that have often been interpreted in a patriarchal manner. Many indigenous communities have strong principles of equality; however, the cultural interpretations of certain generations are often selective and gender biased. Reinterpretation is needed so that indigenous values remain relevant to contemporary principles of gender justice. Siti Musdah Mulia emphasizes that culture is not a frozen entity, but rather a social construct that can be reinterpreted in line with the development of human values. (Mulia, 2007) This means that tradition should not be used to justify injustice, including in

domestic relationships. When cultural values are allowed to operate without criticism, patriarchy is legitimized as a social norm, so that domestic violence is considered part of “domestic normality.”

Third, structural solutions require the strengthening of social and legal institutions, which have often failed to protect victims because they operate within a patriarchal mindset. Law enforcement officials frequently display gender bias in handling domestic violence cases. Domestic violence is often perceived as a private or domestic matter, which contributes to delays in legal action and procedures that inadequately protect or support victims.

This bias is also evident in the enforcement of the PKDRT Law, where many cases are closed through mediation, family pressure, or for the sake of “preserving the integrity of the household”—a practice that perpetuates the cycle of violence. In this context, the CEDAW recommendation through General Recommendation No. 35 is important to emphasize: states must ensure that all forms of gender-based violence are viewed as human rights violations, not private matters. (Nations, 2017) In addition, this can also be integrated by authorized institutions or parties before someone starts a family, for example, the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) or other institutions that provide premarital education. Given the prevalence of domestic violence cases in Indonesia, institutions regulating and supervising marriage must reflect on the reasons for the high number of such cases. The marriage requirements that have been implemented so far seem to be ineffective in terms of being understood by prospective spouses, such that each of them does not fully understand their role in married life.

Therefore, this issue must be revisited by improving the structure and education provided. This may be controversial because it appears to restrict human rights related to the freedom to build a family. However, if we consider providing serious education to people who are going to start a family through education on understanding their roles in the family, how to deal with domestic violence, and how to be mentally, financially, and otherwise prepared to build a family, these are basic things that can strengthen family relationships. In addition, considering that the home is the smallest unit of social life, the life that exists in each family determines the quality of the people in that family. Instead of providing entertainment in the form of applause, it is appropriate for institutions that deal with marriage to be aware that family is the smallest structure in society that needs to be nurtured seriously.

Overall, the argument in this article asserts that the influence of patriarchal culture is the main source of domestic violence because it produces unequal power relations, reinforces women's economic dependence, normalizes violence as a mechanism of control, and weakens legal and social responses to victims. Therefore, healing the wounds of patriarchy must be done through an integrated approach that includes gender equality-based education reform, humanistic cultural reinterpretation, and strengthening legal structures and victim protection institutions. Thus, the principle of gender equality does not only stop at the normative level but can be realized in real life in households and society.

#### **4.2. Limitations**

Although the conclusions emphasize the importance of reforming education, culture, and legal structures, this study has several limitations. First, the study on strengthening the implementation of gender equality does not fully consider the variations in social, economic, and cultural conditions between regions in Indonesia; therefore, the recommendations made may not be fully applicable in areas with very different social structures. Second, the idea of cultural reinterpretation has not been accompanied by an empirical analysis of the extent to which traditional authorities and local communities are willing to accept changes in the interpretation of traditional values. Third, the discussion on legal and premarital education reform does not elaborate on the political, bureaucratic, and resource constraints that may hinder the implementation of these recommendations, including institutional resistance and budgetary limitations. Fourth, this study does not explore the victims' perspectives directly through field data; therefore, the understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence and the obstacles experienced by victims remains theoretical. Finally, the focus of the analysis highlights patriarchy as a cultural structure, thus not fully incorporating other factors such as the influence of economic policy, urbanization, digital media, and changes in contemporary family values that may also contribute to patterns of domestic violence. Thus, further empirical and multidisciplinary

research is needed to formulate the recommendations proposed more comprehensively and contextually.

#### **4.3. Suggestion**

Based on the results of this study, several recommendations were made to complement the conclusions discussed, including the following: First, it is necessary to strengthen gender-sensitive education curricula from elementary school to the university level so that the value of equality is not only introduced normatively but also instilled through learning about empathy, non-violent communication, and equal role sharing. Second, the capacity of law enforcement officials must be continuously improved through training on gender perspectives and the dynamics of domestic violence so that the law enforcement process is no longer influenced by patriarchal bias. Third, the government needs to strengthen integrated services for victims, including the provision of safe houses, legal aid, and easily accessible psychological services. Fourth, guidelines for handling domestic violence cases need to be revised by limiting mediation practices that have often been detrimental to victims. Fifth, pre-marital institutions, such as the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), must provide substantive pre-marital education with material on conflict management, emotional readiness, family economic literacy, and steps to deal with domestic violence.

Sixth, a critical reinterpretation of cultural values is needed so that they are no longer used to legitimize gender inequality, but rather developed as a source of values that support justice because culture is indeed a valuable asset, but this asset must be respected in line with the times and should not be used as a tool to oppress the rights of others. Seventh, women's economic empowerment needs to be strengthened through access to training, business capital, and social support to reduce economic dependence, which often perpetuates violence. Finally, public literacy regarding domestic violence must be improved through campaigns that emphasize that domestic violence is a violation of human rights, not a personal matter. By undertaking these steps, it is hoped that structural, cultural, and educational efforts can be strengthened to create equal family relationships that are free from violence.

#### **Acknowledgment**

The author would like to express his deep appreciation to all those who provided support during the preparation of this journal. Thanks are extended to colleagues who shared their thoughts, constructive criticism, and meaningful encouragement during the writing process. The author is grateful to his family for their unwavering moral support, motivation, and patience. This paper may serve as a valuable scientific contribution to the advancement of knowledge and provide practical value to readers.

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