


## Equal Families, Empowered Generations: Implementing Gender-Responsive Family Education in Negeri Hukurila

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Afdhal<sup>1\*</sup> , Feky Manuputty<sup>1</sup>, Nathalia Debby Makaruku<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Pattimura, Jalan Ir M. Putuhena, Ambon 97233, Indonesia

### Abstract

*This community service program aimed to enhance the understanding and awareness of the people of Negeri Hukurila regarding the importance of gender-responsive education in building equal families and fostering empowered generations. The activities were carried out through three main stages, socialization, mentoring, and evaluation, with active participation from community members. This method enabled a participatory learning process that promoted changes not only in knowledge but also in behavior. The results indicate a significant improvement in participants' comprehension of gender equality concepts, the role of families in education, and the importance of applying equality principles in daily life. The novelty of this program lies in integrating gender-responsive education with local cultural contexts, allowing the concept of equality to be understood more practically and accepted by the community. These findings contribute to the development of community empowerment studies, particularly through educational approaches that are responsive to gender issues and grounded in local contexts. The program concludes that socialization accompanied by continuous mentoring can effectively foster knowledge transformation toward critical awareness. Recommendations highlight the need for cross-stakeholder collaboration to broaden the implementation of gender-responsive education as an integral part of inclusive social development.*

**Keywords:** Community Education, Community Empowerment, Equal Family, Gender Equality, Gender-Responsive Education



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**Correspondence E-Mail:**  
[afdhal@lecturer.unpatti.ac.id](mailto:afdhal@lecturer.unpatti.ac.id)

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**E-mail:**  
[selectaedukasigrup.journal@gmail.com](mailto:selectaedukasigrup.journal@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION

Education constitutes one of the fundamental pillars in building a just and sustainable civilization. However, empirical realities indicate that education often continues to reproduce inequalities, particularly in relation to gender issues. In many regions of Indonesia, including Negeri Hukurila in Ambon City, rigid divisions of roles between men and women persist within both family and community contexts (Manuputty et al., 2023; Manuputty, Afdhal, et al., 2024b). Such conditions frequently shape patterns of education within households. Boys tend to be given broader opportunities to develop in the public sphere, while girls are directed toward domestic roles. This mindset not only restricts the equal development of the younger generation's potential but also reinforces long term cycles of social inequality (Haryanto, 2022; Manuputty et al., 2025).

Field evidence shows that most parents in Negeri Hukurila still have limited knowledge regarding the importance of gender responsive education (Afdhal, 2023; Manuputty, Afdhal, et al., 2024a; Manuputty, Litaay, et al., 2024). Preliminary interviews conducted prior to the implementation of this program revealed that many parents believe that girls do not need to attain as high a level of education as boys, as they are ultimately expected to return to domestic roles. Additionally, there remains a perception that boys should be strong, rational, and dominant, while girls are expected to be obedient, gentle, and restricted in their mobility. Although such views may appear simple, they have long term implications for the formation of young people's character, gender relations in society, and the quality of local development. Therefore, it is essential to discuss and formulate strategies to strengthen gender responsive education as a pathway toward achieving equitable families and empowered generations.

Awareness of the importance of gender responsive education has, in fact, been widely promoted in various national and global policies. Indonesia, for instance, has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and issued Presidential Instruction Number 9 of 2000 on Gender Mainstreaming in National Development. However, implementation at the local level often remains suboptimal. Many communities do not yet clearly understand how gender equality principles can be applied in everyday life, particularly in family based educational practices. Therefore, this community engagement initiative is grounded in a real societal need, namely to create spaces for dialogue and socialization regarding gender responsive education that are aligned with local cultural contexts.

Studies on gender responsive education have been widely conducted by previous scholars. For example, Karim et al. (2024) emphasize that education oriented toward gender equality can improve quality of life while strengthening the foundation of sustainable development. Masudah (2025) demonstrates that the family plays a crucial role in shaping gender awareness from an early age. When parents treat children equally, the likelihood of children developing self confidence and freedom of expression increases.

Other studies by True and Eddyono (2021) and Zahra et al. (2024) reveal that many families unconsciously adopt gender biased parenting patterns, such as assigning greater domestic responsibilities to girls while granting more freedom to boys. Such patterns have been shown to contribute to lower participation of women in education and employment. Similarly, studies by Burke et al. (2025) and Humbert & Strid (2024) indicate that gender based education is not solely a women's issue, but also relates to the formation of healthier male identities, free from the constraints of toxic masculinity that often impose burdens on men.

Furthermore, studies by Deitz & Lahmann (2023) and Okelo et al. (2022) highlight the importance of community based socialization of gender responsive education. According to these scholars, community based approaches are more effective because they engage with cultural values and everyday practices deeply embedded in society. Even studies by Alteneiji (2023) and Ugobueze (2024) show that socialization programs involving community leaders and youth can accelerate the acceptance of gender equality values. In the Maluku context,

research by Makaruku & Ramdhan (2022) finds that customary norms strongly influence gender relations, thus requiring approaches that integrate local traditions with the spirit of equality.

Other studies focus on mentoring as a strategy for social change. Adinugraha et al. (2025) and Jensen et al. (2024) argue that participatory mentoring strengthens program sustainability because communities act not only as objects but also as agents of change. This is supported by Coleman et al. (2024) and Curtis et al. (2021), who state that participatory evaluation in socialization programs can measure the extent to which communities internalize new knowledge. Meanwhile, Guthridge et al. (2022) and Lwamba et al. (2022) show that the success of gender mainstreaming programs is highly dependent on the existence of intergenerational dialogue spaces. Younger generations need opportunities to express their perspectives on equality, while older generations require new understanding to adapt to social change.

International literature further reinforces this argument. Ananga (2021) and Rarieya et al. (2024) identify gender responsive education as a key strategy to prevent structural discrimination. This aligns with the capability approach proposed by Robeyns (2021), which asserts that development must provide equal opportunities for all individuals, both men and women, to realize their potential. Moreover, Vecchio & Martens (2021) emphasize that gender equality in education is a fundamental human right. In practice, community based approaches, as demonstrated by Hakim & Baihaqi (2024) and Soselisa et al. (2024), have proven effective in transforming gender biased social norms. Thus, the literature clearly indicates that gender responsive education is not merely a normative agenda but a practical necessity with direct implications for the quality of family and community life. However, as highlighted in several studies, challenges remain at the community level, particularly in ensuring that gender equality values are accepted without generating cultural resistance.

From this body of literature, it is evident that most studies still focus on macro level policies or urban case studies. Research specifically addressing the socialization of gender responsive education within local communities using culturally grounded approaches remains limited. In Maluku, particularly in Negeri Hukurila, there is still a lack of community engagement models that integrate participatory approaches, mentoring, and evaluation to foster changes in knowledge and awareness.

The uniqueness of this initiative lies in its design, which positions socialization not merely as knowledge transfer but as an intergenerational dialogue space that brings together the perspectives of parents, youth, and community leaders. In this way, gender responsive education is not introduced as an imposed external concept but emerges from collective awareness enriched by local cultural values. This approach makes the program more contextual, adaptive, and sustainable.

Based on this background, the present initiative aims to enhance the knowledge and awareness of the people of Negeri Hukurila regarding gender responsive education through socialization, mentoring, and participatory evaluation. Furthermore, it seeks to formulate a

community based model for strengthening gender equality that is relevant to the local cultural context. Ultimately, this effort is expected to foster equitable families and empowered generations, while contributing to the development of community empowerment studies from both sociological and practical perspectives.

### RESEARCH METHOD

The method of implementing this community engagement program was designed in a participatory manner, emphasizing the active involvement of all elements of the Negeri Hukurila community, including community leaders, parents, and youth. The program was conducted from 4 to 11 March 2025. The selection of Negeri Hukurila as the location was based on preliminary assessments indicating the persistence of traditional perspectives regarding gender roles in family life and child education. In addition, the community maintains strong social cohesion, making a participatory approach particularly suitable for fostering dialogue and collective learning processes. This consideration aligns with the fundamental principle of community engagement, namely to deliver initiatives that not only address real needs but are also relevant to local social and cultural dynamics.

The implementation of the program was carried out through three main stages: socialization, mentoring, and evaluation. The socialization stage was selected as the initial step because the community needed a foundational understanding of the concept of gender responsive education. At this stage, materials were delivered using accessible language and supported by concrete examples from everyday life, thereby avoiding the perception of being overly academic or unfamiliar. The socialization process was not limited to one way communication; rather, it incorporated open discussions that allowed participants to express their experiences, perspectives, and even doubts regarding gender equality issues. This process was essential to foster a sense of ownership over the newly introduced ideas while ensuring that the materials remained grounded in the local context.

Following the socialization stage, the program proceeded with mentoring activities. Mentoring was chosen because changes in knowledge cannot rely solely on theoretical understanding but must be reinforced through practice and collective reflection. In this stage, the community engagement team, together with local leaders, facilitated parents and youth in identifying daily practices that reflect gender bias and subsequently discussed more equitable alternatives. For instance, discussions addressed how household responsibilities can be distributed fairly without distinguishing between boys and girls, and how parents can provide equal opportunities for girls to develop their interests and aspirations. The mentoring process also aimed to strengthen the capacity of community leaders as agents of change, enabling them to sustain these efforts beyond the formal duration of the program.

The final stage was evaluation, which was designed not merely to assess program outcomes but also to serve as a medium for collective reflection. The evaluation was conducted in a participatory manner by inviting participants to share their understanding, the changes they experienced, and the challenges they continued to face. Through this approach,

evaluation did not function as a unilateral assessment but rather as a platform to measure the extent to which the principles of gender responsive education were understood and gradually applied in daily life. Furthermore, the evaluation provided opportunities to document good practices, narratives of change, and inspiring community experiences, which can serve as a foundation for the development of similar programs in the future.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Enhancing Knowledge through Socialization

The initial phase of this community engagement program was conducted through a socialization process involving a broad range of stakeholders in Negeri Hukurila, including parents, youth, and community leaders. Socialization was considered a strategic entry point for building a foundational understanding of gender responsive education. Prior to the implementation of the activity, preliminary findings indicated the persistence of the belief that girls do not need to attain the same level of education as boys, as their primary roles are perceived to be within the domestic sphere. This perception was also reflected in the division of daily responsibilities, where girls were more frequently assigned household tasks, while boys were granted greater freedom to engage in activities outside the home. These conditions illustrate the presence of deeply embedded gender bias within the local social structure.

The socialization process was implemented using a simple, communicative, and contextual approach. The community engagement team did not rely solely on one way lectures, but instead encouraged participants to reflect on their everyday experiences related to gender roles. For example, during discussion sessions, several parents acknowledged that they routinely assigned domestic responsibilities to their daughters, with the intention of preparing them for future roles as homemakers. However, after gaining an understanding that gender equality does not eliminate female identity but rather provides equal opportunities for development, most participants began to recognize that girls education is equally important as boys education.

This process illustrates how the community gradually shifted from traditional perspectives toward more progressive frameworks of thinking. Caywood and Darmstadt (2024) emphasize that changes in adult knowledge occur when individuals are encouraged to critically reflect on long held assumptions. In this socialization activity, such reflection emerged through dialogical interactions that connected personal experiences with new information. In other words, the transformation of understanding was not externally imposed, but rather developed through collectively constructed critical awareness.

To illustrate the changes in participants knowledge, comparative data on community understanding before and after the socialization activity are presented below. These data were obtained through a simple questionnaire administered to participants, particularly focusing on their perspectives regarding girls education and the role of families in promoting gender equality.

**Table 1** Changes in Community Understanding of Gender Responsive Education in Negeri Hukurila

<b>Aspect of Understanding</b>	<b>Before Socialization (percent agree)</b>	<b>After Socialization (percent agree)</b>
Girls education is as important as boys education	42 percent	89 percent
Household roles should be distributed fairly without gender distinction	36 percent	81 percent
Families play a primary role in instilling gender equality values from an early age	48 percent	92 percent
Gender equality is not contradictory to local culture	40 percent	85 percent

Source: Community Engagement Socialization Data, 2025

The table indicates a significant increase in participants understanding, particularly regarding the importance of girls education, which rose from 42 percent to 89 percent after the socialization process. This increase reflects the effectiveness of the activity in raising awareness that educational investment should not be differentiated based on gender. Similar improvements are observed in other aspects, such as the equitable distribution of household roles and the perceived compatibility between gender equality and local culture, which were previously seen as contradictory but are now more widely accepted.

In addition to quantitative results, qualitative observations during the socialization process also revealed changes in attitudes. Some male adolescents, for instance, expressed that it was unfair for household tasks to be assigned solely to their sisters. Meanwhile, parents acknowledged that they had only recently realized the importance of supporting their daughters in pursuing higher levels of education. These findings indicate that the socialization process successfully fostered new forms of awareness rooted in participants own lived experiences.

To support the depiction of the socialization process, documentation of the activity illustrates interactions between facilitators and participants within a participatory discussion setting.



**Figure 1** Socialization Process of Gender Responsive Education in Negeri Hukurila  
Source: Field Documentation, 2025

Socialization thus functioned not only as a medium for knowledge transfer but also as a space for cognitive transformation. In line with Aktar and Rahman (2022), such shifts in mindset constitute a critical foundation for the emergence of more equitable behaviors. The success of the socialization phase in Negeri Hukurila demonstrates that simple, contextual, and participatory approaches are capable of fostering critical awareness regarding the importance of gender responsive education.

### **Attitudinal Change through Mentoring**

Mentoring in the community engagement program in Negeri Hukurila constituted a crucial phase that bridged newly acquired knowledge from the socialization stage to its practical application in everyday life. While socialization functioned to broaden community understanding of gender responsive education, mentoring served as a process of internalizing these values into family behaviors and routines. This mentoring was designed using a participatory approach, in which facilitators did not position themselves as authoritative instructors but rather as dialogical partners working alongside the community.

One of the primary focuses of mentoring was to encourage families to implement principles of equality in household practices. This was reflected in the gradual transformation of domestic role distribution. Previously, household responsibilities were almost entirely borne by girls, while boys were often considered unsuitable for tasks such as cooking or cleaning. However, through guided discussions and practical exercises, parents began to adopt new patterns by distributing tasks more equitably between sons and daughters. For example, boys were involved in activities such as drying clothes or sweeping the yard, while girls were equally given opportunities to focus on their studies. Although these practices may appear simple, they signify an important shift in gender relations at the family level.

Observational data and field notes indicate an increase in the involvement of boys in domestic activities following the mentoring program. A simple survey conducted among

participating families illustrates a notable transformation in household task distribution.

**Table 2** Changes in Boys Participation in Household Activities

Type of Household Activity	Before Mentoring (percent of families involving boys)	After Mentoring (percent of families involving boys)
Sweeping the house or yard	28 percent	76 percent
Washing or drying clothes	14 percent	63 percent
Assisting in cooking or meal preparation	10 percent	58 percent
Caring for younger siblings	19 percent	61 percent

Source: Community Engagement Data, 2025

The table demonstrates a substantial increase in boys participation in domestic tasks, for example sweeping activities rose from 28 percent to 76 percent. Participation in cooking activities also increased from 10 percent to 58 percent. These findings indicate that mentoring successfully translated knowledge into observable behavior, although continued consistency and reinforcement remain necessary.

Beyond the nuclear family, community leaders played a significant role in strengthening the legitimacy of the program. In Negeri Hukurila, traditional and religious leaders hold strong influence over the acceptance of new ideas. When community leaders actively participated in the mentoring process, particularly by demonstrating practices directly, the legitimacy of the program increased significantly. For instance, one community leader openly shared how he began to distribute household responsibilities among his children. This narrative not only reinforced the messages delivered by facilitators but also provided tangible evidence that gender equality values can coexist with local cultural traditions. Thus, community leaders functioned not merely as observers but as agents of change who facilitated collective acceptance of more equitable practices.

Mentoring also had a significant impact on adolescents, particularly in fostering more open attitudes toward cross gender collaboration. Previously, interactions between male and female adolescents were often constrained by gender stereotypes, with boys perceived as dominant and girls as passive. However, through mentoring sessions involving simulations, role playing, and group activities, adolescents began to understand that cross gender cooperation can produce more effective outcomes. In one group activity, for example, male and female adolescents were tasked with designing practical solutions for equitable household role distribution. The discussion revealed that when given the opportunity, female adolescents were able to articulate constructive ideas, while male adolescents learned to listen and accept input. These outcomes indicate that gender equality learning extended beyond parents and contributed to shaping more equitable and cooperative interaction patterns among younger generations.

These findings reinforce the argument that attitudinal change is more effective when communities are directly involved in practice rather than merely receiving information. While knowledge about gender equality delivered through socialization is essential as a cognitive foundation, without mentoring, change would likely remain at the level of understanding alone. Through practical engagement, community members not only comprehend concepts but also experience the tangible benefits of applying equality in daily life. For instance, several mothers reported that when their sons began to assist with domestic work, their workload became lighter, while daughters gained more time to study. Such lived experiences generate stronger and more enduring awareness than theoretical knowledge alone.

To better understand this dynamic, Berger & Luckmann (2023) explain that knowledge formation and social identity are constructed through collective practices within a community. In the context of mentoring in Negeri Hukurila, learning occurred not only through facilitators but also through shared experiences developed collectively. Through everyday interactions, community members constructed new meanings of gender roles that are more equitable. In this sense, mentoring functioned as a space of social practice where new values could emerge and become embedded within the community.

The outcomes of mentoring also demonstrate that attitudinal change is not an instantaneous process but requires time and the involvement of multiple stakeholders. Some families continued to face challenges, particularly resistance from older family members who perceived gender equality values as conflicting with established traditions. However, the presence of community leaders as mediators and role models, combined with the direct experiences of families, became key factors in accelerating the acceptance of new values. This process indicates that transformative learning linked to social practice has a greater likelihood of being sustained over the long term.

### **Collective Reflection through Participatory Evaluation**

Collective reflection through participatory evaluation in the gender responsive education socialization program in Negeri Hukurila functioned not only as a tool for measuring success but also as a space for social learning, enabling the community to collectively reassess the practices, values, and norms that have shaped their daily lives. Evaluation was not treated merely as a technical activity to measure indicators of knowledge or behavior, but rather as a dialogical forum that fostered collective awareness of the importance of gender equality. Within the evaluation forum, parents, youth, and community leaders gathered to share experiences, articulate narratives of change, and discuss ongoing challenges. This process aligns with the approach of Lemma et al. (2025), which emphasizes the importance of community participation in identifying, reflecting upon, and redefining development pathways according to local needs. In this sense, evaluation moved beyond an administrative procedure and became an integral component of empowerment itself.

One of the key outcomes of this participatory evaluation was the emergence of a shared understanding that gender bias is not merely an individual or household issue, but a systemic problem embedded within the social structure. Through open discussions,

community members began to recognize that rigid distinctions between male and female roles have contributed to the reproduction of social inequality. For instance, several parents who previously believed that girls should be oriented toward domestic roles acknowledged that such perspectives must change in order to provide equal opportunities for their daughters in education and personal development. This shift in mindset was further reinforced by testimonies from adolescents, who shared how their participation in the program had broadened their perspectives on cross gender collaboration. The recognition that gender bias is a systemic issue requiring collective action became a critical driving force in strengthening community level commitment.

**Table 3** Results of Collective Reflection through Participatory Evaluation in Negeri Hukurila

<b>Reflection Category</b>	<b>Emerging Good Practices</b>	<b>Narratives of Change</b>	<b>Challenges Encountered</b>
Family	More equitable distribution of household responsibilities between spouses	Husbands began to participate in supporting children learning activities	Some families still perceive domestic tasks as exclusively women responsibilities
Youth	Female adolescents became more confident in expressing their opinions	Male adolescents became more open to collaborating with female peers	Peer pressure continues to reinforce gender stereotypes
Community Leaders	Support for delivering equality messages in community forums	Traditional leaders began incorporating equality issues into deliberative meetings	Some religious leaders remain cautious in addressing equality issues
Community Overall	Regular reflective discussion forums established after program activities	Community members became more willing to discuss sensitive issues	Limited resources for sustaining regular meetings

Source: Community Engagement Data, 2025

Table 3 demonstrates that the evaluation process not only highlighted achievements but also identified challenges that require further attention. Notably, the willingness of community members to openly express these challenges indicates that the evaluation space successfully fostered a safe and inclusive environment, allowing participants to develop a sense of ownership over the program.

Furthermore, participatory evaluation in this context served as a critical mechanism for strengthening program sustainability. By actively involving the community in reflective processes, participants came to see themselves as agents of change rather than passive beneficiaries. Collective reflection also reinforced a sense of ownership, as community members contributed to shaping the direction of future initiatives. This finding is consistent with Afdhal (2023), who argues that the success of participatory development lies not in the

immediate resolution of problems, but in the capacity of communities to continuously learn, adapt, and sustain transformative change. Within this framework, evaluation operates as a mechanism that sustains the dynamics of collective learning.

In addition, the evaluation process revealed the capacity of the Negeri Hukurila community to construct new narratives of equality that are culturally grounded. Emerging stories of change, such as a father proudly stating that he now regularly assists his wife with cooking, or a male adolescent expressing that he no longer feels hesitant to collaborate with female peers, represent concrete manifestations of shifting social identities. These narratives illustrate how collective reflection can generate social legitimacy for change, which in turn strengthens broader community acceptance.

### **Integrating Gender Responsive Education with Local Cultural Context**

The integration of gender responsive education with the local cultural context in Negeri Hukurila represents a crucial element in developing an approach that is not only academically grounded but also deeply embedded in the everyday lives of the community. One of the key novelties of this program lies in the way gender equality values are not treated as externally imposed concepts, but rather are harmonized with local wisdom that has long been embedded in social life. As a result, the community does not perceive the idea of equality as something foreign or externally driven, but instead finds resonance with existing values such as solidarity, deliberation, and social justice that have been practiced across generations. This approach minimizes resistance, as the community is engaged through dialogue within familiar value frameworks, rather than being confronted with abstract or normative doctrines detached from their lived experiences.

One of the most effective entry points for the program was the tradition of deliberation, which in Hukurila is not merely a formal forum but a space for sharing experiences, resolving problems, and strengthening social cohesion. Within this context, gender equality issues were introduced in a natural and culturally relevant manner, for example through local narratives illustrating the roles of women in family life or the equal opportunities of boys and girls within customary learning traditions. By utilizing existing communication structures, discussions on gender responsive education became more accessible and were even perceived as reinforcing indigenous values rather than introducing unfamiliar ideas. The strong local value of solidarity, particularly reflected in collective work practices, was also used as a foundation for discussing equitable role distribution within households, framing domestic responsibilities as a shared collective effort rather than a burden borne solely by women.

The use of a culturally grounded approach provided a strategic advantage in addressing gender bias, which is often perceived as natural or unchangeable. When gender equality is introduced solely through theoretical or normative discourse, it may be rejected as conflicting with tradition. However, when conveyed through familiar forms such as proverbs, oral narratives, or deliberative rituals, the concept becomes more contextual and meaningful. For instance, when community leaders linked equal educational opportunities

for children with local wisdom emphasizing the importance of nurturing seeds for a fruitful harvest, the message became directly relevant to daily life. This process aligns with the concept of cultural responsiveness in community empowerment, which emphasizes the adaptation of program values to local cultural frameworks to enhance acceptance and internalization (Purnama et al., 2024).

Furthermore, this approach demonstrated a strong dialogical dimension. Rather than positioning facilitators as authoritative instructors, they acted as discussion partners who encouraged the community to reflect on their own experiences. For example, when parents discussed the unequal distribution of household responsibilities, facilitators did not immediately provide solutions, but instead posed reflective questions such as how collective practices in agricultural work could be applied within the household. Such questions created a human centered reflective space while linking equality values with familiar local practices. In this way, community members did not feel instructed, but rather recognized as active subjects of knowledge.

Compared to similar programs implemented in other contexts, the success observed in Negeri Hukurila can be attributed to its close alignment with local cultural values. Many gender responsive education initiatives fail because they rely heavily on normative approaches based on regulatory or legal frameworks without considering the socio cultural conditions of the community. In some regions, campaigns focusing solely on national regulations have had limited impact on changing attitudes, as they are perceived as disconnected from daily life. In contrast, the program in Hukurila succeeded by starting from existing values and practices, and then integrating principles of equality within them. In other words, the program did not require the community to abandon its traditions, but rather encouraged reinterpretation of those traditions in a more inclusive and equitable manner.

In addition, the integration of gender values with local culture generated new and more effective social practices. For instance, in group discussion activities, male and female adolescents were encouraged to work together in designing collaborative plans that emphasized cross gender cooperation. This not only transformed the structure of discussions but also influenced everyday social interactions. Adolescents began to perceive girls as equal partners, both in domestic tasks and in public activities. From this process emerged new forms of social identity shaped through collective practice, which is a critical element in building an equitable community (Solissa and Lestaluhu, 2024).

To further illustrate these findings, the following table presents community perceptions regarding the effectiveness of culturally based approaches in understanding gender equality issues.

**Table 4** Community Perceptions of Cultural Integration in Gender Responsive Education Socialization in Negeri Hukurila

Assessed Aspect	Before Program	After Program
Awareness of the importance of girls education	Low, often considered secondary to boys	High, increasingly regarded as equally important
Acceptance of equality principles within households	Considered taboo to discuss	More open, increasingly discussed in deliberative forums
Involvement of community leaders in gender issues	Minimal, focused primarily on customs and rituals	Active, serving as agents of legitimacy for equality
Youth participation in cross gender activities	Limited and biased	More inclusive, with increased collaboration between male and female adolescents

Source: Processed data from socialization documentation and collective reflection activities in Negeri Hukurila, 2025

These findings demonstrate that the program not only enhanced knowledge but also transformed attitudes and behaviors in a culturally relevant manner. By leveraging values of solidarity and deliberation, gender equality is no longer perceived as an external concept, but as an integral part of the community value system.

### Implications for Community Empowerment

The implications of the program “Equitable Families, Empowered Generations” in Negeri Hukurila extend beyond local achievements and contribute to the broader discourse on community empowerment. By integrating socialization, mentoring, and participatory evaluation, this program provides a concrete illustration of how gender responsive education can be implemented through a community based approach. This cyclical model, which begins with conceptual introduction, continues with practical application, and culminates in collective reflection, transcends the formalistic nature of conventional education and reinforces the essence of empowerment as a process of transforming collective awareness and social behavior. This finding aligns with Norris et al. (2025), who emphasize that community empowerment is inseparable from capacity building processes that are integrated with local contexts and oriented toward transforming power relations in everyday life.

The theoretical contribution of this initiative lies in enriching the discourse on community empowerment by demonstrating that gender responsive education cannot be limited to policy articulation or formal instructional materials, but must be embedded within community practices. Findings from Negeri Hukurila indicate that community members are able to internalize gender equality values not through external normative imposition, but through participatory and dialogical learning processes grounded in existing social values. This suggests a new conceptual perspective: that gender based empowerment becomes effective

only when situated within organic social interactions, where community members act as active agents rather than passive recipients of knowledge.

The practical implications are equally evident, highlighting the need for cross stakeholder collaboration to expand the impact of similar programs. Local governments can play a role in providing policy support and resources, educational institutions can contribute through gender responsive curricula and learning modules, while traditional and religious leaders can strengthen moral legitimacy, facilitating broader acceptance of equality principles. Such multi actor engagement ensures program sustainability and enables its expansion to other regions. As emphasized by Zega et al. (2024), the success of community empowerment initiatives is highly dependent on multi stakeholder engagement that broadens access to resources, opportunities, and participatory spaces.

Furthermore, the outcomes of this program are not limited to Negeri Hukurila but hold potential as a replicable model for other communities, provided that contextual adaptations are made. The culturally grounded approach demonstrated in Hukurila confirms that the success of community empowerment initiatives is strongly influenced by alignment with local value systems. When implemented elsewhere, the same principle should be maintained, namely adapting materials, language, and methods to local cultural characteristics so that gender equality values are not perceived as foreign or contradictory to prevailing norms. In this way, empowerment programs can remain both transformative and adaptive.

Another important implication is the need to integrate knowledge transformation with behavioral transformation. Socialization enhanced community knowledge, mentoring facilitated its application in daily life, and evaluation provided a platform for collective reflection to sustain change. These three stages are mutually reinforcing and form a comprehensive empowerment cycle that addresses not only cognitive dimensions but also social practices. This finding contributes to the community empowerment literature, which has often focused on economic or political dimensions, by demonstrating that education, particularly gender responsive education, can serve as an effective entry point for broader social transformation.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the implementation and discussion, it can be concluded that the application of gender responsive education through socialization, mentoring, and evaluation in Negeri Hukurila successfully achieved the primary objective of enhancing community understanding and awareness regarding the importance of gender equality within the family as a foundation for building empowered generations. The participatory design of the process not only generated knowledge change but also encouraged behavioral transformation, enabling equality values to be internalized in everyday life. The success of this program lies in its ability to integrate gender responsive education principles with the local cultural context, making the concept of equality more accessible, applicable, and socially relevant. These findings affirm that community empowerment through education is most effective when designed

using human centered, adaptive, and collaborative approaches, while also contributing to the advancement of community empowerment studies by presenting a culturally grounded model of gender responsive education.

### ETHICAL STATEMENT AND DISCLOSURE

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles, including informed consent, protection of informants' confidentiality, and respect for local cultural values. Special consideration was given to participants from vulnerable groups to ensure their safety, comfort, and equal rights to participate. No external funding was received, and the authors declare no conflict of interest. All data and information presented were collected through valid research methods and have been verified to ensure their accuracy and reliability. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) was limited to technical assistance for writing and language editing, without influencing the scientific substance of the work. The authors express their gratitude to the informants for their valuable insights, and to the anonymous reviewers for their constructive feedback on an earlier version of this manuscript. The authors take full responsibility for the content and conclusions of this article.

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