Economic Growth and Gender Wage Gap, Case in ASEAN 6 Members Countries

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the effect of the wage gap between men and women in the world of work on economic growth in Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, which are members of ASEAN. The data sources are WorldBank, United Nation, and statistical report from related countries, with total of 174 observed data, including data on state per capita income, wage gaps, total years of schooling, and the labor force.This study was conducted with secondary and quantitative data, using Stata 15 as a data processor. Three hypotheses were proven using Stata 15, and the validity, reliability, and relationships between variables were able to be determined. From data collection and process, it is found that all hypotheses are accepted. Gender pay gap has a negative effect on economic growth. The bigger the gap, the more the economic growth will decline.

Keywords: Economic Growth, Wage Gap, Education, Labor Force, ASEAN, Gender

INTRODUCTION

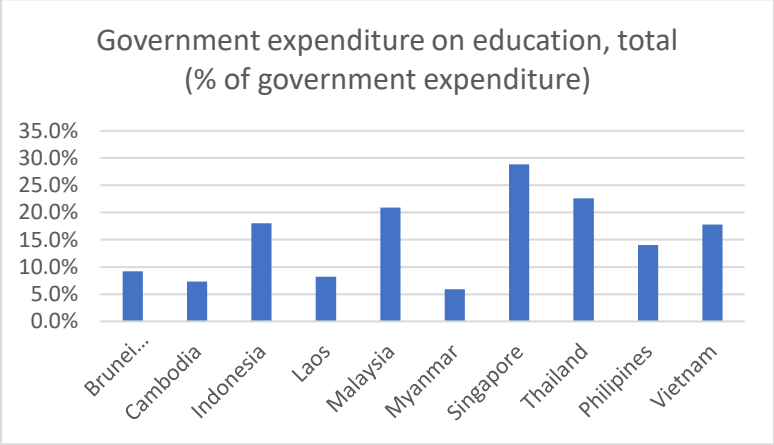
Introduction

Economic growth is the expansion in a nation's economy, which can be measured using several approaches. One of the most often used approaches is Gross Domestic Product (GPD) (Hussin & Saidin, 2012). An increase in economic growth will help a country to increase its per capita income. In addition, economic growth will increase demand for labor, subsequently decreasing the unemployment rate. Economic growth also helps a country reduce its poverty rate and achieve a higher standard of living. A number of government policies were implemented before and associated with this growth, including the elimination of import substitution policies and increasing the levels of investments in education and infrastructure (Hipsher, 2013).

Economic growth in a country is not only beneficial for the country's economy but also people's welfare. According to neoclassical economic growth theory, economic growth can derive from the quality of labor. Skilled labor is what a company preferably chooses, and unskilled labor is often put on the lower quality of work and low wages. Fromthe economic perspective, the level of education and its distribution within the population is believed to have a crucial role in the prospects of income distribution and consequently in economic growth (Osathanunkul & Keawngamdee, 2003).

Based on International Labor Organization, women's current global labor force rate is close to 49% and men 75%. For some countries, the level gap reached 50% points. In the ASEAN region, every country member seriously concerns about education, as can be seen from the huge proportion of government spending on education. It is believed that investment in human capital through education is the engine of the development process. A better educated labor force may increase the return on research and development (Osathanunkul & Keawngamdee, 2003).

Figure 1. Government expenditure on education



Source: World Bank

The factor of labor participation also takes part in economic growth, based on the growth theory. The human capital available is compatible with supporting a country's economy. Other researchers investigated the effect of gender inequality on economic growth found that some factors indeed affect economic growth. According to Seguino (2000), GDP growth is positively related to gender wage inequality.

Gender stereotyping of jobs creates barriers to women's entry, resulting in occupational and horizontal segregation by sex. Discriminating in regulations prohibit

women from certain jobs; standards relating to childbearing and rearing may create disincentive to hire women; and businesswomen are constrained, relative to men, in terms of access to credit, networking, and interaction with other businesses and government officials.

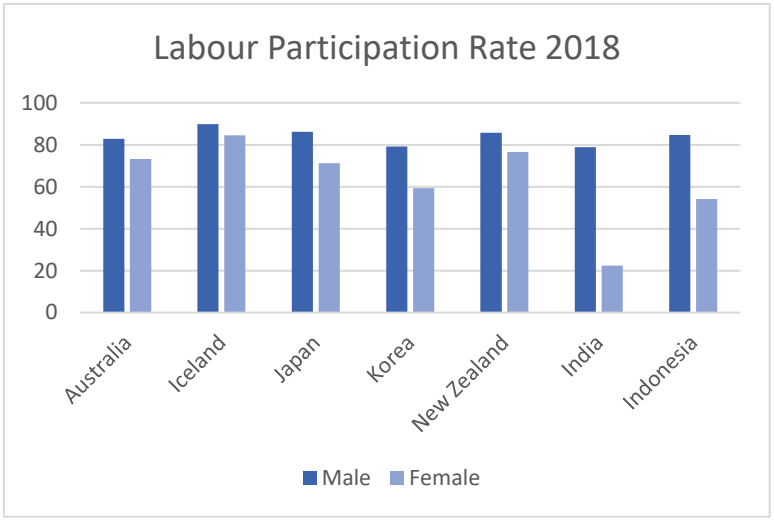


Figure 2. Labor participation rate 2008

India still holds on to the traditional belief that women are not equal to men. This tradition is making Indian females tend to not work because they do not have intend to work or companies prefer to employ men over women. From an economic perspective, reducing gender gaps in labor force participation could substantially boost global GDP.

Table 1 Economic Growth if Gender Gaps Reduce by 2025

Economic Growth if Gender Gaps Reduce by 2025	
Country	**Growth**
Northern Africa	**9.5%**
Southern Asia	**9.2%**
Arab States	**7.1%**
Central & Western Asia	**5.7%**
Latin America & the Caribbean	**4.0%**
South-Eastern Asia & the Pacific	**3.5%**
Eastern Europe	**2.6%**
Eastern Asia	**2.5%**
Sub-Saharan Africa	**2.2%**
Northern America	**2.0%**
Northern, Southern &Western Europe	**2.0%**

Over the last decades, many theoretical and empirical research attempted to determine whether inequality is harmful to economic growth in both developed or developing countries. In three quarter of OECD countries, household incomes of the top 10% grew faster than those of the poorest 10%, resulting in a widened income inequality. Differences in the pace of income growth across household groups in the pre-crisis period were particularly pronounced in most English-speaking countries but also in Israel, Germany, and Sweden. In almost all countries where incomes fell, those of the bottom 10% fell more rapidly. Similarly, in about half of those countries where incomes continued to grow, the top 10% did better than the bottom 10% (Federico Cingano, 2014).

Writer uses the variable that bridges the relevancies of gender inequality and ecnomic growth which are gender wage gap, education attaintment, and labor force in both genders. Gender inequality in education is related to the quality of human capital for the variable skilled labor in economic growth theory. Gender bias in education may thus generate instumental problems for development policy-makers as it compromises progress in other important development goals. On the previous research, researcher investigate the possibility that growth effect of gender wage differentials is transmitted via the stimulus to investment, serving as a signal of profitability.

Although gender inequality issues are visible on different social, political, and anthropological levels, its economic impact on the growth and development of ASEAN member countries' economies is important to be investigated. Because this could possibly regulate a policy that equally benefited both genders in th workplace and helps stimulate these ASEAN 6 members countries to achieve the agenda of 17 Sustainable development Goals, one of them including point 5, which is Gender Equality by 2030.

Hence, this research aims to examine whether gender inequality affects economic growth in ASEAN member countries.

Theory

Classical Growth Theory

Classical perspective on growth was a feature works by the English classical economist Adam Smith, Thomas Malthus, and David Ricardo. Despite many speculations of others before them, they must be regarded as the main precursors of modern growth theory. The interest of the classical economists in economic growth also derived from a philosophical concern with the possibilities of 'progress' an essential condition of which was seen to be the development of the material basis of society. Moreover, it was identified that the purpose of the analysis was to determine the forces in society that promoted this development (Harris, 2007).

Classical economists are often regarded as 'pessimistic' in their prognosis for economic growth because of the barriers or limits to its expansion to the conditions of a predominantly agrarian economy, without significant change in of production methods. Subsistence refers to the minimum income required to survive and income beyond this level known as profits. This belief of classical theory argues that a temporary increase in real GDP per person inevitably leads to a population explosion, limiting a nation's resources, consequently lowering real GPD, and the country's economic growth will start to slow.

Neoclassical Growth Model

The neoclassical growth theory is an economic growth model that outlines how a steady economic rate results when three economic forces take part: labor, capital, and technology. The theory claims that varying amounts of labor and capital play a vital role in the production process and will result in economic equilibrium. The production function is used to measure the economic growth and equilibrium in this theory. The general production function in the neoclassical growth model takes the following form:

Y = AF (K, L)

Where:

Y = income, or GDP

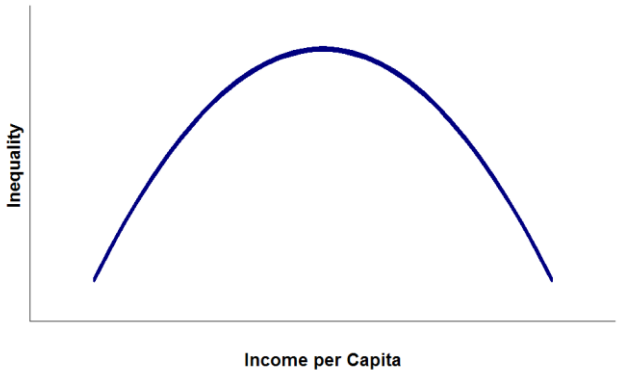
K = capital

L = amount of unskilled labor in the economy

A = determinant level of technology

Kuznets' Hypothesis

The Kuznets curve is a hypothetical curve that graphs economic inequality against income per capita throughout economic development. Simon Kuznets (1960) hypothesized that as an economy develops, the market forces will increase and then decrease the overall economic inequ ality of the society, which is illustrated by the inverted U-shape of the Kuznets curve. He states that there is a relationship between the per capita income of a country and the amount of income inequality within it.



Kuznets Curve

The graph states that the increase of income per capita will increase the inequality and decrease inequality at later stages of development. Kuznets suggested that the pattern resultedfrom the inflow of people into urban areas with unequal income as a country begin to develop, which will have caused the inequality to increase but then will decrease as new members come into labor. This theory can be used to measure income inequality between gender, assuming the new labor force is women and men have more opportunities in labor. As the country develops, it will need more labor to produce output, so this is when women contribute to the labor force and then increase (Haas, 2013).

Literature Review

The journal by Seguino (2002) entitled 'Gender, Quality of Life, and Growth in Asia' examines the gender distribution of the benefits of economic growth in several Asian economies from 1970-90. The variables used are per capita income, the female share of labor force, female and male literacy rates, government consumption, and public education expenditure, on female-to-male population ratio. This journal uses two methodologies. First is Borda Rule to rank order and aggregate QL indicators for Asian economies. Second is regression analysis, they use a fixed-effect model that allows the constant term to vary across countries to capture country-specific characteristics. In conclusion, the slowest growth economics during 1970-90 have the highest gender equity in quality-of-life ratings. Moreover, the data also indicate that economic growth does not have a significant effect on the female-to-male population ratios for this set of countries.

Gnder & Dollar (n.d.) in their journal called 'Gender inequality, income, and growth: are good times good for women?' this journal talks about how lower investment in girls' education simply an efficient economic choice for developing countries and it will decline development. Using the data from year 1960-1995 and two regress to examine the model, both of the models use panel growth regression to check the hypothesis. The first dependent variable, gender inequality, shows that in the case of education, gender inequality is bad for economic growth. The second model that uses per capita income growth as the

dependent variable, tells that gender equality can promote economic growth, and not investing more in girls caused slower growth and reduced income. The two methods use the same independent variable, which is exogenous factors.

Furthermore, journal by Berik et al.(2004) called 'International trade and gender wage discrimination: evidence from East Asia' investigate the impact of competition from international trade on wage discrimination by sex in two highly open economies, in this case, Taiwan (China) and Korea. Moreover, this journal also uses the difference between men and women in average log residual wages in industry X and the year 1980s and 1990s as the dependent variable. The independent variablesare domestic concentration by industry, import ratio by industry, the interaction between industry concentration and import ratio. This journal uses Pareto-function to concentrate the size categories and industries and Spearman coefficients of rank correlation and executed by the OLS regression. The result shows that competition from foreign trade in concentrated industries is positively associated with wage discrimination against female workers in contrast to the implication of neoclassical theory. Compared to the OLS application to long-differenced data, the GLS application to panel data retains more information on wage gaps and trade ratios over time.

Seguino (2000) in 'Gender inequality and economic growth: a cross country analysis' investigates empirically the determinants of economic growth for a set of semi-industrialized export-oriented economies in which women provide the bulk of labor in the export sector. The primary hypothesis tested is that gender inequality contributing to women's relatively lower wages, it was a stimulus to growth via the effect on exports during 1975-95. This journal uses GDP growth as the dependent variable, and the independent variables are gender wage gap, male human capital, and female human capital. Using the regression model using the two-way error components model and the estimation can be done with the least squares dummy variable model (LSDV). The result shows that GDP growth is positively related to gender wage inequality in contrast to the recent work, which suggests that income inequality slows growth. Evidence also indicates that part of the impact of gender wage inequality on growth is transmitted through its positive effect on investment as a share of GDP.

The next journal by Klasen (1999) called 'Does gender inequality reduce growth and development? Evidence from cross-country regression' using cross-country and panel regressions, this paper investigates to what extent gender inequality in education and employment may reduce growth and development. The period used in the data is from 1960-1992 and it used the average annual GDP growth rate per capita as the dependent variable. The independent variables are average investment rate, the average annual rate of population growth, the average annual rate of labor force growth, total years of schooling, annual growth in total years of schooling, female-male ratio of total years of schooling, female-male ratio of the growth in total years of schooling, and other regressors (X). Using the regression model shows the output of direct impact in gender inequality and economic growth. In addition, economic growth is indirectly affected by the impact of gender inequality on investment and population growth.

Journal by Osathanunkul & Keawngamdee (2003) called 'Gender Inequality in Education and Economic Growth in ASEAN Member Countries' investigated the extent of gender inequality in education and its impact on economic growth in ASEAN member countries empirically. The sample comprises 10 ASEAN member countries from over the period 1970-2010. This journal uses GDP per capita for their dependent and the independent variables are share of gross capital formation, average year of total schooling, and Gini index of education. This journal uses the OLS panel regression model, and the result shows that gender inequality is negatively associated with per capita GDP growth. Otherwise, the average year of schooling shows a significant impact on economic growth

Research Data Source

The data collection will rely on a literature review. The purpose of literature review is to gain an understanding of the existing research and debates relevant to a particular topic or area of study and to present that knowledge in the form of a written report (Library, 2017). This study used secondary data as the main data source. The data were taken from existing journals, news, the internet, organization's report and so on. The data source included in this study are:

Data Sources

Variable	Source
GDP	IMF
Wage Average (Male)	World Bank
Wage Average (Female)	World Bank
Average year of Schooling	World Bank
Female Labor Force	World Bank
Male Labor Force	World Bank

Data Analysis

In this study, the data are analyzed with panel data regression method to examine the effect of gender inequality on economic growth.

Panel Regression

This study utilizes panel regression to examine the correlation of the independent variables, which are wage gap, average year of schooling, and female and male human capital, with the dependent variable, which is economic growth in ASEAN. The proxy that is usually used for economic growth is GDP.

$$\ln(GDP)_j = a_0 + a_1 \ln(W_{mj} - W_{fj}) + a_2 \ln(Sch_j) + a_3 \ln(LF_{mfj}) + \varepsilon_j$$

Where:

GDP_j = GDP per capita of country j

$W_{mf} - W_{fj}$ = difference between men and women wage in country j

Sch_j = Average year of schooling in country j

LF_{mfj} = Female and male labor force in country j

ε_j = error term

The writer uses pooled data, which is data structured by time series and cross section. This method is used because the author believes it would control individual heterogeneities, provide more efficient information, minimalize collinearities between variables, and the data panel provides better measurement and a broader range of data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Economic Growth and Gender Inequality

ASEAN region has been known for the economic powerhouse. The combined GDP of the region was 2.4 trillion USD in 2011, making it the seventh-largest economy in the world (Maiti & Bidinger, 2018). Part of the ASEAN member countries that the author observed include Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Brunei Darussalam, which has attracted more foreign direct investment than China in 2013 (McKinsey Global Institute, 2014).

Analysis Result on Economic Growth and Gender Wage Gap in ASEAN-6 Countries

Total observation consists of 174 observations with a total of six countries in the period of 1990 – 2019. The variable *lnGDP* has a mean value of 8.675, showing that the mean of GDP in six ASEAN countries, which includes Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore. Variable *WageF* and *WageM* that represent wage for female and male in six ASEAN countries show 64.362 and 64.566 value for mean. Variable *edu*, which is the total average of schooling in each country, which has mean value of 103.829. Lastly, *LFf* and *LFM* have a value of mean 39.599 and 78.893, which is Labor force for female and male in the six countries observed.

Standard Deviation is a measure of the amount of variation or dispersion of a set of values. The variable of *lnGDP* shows 1.312 for standard deviation values. For *WageF* and *WageF* gradually shows 24.187 and 19.804 for the standard deviation. For variable *LFf* and *LFm* has a standard deviation value of 39.599 and 78.893, and 103.829 for variable *edu.*

Min shows the minimum values from the observation. Variable *lnGDP* has 6.139 minimum values. Variable *WageF* and *WageM* have 27 and 23 for minimum values. For variable *LFf* and *LFm* has minimum values of 33 and 71.03 and variable *edu* is 91.7. At the same time, *Max* shows the maximum values of each variable observed.

Analysis Result on Economic Growth and Gender Wage Gap
Table 2 Regression Analysis

lnGDP	**Coefficient**
Wage	-0.18***
	(0.01)
Edu	0.03**
	(0.01)
LF	0.03**
	(0.02)
Constant	0.59
	(2.99)
R^2	0.54
Observation	174

** p < 0.10; ** p < 0.05; *** p< 0.10*

Regression model above is the result of Economic Growth and component of the gender wage gap, which were gender wage gap, years of total schooling, and the difference of labor force in six ASEAN countries. With the total of 174 observations, the estimation gives the result for F-statistic on 0.00, which indicates the significant level and shows that all independent variables simultaneously affected the dependent variable. Adjusted R-square value 0.54 indicated that variation of the independent variable able to explain the dependent variable for 54%.

The gender wage gap refers to the difference between the average wage for female and the average wage for male, expressed by number in each country. From the theory that the author uses, this study suggests that the result give Inverted-U pattern. As a country begins to develop, the industrial sector, which most likely requires more male labor than female, while not providing opportunities for female workers, thus resulting a negative effect on GDP and the Gender wage gap.

Analysis that was estimated is the effect of the gender wage gap, and another component from gender differentiation to the GDP growth between the six countries observed. The estimation of GDP and the gender wage gap is negatively affecting GDP. It

indicates that every increase of 1 gender wage gap will decrease GDP in each of the six countries by 18% from the total GDP growth. It was caused by the wide gap in the wage received based on gender. The difference is affecting how the country's economic condition is coping with the issues of gender inequality. These results are consistent with the findings of authors who link gender wage gaps to investment (Ertürk & Çağatay, 1995), and the feminization of the labor force in export-oriented economies. Those studies base their argument on the view that income inequality leads to political conflict that creates a climate of uncertainty and instability, either overtly or through the effect on macroeconomic policy, thus slowing growth.

Total years of schooling, which is represented by the variable edu is another component of gender inequality that might affect the GDP growth of the country. The regression shows that the variable edu, which represents a total year of schooling, is positively affecting the GDP growth. It means every increase of 1 GDP growth will also increase the total year of schooling by 14% (Klasen, 1999). East Asia and the Pacific started with better conditions for women's education and employment. Females were able to improve their education and employment opportunities much faster than men, thereby rapidly closing the initial gaps. The total education has a positive effect on the economic growth because many factors from education potentially raise earnings, or simply allow people, or in this case female, achieve the income target and consequently put her in a better position in the workplace (Psacharopoulos & Tzannatos, 2014).

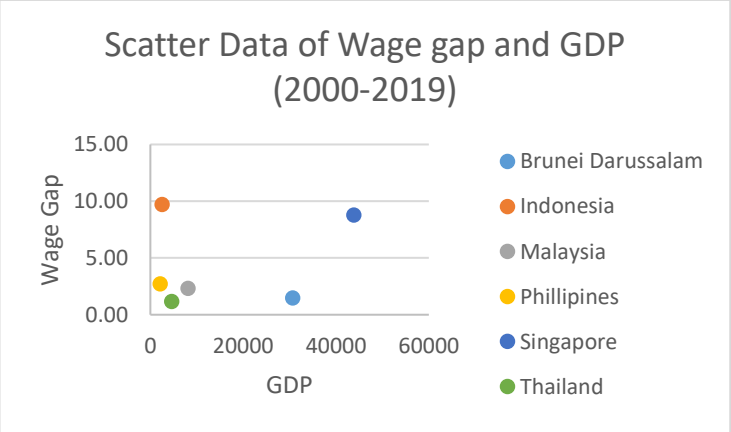
Human capital theory suggests that people are compensated in the workplace based on their abilities and skills (Borjas, n.d.). Human capital theory would suggest that the greater the gap between education attainment between female and male would also develop a greater gap in wage. The neoclassical economic theory also explains about skilled capital that affects economic growth. Other issues occur when female must have attained socio-cultural norms in the society. Females are most likely to have lower-quality jobs or vulnerable employment. Such numbers may occur because of a female figure, which is not usually portrayed as a working figure to start with.

Labor force stated in the model with variable LF, and the result shows a positive relation between LF and lnGDP. This result means that every increase of 1 GDP will also increase LF by 17%. The participation of women in the labor force is less attached than men. Psacharopoulos & Tzannatos, 2014 stated that the decision to work and the period depends on the remuneration from work (wage rate), other (non-labor) income, and tastes. Thus, higher income may induce them to join the labor force. Unlike men, for women to join the labor force is harder. Usually, women are responsible for managing the family. For a woman to participate in the labor force, women need to maintain the working hours and the time for family, especially women who already have a child. The number of children is another factor that directly affects women's participation in the labor force. It is expected that women's participation in the labor force and earning an economy will make an important contribution to the gain, development, and acceleration of growth for any country (Doğan & Akyüz, 2017).

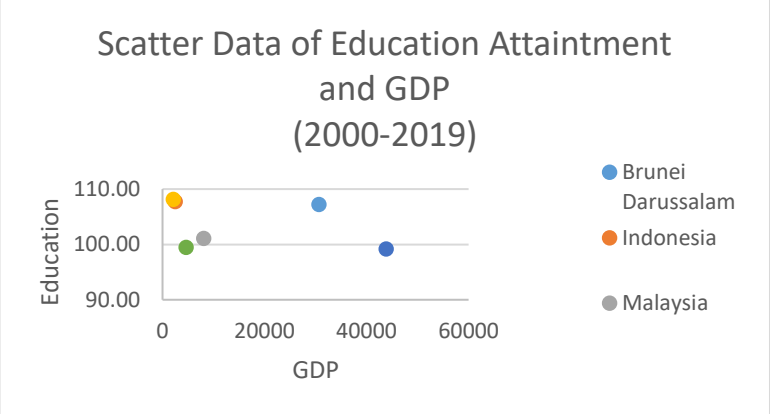
The theoritical framework to explain more about wage gap or income inequality provide by Lewis model, according to that, this tendency towards increasing inequality is reversed when all surplus labor is absorbed into modern-sector employment. Thus, labor becomes a scare factor of production and further growthm which implies an increase in labor demand, will push the wages up and rise the general wage gap. According to many scholar the extent of inequality has been ound strongly correlated with education, popuation growth rate that in this case is represented by labor force and others factors.

Relationship between Variable Observed

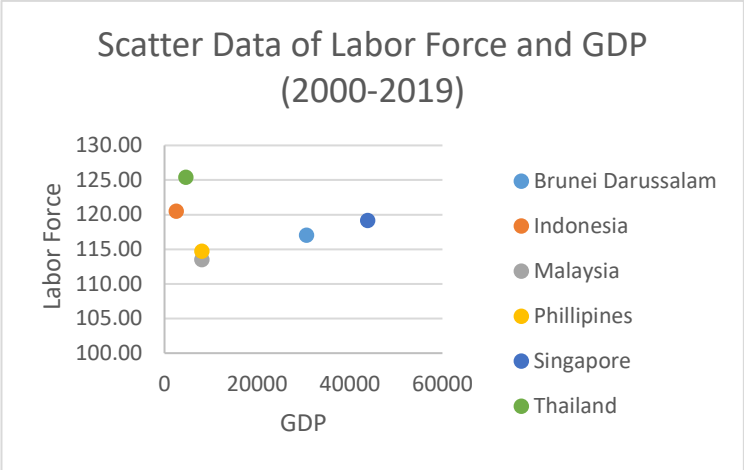
According to the previous study from (Haas, 2013) coutries with high incomes per capitatend to have lower male-to-female wage ratios. From the theory of economic growth that were used in this research, the income indirectly effect cunsomption and effect the GDP.



The scatter data shown that Indonesia is experiencing the high level of disparities in wage followed with low level of GDP per capita. Menwhile in the relatively similar level of disparities in wage in Singapore, the country were able to maintain the high GDP er capita. The difference might corralated with the population and size of the countries. Indonesia has a broad norms and tradition it rather hard to equal the rights for women and minimal wage that are also differ from each region. Related to education, group of country that supported the hypothesis including Thailand and Malaysia, where we can see that low of education related to low GDP per capita. Interesting findings is from Indonesia and Philiphines where both have the highest level of education yet still on the low GDP per capita. Another explaination could posibly government expenditure on education is relatively high for some of the group countries that promotes high education.



Another Findings are related to how GDP and Labor Force effecting each variable, in this case researcher observed total labor force in observed countries. Brunei and Singapore are small countries that statistically had fewer labor forces amongs other countries, yet they managed to higher the GDP per capita. Indonesia, in fact with high population country failed to maximize the labor force to generate more GDP.



Policies in Women's Economic Participation

Women's poor economic participation can be explained by three factors: gender differences in human capital, discrimination in intitutions and traditional social norms. In ASEAN we can see prevelance of all the three factors varying degrees. The human capital differences explained by the data shown that education attainment are still scarce. Institutional discrimination in certain coutries prevents women from having equal opportunities to participate in economy. And, social norms in certain countries are extremely patriarchal and act as barriers to women's participation and economic access.

All countries provide constitutional equality between men and women. However, some of the countries creates a barrier in accessing the legal to women's rights and participation. Discrimination in laws and policies, combined with cultural and social norms, create barriers to women's economic participation and limit women's access to economic opportunities, credit and mobility.

The Women's Empowerment Principles

This principles launched in 2010 by UN Women and the UN Global Compact, this have been endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly, the G20 and the G7. The 7 principes were made to offer guidance to business on how to support gender equality and empower women in workplace. The seven principles are including :

1. Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.
2. Treat all women and men fairly at work – respect and support human rights and non-discrimination.
3. Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers.
4. Promote education, training and professional development for women.
5. Implement enterprise-development, supply-chain and marketing practices that empower women.
6. Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy.

7. Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.

By joining the principles, a CEO signals commitment to this agenda at the highest levels of the company and to working collaboratively in multi-stakeholder networks to foster business practices that empower women.

The Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC)

EPIC is an initiative led by the ILO, UN Women and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and working together alongside with other parties to accelerate the closing of gender pay gap and achievement of pay equity. EPIC provides a platform for member companies to express their views, experiences and ideas on how to tackle the pay gap. Companies that are currently a member to EPIC include The Ingka Group (IKEA), Powher New York, The Fair Pay Innovation Lab (FPI) and The Equal Pay Company.

Conclusion

To sum up everything that has been conducted by the author, the result of Panel Data Regression of GDP to gender wage gap, total year of schooling, and labor force, shows that:

1. Gender wage gap negatively affecting GDP, hence, the increase of gap between male and female wage will decline GDP in the six ASEAN countries. The difference in wage between the gender is supported by the gap in the total year of schooling and the number in the labor force by gender.
2. Total year of schooling have a positive impact on the increase of GDP. This stated in the theory of neoclassical economics, which is quality of labor. Year of schooling is the factor that impacting the quality of labor; the more year attained will also indicate the capability of the workers.
3. Labor force positively affecting GDP, the difference in participation between gender is stated. From the theory, it concludes that the number of labor force participation will also affecting the output. Thus, the total labor force that is increasing will also increase the GDP

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