

MAPPING GENDER EQUALITY IMPLEMENTATION IN ASEAN PORT MANAGEMENT: ASSESSMENT THROUGH THE ASEAN GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

This study examines gender equality implementation in ASEAN port management using the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework (AGMSF) as the primary analytical tool. Although global initiatives such as SDGs 5 have strengthened commitments to gender equality, barriers, including gender bias, limited women's leadership, and masculine organizational cultures, continue to restrict progress. These issues are evident in the maritime and port sector, a historically male-dominated field that plays a crucial economic role in ASEAN yet remains slow in adopting gender responsive governance. Grounded in gender mainstreaming theory, the research incorporates Sylvia Walby's transformative approach, which emphasizes institutional change beyond numerical participation, and Mary Daly's critique of technocratic implementation that often focuses on administrative procedures without addressing deeper power relations. Using a descriptive qualitative method, this study applies document analysis of ASEAN publications, government reports, and academic literature to assess gender equality practices across the three AGMSF aspects: leadership and capacity building, policy integration and accountability, and institutional strengthening. The findings show wide variation among ASEAN member states in integrating gender principles into port governance. While regional frameworks outline clear expectations, many port institutions still operate within hierarchical and masculine norms that limit women's career mobility and weaken accountability mechanisms. Consequently, gender mainstreaming often remains symbolic rather than transformative. The study concludes that advancing substantive gender equality in ASEAN port management requires cultural change, stronger institutional commitment, and sustained regional cooperation. This mapping provides a structured understanding of existing gaps and identifies strategic opportunities for building more inclusive and gender-responsive port governance across the region.

Keywords: Gender Mainstreaming, ASEAN Port Management, Gender Equality Implementation, AGMSF (ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework), Maritime Governance

1. Introduction

Gender equality in the workplace remains a major global problem that is difficult to eradicate. Although international agendas such as Sustainable Development Goal 5 have supported gender equality, numerous challenges persist, including wage gaps, the underrepresentation of women in strategic positions, and biases in employee recruitment. In practice, women's

opportunities are still constrained by organizational culture, social norms, and biases inherited across generations, forcing women to work considerably harder to gain equal employment opportunities. This situation is not limited to a matter of social justice alone; it also hampers economic potential and innovation that would otherwise emerge when opportunities and access are made available to all genders.

Ironically, the maritime sector and port management, as centers of global trade and key drivers of economic growth, including in ASEAN remains slow in implementing gender mainstreaming, despite their strategic role. Historically, the maritime industry has been perceived as a male-dominated workplace, with women frequently treated as “newcomers” who must navigate greater obstacles. Social barriers, career discrimination, and difficulties in obtaining a strategic position remain a reality. Nevertheless, the sustainability imperative of the maritime industry now extends beyond environmental concerns to encompass workforce well-being and inclusion, as highlighted in studies published in *Marine Policy* that position social impact as an integral component of port sector sustainability. In line with this, a growing demand for professionals focused on gender equality issues, such as gender equality advisors and gender mainstreaming specialists in shipping and port companies, has begun to emerge as a consequence of sustainable development requirements, even though such roles remain far less prevalent than conventional positions that do not explicitly incorporate a gender perspective. This reflects the fact that social transformation within the maritime sector has not kept pace with the global demand for inclusive and gender-equitable development.

To date, women’s representation in port management reveals a significant disparity. This is reinforced by a study in Malaysia which found that only approximately 14.5% of management reveal that significant positions in ports are held by women, well below the 30% target set by the government as part of its women’s empowerment agenda. Although many stakeholders within the industry acknowledge the importance of gender diversity, strategic positions continue to be predominantly filled by men. This reflects an underlying bias that impedes women’s advancement in a sector perceived as demanding and “masculine”. This failure stems from a lack of robust policies

supporting inclusivity and an absence of professional mentoring support that could help women ascend to leadership roles. Women are often compelled to work twice as hard to prove their capabilities, given the prevailing stereotype that port work requires masculine traits. These challenges are frequently compounded by wage gap discrimination and cultural pressures that assume women are better suited to administrative roles rather than leading port operations.

The career trajectory of women who do succeed in reaching strategic positions is also marked by significant emotional and social challenges. One such challenge is a sense of isolation arising from limited support among colleagues, both male and female alike. Conversely, promotion policies based on quotas, without adequate training or preparation, can undermine the legitimacy of women’s leadership. This situation demonstrates that addressing gender inequality in ports requires not only more women in positions of authority, but also a transformation in organizational culture, mentoring systems, capacity-building opportunities, and fair compensation policies enabling women to thrive and to be recognized as valued leaders, not merely as statistical fulfillments.

In the ASEAN context, the issue of gender equality is receiving increasing attention as various strategic sectors develop, including the maritime sector. Ports, as logistics hubs and primary gateways for international trade, not only play a vital role in supporting economic growth but also serve as arenas in which inclusive management practices can reflect the extent to which gender equality principles have been implemented. However, despite ASEAN’s launch of various initiatives such as the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework (AGMSF), its application in technical sectors such as port management still shows significant variation across member states.

“Cooperation between ASEAN member countries and social partners is needed to improve protection for female workers, as well as realize ASEAN’s concrete efforts to achieve SDGs targets on gender equality and women’s empowerment”, stated Ida Fauziyah, Indonesia’s Minister of Manpower (ANTARANEWS, 2020). This statement underscores the importance of inter-country synergy in strengthening commitment to gender equality across the ASEAN region. As further noted by Malaysian women’s rights activist Mary Shanti Dairiam, *“In order to ensure women’s rights in the field of employment, there will be equal competition between men and women. However, it is important to ensure that there is no discrimination in the field of education or in the environment where women grow up”* (Dhaka Tribune, 2022). This statement illustrates that efforts to achieve gender equality cannot be separated from the social, cultural, and structural contexts that shape women’s opportunities in the world of work.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to map the implementation of gender equality within port management systems across ASEAN member states, using the AGMSF as the primary analytical framework. Through an examination of the extent to which ASEAN member states have integrated gender equality principles, this research seeks to identify prevailing patterns in its implementation across the region.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study employs the perspective of gender mainstreaming as a strategy for integrating gender equality into policies and institutional practices within the ASEAN port sector. According to Sylvia Walby, gender mainstreaming requires structural transformation by changing the norms, practices, and principles of institutions, not merely increasing women’s participation within masculine structures, but also altering the way those structures function. Walby

distinguishes between integrative and transformative approaches: the transformative approach necessitates cultural change and shift in power relations to achieve equality, whereas the integrative approach requires such changes at the institutional level (Walby, 2005).

Through the *Partnership for Infrastructure* article discussing Advancing Women’s Leadership in Southeast Asia’s Sector, it was found that although the infrastructure sector, including ports, demonstrates a commitment to women’s empowerment, practical implementation frequently continues to face strong cultural barrier and imbalances in leadership opportunities within the sector. This article supports Walby’s view on the importance if structural transformation in gender mainstreaming policy in ASEAN, particularly within the infrastructure and maritime sectors, which face greater challenges in effectively integrating gender equality. As also articulated in the *Handbook for Gender Equality Rapporteurs*, gender mainstreaming must not remain a mere formality; it must also encompass a deeper understanding of existing structural inequalities and the application of appropriate solutions to address those barriers.

On the other hand, Mary Daly critiques the application of gender mainstreaming, which she argues has become overly technocratic and confined to administrative procedures, such as indicators, reporting, or training, without substantive analysis of structural injustice. Daly asserts that gender mainstreaming strategies must ensure change in power relations and organizational structures, rather than producing merely symbolic equality. The finding in *Another Velvet Revolution? Gender Mainstreaming and the Politics of Implementation* further reinforce this view, demonstrating that many gender policies are adopted solely as symbols of a commitment to modernity, yet remain obstructed by bureaucratic resistance,

political bias, and organizational cultures that sustain institutional masculinity.

In the ASEAN context, this study assesses the implementation of gender equality using the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework (AGMSF), which serves as the regional guideline for applying gender equality across public and strategic sectors. The assessment is conducted through three primary dimensions: (1) Leadership & Capacity Building, which evaluates women's involvement in leadership and capacity development; (2) Policy Integration & Accountability, which assesses policy integration, evaluation mechanisms, and institutional accountability; and (3) Institutional Strengthening, which examines the extent to which port institutions reinforce structures, mechanisms, and support systems to advance gender equality. Through this framework, the study maps the degree to which ports across ASEAN are moving toward substantive equality, rather than mere procedural symbolism.

3. Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach, as the primary objective is to map and describe systematically how ASEAN member states implement gender equality in port management based on the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Framework (AGMSF). A qualitative approach enables the researcher to understand the phenomena, context, and social meanings underlying the institutional practices that shape gender dynamics within the port sector. This is consistent with the explanation in *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif dan Kuantitatif*, which affirms that qualitative research focuses on an in-depth understanding of social context and aims to produce comprehensive descriptions of a given phenomenon. Sugiyono similarly explains that descriptive qualitative research aims to depict conditions, situations, and facts systematically and factually without manipulating variables, and prioritizes the

portrayal of real phenomena as they exist. By adopting this approach, the study is able to identify patterns in the application of gender mainstreaming within the ASEAN port management sector and present them in the form of analytical narratives, supplemented by tables or simple visualizations to illustrate the classification of each country.

Research data were obtained through document analysis of reports from international institutions, official ASEAN publications, government reports from member states, and academic journals relating to gender and the maritime sector. Data analysis was conducted through a process of categorization and interpretation to map the extent to which each country implements the three dimensions of the AGMSF: Leadership & Capacity Building, Policy Integration & Accountability, and Institutional Strengthening.

4. Result and Discussion

Global challenges related to gender equality are clearly reflected in ASEAN's port sector. Although the port industry serves as a key pillar of the regional economy, the implementation of gender mainstreaming within it continues to face significant obstacles, including structural bias, a lack of women in leadership positions, and insufficient institutional accountability. Despite ASEAN's longstanding commitment to gender equality as part of its regional agenda, the reality on the ground suggests that the implementation process does not always proceed smoothly. In *The Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming in ASEAN*, it is explained that gender mainstreaming should not merely exist as a policy document, but must be genuinely integrated across all sectors, including strategic ones such as ports, so that women and men can obtain equal access and benefits. However, this ideal frequently comes into conflict with actual conditions in the fields.

This is further evidenced in *ASEAN Norms and Gender-Responsive Human Security*, which emphasizes that although gender commitment at the regional level are considerably strong, many institutions continue to operate within masculine workplace cultures, with accountability mechanisms that have yet to fully ensure that principles of equality are genuinely applied. As a result, the implementation of gender mainstreaming often stalls at the level of discourse and has not yet translated into the structural changes that are needed.

In the context of ASEAN ports, which have historically been masculine and technically oriented workplaces, the tension between normative commitments and implementation realities becomes increasingly apparent. On one hand, the AGMSF demands the integration of gender considerations into the management of strategic sectors. On the other hand, the transformations of workplace culture, leadership, and organizational structures within ports continue to progress slowly. It is precisely this condition that creates variation in the implementation of gender mainstreaming across ASEAN member states, while simultaneously demonstrating that ports serve as a critical arena for assessing the extent to which gender equality is genuinely practiced rather than merely proclaimed.

Although gender equality has been internationally recognized, numerous challenges continue to obstruct its implementation within the ASEAN port sector. Gender stigma and sexism remain primary barriers, as discussed in *Sex Segregation in the Maritime Industry*. A study conducted by Ståhl and Hermansson (2018) found that despite the maritime sector's considerable potential to offer equal opportunities, women remain underrepresented in practice due to an unsupportive workplace culture, including inequality in access to managerial and technical positions. Furthermore, *Masculinities in Maritime Education and*

Training: An Opportunity to Advance Towards Gender Equality notes that inequality in educational and training opportunities has resulted in very low representation of women in maritime study programs, a condition that directly affects female participation rates in this employment sector.

Conversely, while global efforts to strengthen women's roles in the port sector have been increasing, challenges related to gender equality within the industry remain significant, particularly across ASEAN member states. As an example, studies on gender inequality in the workplace indicate that although Indonesia has regulated women's employment rights through various legislative instruments. Including Law No. 13 of 2003 on Manpower and Law No. 7 of 1984 on the Ratification of CEDAW, workplace inequality remains a tangible reality. Based on global data on women's participation in port operations between 2014 and 2018, the female participation rate reached only 12.10%, which remains far from adequate. Nevertheless, a more encouraging picture emerges at the managerial level, where women's representation reaches 34%. This condition reflects the importance of more effective policies in supporting gender equality, with careful attention to the distinction between operational and managerial sectors within ports.

Figure 1. Evaluation of Gender Equality Criteria Related to Social Sustainability in Ports



Source: Sanri, 2022

In Indonesia, the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the port sector, particularly through the Mutiara Pelindo initiative, demonstrates significant progress, though it continues to face several challenges (Wiradanti et al., 2025). In terms of Leadership & Capacity Building, Mutiara Pelindo has successfully carried out various women's empowerment programs, including leadership training, capacity development, and community engagement, all aimed at increasing women's participation and leadership within the port industry. Nevertheless, these programs tend to place greater emphasis on specific technical skills, and broader leadership development within the port sector still requires further enhancement. Regarding Policy Integration & Accountability, Pelindo has integrated policies supporting work-life balance and gender programs, and inclusive workplace policies. A survey conducted in 2024 indicated that 94% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the implemented policies and programs. However, the application of these policies still needs to be extended to technical and operational positions in order to reach a greater number of women. In terms of Institutional Strengthening, Mutiara Pelindo functions as a gender unit that supports women's empowerment across all levels of the Pelindo organization. It also plays a significant role in introducing more inclusive policies and programs following the post-merger restructuring, with a focus on enhancing women's capacity, welfare support, and engagement in social initiatives. Nonetheless, the primary challenge lies in overcoming deeply rooted cultural barriers within the male-dominated industry, as well as expanding women's representation in operational and technical roles at ports. Mutiara Pelindo has established a solid foundation for women's empowerment in the port sector, yet further efforts are still required to achieve more comprehensive gender equality.

Meanwhile, the implementation of gender mainstreaming in Malaysia's port

sector continues to face considerable challenges, despite significant efforts to promote gender diversity, particularly at the managerial level. Based on research conducted at Malaysian ports, although women constitute nearly 54% of the total workforce, only approximately 15% occupy managerial positions. The majority of women working in ports are concentrated in administrative roles, with limited involvement in technical or operational positions that remain predominantly male-dominated. This reflects an imbalance in Leadership & Capacity Building, where the focus has been placed in developing managerial skills and soft skills, while technical training opportunities for women remain restricted. At the national policy level, commitments such as the target of 30% female representation in decision-making position by 2025 signal a strong dedication to Policy Integration & Accountability, however, the implementation of these policies remains uneven. While significant progress has been observed at major ports such as Port Klang, regional ports continue to struggle in improving women's representation in port management. In terms of Institutional Strengthening, the establishment of organizations such as Women in Maritime Malaysia (MyWIMA) has helped strengthen women's networks within the maritime sector, however, gaps persist in women's representation in higher-level technical positions. Although several ports have established gender units to support women's empowerment, existing policies have not proven sufficient to achieve comprehensive gender equality, particularly within operational roles.

Singapore, on the other hand, has demonstrated significant progress in the implementation of gender mainstreaming within the port sector, particularly in the area of Leadership & Capacity Building. Through initiatives such as *Women in Maritime*, launched by the Singapore Maritime Foundation, the country has

focused on advancing gender diversity by providing leadership training dan mentoring programs for women, as well as encouraging women to assume strategic roles within the maritime sector. However, despite the existence of policies supporting women's empowerment, women's representation at the highest managerial levels remains limited, with only 10% of women occupying leadership positions as of 2020. In terms of Policy Integration & Accountability, *the Maritime Singapore 2030* (MS2030) strategy and the MPA Women in Maritime program seek to integrate gender diversity through scholarships and training initiatives, although their implementation has been more concentrated in the administrative and managerial sectors. Meanwhile, Institutional Strengthening is evident in the establishment of gender units working to reinforce women's roles across all port sector domains. Singapore has also developed policies supporting work-life balance and gender-sensitive facilities, however, one significant challenge persist the underrepresentation of women at the senior leadership level remains a primary obstacle in achieving genuine gender equality.

The Philippines, on the other hand, has demonstrated an initial commitment to gender mainstreaming in the maritime industry, however, significant limitations remain, as efforts are still in the early stages and have yet to be implemented comprehensively (Baldonado et al., 2025). In terms of Leadership & Capacity Building, the Philippines show only partial progress. Maritime Higher Education Institution (MHEIs) have opened their doors to female students, and recommendations have been made for specialized training and orientation programs for women. Nevertheless, these efforts have not yet been supported by systematic female leadership guidelines to develop clear career pathways. Women's capacity has been addressed through seminars, though such programs remain unstructured at the national level. Women's involvement in leadership and

decision-making positions within the industry remains severely limited, reflecting a weak institutional power base. Regarding Policy Integration & Accountability, the Philippines possesses a strong policy foundation at the international level, including the ratification of CEDAW and support for the IMO Women in Development program. However, the integration of these principles into the policies and operations of domestic shipping companies remains minimal. Gender discrimination continues to persist, manifesting, for instance, in the rejection of female crew members by placement agencies and shipowners while clear Standard Operating Procedures (SPOs) to prevent harassment and ensure gender equality accountability in the workplace have yet to established. In terms of Institutional Strengthening, progress is visible in the roles of several government agencies including MARINA, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), which have begun accepting women in shore-based positions. Nonetheless, this institutional development has not been accompanied by the establishment of dedicated gender units within ports or a structured national policy framework to guarantee equitable working environments. The greatest challenges remain the persistence of patriarchal perceptions, the lack of women's representation in decision-making positions, and the absence of a robust policy framework to drive systematic gender transformation across the entire Philippine maritime sector.

In general, Brunei Darussalam has demonstrated substantial progress in Leadership & Capacity Building, as reflected in the high representation of women in executive and managerial leadership positions, with 37% of managerial posts held by women, the highest figure in ASEAN as well as a variety of capacity development programs such as the PREPanitia Forum and the Academy for

Women Entrepreneurs (Ministry of Culture, 2023). Although the National Plan of Action on Women is still in the drafting phase, institutional frameworks such as the Special Committee on Family Institution, Women and Children have been functioning effectively since 2008. In terms of Policy Integration & Accountability, Brunei possesses a comprehensive legal foundation protecting women's rights, including the Employment Order 2009 and the Anti-Trafficking in Person Act 2019, and actively participates in regional commitments such as the ASEAN Declaration on Gender Equality and Family Development. Meanwhile, Institutional Strengthening is underpinned by the central role of the Department of Community Development as the focal point, alongside close collaboration with NGOs such as Project Women Brunei.

However, when attention is directed specifically to the port sectors, findings become considerably limited and indicate the absence of any systematic application of the gender mainstreaming framework. There is no available information regarding leadership programs, maritime training, or female-specific cadetship schemes within ports. Policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) protecting gender safety and equality within port environments are similarly absent from the record, despite the applicability of the general legal framework. Most critically, there is no indication of the existence of a gender unit within ports or within Brunei's maritime authority, nor of any dedicated institution addressing gender issues in the maritime transport and logistics sector. This suggests that the port sector has yet to be prioritized within Brunei's national gender mainstreaming agenda.

Thailand, on the other hand, has built a very strong policy and institutional foundation for gender mainstreaming at the national level, particularly within the framework of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda. The application of all three AGMSF dimensions is

comprehensively evident in the WPS context, marked by the existence of national guidelines, multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms such as the CCCW-SBP and its Sub-committee, and a tangible focus on women's capacity development and leadership. However, when examined specifically within the maritime sector and port management, implementation reveals meaningful progress that nonetheless remains in its early stages and its comparatively more limited in scope.

In terms of Leadership & Capacity Building, the Port Authority of Thailand (PAT) has initiated outreach efforts to educational institutions to promote maritime careers for women, although structured internal leadership and mentorship programs for female employees have not yet been identified. Regarding Policy Integration & Accountability, PAT has adopted gender-sensitive codes of conduct as a form of female guidelines. However, there is no indication of gender-responsive Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for technical port operations, nor of a gender-disaggregated data collection system for accountability purposes. Meanwhile, in terms of Institutional Strengthening, PAT has appointed a gender focal point within its Human Resources department, representing an initial step toward institutional strengthening though the reach and institutional influence of this mechanism have not yet matched the breadth and strength of the WPS coordination structures at the national level, which involve multiple ministries.

In terms of applying the AGMSF within the maritime sector, Vietnam has yet to demonstrate a comprehensive or systematic approach. Available information is highly limited and indicates that gender equality has not become a primary focus within the sector's development agenda. In terms of Leadership & Capacity Building, there are some initial positive indicators. Autonomous technology reports have noted efforts to expand educational access for

women, including the training of 30 female navigation students since 2013 and the issuance of the first female ship officer certifications in 2022-2023. Meanwhile, regarding Policy Integration & Accountability, the situation reflects the existence of a policy foundation that has not yet been fully operationalized. The explicit presence of a Ministry of Transport (MoT) Gender Action Plan represents a strong indicator of a gender policy framework at the ministerial level. However, the most significant gap is evident in the area of Institutional Strengthening, as no institution specifically assigned and managed to drive gender transformation within the maritime sector has been identified.

As for Cambodia, no relevant implementation has been identified whatsoever. Although national policy documents and UNDP strategies broadly outline progress and commitments in gender mainstreaming across various sectors, such as the economy, social, development, and governance, none of them specifically address gender issues in the context of ports, maritime logistics, or sea transportation. No specialized guidelines, gender units, SOPs, or empowerment programs aimed at enhancing women's participation, safety, and leadership within port environments have been identified either (UNDP Cambodia Gender Equality Strategy, 2025; Ven & Pham, 2022).

The implementation of the AGMSF in Myanmar's port sector reveals deeply fundamental and structural challenges, with the likelihood of application across all three dimensions being extremely low to virtually nonexistent. No systematic initiatives comparable to similar programs aimed at promoting women's leadership through structured training and mentoring have been identified. Women's representations in strategic and decision-making positions within the port sector is also estimated to be extremely low. Operational policies and regulations in Myanmar's port sector are likely to be "gender-blind", lacking any

systemic integration of gender impact analysis. Furthermore, no policy framework or national guidelines directing port authorities to build gender-responsive institutional structures have been found. Port authorities similarly lack the mandate, initiatives, or sufficient institutional capacity to mainstream gender as part of their core mission. The barriers at play are estimated to be deeply entrenched, encompassing cultural, political, and structural factors with a masculine and highly hierarchical institutional culture, reinforced by the legacy of military administration, constituting a fundamental obstacle to gender inclusion.

On the other hand, the implementation of the AGMSF in Timor Leste's port sector has not yet been specifically identified. Initiatives do exist, such as the Strategic Framework for Women in Politics (2021-2025) and the "*100 Hau Pronto Lidera*" program, which aim to strengthen women's leadership at the local and national levels. Timor Leste has also adopted various gender-responsive national policies, including the National Action Plan on the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence (NAP-GBV 2022-2025) and the National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (2024-2028) (The Secretary of State for Equality [SEI], 2024). Gender equality institutions in Timor Leste are further supported by the role of the Secretary of State for Equality (SEI) as the national coordinator, as well as Gender Working Groups established across various ministries. Nevertheless, no information specifically directed at women in the port or maritime sector has been identified.

The implementation of the AGMSF in Lao's port management sector remains in its early stages and has yet to demonstrate systemic continuity, particularly when compared to the fisheries sector, which already possesses a clearer policy foundation. Although Laos does have a strong national legal framework related to gender equality, including the ratification of CEDAW and various legislative instruments

such as the Law on Development and Protection of Women (2004) and the Revised Labour Law (2014), none of these have been specifically integrated into port governance and operations. A proposal regarding the establishment of a DLF gender network in the fisheries sector has also been identified. However, no similar initiative has been observed within port authority environments. This indicates that institutional capacity to promote gender integration in the maritime and port sector remains weak and has yet to receive adequate prioritization.

Based on the in depth analysis of the application of the three AGMSF dimensions, Leadership & Capacity Building, Policy Integration & Accountability, and Institutional Strengthening across ASEAN member states, countries can be categorized into three main groups according to their level of gender equality implementation in port management system: High Implementation, Moderate Implementation, and Low Implementation. This classification is determined not only by policy commitment, but also by institutional strength and the sustainability of programs at the operational level. A comparative summary is presented on the table below.

Table 1. Gender Equality Implementation in Port Management System

High Implementation	Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam
Moderate Implementation	Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines
Low Implementation	Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Timor Leste

Source: created by Authors (2025)

Indonesia and Singapore fall within the High Implementation group, as both possess relatively clear and systematic policy, institutional, and programmatic frameworks within the port sector, although room for improvement remains. Brunei Darussalam in

particularly is also categorized within the High Implementation group on the basis of its exceptionally strong national foundation in terms of policy, institutional structures and women's leadership achievements with women occupying 37% of managerial positions. Although implementation within the port sector specifically remains limited and unsystematic, this classification is grounded in the strength of the national framework's capacity, which would enable rapid adoption should be the port sector become a prioritized area.

Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines are categorized within the Moderate Implementation group, as they demonstrate positive initial commitments and efforts, despite being unable to implement them comprehensively with progress remaining fragmented or still in the development stage within the port management sector

Kamboja, Myanmar, Laos, dan Timor Leste, are categorized within the Low Implementation group, as information and application of the three AGMSF dimensions specifically within the port management sector is either entirely absent or extremely minimal.

5. Conclusion

This study identifies the level of gender equality implementation in port management across ASEAN member states through the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework (AGMSF). These findings reveal significant variation in the application of gender equality principles within the port sector among ASEAN countries. Despite strong commitments at the regional level. Many countries continue to face structural barriers, including masculine organizational cultures, a lack of women in leadership positions, and weak accountability mechanisms.

Countries classified within the High Implementation group (Indonesia, Singapore, and Brunei Darussalam) demonstrated substantial progress in gender policy

integration, supported by clear policy and institutional frameworks, though room for improvement remains, particularly within port operational sectors. In contrast, countries in the Moderate Implementation group (Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines) display positive commitments but continue to be hindered by uneven implementation and challenges in strengthening institutional capacity. Countries classified within the Low Implementation group (Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, and Timor Leste) remain in the early stages and exhibit considerable limitations in integrating gender considerations into the policies and operations of the port management sector.

Overall, achieving more substantive gender equality in the ASEAN port sector requires transformation in organizational culture, enhancement of institutional capacity, and a stronger commitment from both government and the private sector to create more inclusive spaces for women within the maritime and port industry. This study provides a structured understanding of the existing gaps and identifies strategic opportunities for building more gender-responsive port governance across the ASEAN region.

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