



The Ratification of CEDAW in Strengthening an Anti-Discrimination Legal Culture Among Open University Students

Pengesahan Cedaw dalam Penguatan Budaya Hukum Anti-Diskriminasi Mahasiswa Universitas Terbuka

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) depends not only on the existence of regulations, but also on the understanding and legal culture of the academic community. This study aims to analyze student understanding, the implementation of CEDAW values, supporting and inhibiting factors, and efforts to strengthen the anti-discrimination legal culture at Universitas Terbuka. The study used a descriptive qualitative approach. Informants consisted of 10 active Universitas Terbuka students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and documentation, then analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model through data condensation, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions. The results showed that all informants understood the objectives of CEDAW, while its implementation was seen through equal access to education, although stereotypes, social bias, and inequality in legal literacy still exist. In conclusion, strengthening the anti-discrimination legal culture requires CEDAW education, continuous socialization, effective reporting mechanisms, optimization of the PPKS Task Force, and student participation.

Keywords: Anti-Discrimination, CEDAW, Legal Culture, Gender Equality, Human Rights.

ABSTRAK

Implementasi Undang-Undang Nomor 7 Tahun 1984 tentang Pengesahan Konvensi Penghapusan Segala Bentuk Diskriminasi terhadap Perempuan (CEDAW) tidak hanya bergantung pada keberadaan peraturan, tetapi juga pada pemahaman dan budaya hukum sivitas akademika. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pemahaman mahasiswa, penerapan nilai-nilai CEDAW, faktor pendukung dan penghambat, serta upaya penguatan budaya hukum anti-diskriminasi di Universitas Terbuka. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Informan terdiri dari 10 mahasiswa aktif Universitas Terbuka yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña melalui tahapan kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa seluruh informan memahami tujuan CEDAW, sementara implementasinya terlihat melalui akses pendidikan yang setara, meskipun stereotip, bias sosial, dan ketimpangan dalam literasi hukum masih ada. Sebagai kesimpulan, penguatan budaya hukum anti-diskriminasi memerlukan pendidikan mengenai CEDAW, sosialisasi berkelanjutan, mekanisme pelaporan yang efektif, optimalisasi Satuan Tugas PPKS, serta partisipasi mahasiswa.

Kata Kunci: Anti-Diskriminasi, CEDAW, Budaya Hukum, Kesetaraan Gender, Hak Asasi Manusia.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) through Law Number 7 of 1984 as a form of the state's commitment to guaranteeing gender equality and eliminating all forms of discrimination against women. This ratification positions CEDAW as one of the foundations in efforts to realize the protection of women's rights and gender equality in Indonesia. However, the existence of regulations does not automatically guarantee the realization of the principle of non-discrimination in community life. The implementation of CEDAW is also related to the formation of a legal culture that encourages society to understand, accept, and apply the principle of equality in everyday life. Ngelo et al. (2025) stated that the implementation of CEDAW in Indonesia still faces obstacles in the form of a patriarchal culture, low public legal awareness, and less than optimal collaboration between institutions in realizing gender equality.

Higher education institutions hold a strategic position in shaping an anti-discrimination legal culture because students are part of a group expected to internalize the values of justice, equality, and human rights. The higher education environment is not only a learning space but also a venue for social interactions that can shape students' understanding and behavior regarding gender equality issues. However, gender-based discrimination practices are still found among students. Iqbal and Harianto (2022) found that students still experience prejudice, inequality, and gender discrimination in their family, work, and friendship environments, indicating that awareness of the principle of equality has not yet fully developed. This situation suggests that strengthening an anti-discrimination legal culture needs to be integrated into students' educational process and academic lives.

This issue becomes increasingly relevant in the context of the Open University, which has students from diverse ages, professions, cultures, and regions. This diversity can be a valuable asset in building an academic environment that respects differences, but at the same time can also lead to differences in understanding and applying the principles of CEDAW. Larasati and Ayu (2020) explain that education on gender equality and human rights is a crucial instrument in building students' legal awareness, thereby preventing discriminatory practices in higher education. Similarly, Kasuma and Irianto (2023) demonstrate that integrating CEDAW principles into legal education can strengthen students' perspectives on gender equality and support the development of a more inclusive academic culture.

Implementation issues are also evident in the gap between the existence of regulations and their application in higher education. Research by Kumala et al. (2025) shows that students generally have a positive view of gender equality, but still find the influence of social stereotypes that influence perceptions and behavior regarding the roles of women and men. On the other hand, Amar et al. (2026) state that gender inequality in Indonesia remains structural due to the influence of cultural norms and legal practices that do not fully support equality. Pratama and Juliandi (2026) also explain that the practice of bullying and various forms of violence in higher education demonstrates the ongoing gap between regulations and their implementation in the academic environment. This condition demonstrates that the existence of regulations needs to be accompanied by strengthening legal awareness, academic culture, and mechanisms that support the implementation of anti-discrimination principles.

In addition to implementation issues, research on Law Number 7 of 1984 in the context of higher education, particularly among Open University students, is still relatively limited. Previous research has focused more on students' legal awareness of gender-based violence, constitutional guarantees of non-discriminatory treatment, gender-based violence in higher education, bullying practices, institutional reform in handling sexual violence, and the challenges of gender equality policies in Indonesia. Uttami, Prihatinah, and Rahmah (2024) emphasized the importance of legal socialization and the academic environment in supporting regulatory implementation, while Setiawan et al. (2023) emphasized the need for synergy between national regulations, higher education policies, and law enforcement mechanisms in protecting victims of gender-based violence. Said et al. (2026) demonstrated that policy effectiveness is also related to institutional commitment, leadership, and organizational culture, while Kartiwi et al. (2026) identified challenges in the form of institutional capacity, inter-agency coordination, and inequality in policy implementation. Research by Abbas and colleagues (2026) also shows that patriarchal culture, gender bias in educational practices, and limited implementation of gender-responsive policies remain obstacles to achieving gender equality. However, studies specifically linking the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of CEDAW with strengthening the anti-discrimination legal culture among Open University students are still scarce.

Based on these problems, this study aims to determine the understanding of Open University students regarding the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), analyze the implementation of CEDAW values in strengthening anti-discrimination legal culture, and identify factors that support and hinder its implementation and efforts that can be made to strengthen anti-discrimination legal culture in the Open University environment. This research is important because strengthening legal culture is not only related to the existence of regulations, but also to the understanding and application of the values of equality, respect for human rights, and rejection of discrimination in academic and social life. The novelty of the research lies in the focus of the study on the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of CEDAW in strengthening anti-discrimination legal culture in Open University students with a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews, thus connecting the implementation of national law, legal culture, and student experiences in the context of open and distance learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Study

Theory of Legal Implementation

Legal implementation is the process of applying legal norms in society to effectively achieve legal objectives. According to Lawrence M. Friedman, the effectiveness of legal implementation is influenced by three components: legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture. Flora, Thuong, and Erawati (2023) explain that legal implementation is optimal when the legal substance is supported by competent officials and a societal legal culture that encourages compliance.

In this study, the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of CEDAW is examined through the understanding and application of gender equality and anti-discrimination values by Open University students. Kasuma

and Irianto (2023) emphasized that the implementation of CEDAW in higher education requires the integration of gender equality principles into legal education to foster students' legal awareness.

Legal Culture Theory

Legal culture is the values, attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors of society toward the law that influence compliance with and the effectiveness of rule implementation. Friedman places legal culture as a crucial element in a legal system because the success of regulation depends not only on the content of the rules but also on their acceptance and implementation by society.

In this study, legal culture is understood as the attitudes and behaviors of Open University students in implementing anti-discrimination values based on CEDAW. An understanding of equality, human rights, and non-discrimination forms the basis for forming an anti-discrimination legal culture in the academic environment.

Human Rights Theory (HAM)

Human rights are fundamental rights inherent to every human being, regardless of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, or social status. One of its core principles is non-discrimination, which underpins CEDAW and its ratification by Indonesia through Law No. 7 of 1984.

Faridha, Suindrayani, and Mewahni (2026) show that the implementation of gender-responsive regulations still faces challenges in the form of structural bias in law enforcement. Therefore, strengthening understanding of human rights and gender equality in higher education is a crucial part of promoting substantive protection of women's rights.

Gender Equality Theory

Gender equality is a condition where women and men enjoy equal opportunities, rights, responsibilities, and treatment in all aspects of life. This principle is one of the foundations of CEDAW, which aims to eliminate discrimination against women through policy, education, and legal reform.

Kasuma and Irianto (2023) explain that universities play a role in internalizing CEDAW principles through curriculum, research, and academic activities. Therefore, implementing gender equality depends not only on regulations but also on legal awareness and an inclusive academic culture.

Based on these four theories, this study uses the theory of legal implementation, Lawrence M. Friedman's theory of legal culture, human rights theory, and gender equality theory to analyze the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of CEDAW in strengthening the anti-discrimination legal culture of Open University students. These four theories explain the relationship between regulations, legal understanding, awareness, and student behavior in creating an academic environment free from discrimination.

Review of Legislation

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an international convention adopted by the United Nations General

Assembly (UN) through Resolution 34/180 on December 18, 1979 and entered into force on September 3, 1981. This convention is known as the International Bill of Rights for Women because it is an international legal instrument that specifically regulates the protection of women's rights and the elimination of all forms of gender-based discrimination. The main objective of CEDAW is to guarantee equal rights between women and men in the political, economic, social, cultural, educational, and legal fields through concrete policies and actions from participating countries (United Nations, 1979).

According to Article 1 of CEDAW, discrimination against women is defined as any distinction, exclusion, or restriction based on sex that has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, exercise, or enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women. Therefore, countries that have ratified CEDAW are obliged to take legislative, administrative, and public policy measures to eliminate discrimination in all aspects of life.

In its implementation in Indonesia, CEDAW serves as a normative foundation for the development of various policies that support gender equality and protect women's rights. Kasuma and Irianto (2023) explain that CEDAW implementation is not limited to the creation of regulations but must also be integrated into the education system, particularly legal education, to foster a gender equality perspective from the academic level. Therefore, universities have a strategic role in instilling CEDAW values in students as future leaders (Kasuma & Irianto, 2023).

Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of CEDAW

Indonesia ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) through Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. This ratification demonstrates the Indonesian government's commitment to guaranteeing respect, protection, and fulfillment of women's rights as part of human rights.

Through Law No. 7 of 1984, Indonesia is obligated to align various national policies with the principles of CEDAW. This commitment is realized through the development of regulations that support gender equality, eliminate discrimination, increase access to education, protect female workers, and promote women's participation in political and social life.

Ngelo et al. (2025) stated that although Indonesia has ratified CEDAW for more than four decades, its implementation still faces various challenges, including a patriarchal culture, low public legal literacy, and suboptimal inter-agency coordination in implementing gender equality principles. Therefore, strengthening public legal culture is a crucial factor in increasing the effectiveness of Law Number 7 of 1984.

Supporting Legislation

The implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 is supported by various national laws and regulations that have the same objective, namely to guarantee respect for human rights and prevent all forms of discrimination.

a. The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia

Article 27 paragraph (1) emphasizes that every citizen has equal standing before the law and government. In addition, Article 28D paragraph (1) guarantees equal

- treatment before the law, while Article 28I paragraph (2) emphasizes that every person has the right to be free from discriminatory treatment on any basis.
- b. Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights
This law stipulates that every citizen has equal rights regardless of gender, religion, ethnicity, race, or other background. The principle of non-discrimination stipulated in this law strengthens the implementation of CEDAW in the national legal system.
 - c. Law Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education
This law affirms that higher education is organized based on the principles of justice, equality, respect for human rights, and non-discrimination. Universities have a responsibility to create an academic environment that is safe, inclusive, and respectful of diversity.
 - d. Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 30 of 2021
Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation No. 30 of 2021 concerning the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence in Higher Education is one way to implement the values of CEDAW in higher education. This regulation outlines mechanisms for prevention, handling, and protection of victims, as well as the establishment of a task force to create a safe, inclusive campus environment free from discrimination and gender-based violence.
Faridha et al. (2026) stated that the existence of gender-responsive national regulations is a crucial step in strengthening the protection of women's rights. However, the effectiveness of these regulations depends heavily on implementation at the institutional level, increased public legal awareness, and the commitment of all stakeholders to achieving gender equality.

The Relevance of Law Number 7 of 1984 to Open University Students

Students, as part of the academic community, play a crucial role in fostering a legal culture that respects human rights and rejects all forms of discrimination. Universitas Terbuka, with its diverse student body from diverse social, cultural, age, professional, and regional backgrounds, provides a strategic platform for implementing CEDAW values through learning, student activities, and social interactions.

The implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 within the Open University environment is not only measured by students' understanding of the regulations, but also by how the values of equality, respect for differences, and anti-discrimination are realized in daily academic life. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 as a basis for strengthening an anti-discrimination legal culture among Open University students through a qualitative approach.

Implementation of CEDAW in Higher Education Environment Implementation of CEDAW Principles in Higher Education

Higher education institutions are strategic institutions in implementing the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) through education, research, community service, and academic policies and culture that uphold equality and human rights. Larasati and Ayu (2020) state that education on gender equality and human rights is important in building students' legal awareness to prevent discrimination. Implementation of CEDAW can also be achieved through the integration of equality values into the curriculum, student

activities, and institutional governance so that students are able to apply the principle of non-discrimination in their academic and social lives.

Anti-Discrimination Culture Among Students

An anti-discrimination culture encompasses attitudes, values, and behaviors that respect equal rights regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, race, or social background. In higher education, this culture is crucial for creating an inclusive academic environment. Kumala et al. (2025) showed that students have positive views on gender equality, but social stereotypes still influence perceptions and behaviors regarding the roles of women and men. Therefore, equality education, dialogue, respect for differences, and equal participation are necessary to strengthen an anti-discrimination culture and student legal awareness.

The Role of Students as Agents of Change

Students hold a strategic position as agents of change, social control, and future leaders in promoting a just and discrimination-free society. This role can be realized through academic activities, student organizations, and education on gender equality and human rights. Hadisiswati et al. (2025) explain that legal education can increase students' legal awareness and encourage them to become pioneers in preventing and addressing gender-based violence in higher education. Understanding the principles of equality and non-discrimination is expected to encourage students to apply the values of CEDAW in their daily lives.

Challenges in Implementing an Anti-Discrimination Legal Culture

The implementation of an anti-discrimination legal culture still faces challenges in the form of patriarchal culture, gender stereotypes, and low legal literacy regarding women's rights and equality. Amar et al. (2026) stated that gender inequality in Indonesia is still influenced by cultural norms and legal practices that do not fully support equality. Furthermore, Pratama and Juliandi (2026) demonstrated a gap between regulations and their implementation through the continued occurrence of bullying and violence in higher education. Said et al. (2026) emphasized that institutional strengthening requires the commitment of the entire academic community to implementing equality, respect for human rights, and protection of vulnerable groups. Therefore, consistent policy implementation is necessary to support the creation of an inclusive, safe, and discrimination-free academic environment.

Previous Research

Research on the implementation of gender equality, legal culture, and anti-discrimination in higher education has been extensively conducted in recent years. However, research specifically examining the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of CEDAW in strengthening the legal culture of anti-discrimination among Open University students is still very limited. Therefore, previous research needs to be reviewed to understand research developments and identify research gaps.

1. The first study was conducted by Uttami, Prihatinah, and Rahmah (2024) on students' legal awareness of the prohibition on online gender-based violence. The results showed that students' legal awareness was high, but the effectiveness of regulatory implementation was significantly influenced by legal socialization and a

supportive academic environment. This study confirmed that improving legal literacy is a crucial factor in preventing gender-based discrimination and violence in higher education.

2. The second study, conducted by Manitra and Prabandari (2024), examined constitutional guarantees of non-discriminatory treatment in Indonesia. This study concluded that although the constitution provides strong protection for the principle of equality before the law, its implementation still requires strengthening through institutional policies and legal education to effectively implement anti-discrimination values in society.
3. The third study, conducted by Setiawan et al. (2023), examined gender-based violence in higher education. The results showed that victim protection requires synergy between national regulations, higher education policies, and effective law enforcement mechanisms. This study also emphasized the importance of implementing international instruments, including CEDAW, as a basis for developing protection policies in academic environments.
4. The fourth study, conducted by Pratama and Juliandi (2026), examined bullying practices in higher education from a human rights perspective. The study found that bullying still occurs in various forms, including verbal, psychological, physical, and digital. This situation indicates a gap between existing regulations and their implementation in higher education, necessitating the strengthening of legal culture and student protection mechanisms.
5. The fifth study, conducted by Said et al. (2026), examined constitutional and institutional reforms in addressing sexual violence in Indonesian universities. The results showed that policy effectiveness is determined not only by the existence of regulations, but also by institutional commitment, leadership, and an organizational culture that supports victim protection.
6. The sixth study, conducted by Kartiwi et al. (2026), examined the challenges of public policy in realizing gender equality in Indonesia. The study concluded that although Indonesia has ratified CEDAW and implemented various gender mainstreaming policies, their implementation still faces challenges in the form of institutional capacity, inter-agency coordination, and disparities in implementation across sectors.
7. The seventh study, conducted by Abbas and colleagues (2026), involved a systematic review of gender equality in education in Indonesia. The results showed that the main obstacles to implementing gender equality policies stem from patriarchal culture, gender bias in educational practices, and the limited implementation of gender-responsive policies in educational institutions.
8. The eighth study, conducted by Larasati and Ayu (2020), concerns gender equality and human rights education in Indonesia. This study explains that education plays a strategic role in building awareness of gender equality, respect for human rights, and preventing discrimination through inclusive learning processes.
9. The ninth study, conducted by Kasuma and Irianto (2023), examined the integration of CEDAW into the curriculum of law schools in Indonesia. The study found that integrating CEDAW principles into the legal education curriculum strengthened students' perspectives on gender equality and supported the development of a more inclusive academic culture.
10. The tenth study, conducted by Ngelo et al. (2025), examined the effectiveness of the implementation of the international CEDAW regime in Indonesia. The study

concluded that CEDAW implementation still faces various challenges, such as patriarchal culture, low legal literacy, and suboptimal inter-agency coordination. Therefore, strengthening legal culture through education and increasing public awareness is necessary to optimally achieve CEDAW's objectives.

Based on the ten previous studies, it can be concluded that previous research has focused more on legal awareness, gender equality, gender-based violence, protection of women's rights, and the implementation of anti-discrimination policies in higher education. However, no research has been found that specifically examines the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of CEDAW in strengthening the anti-discrimination legal culture among Open University students using a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews with students. This gap is novel in this research, as it connects the implementation of national law, legal culture, and student experiences in the context of open and distance learning.

Framework of thinking

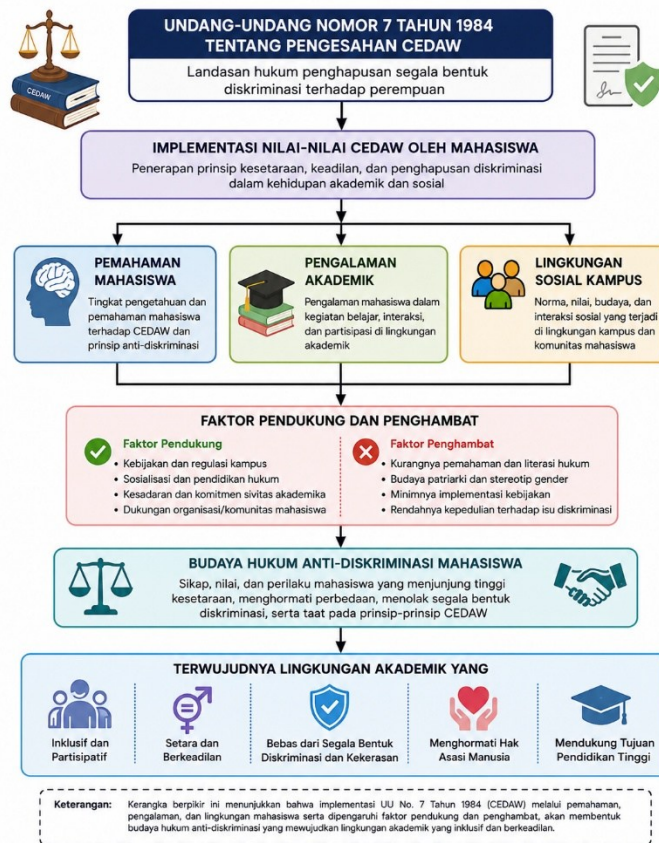
The implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) demonstrates Indonesia's commitment to ensuring gender equality and eliminating all forms of discrimination against women. However, the success of a regulation's implementation is determined not only by the existence of legal norms, but also by the level of understanding, awareness, and legal culture of the community that is the subject of the law. In the context of higher education, students have a strategic role as agents of change who are expected to internalize the values of equality, justice, and respect for human rights in academic and social life. Various studies emphasize that the implementation of CEDAW needs to be supported by the formation of a legal and educational culture that encourages behavioral change, not just formal compliance with regulations.

This research is based on the assumption that students' understanding of the substance of Law Number 7 of 1984 and the principles of CEDAW will influence the implementation of anti-discrimination values in everyday life. This understanding then shapes a legal culture reflected in mutual respect, appreciation for diversity, rejection of discrimination, and adherence to the principle of equality. Conversely, poor legal understanding has the potential to give rise to discriminatory attitudes that hinder the creation of an inclusive academic environment.

In this study, the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 is positioned as a normative foundation influencing the formation of an anti-discrimination legal culture among Open University students. This process is influenced by several aspects, namely students' understanding of CEDAW, experiences in academic life, the campus social environment, and supporting and inhibiting factors for implementation. Furthermore, the formed anti-discrimination legal culture is expected to create an academic environment that upholds equality, justice, respect for human rights, and is free from all forms of discrimination.

Based on this description, the framework for thinking in this research can be described as follows.

Figure 1. Thinking Framework



RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive approach to understand the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in strengthening the anti-discrimination legal culture of Open University students. This approach is used to gain an understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and views of informants through direct interaction. Fadli (2021) explains that qualitative research examines phenomena holistically in natural settings with the researcher as the primary instrument. Meanwhile, Hall and Liebenberg (2024) and Villamin et al. (2025) explain that qualitative descriptive research is appropriate for describing participants' experiences and perspectives contextually through in-depth interviews.

The researcher served as the primary instrument, supported by semi-structured interview guidelines, field notes, a recording device, a mobile phone or laptop, and relevant documents. Primary data was obtained through interviews, while secondary data came from literature studies and documentation. Neupane et al. (2026) explained that semi-structured interviews yield in-depth and flexible information, while Kalsum et al. (2026) stated that documentation can strengthen interview results through triangulation. Data analysis used the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, which includes data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data were analyzed based on the themes of understanding CEDAW, anti-discrimination values, supporting and inhibiting factors, and efforts to strengthen legal culture. Saldaña (2020) explained that data presentation helps build interpretations and find relationships between themes.

The research was conducted at Universitas Terbuka with 10 active students as informants selected using purposive sampling. Informant criteria included active students, at least in their third semester, possessing information on gender equality, human rights, or anti-discrimination, and being willing to participate in interviews. Ahmad and Wilkins (2025) explained that purposive sampling allows for the selection of informants based on their experience and relevance to the research phenomenon. Merkebu et al. (2026) emphasized the principle of information-rich cases, while Nyimbili and Nyimbili (2024) stated that the success of purposive sampling is determined by the accuracy of the informant criteria, not the sample size.

The research procedure includes preparation, data collection, data analysis, data validity checks, and compilation of results. Preparation was carried out by determining the focus, developing interview guidelines, and selecting informants. Data collection was conducted through interviews with 10 students and documentation studies, accompanied by field notes, recordings, and transcriptions. The data were then analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model. Data validity was checked through source triangulation, technical triangulation, and member checking. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing information between informants, while technical triangulation compared interview results and documentation. Member checking was used to ensure the consistency of information and interpretations with informant statements. Morgan (2024) explains that triangulation can increase the trustworthiness of qualitative research, while Lloyd et al. (2024) discuss the application of member checking in qualitative research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Research Informants

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Informants

Informant Code	Informant Name	Student ID Number	Study program	Faculty/Field of Science
I1	Muhammad Akbar Dzhafrin	051327928	Legal studies	Faculty of Social and Political Sciences
I2	Adisty Wulandari	055074487	Information Systems	FST
I3	Al-Fadel Arman Rizzy	048977848	Legal studies	Faculty of Social and Political Sciences
I4	Nabila Azzahra Putri	058353725	Accountancy	FEB
I5	Erwin Immanuel	055796989	Communication Studies	Faculty of Social and Political Sciences
I6	Fitri Amelia	051094567	Business Management	FEB
I7	Muhammad Khalil Gibran	051692946	Management	FEB
I8	Rif'at Abi Ishaq	052829985	Taxation	FEB
I9	Shalva Nur Fauziah	052033476	Educational Technology	Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
I10	Yafi Nadhofa Sundawa	052721534	Legal studies	Faculty of Social and Political Sciences

Based on these characteristics, the informants consisted of students from various study programs, semesters, and genders, enabling them to provide diverse perspectives on the implementation of CEDAW principles within the Open University environment. This diversity of academic backgrounds is one of the strengths of this study, as it allows researchers to obtain a more comprehensive picture of students' understanding of gender equality, anti-discrimination legal culture, and their experiences in academic life.

Research result

Open University Students' Understanding of the Implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

The research findings indicate that all informants are aware of Law Number 7 of 1984 as a form of ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), although the depth of their understanding varies based on academic background. Law students understand the substance of CEDAW more comprehensively, while students from other study programs better understand the objectives of CEDAW in guaranteeing equal rights and preventing discrimination against women.

Muhammad Akbar Dzhaifirin stated, "This law is a ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In substance, this law is a national legal instrument that requires the state to guarantee substantive equality between women and men in all areas of life" (Informant I1). Al-Fadel Arman Rizzy emphasized, "Law Number 7 of 1984 is a legal instrument that ratifies the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. This is not just a regulation, but our country's commitment to ensuring women have equal rights in all areas" (Informant I3). Adisty Wulandari also said, "Through this law, the state is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and guaranteeing equal rights in education, employment, politics, and social life" (Informant I2).

These results indicate that students understand the primary objective of Law Number 7 of 1984 as an instrument to ensure gender equality and protect women. This finding aligns with Kasuma and Irianto (2023) who stated that implementing CEDAW in higher education requires more than just regulations, but also the integration of gender equality values into legal education. Larasati and Ayu (2020) also emphasized the importance of gender equality and human rights education in fostering students' awareness of anti-discrimination values.

However, the differences in understanding indicate that legal literacy regarding CEDAW is not yet evenly distributed. This condition aligns with Ngelo et al. (2025) who identified low legal awareness, the influence of patriarchal culture, and the need for ongoing legal education as challenges to CEDAW implementation. Based on Lawrence M. Friedman's Legal System Theory, these findings indicate the beginning of the formation of legal culture elements through students' understanding of equality, human rights, and the rejection of discrimination. However, strengthening the legal substance through legal education, CEDAW socialization, and increasing legal literacy is still necessary so that the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 can be supported by a sustainable anti-discrimination legal culture.

Implementation of CEDAW Values in Strengthening Anti-Discrimination Legal Culture Among Open University Students

The second objective of this study is to analyze the implementation of the values of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in strengthening the anti-discrimination legal culture of Open University students. Based on interviews with ten informants, all informants assessed that the value of equality has been implemented through the Open and Distance Higher Education (PTTJJ) system which provides learning opportunities without differentiating age, gender, occupation, domicile, economic conditions, or social background.

Muhammad Akbar Dzhaifirin stated, "The implementation of equality values at the Open University is fundamentally excellent. The flexibility of the distance learning system facilitates democratic and inclusive access to higher education for anyone regardless of age, employment status, geographic location, or gender background." (Informant I1). Rif'at Abi Ishaq added, "UT implements an open and distance learning system that provides opportunities for anyone to study without restrictions on age, graduation year, economic background, geographic region, or physical condition. All students receive equal material modules, access to the LMS, and the right to evaluate grades equally and transparently." (Informant I8). Yafi Nadhofa Sundawa also stated, "UT's open and distance learning concept eliminates many discriminatory barriers. All students have equal access to course materials, the same rights to participate in Online Tutorials, and objective assessments." (Informant I10).

In addition to equal access to education, most informants have never experienced direct discrimination. However, some informants still found stereotypes and implicit bias in students' social interactions. Adisty Wulandari mentioned stereotypes based on age and occupation, while Shalva Nur Fauziah found jokes containing gender stereotypes. Al-Fadel Arman Rizzy also stated that stereotypes appear more in social perceptions and tutorial forums than in institutional policies. These findings indicate that the implementation of CEDAW values has been seen at the education system level, but in social interactions, forms of bias still exist that have the potential to hinder the strengthening of an anti-discrimination culture.

These findings align with Kasuma and Irianto (2023), who emphasized the importance of internalizing gender equality values within academic culture. Kumala et al. (2025) also showed that students' views on gender equality tend to be positive, but social stereotypes still influence interactions between students. Meanwhile, Hadisiswati et al. (2025) emphasized the role of students as agents of change in building a safe, inclusive, and discrimination-free campus environment.

Based on Lawrence M. Friedman's Legal Culture Theory, the implementation of CEDAW values at the Open University demonstrates positive developments through an open, objective, and inclusive education system. However, legal culture is also influenced by the attitudes, values, and behaviors of the legal community. The persistence of stereotypes and social biases indicates the need for continuous strengthening of education, outreach, and development. Thus, while CEDAW values have been implemented through the provision of equal educational opportunities, strengthening an anti-discrimination legal culture remains necessary at the level of student interaction and behavior.

Factors that Support and Hinder the Implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 in Building an Anti-Discrimination Legal Culture in the Open University Environment

The third objective of this study is to identify supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in building an anti-discrimination legal culture at the Open University. Based on interviews with ten informants, the implementation of CEDAW is influenced by institutional aspects, the education system, academic culture, and student characteristics.

Key supporting factors include an open and distance learning system that provides equal learning opportunities, the existence of national regulations and internal university policies, the use of digital technology, and increased student awareness of human rights. Muhammad Akbar Dzhaifirin stated, "The supporting factors are a flexible and inclusive system that naturally opens up space for vulnerable groups who have difficulty accessing conventional campuses. In addition, there is a national legal umbrella, the PPKS Task Force, and digital infrastructure that facilitates the dissemination of information and complaint mechanisms." (Informant I1). Rif'at Abi Ishaq added, "The use of digital technology (LMS and SIA UT) as the main learning basis reduces subjective bias or discriminatory face-to-face interactions. Furthermore, the existence of inclusive policies from the central government and regulations regarding the prevention of sexual violence also strengthen this legal culture." (Informant I8). Erwin Immanuel also emphasized the importance of a national legal basis, institutional commitment, and increased student awareness of human rights and equality (Informant I5).

On the other hand, inhibiting factors found include low legal literacy regarding CEDAW, minimal socialization, the influence of patriarchal culture, gender stereotypes, and the unequal understanding of indirect discrimination. Al-Fadel Arman Rizzy stated, "The main obstacle is the lack of socialization and training. Many students or tutors may not know the specific contents of the CEDAW Law or how to report if they feel discriminated against. Another obstacle is the patriarchal culture that is still strong in society." (Informant I3). Muhammad Khalil Gibran also mentioned low legal literacy and the less than optimal socialization of discrimination prevention mechanisms (Informant I7), while Shalva Nur Fauziah highlighted the low understanding of indirect forms of discrimination (Informant I9).

These findings indicate that the existence of inclusive regulations and education systems does not fully guarantee the formation of an anti-discrimination legal culture. These findings align with Ngelo et al. (2025), who identified patriarchal culture and low legal awareness as challenges to CEDAW implementation. Kartiwi et al. (2026) emphasized the importance of institutional capacity, coordination, and policy consistency, while Abbas et al. (2026) found that patriarchal culture, gender bias, and limited implementation of gender-responsive policies remain obstacles.

Based on Lawrence M. Friedman's Legal System Theory, Law Number 7 of 1984 and supporting regulations constitute the legal substance, the commitment of Universitas Terbuka, the PPKS Task Force, and service mechanisms constitute the legal structure, while legal awareness, gender stereotypes, patriarchal culture, and respect for diversity constitute the legal culture. The findings indicate that legal culture remains an aspect that needs to be strengthened. Therefore, education, outreach, training, and

increased legal literacy are needed to support the sustainable implementation of CEDAW at Universitas Terbuka.

Efforts to Strengthen Anti-Discrimination Legal Culture Among Open University Students Based on the Implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984

The fourth objective of this study is to formulate efforts to strengthen the anti-discrimination legal culture among students of the Open University based on the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Based on interviews with ten informants, this strengthening requires synergy between students, the university, and the entire academic community through increasing legal literacy, ongoing socialization, effective reporting mechanisms, and strengthening institutional policies.

Many informants suggested integrating CEDAW, gender equality, human rights, and anti-discrimination education from the beginning of the course. Muhammad Akbar Dzhaifirin stated, "Inserting material on gender equality, human rights, and anti-discrimination values into the Student Learning Success Support Service (LPKBM/OSMB) and in general course modules." (Informant I1). Al-Fadel Arman Rizzy suggested, "UT should explicitly include material on CEDAW and gender equality in general compulsory courses so that all students understand from the beginning of the semester." (Informant I3). Yafi Nadhofa Sundawa also proposed education on gender equality and anti-discrimination in OSMB activities so that legal awareness is formed from the beginning of the course (Informant I10).

In addition to legal education, informants emphasized the importance of a secure, accessible, and transparent reporting mechanism and the optimization of the PPKS Task Force. Erwin Immanuel stated, "Campuses need to strengthen reporting and handling mechanisms for discrimination cases that are easily accessible, transparent, and provide protection for reporters." (Informant I5). Fitri Amelia also emphasized the need for a secure and transparent complaint mechanism (Informant I6), while Rif'at Abi Ishaq proposed strengthening a secure and confidential reporting system and optimizing the PPKS Task Force in each Regional UT (Informant I8).

Students are also seen as agents of change in building an inclusive academic culture. Muhammad Khalil Gibran stated that students need to build a culture of mutual respect, prioritize inclusive dialogue, and be role models in valuing diversity (Informant I7). Shalva Nur Fauziah added that students need to develop tolerance and actively participate in programs that support an inclusive campus environment (Informant I9).

These findings indicate that strengthening an anti-discrimination legal culture is not sufficient through regulation, but requires ongoing education, institutional commitment, and academic community participation. These findings align with those of Hadisiswati et al. (2025) regarding the role of legal education in shaping students as agents of change, Pratama and Juliandi (2026) regarding the importance of education and reporting mechanisms in preventing discrimination and bullying, and Said et al. (2026) regarding the importance of institutional reform and academic community participation.

Based on Lawrence M. Friedman's Legal System Theory, strengthening the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 requires a balance between legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture. Regulations constitute the legal substance, while campus institutions, the PPKS Task Force, and reporting mechanisms constitute the

legal structure. Meanwhile, legal literacy, gender equality education, respect for diversity, and student participation are part of the legal culture. Thus, strengthening the anti-discrimination legal culture at the Open University can be achieved through the integration of CEDAW material in orientation and learning, socialization of equality and human rights, strengthening reporting mechanisms, optimizing the PPKS Task Force, and enhancing the role of students as agents of change.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the implementation of Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) at the Open University has been reflected in students' understanding of gender equality, respect for human rights, and rejection of discrimination. All informants understood the objectives of CEDAW, although the depth of their understanding varied based on their academic background. The implementation of CEDAW values is primarily seen through the Open and Distance Higher Education system that provides equal access to education. However, gender stereotypes, social bias, and differences in legal literacy regarding CEDAW are still found. Supporting factors include an inclusive education system, regulations, institutional commitment, digital technology, and increased student awareness, while obstacles include low legal literacy, minimal socialization, patriarchal culture, gender stereotypes, and unequal understanding of indirect discrimination. Identified strengthening efforts include the integration of CEDAW materials in orientation and learning, ongoing socialization, strengthening reporting mechanisms, optimizing the PPKS Task Force, and increasing the role of students as agents of change.

This study has limitations because it used a qualitative approach with ten informants from one university. Therefore, the findings describe the experiences and perceptions of informants in the context of the Open University and are not intended to be statistically generalized. Future research could expand the number of informants from various universities, involve the perspectives of lecturers and institutional administrators, and use a quantitative or mixed methods approach to obtain a broader picture of the anti-discrimination legal culture. Practically, the research results can be used by the Open University to strengthen CEDAW literacy through orientation and learning, increase the socialization of gender equality and human rights, provide a safe and accessible reporting mechanism, and strengthen the role of the PPKS Task Force and student participation in building an inclusive academic environment.

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