



The Level of Teachers' Awareness in the Implementation of Gender and Development (GAD) Laws

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Abstract

The emergence of gender-related issues and concerns in the workplace paved the way to explore how Gender and Development-related laws were implemented. This study focused on assessing the levels of Implementation of Gender and Development-related laws and teachers' awareness. A descriptive-correlational method of research was used with 67 teacher-respondents in Southern Palawan, the Philippines selected through simple random sampling. Findings showed that teachers are moderately aware of the GAD-related laws having a composite mean of 4.06. More so, teachers perceived that these laws are moderately implemented, with a composite mean of 3.81. Furthermore, the implementation of gender and development-related laws and the teachers' level of awareness was found to be significantly correlated.

Keywords: Awareness, gender and development, LGBTQ+, Sexuality, teachers

Introduction

Discrimination based on sex and gender is common in today's world. Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender sensitivity is the degree to which a person is aware of their assigned sex as time passes. Gender prejudice has been discovered in a wide range of situations. On the other hand, the campaign against gender discrimination is continuous and has no exclusions; we all deserve to feel welcomed and comfortable. To achieve gender-sensitive and gender equality, everyone has a role to play in ensuring that people are free from violence and prejudice. The most common causes of injustice in human connections are sex and gender. For years, women and LGBTQ+ people have been fighting for equality. As a result, there has been a continuous conversation within and beyond the workplace to address gender disparity and sensitivity.

Sex and gender have been used interchangeably for a long time, but their meanings are becoming increasingly diverse, and it's important to understand the differences. Sex refers to a person's physical attributes, whether male or female (World Health Organization [WHO], 2006) ^[1]. Meanwhile, gender is characterized as a social construct, meaning that it is a manner of categorizing qualities, interests, and behaviors as "masculine" or "feminine" based on people's creation, belief, and reinforcement of these divisions (Anderson, 2016) ^[2].

Despite progress toward justice and equality in some regions and countries, patriarchal culture continues to cause injustice, discrimination, oppression, and violence around the world. To achieve gender equality, "health disparities," "gender-based violence," "lack of representation in leadership," and "wage gap" are said to be major areas of concern. It is noted that women were suffering from reproductive health-related concerns due to a lack of access to adequate services prior to the COVID19 pandemic. Because a huge number of women work in the health sector, their risk of getting diseases has increased dramatically because of the current health issues. Gender-based violence increased because of the pandemic, affecting particularly vulnerable women. Despite workplace liberalization, the proportion of women in top managerial positions remains low, resulting in underrepresentation, particularly in policymaking and decision-making. Finally, women's salaries continue to be a major concern. Because most members of higher management are men, the wage disparity between men and women in an organization remains significant (Bish, 2021) ^[3].

Gender-related issues in the Philippines, such as equal political participation, academic and political advancement, domestic violence, and even sexualization of women, are an ongoing pursuit as only a few legislations are tackling and resolving such. In the education sector, male and female students and teachers are subjected to disparate treatment. The unequal power relations between men and women are vital factors depending on their sex and gender. Sexual harassment and assault primarily targeted females, and incidents have been documented in both high and low resource settings in elementary and secondary schools and colleges. The capacity of a female is frequently underestimated in various areas, particularly physical labor, and this has a disproportionate impact on women. On the other hand, we can see that LGBT teachers and students felt unwelcome due to the biases they encountered. There are many people that discriminate against the LGBT community. This type of judgment can create a chasm in people's minds and harm human relationships. The LGBT community faces a higher rate of abuse, neglect, and discrimination than straight citizens. Gender-sensitive and gender-friendly education is essential in our educational system. Promoting gender awareness at all levels is one of the most effective strategies to reduce gender discrimination in society, and it will also assist students and teachers in better understanding their own attitudes. Male and female instructors must be socialized in a way that fosters human relationships while also giving equal opportunity for all. Because schools as teachers' workplaces are microcosms of society, reflecting both their strengths and flaws, the natural socialization patterns of workers frequently lead to erroneous notions of gender roles. Schools play a critical role in instilling gender awareness in teachers' etiquette and manners. More importantly, a gender-responsive workplace is required. The academic, social, and physical environment and the surrounding community consider the unique requirements of all teachers. Schools oversee dealing with school-related violence as well as offering comprehensive health education. Administrators, too, must adhere to professional norms on proper disciplinary methods, give unbiased rules and regulations, and operate in a non-violent and inclusive manner (WHO, 2012; United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organizations [UNESCO], 2017) ^[4] ^[5].

With this timely issue in society and schools, the researcher finds a reason to assess the level of implementation and teachers' awareness of the Gender and Development (GAD) program in schools in Palawan, Philippines.

Statement of the Problem

This study was conducted to effectively assess the Gender and Development levels of Implementation and teacher's awareness. Answers to the following specific questions were sought.

1. What is the awareness level of Senior High School teachers in Southern Palawan, Philippines toward the Gender, and Development (GAD) laws?
2. What is the implementation level of Gender and Development (GAD) laws in schools in Southern Palawan, Philippines?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' level of awareness toward the Gender and Development (GAD) laws and its implementation level?

Related Literature and Studies

In most instances, the distinctions between sex and gender are often unrecognized but are defined diversely, hence, there is a need to critically look at their meanings and differences (Newman, 2021) ^[6]. Although justice and equality on gender and race are progressively developing in most nations, the lingering effects of the previous prejudices, discrimination, harassment, and disparity continuously restrain the effective implementation of programs promoting justice and equality (Hazel, & Kleyman, 2020) ^[7].

It is noted that women have higher satisfaction or happiness levels than men. Moreover, a substantial difference in terms of connections between factors such as marriage and happiness when differing gender rights are taken into account (Graham, & Chattopadhyay, 2012) ^[8].

Women's perceptions of gender equality do not always correspond to worldwide gender disparity indexes. Although attitudes toward gender issues may have begun to unite in recent years, they did not reflect the same underlying concept as in index-equal cultures. These findings underscore an enduring conflict between universal gender equality requirements and a focus on subjective interpretations of women's interests (Kurzman *et al.*, 2019) ^[9].

Although generally, women are happier than men, the happiness gap may vary among males and females at the country level. It was found that females would be happier than they do now if they possess objective individual traits as males do. On the other hand, females have a far greater positive response to individual happiness factors than males. These findings hold true across all geographic locations and income categories. Furthermore, a link between the observable and unobservable elements of unhappiness with life expectancy and literacy rates among females has been discovered (Arrosa, & Gandelman, 2016) ^[10].

Gender disparities were prominent in the early teacher education curriculum. These have survived and are evident in today's curricular structures, but the phrasing may have changed over time. Other key findings included the need for gender-related actions to address gender issues and address gender hierarchies, as lecturers and teacher education administration regarded as necessary for implementing a gender-sensitive curriculum in teacher education colleges (Lumadi, & Shongwe, 2010) ^[11].

Schools have a crucial role in the socialization of gender views and behavior in young children. Teachers and classmates shape gender attitudes and, as a result, gender disparities in cognition and behavior. Unfortunately, teachers have insufficient training in detecting and overcoming gender stereotypes and prejudices, both their own and others. As a result, they frequently model, expect, reinforce, and build the groundwork for gender distinction among their students (Bigler, Hayes, & Hamilton, 2013) ^[12].

Teachers who participated in gender equality professional development training sessions were found to be more likely to engage in gender-equitable teaching practices than those who did not. Teachers gave more equitable assistance to their classroom students after being presented with gender equality interventions (Luongo, 2012) ^[13].

To maximize the benefits of peer socialization, parents, service providers, and policymakers should assist young children in structuring and organizing their peer relationships (Hanish, & Fabes, 2014) ^[14]. Youngsters require help understanding gender differences and becoming comfortable

around other children of other genders.

Early pregnancy is one of the biggest impediments to gender development in underdeveloped nations. It prevents further education, physical growth, and decision-making power, resulting in more significant discrepancies between men and women. Another aspect that legitimizes inequality is the interpretation of religious beliefs; schools must comprehend this meaning and create ways to execute gender development programs in neutral environments (Correa-Fernandes *et al.*, 2015) ^[15].

Gender equity for equal opportunity framework is an essential guide for improving gender and development program practices in schools so that every learner can be and become a whole person. To fully address the gender gap and inequities, tracking learners' profiles, monitoring, and evaluating gender and development in the classroom would be beneficial (Talon, Carreon, & Diragen, 2020) ^[16].

The school community is aware of the legislative framework to ensure that both genders have equal opportunities. However, additional information on government institutions charged with implementing Gender and Development (GAD) and concerns about gender equality and women's empowerment is still needed (Sumadsad, & Tuazon 2016) ^[17]. Gender inequality, while still present in society, has never been a severe problem in the Philippines, as seen by the casual attitudes of ordinary Filipinos toward gender issues.

One strategy to reduce gender gaps is to achieve gender development through education (Correa-Fernandes *et al.*, 2015) ^[15]. If gender equality is present, it will help ensure that girls and boys have equal opportunities (Sahin, 2014) ^[18]. The role of gender provides a unique opportunity to broaden the study's aim and scope to include new ideas and research on gender development (Zosuls *et al.*, 2011) ^[19].

The varied impact of gender role beliefs on men's and women's incomes appears to be a significant factor in the gender wage disparity. Furthermore, through educational attainment, labor force participation, working hours, and occupational position, gender role beliefs indirectly and widely affect gender income inequality (Qing, 2020) ^[20].

Threats to adolescent gender identification may play a role in the job market's high gender segregation. There were significant differences in career preferences between boys and females. Notably, adolescents who were threatened with losing their gender identity had higher stereotyped job preferences, implying a direct relationship between endangered gender identity and stereotypical preferences (Sinclair, & Carlsson, 2013) ^[21].

Methodology

This quantitative research employed a Descriptive-Correlational research design to determine the levels of Gender and Development implementation and teacher awareness. The 67 teachers from Southern Palawan in the Philippines were this research's primary source of information. The respondents were identified using a simple random technique and asked to answer the survey instrument online. The research instrument was centered on determining the teacher's awareness of the laws related to Gender and Development and their levels of implementation in their respective schools. The mean and standard deviation and Pearson correlation were used in analyzing the responses gathered.

Results and Discussions

Level of Awareness on Gender and Development (GAD) Laws

Table 1: Teachers' Level of Awareness on GAD-related Laws

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation	Adjectival Rating
1. RA 6725: An Act Strengthening the Prohibition on Discrimination Against Women with respect to terms and conditions of employment, amending for the purpose Article 135 of the Labor Code, as amended	4.16	0.881	Moderately aware
2. RA 10354: An Act Providing for a National Policy on Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive	3.85	1.034	Moderately aware
3. RA 7192: Women in Development and Nation Building Act – An Act promoting the integration of women as full and equal partners of men in development and nation-building and for other purposes.	3.96	0.991	Moderately aware
4. RA 7877: Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 – An act declaring sexual harassment unlawful in the employment, education, or training environment and for other purposes.	4.22	0.850	Extremely aware
5. RA 8972: Solo Parent's Welfare Act of 2000 - An act providing benefits and privileges to solo parents and their children, appropriating funds therefor and for other purposes.	3.85	0.989	Moderately aware
6. RA No. 9710: An Act Providing for the Magna Carta of Women	4.03	1.029	Moderately aware
7. RA No. 9262: Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004 – An act defining violence against women and their children, providing for protective measures for victims, prescribing penalties therefor, and for other purposes.	4.34	0.770	Extremely aware
Composite Mean	4.06		Moderately aware

The level of Teachers' Level of Awareness on GAD-related Laws was translated using the survey scale: 1-1.8 as not at all aware, 1.9-2.6 as slightly aware, 2.7-3.4 as somewhat aware, 3.5-4.2 as moderately aware, and 4.3-5 as extremely aware. Data shown in Table 1 revealed that teachers' level of awareness among five of the seven Gender and Development (GAD) laws were classified as moderately aware. More so, it

can be gleaned that teachers' level of awareness in two of these laws, namely the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 and the Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004, were described as extremely aware. Consequently, it can be noted that teachers' level of awareness among the GAD-related laws was rated moderately aware with a composite mean of 4.06.

Level of Gender and Development (GAD) laws implementation

Table 2: Level of Implementation of GAD-related Laws

GAD-related Laws		Mean	Std. Deviation	Adjectival Rating
1.	RA 6725: An Act Strengthening the Prohibition on Discrimination Against Women with respect to terms and conditions of employment, amending for the purpose Article 135 of the Labor Code, as amended	3.91	1.026	Moderately implemented
2.	RA 10354: An Act Providing for a National Policy on Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive	3.78	1.042	Moderately implemented
3.	RA 7192: Women in Development and Nation Building Act – An Act promoting the integration of women as full and equal partners of men in development and nation-building and for other purposes.	3.79	1.052	Moderately implemented
4.	RA 7877: Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 – An act declaring sexual harassment unlawful in the employment, education, or training environment and for other purposes.	3.78	1.027	Moderately implemented
5.	RA 8972: Solo Parent’s Welfare Act of 2000 - An act providing benefits and privileges to solo parents and their children, appropriating funds therefor and for other purposes.	3.76	1.016	Moderately implemented
6.	RA No. 9710: An Act Providing for the Magna Carta of Women	3.78	0.997	Moderately implemented
7.	RA No. 9262: Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004 – An act defining violence against women and their children, providing for protective measures for victims, prescribing penalties therefor, and for other purposes.	3.91	0.996	Moderately implemented
Composite Mean		3.81		Moderately implemented

Table 2 presents the level of implementation of the laws concerning gender and development as perceived by the teachers. As indicated, the teachers perceived the implementation level of these laws as moderately implemented with a composite mean of 3.81.

Levels of teachers’ awareness and implementation of Gender and Development (GAD) laws

Table 3: Relationship of teachers’ level of awareness toward the Gender and Development (GAD) laws and its level of implementation

	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Interpretation
Level of Awareness & Level of Implementation	.783**	.000	Highly correlated

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A Pearson-Product Moment Correlation was run to determine the relationship between the teachers’ level of awareness toward the gender and development laws and its level of implementation. It is worthy to note that the levels of awareness and implementation are highly correlated with an r-value of 0.783.

Conclusion

This study was centered on assessing the levels of implementation of gender and development-related laws and teacher awareness. With the findings mentioned above, we can infer that teachers in Southern Palawan, the Philippines are moderately aware of the existing laws related to gender and development. As for the implementation of such laws, teachers perceived that these are somewhat implemented. Furthermore, the level of implementation of gender and development-related laws is significantly related to teacher awareness. With this, it is hereby recommended to strengthen the implementation of such laws with intensified training, symposia, and information campaigns. Allocation of sufficient budget to be used for activities promoting gender

and development in schools are likewise recommended.

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