

SJIF Impact Factor(2024) : 8.402
ISI I.F.Value : 1.188

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
DOI : 10.36713/epra2013



EPRA International Journal of

MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

Monthly, Peer Reviewed (Refereed) & Indexed International Journal

Volume - 10 Issue - 2 February 2024

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ISSN (Online) : 2455 - 3662
SJIF Impact Factor(2024) :8.402
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DOI : 10.36713/epra2013



EPRA International Journal of
**Multidisciplinary
Research**

Monthly Peer Reviewed & Indexed
International Online Journal

Volume: 10 Issue: 2 February 2024

Indexed By:



Published By :EPRA Publishing

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EXPLORING THE INTEGRATION OF GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT CONTENT AND PEDAGOGY IN LANGUAGE TEACHING THROUGH THE LENS OF ENGLISH TEACHERS: A PHENOMENOLOGY

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Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra15864>

DOI No: 10.36713/epra15864

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore into the experiences of teachers on the integration of gender and development content and pedagogy in language teaching. This study was participated by the 13 teachers who were involved in the integration of gender and development in language teaching from the Schools of the Division of Davao de Oro. From the results, it showed that teachers have different lived experiences, coping strategies, and insights on the integration of gender and development content and pedagogy in language teaching. As such, the following themes emerged: using androgynous styles in forming groups; fostering gender-inclusive education; promoting equality and self-discovery through GAD Integration; issues of educating students on gender and development; and problems on gender inclusivity during group activities; utilizing and practicing gender-fair language; integrating GAD activities to teaching; being flexible and adaptive; promoting inclusivity and equality through GAD integration in education; recommending the continuation of GAD integration; and provision of GAD related training and seminar.

KEYWORDS: *integration of gender and development, language teaching, inclusivity, phenomenology, Davao de Oro*

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education (DepEd) issued a Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Program that enhances and promotes K to 12 curricula that integrate gender and development in all core subjects including English together with its Gender and Development directive from the Philippine Constitution to eradicate all types of discernment touching women and justices of children and others (DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017). However, the integration of gender and development specifically in language teaching remains to be a challenge among English teachers.

In India, a study on English language teaching on gender language education found that English language educators tried to include even the most minute ideas of gender-fair language and gender-fair teaching strategies (KM Baharul Islam, 2018). Moreover, another study in Indonesia by Abdul Hamid (2001), as cited by Kamarudin et. al (2016) on linguistic sexism, discovered that language teachers were having difficulty in integrating gender and development in a language classroom because they scarce exposure to the educational curriculum on the teaching process based on gender-based strategies. Meanwhile, in the Philippines, a study conducted by Castro and Dela Rosa (2021) found that in the Division of Bataan and City Division of Bataan, the integration of gender and development in teaching strategies specifically in English remains a challenge among the teachers

which resulted from no proper training and support from a gender specialist.

Purpose of the study

The aim of this phenomenological inquiry was to explore and understand the lived experiences of secondary language educators in Mawab District, Division of Davao de Oro on the integration of gender and development on content and pedagogy in English teaching.

Research Questions

1. What are the lived experiences of the language teachers in integrating gender and development content and pedagogy in English teaching?
2. How do English teachers cope with the challenges of integrating gender and development content and pedagogy in English teaching?
3. What are the insights of English teachers on integrating gender and development content and pedagogy in English teaching?

Theoretical Lens

This study was gleaned through the lens of Gender Schema Theory by Sandra Bem (1981), Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura (1960), and the DepEd Order No. 32., s.2017 also known as the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy.



Gender Schema Theory (Bem, 1981) focuses on how individuals utilize the information provided by their culture regarding masculinity and femininity (Vinney, 2019). The gender schema theory holds that kids actively learn and essentially socialize themselves. Children actively classify the behaviors, actions, and characteristics they observe into gender categories, or schemas, as in this case. In this study, Bem’s Gender theory was used to understand how gender influenced students through the schemas they create by observing and learning from their environment, the school, teachers, and colleagues.

METHODS

Research Design

A phenomenological approach was used in this study to investigate the lived experiences of public secondary English teachers on the integration of gender and development content and pedagogy in language teaching.

Research Participants

For the phenomenological study, Creswell J.D. (2018) cited the importance of the random selection of participants where he suggested that a total number of fourteen (14) participants or key informants were best in the conduct of a qualitative phenomenological study. In my study, I considered thirteen (13) participants to seven (7) to undergo in-depth interviews and seven (6) focused group discussions.

Data Analysis

After the data collection and interviews were conducted, the collected information was organized, reviewed, transcribed, translated, and analyzed through thematic analysis. By using this method, the themes were certain to comprise all crucial information without leaving out any substantial features. Accordingly, using the descriptions made for the topic, this phase entailed giving the relationship or meaning the theme conveys a comprehensive name. After this, the meaning and content of the codes were taken into consideration by the qualitative researcher in choosing the theme. Lastly, I used a method called "telling the story" Or "representing the data.

RESULTS

Table 1
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Experiences of Teachers in the Integration of Gender and Development in English

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Fostering Gender-inclusive Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> utilizing gender fair language in providing examples giving the students words that are from single gender but is used in general
Using Gender-Inclusive Learning Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> giving the learners variety of activities or differential methods to address the needs for each gender providing group quiz and equally distributing activities to the students disregarding their gender
Noting Issues in Using Gender-neutral Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> having the students used to writing in a gender-biased form and utilizing it in constructing their own sentences letting the students unlearn common gender bias terms is difficult having concerns on how to address students especially those who belong to LGBTQA group

Fostering Gender-inclusive Communication

In support of this theme, IDI-02 said that they were utilizing gender fair language in providing examples:

First, I utilize gender-fair language in providing sample sentences in teaching English lessons like active voice and verb tenses.

In fact, this was supported by FGD-05, they stated that giving the students words that were from single gender but is used in general:

My strategy is that because in English there are so many stories sometimes one of my strategies instead of using the word, he or she most of the time, I used the word we or us for them not to be left out and for them that the opinions and my strategies in the discussions.

Using Gender-inclusive Learning Strategies

This theme was linked to the answer of FGD-04, who said that they were giving the learners variety of activities or differential methods to address the needs for each gender:

Yes, I agree with all their ideas, in addition since, we are handling heterogenous class, with different gender identity so we need to give them a variety of activities or differential methods.

FGD-05 also shared that they were providing group quiz and equally distributing activities to the students disregarding their gender:

Integrating gender and development, in my class I am very fond of giving a group quiz so I usually tend to equally distribute my students disregarding of their gender.



Noting Issues on Using-neutral Language

This extracted theme was related to the answer of IDI-02, who shared that they having the students used to writing in gender-biased form and utilizing it in constructing their own sentences:

I observed that majority of the students learned about the common gender bias like mother Earth instead of Earth, camera man instead of photographer which are very difficult to unlearn although the sample sentences are gender.

More so, FGD-01 shared that letting the students unlearn common gender bias terms was difficult:

One of the difficulties that I have experienced or encountered as a language teacher is very common to everybody I believe, which is to let my students unlearn common gender bias language.

Table 2

Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Coping Strategies of Teachers on the Challenges in the Integration of Gender and Development in Language Teaching

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Utilizing and Practicing Gender-fair Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presenting sentences with fair language to clearly and properly write their own gender language without bias having differentiated activity and instruction and will use gender-fair language
Utilizing GAD-integrated Approaches to Teaching Instruction Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integrating GAD every time problems occur on different behaviors in group activities addressing properly the differences of the learners' preferences achieve an interactive teaching and learning atmosphere
Enhancing One's Teaching Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> researching more on the techniques and strategies that could apply to have better understanding on learners' identity and preferences. seeking learning by reading, participating in GAD-related activities and webinars to effectively integrate GAD in teaching English.

Utilizing and Practicing Gender-fair Language

In connection to this developed theme, IDI-02 shared that they were presenting sentences with fair language to clearly and properly write their own gender language without bias:

First, I utilize projector in presenting sentences with fair language for students to copy properly and clearly without writing their own gender biased language.

This was supported by IDI-01, who stated that they were having differentiated activity and instruction and used gender-fair language.

I need to apply the differentiated instruction by using of gender-fair language because as a teacher we must be resourceful and must be sensitive to the need of that learner.

Utilizing GAD-integrated Approaches to Teaching Instruction Approaches

This theme was linked on the answer of IDI-04, who shared that they were integrating GAD every time problems occur on different behaviors in group activities:

Aside from that Ma'am, integrating GAD every time problems occur on different behaviors in group activities is my strategy to really address the needs of the learners.

In addition, FGD-02 expressed that they were addressing properly the differences of the learners' preferences achieve an interactive teaching and learning atmosphere:

By addressing properly the learners' preferences, it is now easy for me to achieve an interactive teaching and learning atmosphere inside my classroom.

Enhancing One's Teaching Strategies

This theme was related on the answer of FGD-03 who shared that they were researching more on the techniques and strategies that could apply to have better understanding on learners' identity and preferences:

As a teacher, you must research more in addition to the techniques and strategies that you could apply to have a better understanding on your student's identity and preferences.

In fact, IDI-02 supported on this by stating that they were seeking learning by reading, participating in GAD-related activities to effectively integrate GAD in teaching English:

We should seek learning by reading, participate in GAD related activities and webinars to effectively integrate this in teaching English.



Table 3
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Insights of Teachers on the Integration of Gender and Development in Language Teaching

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Recommending the Continuation of GAD Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuing GAD integration to foster connection and understanding among learners integrating GAD on teaching language as means to help various learners
Demonstrating Gender Sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> having the sensitivity to addressing the students specially in gender related topics to avoid gender bias in class knowing the background information of the students for the teacher to be sensitive in addressing the learner
Incorporating GAD to Promote Holistic Academic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender and development can be positively integrated to promote holistic learning Gender and development can be a tool for the language teachers to promote self-empowerment among the learners managing student behavior and their learning process can create holistic and effective learning

Recommending the Continuation of GAD integration

In support to this theme, IDI-01 recommended that having a need to continue the integration of gender and development:

I need to continue with the activities that integrated gender and development because I have observed that once the group is grouped into mixed without the differentiation of group deepened understanding has been developed among the learners.

Also, IDI-04 recommended that integrating gender and development on teaching language can help all kinds of learners:

Yes, because integrating gender and development on teaching language can help all kinds of learners

Demonstrating Gender Sensitivity

In connection to this theme, FGD-03 shared that they were having the sensitivity to addressing the students specially in gender related topics to avoid gender bias in class:

My realization as I integrate gender and development content in my pedagogy in English teaching is that we should be sensitive in addressing the learners.

In fact, FGD-05 also said that they were knowing the background information of the students to be selective and sensitive with his/her choice of words when addressing opinions and concerns towards the learners:

One of my realizations in integrating gender and development is that we should be very prepared when it comes to dealing with your students.

Incorporating GAD to Promote Holistic Academic Development

In connection to this theme, IDI-02 shared that gender and development can be positively integrated to promote holistic learning:

I realized that gender and development can be positively integrated in teaching English to promote students holistic learning.

In fact, IDI-05 stated that gender and development can be a tool for the language teachers to promote self-empowerment among the learners:

My realizations about the is that this can be a tool for the language teachers especially in my part to promote self-empowerment among the.

DISCUSSION

Lived Experiences of Teachers on the Integration of Gender and Development In Language Teaching Fostering Gender-Inclusive Communication

Gendered language is anything that unnecessarily differentiates between women and men. This study result was supported by the study of Paterson (2019) which stated that a curriculum must be created to see the desires of the students without compromising the students' gender preferences through applying and using gender inclusive communication. In similar manner, Savignon (2018) said that gender and development-guided classrooms can aid students in gaining a better understanding of how to use the language both orally and in writing in a proper and suitable manner.

Using Gender-Inclusive Learning Strategies

The participants had experienced the integration of gender and development in English teaching through using gender-inclusive learning strategies. This corroborated with the study of Romiti et al., (2020) which stated that on gender perspective in English language teaching, teachers' experiences were found to be beneficial regarding their capacity to create engaging language activities in broader social norms that support gender equality and diversity. Moreover, the study of Lengkawanati (2018) supported that by demonstrating effective learning techniques to students



and exposing them to gender-neutral activities may help the students achieve higher learning outcomes and grow into independent learners.

Noting Issues on Using Gender-Neutral Language

In English, gender-inclusive language has indeed largely been normalized. This result is being supported by the study of Cabla (2020) which stated that many public and private institutions in the Philippines have struggled to pinpoint the specific areas of curriculum where gender and equality were incorporated. Further, Park and French (2020) also stated that learning strategies that integrated gender and development were driven and have a reputation for being effective or efficient particularly in the learning of languages, but they cannot be employed by all learners.

Coping Strategies of Teachers on the Challenges in the Integration of Gender and Development in Language Teaching

Utilizing and Practicing Gender-fair Language

Teachers who were involved in the integration of GAD in language teaching encountered challenges in the integration of gender and development in language teaching. This result of the study was validated by the study of Metz-Gockel (2019), which states that for gender-sensitive teaching to be guaranteed, using of gender-fair language is necessary. Another essential finding in the study of Acar-Erdol et al., (2018) which reiterated that the curriculum and educational system have an impact on how people think and act.

Utilizing GAD-integrated Approaches to Teaching Approaches

Integrating gender and development activities in teaching English helped the teachers to cope with the challenges experienced by the teacher inside the classroom in dealing with learners who were gender sensitive. This result of the study was supported by the findings of Bautista (2021), which stated that to ensure that the Department of Education was following the provisions on the integration of gender and development in teaching strategy. Moreover, another study of Lengkanawati (2018) which stated that by demonstrating effective learning techniques to students and exposing them to gender-neutral activities.

Enhancing One's Teaching Strategies

In the integration of gender and development in language teaching, through enhancing their teaching strategies teachers were able to address the diversity of learners. This result was being supported by the study of Ariyanto (2021) which indicated that teachers were prepared to incorporate gender and development concepts into their lessons. Further, a study of Bengoechea (2019) supported this result by emphasizing the relevance of understanding the attitudes of the linguistic community.

The Insights of Teachers on the Integration of Gender and Development in Language Teaching

Recommending the Continuation of GAD integration

The primary purpose of the integration of gender and development was to embrace the differences of the learners and to accept the idea that everyone is unique. This result was verified by the study of Kumlu et al., (2021) which stated that schools should take initiatives to address wide range of preparations and policies including gender-responsive policies and building gender-sensitive pedagogy. In addition, a study of Cudiamat and Hernandez (2018) also reaffirmed that gender-responsive teaching strategy should be implemented and continued in the classroom to promote gender equality and enhance students' academic performance.

Demonstrating Gender Sensitivity

Demonstrating gender sensitivity was one of the perceptions of the teachers in the integration of gender and development in language teaching. This result in the study was being substantiated by the study of Hernandez and Cudiamat (2018) which reaffirmed that gender-responsive teaching strategy should be implemented in the teaching space to promote gender equality and enhance students' academic performance. Moreover, the result of the study of Galangam et al., (2021) also supported this result as they said that teachers must consider the needs and particularities of each student based on their backgrounds, well-being, and gender.

Incorporating GAD that Promotes Holistic Academic Development

With its integration it became a tool for the language teachers to promote self-empowerment and manage the learners' behaviors in the learning process. This result was validated by the study of Shi (2019) which said that basically, language learning strategies provide learners the ability to enhance students' learning by boosting linguistic proficiency, self-assurance, and interest in learning process. In fact, this result was verified by the study of Weimer (2019) which stated that using effective tactics and procedure that also consider gender and development aided in the development of the students' cognitive, psychomotor, and affective abilities.

Implication to Teaching Practice

The results of this study significantly acclaimed that in the integration of gender and development in language teaching, English teachers played an important role in promoting gender sensitive and equitable learning environment for the students. Through integrating gender and development, students and teachers were having a harmonious exchange of idea in during the teaching and learning process. Moreover, the result of this study opened the minds of the teachers to really strengthen the integration of gender and development in the classroom. Teachers were key sources of equality and fairness when talking about classroom set-up, therefore it was indeed anticipated that in school, children, or learners during activities inside or outside the classroom were given equal opportunity among others.



Recommendations for Further Research

This phenomenological study aimed to explore, analyze, and comprehend the lived experiences of thirteen teachers with respect to their participation in the integration of gender and development in language instruction in the Davao de Oro Division. These 13 educators were selected using approved inclusion criteria and purposive sampling. Further, it was encountered that teachers developed approaches to cope with the challenges of integrating gender and development in language teaching. Besides, this study was done to reveal the insights of teachers being involved in the integration of gender and development in language teaching.

It was suggested that in the future, researchers should involve more research participants or informants in their studies that directly address the integration of gender and development in language instruction. To ensure that the study is conducted in a different location, future research may concentrate on the experiences of other educators who are involved in the integration of gender and development. Thus, as it focuses on filling in the various gaps in our understanding of the phenomenon, future research may offer more information on the body of knowledge.

Concluding Remarks

Eliminating gender biases and discrimination has been the main goal of having gender and development programs. This program does not only focus on a single gender preference alone; however, this gives importance to all types of gender. Being one of the teachers who advocated gender sensitivity and fairness, I see this research as an opportunity to see if the language teachers have the same view as me in the integration of gender and development in teaching language. Based on the result of the study, there were some teachers that were not aware that they were already using the gender and development teaching strategy not until they had a capability training about Gender and Development. Yet, in the modern times, Gender and development also touched on the other form of gender such as male and those who belong to LGBTQA community. Altogether teachers must demonstrate gender sensitivity in addressing the learners. Demonstrating sensitivity really promotes peaceful classroom environment. Also, I realized that integrating gender and development promotes holistic academic development. Through practicing gender sensitivity teachers can create learning activities that were equitable for all in which now promotes holistic learning. In addition, in integrating gender and development in teaching, teachers can promote inclusivity and equality among the teachers. Also, it was highly and firmly recommended that gender and development should be integrated continuously to promote equality, fairness, and non-discriminatory education. Besides, I concluded that the department of education should provide relevant trainings and seminars that focuses on the integration of gender and development in the curriculum.

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