

Research Article

Gender-focused Educational Programs on Student Development

<https://doi.org/10.58429/pgjsrt.v5n1a226>

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VOLUME 5 | NO. 1 | 2026 ISSUE

This study examined the implementation of gender-focused educational programs in public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City, Philippines, and their relationship to students' gender sensitivity development. Despite national frameworks such as DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017 and the Magna Carta of Women, gender stereotypes, discrimination, and bullying continue to affect school environments. Guided by Feminist Theory, Gender Mainstreaming Theory, and Bem's Gender Schema Theory, the study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational design involving 527 respondents: 368 students, 135 teachers, and 24 GAD focal persons/coordinators during SY 2025–2026. A validated researcher-made questionnaire (CVI = 1.00; Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.888$) measured program implementation and students' gender sensitivity.

Results showed that all schools had implemented gender-focused programs, including GAD Plans, GFPS, curriculum integration, trainings, and advocacy activities. Teachers rated implementation higher ($M = 2.54$) than students ($M = 2.08$), with a significant difference ($p < 0.001$). Students demonstrated high gender awareness ($M = 3.12$) and attitudes ($M = 3.05$), but only moderate responsive behavior ($M = 2.48$). Overall gender sensitivity was high ($M = 3.23$). However, no significant relationship was found between program implementation and gender sensitivity ($r = 0.023$, $p = 0.666$), indicating the need for more experiential and behavior-focused interventions.

KEYWORDS

Gender and Development, Gender-focused Educational Programs, Gender-Sensitivity Development, , Senior High Students



INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a primary avenue for promoting equity, inclusivity, and holistic development. This shapes one's intellectual, emotional, and social growth. However, gender-related issues such as stereotypes, discrimination, and unequal opportunities continue to persist in many educational settings. These challenges can influence how students perceive gender roles and interact with others in the school community. In response, many institutions have implemented gender-focused educational programs designed to promote gender equality, eliminate stereotypes, and create inclusive learning environments. These initiatives aim to develop students' gender sensitivity by increasing their awareness, shaping positive attitudes, and encouraging responsive behavior for gender diversity and equality.

In a global context, gender equality has become a global priority in education as it promotes fairness, inclusion, and equal opportunities for all learners. The United Nations emphasizes this commitment through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality), which aim to ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote gender equality worldwide (United Nations, 2015). These goals recognize that education plays a crucial role in eliminating discrimination and promoting respect for diversity in schools. According to UNESCO reports, creating gender-sensitive learning environments is essential in addressing gender biases, reducing stereotypes, and fostering mutual respect among students (UNESCO, 2019). Such environments help learners develop awareness and positive attitudes toward gender equality, making gender-responsive education an important strategy in promoting inclusive and supportive school communities.

In the Philippines, gender equality in education is supported by national policies and programs that promote inclusive and gender-responsive learning environments. The Department of Education issued DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017, also known as the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy, which integrates gender sensitivity, equality, and non-discrimination in the delivery of basic education. This policy aligns with the provisions of the Magna Carta of Women, which mandates government agencies to implement Gender and Development (GAD) programs that promote gender equality in various sectors, including education. According to the Philippine Commission on Women, these initiatives aim to address gender stereotypes and ensure that educational institutions promote fairness, respect, and equal opportunities for all learners (PCW, 2023). Through these policies, schools are encouraged to implement gender-focused educational programs that support the development of gender sensitivity among students.

Despite the implementation of gender equality policies in education, gender-related issues continue to affect students in school environments. Reports indicate that gender stereotypes and biases may still be present in some educational practices and learning materials, which may influence students' perceptions of gender roles and equality (Philippine Commission on Women, 2023). In addition, bullying and discrimination remain common experiences among Filipino learners. Data from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization indicate that more than 40% of Filipino students aged 13–17 reported experiencing bullying in school within a year, highlighting concerns about students' safety and well-being (UNESCO, 2019). Furthermore, results from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022, discussed by the Second Congressional Commission on Education in 2024, indicate that about one out of three Filipino student's experiences bullying in school, with 43% of girls and 53% of boys encountering bullying multiple times a month. Similarly, reports discussed shows that about 65% of Filipino students reported experiencing bullying at least a few times a month, with around 40% experiencing it frequently, which is higher than the average reported in many other countries (EDCOM II, 2023). These conditions emphasize the importance of strengthening gender-focused educational programs that promote gender sensitivity, respect, and inclusivity among students.

With the presence of gender-responsive policies and initiatives in educational setting, there is still limited empirical evidence examining how gender-focused educational programs influence students' gender sensitivity development in local school contexts. Previous studies often focus on policy implementation or administrative perspectives, with less attention given to students' own experiences and perceptions of these programs. Moreover, limited research has examined the

relationship between the extent of implementation of gender-focused educational programs and the level of gender-sensitivity development among students.

Given these gaps, there is a need to assess how gender-focused educational programs are implemented in schools and how these contribute to students' gender-sensitivity development in the local educational context. Thus, this study aims to assess the implementation of gender-focused educational programs and the level of gender-sensitivity development among students, as well as to analyze the relationship between these gender-focused educational programs in student development, particularly in gender-sensitivity development.

This study is essential because it examines how gender-focused educational programs contribute to the development of gender sensitivity among students, which is important in promoting respect, equality, and inclusivity in school environments. It is relevant as schools continue to implement gender-responsive policies and initiatives aimed at addressing gender stereotypes, discrimination, and bias among learners. By assessing the extent of implementation of these programs and their relationship to students' gender-sensitivity development, the study provides meaningful insights that can help educators and policymakers strengthen gender-responsive educational practices. Ultimately, the findings may contribute to creating more inclusive and supportive learning environments where students develop positive attitudes toward gender equality.

The findings of this study provided valuable insights for educators, school administrators, curriculum developers, and policymakers in evaluating and strengthening the implementation of gender focused educational programs in schools. The results helped identify how these initiatives contributed to the development of gender sensitivity of students. Moreover, the study served as a basis for improving gender responsive strategies and school practices that promoted inclusive and respectful supportive learning environments. Finally, this research contributed to the development of educational settings that cultivated gender sensitivity, equality, and mutual respect among students.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the implementation of gender-focused educational programs and their relationship to student development in all public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What gender-focused educational programs are implemented by all public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City?
2. What is the extent of implementation of these gender-focused programs in all public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City as perceived by students and teachers?
3. What is the level of students' gender sensitivity development?
4. Is there a significant difference in the extent of implementation of gender-focused programs in all public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City, as rated by students and teachers?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the implementation of gender-focused educational programs and students' gender sensitivity development?
6. Based on the findings, what enhancement program may be proposed to further enhance students' gender sensitivity development?

METHODS

Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative, descriptive–correlational research design. This design was appropriate because the study sought to (a) describe the gender-focused educational programs being implemented and the extent of their implementation rated by students and teachers, (b) determine the level of students' gender sensitivity development, and (c) examine the possible relationship between program implementation and students' gender sensitivity. According to Creswell and Creswell



(2023), quantitative research was appropriate when the aim was to measure variables numerically and analyze statistical relationships among them. Survey questionnaires administered to respondents served as the primary data-gathering instrument.

Respondents

This study involved 527 respondents from all public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City during School Year 2025-2026, composed of selected students and selected teacher from all Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay, as well as the Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Persons and GAD Coordinators from each school during the school year 2025-2026. These respondents were chosen because they are directly involved in the implementation and experience of gender-focused educational programs within the school.

Using stratified-proportional sampling, Slovin's formula (0.05 margin of error) was applied to a student population of 4,562 and teacher population of 204, resulting to 368 students and 135 teachers. These respondents were proportionally distributed across the 12 Senior High Schools. A complete enumeration was used to all 24 Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Persons and Coordinators, since the number of the respondents is manageable.

Research Instrument

The main research instrument of this study was a researcher made structured survey questionnaire as the primary data-gathering tool. The instrument was designed to measure both the scope of implementation of gender-focused educational programs and the level of students' gender sensitivity development. The questionnaire was structured into four parts (1) the Demographic Profile (2) Checklist of Gender-focused Educational Programs Implemented in the School (3) Extent of Implementation of Gender-Focused Educational Programs (4) Level of Student Gender-Sensitivity Development, to ensure that the variables of the study were systematically measured.

To ensure the appropriateness of the research instrument, the study established its content validity through expert validation. The draft questionnaire was reviewed by nine (9) experts in education, gender studies, and research methodology. They evaluated the items based on clarity, relevance, and appropriateness for the respondents using C.H Lawshe Content validity (Lawshe,1975).

The results revealed a CVI of 1.00, indicating that all items were rated as essential by the validators. This suggests that the instrument demonstrated excellent content validity and was suitable for measuring the variables of the study.

After content validation, the instrument underwent a pilot test among 30–40 students and teachers from a neighboring school in a different school division who were not included among the actual respondents. The collected data in the pilot test were analyzed for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha to assess the instrument's internal consistency. The results showed a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = 0.888$, indicating that the instrument demonstrated high reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher secured approval from the Schools Division Superintendent of Sagay City, followed by school coordination. Written parental consent and respondent assent were obtained after orientation on study objectives and ethical protections (confidentiality, voluntary participation).

The validated questionnaire underwent pilot testing (30-40 respondents from a non-participating school) for refinement, then administered via printed and Google Forms at respondents' convenience. Completed surveys were immediately retrieved (100% response rate), screened for completeness, anonymized via coding, and prepared for SPSS analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

The gathered data were organized, coded, and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, percentage, standard deviation) to determine the programs and extent of program implementation and levels of gender sensitivity development. Inferential statistics (t-test, Pearson r) were used to test for differences and relationships. The following procedures were applied according to each research question.

To answer SOP 1, frequency and percentage summarized responses to identify implemented programs. For SOP 2, mean and standard deviation were computed for each program and interpreted using a 4-point Likert scale. For SOP 3, mean and descriptive statistics measured awareness, attitude, and gender-responsive behavior, each interpreted on a 4-point scale (very high, high, low, very low). A grand mean of the three dimensions indicated the overall level of gender sensitivity development. Independent samples test compared mean ratings of implementation between students and teachers were used in SOP 4. And for SOP 5, Pearson r tested the linear relationship between extent of implementation and students' gender sensitivity development, with significance set at $\alpha = 0.05$. Results were interpreted alongside related literature to inform the proposed enhancement program.

RESULTS/FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Results

For SOP number 1 which asks on what gender -focused educational programs are implemented by public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City, the table below was used. Note support is different form program.

Table 1. Gender-Focused Educational Programs Implemented Across Public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City

Programs	Number of GAD Focal Person and GAD Coordinator Implementing the Program in Senior High Schools	Percentage of GAD Focal Person and GAD Coordinator Implementing the Program in Senior High Schools
A. Policy and Institutional Program		
1. Annual GAD Plan and Budget (GPB)	24	100
2. Organized Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS)	24	100
3. Collection of Sex-Disaggregated Data	23	95.83
4. GAD Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation Mechanism	24	100
B. Gender-Responsive Curriculum and Instruction		
1. Integration of GAD Concepts in Lesson Plans	24	100
2. Use of Gender-Responsive Learning Materials	24	100
3. Development of gender-responsive lesson exemplars	24	100
4. Teachers Training on Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Education	24	100
5. Gender-Responsive Teaching-Learning Instruction	24	100
C. Capacity Building and Gender Sensitivity Programs		
1. Gender Sensitivity Training (GST)	22	91.67
2. Gender-related Seminars for Students	23	95.83
3. Student leadership training incorporating gender equality principles	22	91.67
4. Gender clubs or student organizations	22	91.67



promoting gender equality and inclusion

D. Gender Advocacy and Inclusive School Environment Programs

1. Women’s Month Celebration	24	100
2. Pride Month Activities	18	75
3. Children’s Month Celebration	22	91.67
4. 18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women (VAWC)	24	100
5. Safe spaces or gender-support desks	19	79.17
6. Gender equality advocacy campaigns and information dissemination	24	100

Table 1 shows the gender-focused educational programs implemented by all public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City. The findings shows that schools implement gender-focused educational programs across four categories: Policy and Institutional Programs, Gender-Responsive Curriculum and Instruction, Capacity Building and Gender Sensitivity Programs, and Gender Advocacy and Inclusive School Environment Program. In terms of Policy and Institutional Program, all schools (100%) have established key mechanism such as the Annual GAD Plan and Budget (GPB), Organized Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS) and GAD Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation Mechanism, while most of the Senior High Schools (95.83%) collects sex-disaggregated data. For the Gender-Responsive Curriculum and Instruction, all schools (100%) implemented the integration GAD concepts in lesson plan, used gender-responsive learning materials, developed gender-responsive lesson exemplars, trained teachers on gender-responsive and inclusive education and implement gender-responsive teaching and learning instruction, this indicates a full implementation of Gender-Responsive Curriculum and Instruction. Under Capacity Building and Gender-Sensitivity Programs, majority of schools (91.67%) implemented gender sensitivity training, student leadership training that incorporates gender equality principles, gender clubs or student organizations and 95.83 % of schools implemented and conduct gender related seminars for students. Meanwhile, the Gender Advocacy and Inclusive School Environment Program, 100% of schools implemented Women’s Month Celebration, 18-Day campaign to End Violence Against Women and gender equality advocacy campaigns and information dissemination. Additionally, a high percentage of school with 91.67% implements Children’s Month celebrations. However, 75% of schools conduct Pride Month activities and 79.17% of schools provide safe spaces or gender support desk. This suggested that while general gender advocacy programs are implemented, certain initiatives that specifically support diverse gender identities and provide direct support are less consistently established and implemented.

As to the SOP 2, extent to which gender-focused educational programs are implemented, the table below was used.

Table 2. Extent of Implementation of Policy and Institutional Program

Programs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
1. Gender-related policies are well communicated to students, faculty and staff.	2.3267	.70981	High Extent
2. The school has a designated committee that actively implements gender-related programs.	2.2231	.70217	High Extent
3. The school provides adequate resources to support gender-related programs and activities.	2.1713	.78822	High Extent
4. The school collects sex-disaggregated data or keeps records of students and staff based on their gender.	1.9661	.85754	High Extent
5. The school regularly reviews and improves its gender-related programs and activities.	2.0518	.82942	High Extent
6. The school collaborates with other organizations	2.0538	.84005	High Extent

for gender-related activities

7. School head, teachers and non-teaching personnel actively support gender-related initiatives.	2.3167	.75903	High Extent
8. Gender-related issues are discussed during school meetings.	2.0996	.80047	High Extent
Mean	2.1511	.61102	High Extent

Scale: 0-1(Very Low Extent); 1-1.67 (Low Extent);1.68–2.34 (High Extent) 2.35-3.0(Very High Extent)

Table 2 shows that the implementation of gender-focused programs in terms of policy and institutional program is at a high extent (M = 2.1511). This indicates that the programs are carried out to a considerable extent but not fully and schools generally have established policies, structures, and support systems for gender-related initiatives. The highest rating was on the communication of gender-related policies (M = 2.3267), suggesting that schools effectively inform stakeholders. Strong support from school personnel (M = 2.3167) also reflects active involvement in promoting these programs. However, slightly lower means in areas like sex-disaggregated data collection (M = 1.9661) and program review (M = 2.0518) suggest the need to further improve monitoring and evaluation practices.

Overall, while implementation is strong, enhancing evaluation and data systems can further strengthen gender-focused programs.

Table 3. Extent of Implementation of Gender-Responsive Curriculum and Instruction

Programs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
1. Lessons integrate concepts of gender equality.	2.3147	.71799	Very High Extent
2. Learning materials used in the classroom promote inclusivity and respect for all genders.	2.3207	.72504	Very High Extent
3. Teachers address gender-related issues during classroom discussions.	2.1753	.74568	High Extent
4. Teachers encourage students of all genders to think critically and participate in discussions.	2.3765	.66243	Very High Extent
5. Teaching strategies used in the classroom are inclusive of diverse learners.	2.2490	.75274	High Extent
6. Classroom activities allow equal participation among students regardless of gender.	2.3884	.68525	Very High Extent
7. Students are encouraged to express their opinions regardless of gender.	2.4223	.70424	Very High Extent
8. Instruction promotes equal leadership opportunities among students	2.3904	.64662	Very High Extent
Mean	2.3297	.54196	Very High Extent

Scale: 0-1(Very Low Extent); 1-1.67 (Low Extent);1.68–2.34 (High Extent) 2.35-3.0(Very High Extent)

Table 3 shows that gender-focused educational programs, particularly in gender-responsive curriculum and instruction, are implemented to a very high extent (M=2.3297). This indicates that the programs are consistently and completely carried out and that reflects strong integration of gender equality into teaching practices and classroom activities. Key indicators like encouraging student participation of all genders to think critically (M=2.3765), fostering equal participation among students regardless of gender (M=2.3884), and encourage students to express their opinions (M=2.4223) earned a very high mean. These results highlight inclusive classrooms that actively support gender fairness and engagement. With that, ratings were somewhat lower for addressing gender-related issues during classroom discussions (M=2.1753) and using inclusive teaching strategies for diverse learners (M=2.2490), pointing to opportunities for improvement. Teachers could enhance explicit discussions of gender topics and their incorporation into lesson plans. In summary, schools excel in implementing gender-responsive curriculum and instruction overall, with just a few areas ripe for refinement.

Table 4. Extent of Implementation of Capacity Building and Gender Sensitivity Programs

Programs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
1. The school conducts gender sensitivity trainings and seminars.	1.9462	.87497	High Extent
2. The school provide seminars on gender equality and gender-related issues for students.	2.0199	.84980	High Extent
3. Gender equality principles are integrated into student leadership training programs in the school	2.1514	.80479	High Extent
4. The school clubs promote inclusion and diversity.	2.1534	.79065	High Extent
Mean	2.0677	.69690	High Extent

Scale: 0-1(Very Low Extent); 1-1.67 (Low Extent);1.68–2.34 (High Extent) 2.35-3.0(Very High Extent)

Table 4 shows that the implementation of gender-focused educational programs in the category of capacity building and gender sensitivity programs is at a high extent ($M = 2.0677$). This indicates that the programs are carried out to a considerable extent but not fully in providing training, seminars, and activities that promote gender awareness among students. Among the indicators, integrating gender equality principles into student leadership programs ($M = 2.1514$) and promoting inclusion through school clubs ($M = 2.1534$) received relatively higher ratings. This suggests that schools actively embed gender concepts in student development activities. However, the conduct of gender sensitivity training ($M = 1.9462$) obtained the lowest mean, indicating that these activities may not be consistently implemented. This implies a need to strengthen and increase capacity-building initiatives for both students and school personnel. Overall, while schools demonstrate a good level of implementation, enhancing the frequency and depth of training programs can further improve gender sensitivity efforts.

Table 5. Extent of Implementation of Gender Advocacy and Inclusive School Environment Programs

Programs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
1. The school celebrates events related to gender equality (e.g., Women’s Month, 18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women, etc.).	2.6633	.58950	Very High Extent
2. Campaign to End Violence Against Women, etc.).	2.5159	.59501	Very High Extent
3. The school provides a safe and supportive environment for individuals of all genders.	2.3008	.74435	Very High Extent
4. The school strictly enforces policies against gender-based harassment.	2.4203	.66614	Very High Extent
5. The school promotes an environment where students can safely express their gender identity.	2.4163	.65354	Very High Extent
6. School facilities are accessible and inclusive for individuals of all genders.	2.3865	.68783	Very High Extent
7. Gender-related complaints are handled with confidentiality in the school.	2.2530	.69626	Very High Extent
8. Information materials about gender equality are available in school.	2.3924	.67415	Very High Extent
Mean	2.4186	.48794	Very High Extent

Scale: 0-1(Very Low Extent); 1-1.67 (Low Extent);1.68–2.34 (High Extent) 2.35-3.0(Very High Extent)

Table 5 shows that the implementation of gender-focused educational programs in the category of gender advocacy and inclusive school environment program is at a very high extent ($M = 2.4186$). This indicates that the programs are consistently and completely carried out. This shows that schools strongly promote gender equality through activities, policies, and inclusive practices. All indicators were rated very high, with the highest mean observed in celebrating gender-related events ($M = 2.6633$), reflecting active school participation in advocacy initiatives. Campaigns against gender-based violence ($M = 2.5159$) and the enforcement of anti-harassment policies ($M = 2.4203$) further demonstrate strong institutional commitment to creating a safe environment. Other areas, such as providing safe spaces ($M = 2.3008$) and handling complaints confidentially ($M = 2.2530$),

although still very high, received relatively lower ratings, suggesting minor areas for enhancement. Overall, the findings imply that schools are highly effective in fostering an inclusive and gender-responsive environment.

To address SOP number 3, Tables 6-8 present mean scores across three dimensions of gender sensitivity development—awareness, attitudes, and responsive behavior—among senior high school students. Table 9 then provides the composite overall level of gender sensitivity development.

Table 6. Level of Students' Gender Sensitivity Development in Terms of Awareness

Awareness	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
1. Understand the meaning of gender equality.	3.3025	.82883	High
2. Aware of gender discrimination issues.	3.4251	.66466	Very High
3. Identify gender stereotypes.	3.0981	.83710	High
4. Understand the importance of equal rights.	3.1417	.81084	High
5. Recognize unfair treatment based on gender.	3.3433	.67496	Very High
6. Understand the concept of gender sensitivity.	3.0708	.92056	High
7. Aware of policies protecting gender rights.	3.1826	.76959	High
8. Understand the impact of gender bias.	3.2916	.71250	Very High
9. Aware that gender equality promotes fairness among individuals.	3.2153	.91734	High
10. Aware that gender stereotypes can affect how people are treated.	3.2698	.83354	Very High
Mean	3.2341	.62956	High

Scale:1.0-1.75 (Very Low); 1.76-2.50 (Low); 2.51-3.25 (High); 3.26-4.00 (Very High)

Table 6 reveals students exhibit high awareness (M=3.2341) of gender-related concepts, this indicates that students generally possess adequate awareness of gender issues, although some aspects may require further reinforcement. They demonstrate strong understanding of gender equality (M=3.30), discrimination issues (M=3.43), and unfair treatment recognition (M=3.34). Three items reached Very High (discrimination, unfair treatment, policy awareness), while seven items fell in the High range, indicating consistent but not exceptional cognitive grasp. This confirms gender-focused curriculum (100% implementation) successfully builds foundational knowledge, though deeper mastery of concepts like gender sensitivity (M=3.07) may require reinforcement.

Table 7. Level of Students' Gender Sensitivity Development in Terms of Attitude

Attitude	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
1. Believe all genders deserve equal opportunities.	3.5777	.60854	Very High
2. Respect individuals regardless of gender identity.	3.5804	.54165	Very High
3. Believe leadership roles are not limited by gender.	3.3433	.71046	Very High
4. Support equal opportunities for all genders in leadership and decision-making roles.	3.4060	.67853	Very High
5. Value diversity in gender expression.	3.2752	.69974	Very High
6. Believe education should promote gender equality.	3.3869	.66336	Very High
7. Believe schools should create an environment that treats all genders fairly.	3.4550	.56056	Very High
8. Some leadership roles are more suitable for one gender than others. (reverse coded)	2.5410	.82565	High
Mean	3.3123	.50297	Very High

Scale:1.0-1.75 (Very Low); 1.76-2.50 (Low); 2.51-3.25 (High); 3.26-4.00 (Very High)

Table 7 shows that students achieved a Very High Level of gender attitudes (M=3.3123), indicating that students strongly uphold gender equality, demonstrate respect for diverse gender identities, and reject discriminatory beliefs, including the ability to recognize inequality, identify stereotypes, and appreciate the importance of equal rights and fairness. Highest agreement centered

on equal opportunities for all genders (M=3.58) and respect regardless of gender identity (M=3.58), demonstrating schools' success in cultivating fairness and inclusivity.

Five items reached Very High Level, including leadership equality support (M=3.34), while the reverse-coded item 8 (M=2.54, High Level) exposed lingering traditional beliefs about gender-specific leadership roles. This residual stereotype amidst otherwise progressive attitudes underscores the need for targeted interventions to eliminate remaining biases, building on the solid foundation established by 100% gender-responsive curriculum implementation.

Table 8. Level of Students' Gender Sensitivity Development in Terms of Gender-Responsive Behavior

Responsive Behavior	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
1. Treat classmates equally regardless of gender.	3.3678	.73429	Very High
2. Speak up against gender discrimination.	2.9264	.90084	High
3. Promote fairness during group activities.	3.2861	.62498	Very High
4. Show respect for others' gender identity.	3.4169	.62554	Very High
5. Speak up against stereotypes when I hear them	2.9946	.92327	High
6. Actively contribute to creating an inclusive classroom environment.	3.2098	.72210	High
7. Ensure that leadership roles are shared equally among classmates regardless of gender.	3.3134	.67945	Very High
8. Avoid treating people differently because of their gender.	3.2398	.76626	High
9. Sometimes ignore gender-based jokes or comments. (reverse coded)	2.4714	.74922	Low
Mean	3.1362	.51779	High

Scale: 1.0-1.75 (Very Low); 1.76-2.50 (Low); 2.51-3.25 (High); 3.26-4.00 (Very High)

Table 8 shows that students achieved a High Level of gender-responsive behavior (M=3.1362), this suggests that students generally practice gender-sensitive behaviors, although these may not always be consistent in all situations. Four indicators reached Very High Level: respecting gender identity (M=3.42), equal treatment of classmates (M=3.37), promoting group fairness (M=3.29), and sharing leadership equitably (M=3.31).

Active intervention behaviors lag at High Level: speaking against discrimination (M=2.93) and stereotypes (M=2.99). The reverse-coded item 9 (M=2.47, Low Level) confirms some students tolerate gender-based jokes rather than confronting them, representing the critical gap between high awareness/attitudes (Tables 6-7) and behavioral application.

This pattern validates the study's null correlation finding—gender programs (100% curriculum implementation) successfully build knowledge but require experiential training to develop confident advocacy skills against real-time bias.

Table 9. Level of Students' Gender Sensitivity Development

Gender Sensitivity Development	Mean	Description
Awareness	3.2341	High
Attitude	3.3123	Very High
Gender-Responsive Behavior	3.1362	High
Grand Mean	3.2275	High

Scale: 1.0-1.75 (Very Low); 1.76-2.50 (Low); 2.51-3.25 (High); 3.26-4.00 (Very High)

The overall results indicate that students demonstrate a high level of gender-sensitivity development (Grand Mean = 3.2275). This suggests that students generally possess adequate knowledge, maintain positive perspectives, and exhibit appropriate behaviors toward gender equality.

In terms of awareness ($M = 3.2341$), students show a high level of awareness indicating that students generally possess adequate awareness of gender issues, although some aspects may require further reinforcement. Similarly, attitude ($M = 3.3123$) was rated very high, indicating that students strongly uphold gender equality, demonstrate respect for diverse gender identities, and reject discriminatory beliefs, including the ability to recognize inequality, identify stereotypes, and appreciate the importance of equal rights and fairness. However, gender-responsive behavior ($M = 3.1362$) was rated high, suggests that students generally practice gender-sensitive behaviors, although these may not always be consistent in all situations.

This implies that although students demonstrate strong knowledge and positive attitudes, these are not always consistently reflected in their actions, particularly in actively addressing discrimination or gender stereotypes.

Overall, the findings suggest that while students have a solid foundation in gender sensitivity, there is a need to further enhance the application of gender-responsive behaviors to ensure that awareness and attitudes are consistently practiced in everyday situations.

Inferential Results

This section specifically addressed the SOP 4 and SOP 5, which includes the difference in the extent of implementation of gender-focused educational programs as perceived by students and teachers, and the relationship between program implementation and students' gender sensitivity development. T-test and Pearson correlation were utilized to analyze the data and test the significance of the findings.

Table 10. Difference in the Extent of Implementation of Gender-Focused Programs as Rated by Students and Teachers

Program	Group	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p	Interpretation
Policy and Institutional Program	students	2.0150	.56391	8.449	.000	Highly Significant
	teachers	2.4930	.59242			
Gender-Responsive Curriculum and Instruction	students	2.2267	.52272	7.070	.000	Highly Significant
	teachers	2.5883	.50325			
Capacity Building and Gender Sensitivity Programs	students	1.9255	.65202	7.651	.000	Highly Significant
	teachers	2.4248	.67984			
Gender Advocacy and Inclusive School Environment Program	students	2.3249	.46397	7.151	.000	Highly Significant
	teachers	2.6538	.46834			
When Taken Altogether	students	2.1230	.44697	9.094	.000	Highly Significant
	teachers	2.5400	.50347			

Table 10 shows a highly significant difference (p -values=.000) in the perceived extent of implementation between students and teachers. Teachers consistently rated the implementation higher than students across all program areas. When taken as a whole, teachers ($M = 2.5400$) rated the implementation higher compared to students ($M = 2.1230$).

This indicates a perception gap, where teachers believe that programs are effectively implemented, while students may not fully experience or recognize these efforts. This difference suggests the need to improve program visibility and student engagement.

Table 11. Relationship Between the Implementation of Gender-Focused Educational Programs and Students' Gender Sensitivity Development

Programs	Gender Sensitivity Development	r	p	Interpretation
Policy and Institutional Program	Awareness	.024	.646	Not Significant
	Attitude	.017	.741	
	Gender Responsive Behavior	.063	.228	
Gender-Responsive Curriculum and Instruction	Awareness	.003	.950	Not Significant
	Attitude	.030	.566	
	Gender Responsive Behavior	.017	.739	
Capacity Building and Gender Sensitivity Programs	Awareness	.004	.940	Not Significant
	Attitude	.002	.964	
	Gender Responsive Behavior	.059	.263	
Gender Advocacy and Inclusive School Environment Program	Awareness	.059	.263	Not Significant
	Attitude	.037	.481	
	Gender Responsive Behavior	.042	.422	
Overall Program	Overall Gender Sensitivity	.023	.666	Not Significant

Table 11 shows that there is no significant relationship ($p > 0.05$) between the implementation of gender-focused programs and students' gender sensitivity development.

This suggests that although programs are highly implemented, they do not directly influence students' awareness, attitudes, or behavior. This may be due to the influence of external factors such as family, peers, and media, or the possibility that programs focus more on knowledge rather than behavioral application.

CONCLUSION/IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary of the Findings

1. All 19 gender-focused educational programs implemented in the public Senior High School in the Division of Sagay City are the following:

A. Policy and Institutional Program

1. Annual GAD Plan and Budget (GPB)
2. Organized Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS)
3. Collection of Sex-Disaggregated Data
4. GAD Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism

B. Gender-Responsive Curriculum and Instruction

5. Integration of GAD Concepts in Lesson Plans
6. Use of Gender-Responsive Learning Materials
7. Development of gender-responsive lesson exemplars
8. Teachers Training on Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Education
9. Gender-Responsive Teaching-Learning Instruction
- C. Capacity Building and Gender Sensitivity Programs
 10. Gender Sensitivity Training (GST)
 11. Gender-related Seminars for Students
 12. Student leadership training incorporating gender equality principles
 13. Gender clubs or student organizations promoting gender equality and inclusion
- D. Gender Advocacy and Inclusive School Environment Program
 14. Women's Month Celebration
 15. Pride Month Activities
 16. Children's Month Celebration
 17. 18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women (VAWC)
 18. Safe spaces or gender-support desks
 19. Gender equality advocacy campaigns and information dissemination

2. The extent of implementation of these gender-focused programs in all public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City as perceived by students and teachers is high to a very high extent, with the strongest implementation observed in gender-responsive curriculum and instruction ($M=2.3297$), gender advocacy and inclusive environment program ($M=2.4186$) and policy and institutional program at a consistently high level ($M=2.1511$) and a slightly lower implementation in capacity building and gender sensitivity program ($M=2.0677$).

3. The level of students' gender sensitivity development in Senior High School in the Division of Sagay is at a high level of gender sensitivity ($M=3.2275$).

4. There is a highly significant difference (p -values= .000) in the extent of implementation of gender-focused programs in all public Senior High Schools in the Division of Sagay City, as rated by students and teachers.

5. There is no significant relationship ($p > 0.05$) between the implementation of gender-focused educational programs and students' gender sensitivity development.

6. An enhancement program is proposed to further enhance student gender sensitivity development and bridge the awareness-behavior gap.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Public Senior High Schools in Sagay City have widely implemented gender-focused educational programs across policy and institutional program, gender-responsive curriculum and instruction, capacity building and gender sensitivity program, and gender advocacy and inclusive environment program, reflecting a strong commitment to gender equality and inclusivity in the school environment.
2. The extent of implementation is generally high to very high, with the strongest practices observed in gender-responsive curriculum and instruction and gender advocacy program; policy and institutional program are also consistently practiced, while capacity building and gender sensitivity programs, though still high, show relatively lower implementation levels.
3. Students demonstrate a high level of gender sensitivity development, indicating adequate awareness, positive attitudes, and acceptable gender-responsive behavior.
4. There is a significant difference between students' and teachers' perceptions of program implementation, suggesting possible variations in their experiences or levels of engagement with these initiatives.



5. Despite the strong implementation of gender-focused programs, no significant relationship was found between program implementation and students' gender sensitivity development, indicating that other factors may influence how students develop gender-responsive attitudes and behaviors.
6. Based on these findings, an enhancement program is proposed to strengthen students' gender-responsive behavior, bridge the gap between awareness and practice, and improve the overall effectiveness of gender and development initiatives in schools.

Implications of the Study

This research carries significant implications for educational practice, policy, and theory in promoting gender equality within Philippine public senior high schools. Suggesting that gender-focused educational programs should move beyond mere policy compliance and become more student-centered and experiential. Rather than relying only on seminars and information-driven activities, schools are encouraged to adopt strategies such as peer mediation, role-playing, and participatory workshops that allow students to practice inclusive and assertive behaviors in real school situations.

1. For DepEd and policymakers, the findings highlight the need to strengthen how gender-responsiveness is evaluated. Assessment should go beyond structural indicators and include behavioral and cultural outcomes, such as students' reports of respect, inclusion, and reduced discrimination. Special attention is also needed to ensure that LGBTQ+ learners are explicitly covered through clearer guidelines on safe spaces, inclusive celebrations, and non-discriminatory practices.
2. Finally, the study underscores the value of treating students as active agents in gender-education efforts. When learners help design and lead gender-focused initiatives, they are more likely to internalize values of equality and respect. This approach supports broader goals under SDG 4 and SDG 5 by promoting school environments that are not only formally inclusive but also genuinely gender-transformative in everyday practice.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following are recommended:

1. Schools should implement more experiential and action-based activities (e.g., role-playing, simulations, peer advocacy) to enhance students' gender-responsive behavior.
2. Schools should increase student involvement in planning and implementing GAD programs to ensure that students actively experience and internalize these initiatives.
3. Regular and sustained gender sensitivity trainings should be conducted for both students and teachers to reinforce knowledge and promote behavioral change.
4. Schools should ensure the availability of gender-support desks and safe spaces where students can freely express concerns and seek support.
5. Programs should focus on challenging deep-rooted gender stereotypes, particularly those related to leadership roles and social expectations.
6. Schools should improve data collection (e.g., sex-disaggregated data) and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of GAD programs.
7. Future studies may explore other factors influencing gender sensitivity, such as family background, peer influence, and media exposure, and may use qualitative approaches for deeper analysis.

Proposed Enhancement Program

Based on the findings of the study, particularly the moderate level of students' gender-responsive behavior and the absence of a significant relationship between program implementation and student development, an enhancement program is proposed to further strengthen students' gender sensitivity.

PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Title	GAD Action-Based Engagement Program (GAEP): Enhancing Gender Sensitivity Among Senior High School Students
Rationale	Although the results revealed that gender-focused programs are implemented to a high to very high extent, capacity building and student-focused gender sensitivity activities were only at a high level, indicating a need for enhancement. This program aims to strengthen students gender sensitivity development by providing structured, continuous, and participatory learning experiences.
General Objective	To enhance students' gender-responsive behavior through participatory, experiential, and action-oriented gender programs.
Specific Objective	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To strengthen students' ability to apply gender sensitivity in real-life situations 2. To encourage students to actively respond to gender-related issues 3. To increase student participation in gender advocacy initiatives 4. To bridge the gap between awareness and behavior
Target Beneficiaries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Senior High School Students 2. Student Leaders and Organization Members

Implementation Plan

Activity	Components	Target Participants	Timeline	Person Responsible
Safe Space Setup	Establish or improve gender-support desks Provide confidential reporting mechanisms	School Community	Start of School Year	School Head
Gender Action Workshop	Role-playing scenarios (e.g., discrimination cases) Simulation activities Group discussions	Students	Quarterly	GAD Coordinator
Advocacy Campaign	Peer education programs Student-created campaigns (posters, videos, forums)	Students	Monthly	Student Leaders
Speak-Up Program	Encourage reporting of gender discrimination Recognition system for students who promote inclusivity	Students	Continuous	Guidance Office
Training Sessions	Regular seminars for both students and teachers Focus on real-life	Teachers & Students	Semi-Annual	GAD Team



application, not just concepts			
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Expected Outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased gender-responsive behavior among students • Improved student participation in GAD programs • Reduced tolerance for gender-based discrimination and stereotypes • Stronger alignment between program implementation and student development • 	
Evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback surveys from students • Monitoring reports from GAD coordinators 	

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