



Philippine Normal University  
The National Center for Teacher Education

# Policy Brief Series

VOLUME 5 | Issue 5 | 2021

## INTEGRATING GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT AGENDA IN TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND PHILIPPINE STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS AND EDUCATION LEADERS

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Source: Philippine Commission on Women

### Executive Summary

Framed by Gender and Development (GAD) perspective, this policy brief provides recommendations to basic education and teacher education institutions (TEIs) on how to mainstream gender to achieve gender equality and women empowerment. Several policy guidelines and incentives were suggested using gender integration strategy in the Philippine Professional Standards for teachers and educational leaders as well as the core functions of higher education institutions.

The policy recommendations are based on the narratives of teachers, parents, and students during the pandemic through the focused group discussions conducted by the Sectoral Coordination Division of the Philippine Commission on Women. Several gender issues emerged from the data such as: gender stereotyping in instructional materials, gender violence, teenage pregnancy, and disruptions in schooling of boys and girls due to economic problems of their families



## Introduction

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has brought a number of disruptions in the educational system of the country. Schools have to shift their mode of delivery of instruction from traditional face-to-face to online learning, blended or print modular instruction among others. Teachers and school leaders needed to upgrade their skills in technology and pedagogical practices including assessment strategies using the digital platform. Working arrangements were challenged, e.g., work from home scheme, working by skeletal force. These conditions have also brought changes to the learning environment and the learners. Amidst these transitions and its challenges, are the gender issues that emerge while learners go through schooling.

It is important to perform gender analysis in the learning environments since schools are one of the social institutions that perpetuate gender biases and inequality. This policy paper is framed from the notion that gender inequality emanated from patriarchy where gender relations are not equal, the men are more powerful than the women. This type of gender relations occurs in the production process (public sphere) and reinforced by the reproduction process (private sphere) in capitalist societies (Bowman, 2016.). From the women's economic conditions, the analysis of gender inequalities and subordination is seen through social, historical, and cultural processes in various social institutions such as schools, church, and government, among others.

In schools, patterns of behavior and gender relations that show gender divisions similar to the practices of capitalist societies are shaped by the gendered practices of teachers and school leaders (Acker, 1997). The gendered practices are seen in the curriculum, school governance, pedagogy, school culture and support system among others. However, gendered practices that result in gender stereotyping, gender biases, and oppression may be reduced or not eradicated (Chisamy, DeJaeghere, and Kendal, 2012) in different ways. Strategies to achieve gender equality and women empowerment and the elimination of gender inequality may be designed in the education sector (Elina, 2014).

To achieve gender equality and women empowerment, the Philippines makes use of gender and development (GAD) framework to formulate gender agenda. As provided in the Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act 7910), GAD is an important lens to develop the potential of men and women in order to transform the political, economic, and socio-cultural landscapes of society where there is respect for human rights and achievement of gender equality and women empowerment. GAD also put emphasis on the participation of women in the political process to reinforce their legal rights. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action, and Sustainable Development Goal No. 5 serve as the international framework for GAD agenda in the Philippines.

While GAD provides the perspective and process for the integration of gender lens or concepts in development goals, gender mainstreaming (GM) is the strategy to achieve the goals of gender equality and women empowerment (<https://pcw.gov.ph/gender-mainstreaming/>). GM as a strategy was reaffirmed during the Fourth United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995 and continued until today especially by governments. One of the entry points of GM is the formulation of policies such as guidelines, issuances, department orders, executive orders, among others. Hence, the recommended policies in this paper are framed by GAD and GM.

Together with GAD and GM, the professional standards for teachers and education leaders form part of the framework in the formulation of policies for basic education. The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) (DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017) provides different indicators for the dimensions in teaching and learning. Similarly, the Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) (DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2020) and Professional Standards for School Supervisors (PPSS) (DepEd Order No. 25, s. 2020) offer sets of standards in leading and managing an organization and managing instruction respectively. These standards also serve as guidelines for the assessment of performance and career stages of teachers, school heads and school supervisors.



## Methodology

This policy brief is a result of a study on the narratives (Cresswell, 2015) of learners, teachers, and parents in the basic education level using focused group discussion as the main instrument in data collection through the online platform. There were thirty-three (33) teachers from elementary (36.4 %) and secondary level (63.6%); who participated in the focused group discussion, mostly females (72.41%) from the different regions of the country except Region VII, IX, and the Cordillera Administrative Region. In the case of twenty-eight (28) learners, there were more female participants (64%) than males (36%) from high school (64%) and elementary (32%) level and they came from the different regions of the country except regions VII, VIII, IX, and IX. As regards the twenty-four (24) parent-participants, the majority are females (70.83%) and 29.17% are males. There are more parents who have children in the secondary level (46.67%) than in the elementary (26.67%) level. Others did not disclose their data. Almost all regions had parent-participants except region IX and the Cordillera Administrative Region.

## Results

There were four important gender issues in basic education that surfaced based on the narratives of students, teachers and parents.

First, gender stereotyping was found in the images, illustrations, and texts of modules of learners. Traditional roles of men and women were shown such as women performing domestic work while men, as breadwinners, work outside of their condition reinforces the idea of biological determinists, that women perform domestic or reproductive roles while men do the productive functions due to their biological makeup (Scott, 1986). This condition manifests gender division of labor that often results in gender subordination or unequal gender relations (Bowman, 2016.).

The second issue was gender violence. Stories of rape and gender violence were shared by the students, teachers and parents. Some cases were observed before the pandemic and other stories happened during the pandemic. Rape and physical abuse were experienced by boys and girls while in their homes and communities, others were victims of cyberbullying and some were traumatized because they were pressured to look at pornographic materials. Gender violence is a form of oppression as a result of patriarchy where gender relations are not equal, men are more dominant than women.

Third, is on teenage pregnancy. Students, teachers, and parents have heard of young girls who became pregnant. Although teenage pregnancy was an issue even before the pandemic, this problem persisted even during lockdowns. This situation had forced young boys and girls to cohabit. Since they have to sustain their family in order to survive, young boys drop out of school to earn a living while girls have to take care of their babies. They are lucky if their parents will support them but those who came from poor families will have to survive on their own. These young people have already lost their opportunities for education as well as getting high earning jobs or putting up capital for business. Access to education is a basic human right as provided in the Magna Carta of Women, Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW, SDG Goal No. 4 and No. 5. With teenage pregnancy, early marriage, and dropping out of school for boys and girls, gender equality and women empowerment will be hard to achieve.

The fourth issue is the differential behavior of boys and girls to schooling. The girls are found to be more patient in accomplishing their performance tasks than the boys. Girls were observed to perform better than boys in doing independent school tasks. In poor families, boys and girls were forced to work since their parents have lost their jobs or business during the pandemic. The girls persisted to do their school tasks while boys tended to drop out from school and work. Probably because they were too tired from construction work, hence, they cannot work on their assignments in school and later leave schooling. Again, this type of situation has deprived them of the right to education and later right to a decent and sustainable economic condition. Gender inequality will still also stay with this type of environment.



## Policy Recommendations: Integrating Gender and Development Agenda in Professional Standards for Teachers and Education Leaders

On the basis of the gender issues that emerged from the narratives, the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education, specifically the Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) may formulate policy guidelines integrating gender and development perspectives in the professional standards for teachers, school heads and school supervisors.

Below are the policies which may be developed for schools and other units of DepEd.

1. Integrating gender concepts and perspectives, gender-fair education, and gender fair language in various Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) Domains. Guidelines in the process of integration as well as different means of verification may be established in the domains including the strands and career stages such as: Domain 1-content knowledge and pedagogy; Domain 2-Learning environment; Domain 3-Diversity of learners; Domain 4- Curriculum and planning; Domain 5-Assessment and reporting; Domain 6- Community linkages and professional engagement; and Domain 7- Personal growth and professional development.
2. Guidelines in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender responsive programs in schools may also be developed. The framework for the development policy guidelines will be the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) Domains including the strands and career stages such as: Domain 1 – Leading strategically; Domain 2 – Managing school operations and resources; Domain 3 – Focusing teaching and learning; Domain 4 – Developing self and others; and Domain 5 – Building connections.

Guidelines integrating GAD may be done but not limited to the following activities:

- a) GAD agenda/gender-fair education principles are in the VMGO;
  - b) gender-fair education, gender equality, and women empowerment is part of school planning and implementation, policy review and implementation, and program design and implementation;
  - c) inclusive equipment and facilities; d) school-based and community-based health education projects;
  - d) projects on safe spaces act, anti-sexual harassment, and anti-bastos law;
  - e) capability development for faculty and staff;
  - f) assessment tools for gender fair principles and language in teaching and learning, and assessment; and
  - g) gender-fair and gender-responsive evaluation framework for schools.
3. Policy guidelines in promoting gender responsive programs based on Philippine Professional Standards for School Supervisors (PPSS) Domains as well as the strands and career stages. These domains include: Domain 1 – Supporting curriculum management and implementation; Domain 2 – Strengthening shared accountability; Domain 3 – Fostering a culture of shared responsibility; and Domain 4 – Developing self and others.

Program guidelines may be formulated to a) ensure that gender-fair education principles permeate in curriculum implementation and contextualization; b) promote GAD Agenda in the curriculum; c) Teacher's administrative tasks—printing, distribution, retrieval of modules, and others; d) development of instructional materials devoid of gender stereotyping; e) male and female teachers pursuing graduate studies in gender and women's studies; f) male and female teachers promoting safe spaces, gender equality, and women empowerment; g) ensuring that learning environments are safe for boys and girls; and h) other gender fair and gender responsive activities.



4. Policy on Incentives may be designed for teachers who were able to do programs or projects that lead to:  
a) Operationalization of gender-fair strategies in teaching and learning; b) Utilization of teaching strategies that are gender fair and inclusive; c) Development of gender-fair assessment tools; and d) Establishment of school and community partnership to help prevent gender-based violence, teenage pregnancy, teen parents, and child labor; and e) other forms of job embedded projects.
5. Similarly, policy incentives for school heads and school supervisors who develop projects with the different stakeholders (parents, LGUs, industry, and HEIs/TEIs) on gender-responsive programs to prevent dropouts, gender-based violence, teen marriages, early pregnancy, and a heavy load of household chores; and scholarship programs/grants-in-aid to students who are below average, with disabilities, indigenous peoples, or children in vulnerable situations
6. Gender and development may also be part of the research agenda of DepEd. In its role to improve the quality of education, the research agenda of DepEd should also contribute to the development of research-based knowledge in content knowledge (CK), pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPCK), and supporting mechanisms to eliminate gender biases and gender inequalities in society.

Teacher education institutions may also develop policy guidelines and policy incentives along the core functions of the university: research, instruction, and extension or civic engagement.

1. In instruction, it is important to align GAD perspective and professional standards for teachers and education leaders in its curricular goals and design. They may develop policies on the a) development Vision, Mission, Goals, and objectives as bases of the curriculum; b) syllabus; c) assessment tools; d) performance tasks; e) instructional materials; f) co-curricular activities; g) offering the specialization in Women's Studies or Gender Studies and h) student services.
2. In research, GAD and GM may form part of the university research agenda and incentive system. Research along the area of scholarship of teaching, gender equality and women empowerment may contribute to SDG no. 5 and no. 4.
3. The university's engagement with the communities or local government units is a form of contribution to the implementation of the development policy of the country. Similar to the research agenda, the university extension program may develop an extension framework with GAD and GM and the professional standards for teachers and education leaders.

Boys and girls, men and women serve as the indispensable human capital of a country. Necessarily, their skills should be developed and strengthened to harness our resources. To do this, everyone should have access to quality education. However, the narratives of the teachers, learners, and teachers show that there are still a number of gender issues waiting to be resolved. Hence, this policy brief offers GAD and GM strategies for the education sector so that graduates will be a Filipino who is gender fair, gender sensitive, and inclusive who in turn will contribute to the goals on gender equality and women empowerment.

## Acknowledgement

The FGD data in this paper are from the project titled: *FGD on Gender Issues for Policy Recommendation in Basic Education* which was funded and conducted by the **Sectoral Coordination Division** of the **Philippine Commission on Women** last March 2021.



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