

Awareness And Knowledge On The Implementation Of The Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy In A Local College: Inputs For Policy Recommendation

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Abstract— This study explored senior high school students' awareness and knowledge of the Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Policy at Baliwag Polytechnic College. Using a mixed-methods approach, it assessed students' understanding of the policy and the factors influencing their awareness.

Findings showed that while students were somewhat aware of GRBE, many had limited knowledge of its details and applications. Access to information, teacher involvement, and school initiatives played key roles in shaping their understanding. A gap was found between students' perceived awareness and actual knowledge, highlighting the need for better dissemination and integration of gender-responsive education.

Based on these results, the study recommends strategies to improve the accessibility and communication of GRBE in schools. Strengthening policy implementation will help create a more inclusive and informed learning environment. Further research is encouraged to examine the impact of gender-responsive education on student engagement and academic performance, ensuring continuous improvement in policy execution.

Keywords— Gender-Responsive Education; awareness; knowledge; policy implementation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a pivotal role in shaping an inclusive society, where every learner, regardless of gender, is afforded equal opportunities and a supportive environment to thrive. As global and national efforts intensify towards promoting gender equity, the Philippine education system recognizes the need to address deeply rooted gender biases and discriminatory practices within schools. This acknowledgment is particularly crucial in the senior high school level, where students begin to form critical perspectives on social issues, including gender roles and equality. By fostering awareness and understanding of gender-responsive policies, schools can empower students and educators alike to become

active proponents of equity and inclusivity, ensuring that the principles of gender equality are not only taught but practiced within and beyond the classroom.

The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines implemented the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy through DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017, in response to the need for gender equality in education. The policy aims to promote gender equality by eliminating discriminatory practices and creating an inclusive school environment that ensures equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of gender. It is in alignment with global commitments, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5, which advocates for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls (World Bank, 2021) [1]

The Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy aims to create a learning environment that supports gender equity, ensuring that all learners, regardless of gender, experience non-discriminatory educational practices. It requires schools to integrate gender-responsive teaching materials (Dorji, T. 2020; Tariman, 2020) [2] address gender-basic violence (Suzor et al., 2019) [3] and promote a safe space (Arao & Clemens, 2023) [4] for all genders. Teachers are trained to recognize and counteract gender biases in both content and pedagogy. The policy also mandates the creation of school environments where students feel safe to express their identities without fear of judgment or discrimination (Anderson, 2020) [5]

According to Marmani (2021) [6] despite various efforts worldwide to address gender inequality, the problem still exists. It is suggested that creating and implementing teacher training programs is important to encourage educational practices that support gender equality in schools. In spite of the well-meaning provisions of this policy, the level of awareness and knowledge among senior high school students remains a significant issue. Studies indicate that many students have limited understanding of gender-responsive policies (Dorji, 2020) [7] resulting in a disconnect between the policy's objectives and their daily experiences in school. According to findings by local educational stakeholders, while the DepEd has made strides in raising awareness about gender sensitivity these efforts have yet to fully permeate all

levels of the student body, especially in rural areas or in schools with limited resources (Manalang 2023) [8].

B. Awareness

Awareness, on the other hand, is the recognition or realization of the existence and importance of certain issues, practices, or conditions. It goes beyond just knowing; it includes being conscious and mindful of how certain concepts (like gender equity) affect oneself and others. Studies such as those by (UNESCO 2021) [9], emphasize that awareness is essential for initiating change, particularly in educational settings, where it fosters empathy, inclusivity, and advocacy for equitable practices. In this study, awareness pertains to whether senior high school students, as well as their teachers, are familiar with gender-responsive basic education policy or GRBE policy. Research suggests that increasing awareness can influence behavior change.

C. Knowledge

Knowledge refers to the understanding and information an individual has acquired through education, experience, or exposure to specific content. In the context of gender-responsive education or similar fields, knowledge involves being informed about relevant policies, principles, and practices. According to Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen's 1991) [10], knowledge plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes and influencing behavior, suggesting that the more knowledgeable individuals are about a subject, the more likely they are to act in alignment with it. In the context of this study, if both senior high school students and teachers have not heard of the gender-responsive basic education policy or GRBE policy, they are unaware of it. If they understand its specific purpose and application, they are knowledgeable about it.

D. Research Problem and Hypothesis

This study aims to determine the Awareness and Knowledge on the Implementation of Gender Responsive Basic Education Policy among Senior High School Students in Dalubhasaang Politekniko ng Lungsod ng Baliwag Senior High School Department.

Specifically, it will seek to answer the research problems as follows.

- 1) How may the demographic profile of the respondents be described in terms of:
 - a) students
 - b) gender; and
 - c) grade level;
 - d) teachers; and
 - e) gender?
- 2) How may the awareness on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy as assessed by the two groups of respondents described in terms of:
 - a) familiarity with the policy;
 - b) source of information; and
 - c) perception of relevance?
- 3) How may the knowledge on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy as

assessed by the two groups of respondents described in terms of:

- a) understanding of policy objectives;
 - b) knowledge of policy provisions; and
 - c) awareness of rights and responsibilities?
- 4) Is there a significant difference on the perceptions of the respondents on the awareness and knowledge of the implementation of Gender-responsive basic education policy, when grouped according to their demographic profile?
 - 5) Is there a significant difference in the awareness and knowledge on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy as assessed by the two groups of respondents?
 - 6) How does the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy shaped the experiences, practices, gender biases, and gender awareness of the teachers and students?
 - 7) Based on the results of the study, what policy recommendation or support program may be derived?

Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses have been formulated.

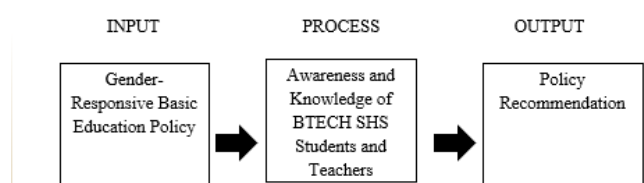
H1: There is no significant difference in the awareness and knowledge of the Gender-responsive basic education policy between students and teachers when grouped according to their demographic profile.

H2: There is no significant difference in the awareness and knowledge of the implementation of the GRBE Policy as assessed by the two groups of respondents.

E. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.

Paradigm of the Study



The Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) policy, established by the Department of Education, aims to eliminate discriminatory practices and foster an inclusive educational environment by integrating gender-responsive teaching materials, training teachers to address biases, and creating safe spaces for all genders. However, students' awareness and knowledge of the policy remain a challenge, influenced by factors such as educational exposure, socioeconomic background, and socialization agents like family, peers, and media.

Effective policy implementation depends on students' awareness, as informed students can advocate for inclusivity, while low awareness perpetuates stereotypes and discrimination. Teachers' preparedness is also vital, as well-trained educators

are essential for delivering gender-responsive education.

This research identifies gaps in awareness and knowledge to guide interventions such as workshops and curriculum revisions, improving the policy's implementation. Drawing on global best practices from countries like Canada and Sweden, the study aims to refine the GRBE policy for greater inclusivity in the Philippines.

Using Gender Schema Theory, the conceptual framework highlights the interplay. (Bem 1981) [11]. It explains how individuals develop gender identity and understand gender roles through the internalization of cultural norms and societal expectations. According to this theory, children learn about what it means to be male or female from their surroundings (e.g., family, media, school), and they organize this information into schemas—mental structures that help them interpret and categorize experiences related to gender of key components: the GRBE policy, exposure to gender-responsive practices, and socialization agents. These factors influence students' cognitive frameworks (gender schemas), shaping their understanding of gender issues. Addressing these elements can foster more progressive gender perceptions, enhancing the effectiveness of the GRBE policy and creating an equitable educational environment.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

This research will utilize a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative techniques for data collection and analysis. This methodological integration provides a comprehensive understanding of the research problem, combining statistical data for quantitative analysis with narrative data for qualitative insights. The quantitative component involves administering a structured survey to a representative sample, allowing for the collection of numerical data to test the proposed hypotheses. In contrast, the qualitative component employs semi-structured interviews with key participants to explore more nuanced perspectives and deeper insights. By triangulating these methods, the study aims to ensure the validity and reliability of its findings, contributing meaningfully to the existing literature in the field.

B. Sampling and Respondents

To ensure comprehensive representation and the collection of meaningful insights, this study will utilize proportional stratified sampling, the population is divided into different subgroups or "strata" and the sample size for each stratum is determined basic on the proportion of that stratum to the total population. This ensures that the sample size from each group reflects the group's size relative to the entire population. Given that the study requires students belonging to the LGBT community and the teachers who engage with them, proportional stratified sampling is deemed the most appropriate strategy for identifying

respondents who can provide valuable and relevant data.

Subsequently, within each category (L, G, B, T,) respondents will be randomly selected using simple random sampling techniques. This method will not only minimize bias but will also guarantee that every student has an equal opportunity to be chosen. This rigorous approach will ensure that the findings reflect the breadth and depth of insights sought from the student population across various academic disciplines. Furthermore, this sampling approach is well-suited to this study because the participants are exclusively comprised of senior high school students and teachers from Baliwag Polytechnic College.

In the qualitative phase of the study, the researcher will select two respondents from each category (L, G, B, T) to enable an in-depth examination of diverse experiences, practices, gender biases, and instances of gender blindness within their local college. Respondents will be given ample time to respond to the questions and share their views and experiences, ensuring that the data collected will be substantial and valuable for the research

Table 1.

Respondents of the Study

Gender	ABM	GAS	HUMSS	STEM	TVL	TOTAL	SAMPLE SIZE
Lesbian	16	23	37	14	23	113	88
Gay	26	14	10	12	26	88	72
Bisexual	123	67	218	54	52	514	225
Transgender	1	1	2	0	4	8	8
TOTAL	166	105	267	80	105	723	393

C. Instrument

The quantitative questionnaire aims to explore the level of awareness and knowledge regarding the implementation of the Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Policy at Dalubhasaang Politekniko ng Lungsod ng Baliwag. The questionnaire includes categories such as the respondents' familiarity with the policy, sources of information, perception of relevance, understanding of policy objectives, knowledge of policy provisions, and awareness of rights and responsibilities.

By focusing on awareness and knowledge, the instrument seeks to identify gaps that may hinder the successful implementation of the policy. This data will serve as the foundation for recommending strategies, such as training programs or information campaigns, to enhance understanding and support the effective adoption of the Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Policy within the institution.

Moreover, the subsequent sets of questions were carefully designed by the researcher and validated by experts with extensive knowledge in the development and implementation of school policies and gender studies. This validation process ensured that the instrument is accurate, reliable, and aligned with the objectives of the study. Additionally, the instrument was tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a strong reliability score of 0.920 for

awareness and 0.745 for knowledge. Further confirming the reliability's consistency and suitability for the study.

To collect qualitative data, participants will be invited to a semi-structured interview. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative research method that combines both structured and unstructured interviewing techniques. The researcher will prepare a set of open-ended questions about students' experiences, practices, gender biases, and gender blindness to guide the conversation while allowing flexibility in responses. This approach enables the interviewer to probe deeper into participants' answers, ask follow-up questions, and explore topics that may arise organically during the discussion.

D. Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher will follow essential protocols before administering the survey questionnaire and personal reflection prompts. First, a formal request will be submitted to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Research and at Dalubhasaang Politekniko ng Lungsod ng Baliwag to obtain authorization for the study. Once permission is granted, the approved request will be sent to the Senior High School Principal, who will be briefed on the study's objectives and scope.

Next, the researcher will draft a letter of consent for the selected participants. The survey questionnaire will be administered in person to ensure clarity and completeness in data collection. In the qualitative phase, participants will be invited to participate in semi-structured interviews, enhancing the richness of the data.

On the other hand, the survey instrument was personally distributed, and respondents were assured of anonymity in compliance with Memorandum No. 9, Section 2022. The respondents' personal information was safeguarded and guaranteed to be used exclusively for the purposes of the study.

The collected data will be systematically summarized, tallied, tabulated, and analyzed using rigorous statistical methods, with oversight from a qualified statistician. This thorough approach guarantees that the data collected is robust and insightful, leading to meaningful interpretations and conclusions.

E. Data Analysis

In this study, several statistical techniques were employed to interpret the collected quantitative data, which was crucial for effectively utilizing the data. To describe the students' social identity perspective, calculations for the range, mean, and standard deviation were executed. The specific formula used to compute the mean and standard deviation helped provide insights into the data.

The mean served as a mathematical average for a set of numerical data, while the standard deviation quantified the level of variation or dispersion among the data values. This computation was conducted to determine both the average value or mean and the

extent of deviation between individual results. A low standard deviation suggested that the data points were closely clustered around the mean (also known as the expected value), whereas a high standard deviation indicated that the data points were dispersed across a wider range of values.

Concurrently, T-tests were applied to examine various relationships. Initially, a correlation analysis was employed to assess the difference between students' gender nonconforming inclusive practices when grouped to the students' demographic profile and the difference between students' social identity perspective when grouped according to their demographic profile. Subsequently, a correlation matrix was constructed to explore significant relationship between students' social identity perspectives and gender nonconforming inclusive practices.

Regarding the qualitative data gathered, a content analysis narrated the data taken from the interview.

III. RESULTS

1) How may the demographic profile of the respondents be described in terms of:

- students
- gender; and
- grade level;
- teachers; and
- gender?

Table 2.

Description of students' demographic profile in terms of gender

Gender	F	%
Lesbian	88	22.39
Gay	72	18.32
Bisexual	225	57.25
Transgender	8	2.04

These findings highlight the diverse gender identities present among students, emphasizing the importance of implementing gender-responsive policies to ensure inclusivity and equal opportunities

Table 3.

Description of students' demographic profile in terms of grade level

Grade Level	F	%
Grade 11	177	45.04
Grade 12	216	54.96

within the school environment.

This near-equal representation of both grade levels suggests that insights on awareness and knowledge of gender-responsive policies come from students at different stages of their senior high school education, providing a well-balanced perspective on

Table 4.

Description of teachers' demographic profile in terms of gender

Gender	F	%
Lesbian	0	0.00
Gay	3	42.86
Bisexual	4	57.14
Transgender	0	0.00

the implementation of these policies within the school.

This distribution highlights the presence of diverse gender identities among teachers, which may influence their perspectives on gender-responsive policies within the school. The representation of LGBTQ+ educators suggests that their insights could contribute to understanding the inclusivity and effectiveness of these policies in addressing diverse gender identities within the academic environment.

- 2) *How may the awareness on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy as assessed by the two groups of respondents described in terms of:*
 - a) *familiarity with the policy;*
 - b) *source of information; and*
 - c) *perception of relevance?*

A. Familiarity with the policy

Familiarity with the Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Policy refers to the level of awareness and understanding that students and teachers have regarding its implementation in the school setting. This familiarity allows individuals to recognize gender-responsive initiatives, policies, and programs designed to promote inclusivity and equality in education. A well-informed school community fosters a supportive learning environment where gender fairness and respect are upheld.

Table 5.

Students and Teachers' awareness on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy in terms of familiarity with the policy.

Item Statement	Student		Teacher	
Familiarity with the policy	WM	VI	WM	VI
<i>As a senior high school student/teacher of BTECH,</i>				
1. I am aware of initiatives that promote gender equality in all aspects of learner development at school.	4.25	SA	4.29	SA
2. I am aware that the school observes and celebrates events related to Gender and Development (GAD) as part of the school calendar.	3.87	A	4.00	A
3. I am aware of policies that support gender-responsive approaches in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment within the school.	4.08	A	4.14	A
4. I am aware that the school provides training and capacity-building activities for teachers and staff on gender-responsive education.	3.69	A	3.71	A
Continuation of Table 5...				
5. I am aware of the school's guidelines and mechanisms for reporting and addressing gender-basic discrimination and harassment.	4.16	A	4.00	A
Standard Deviation	0.77		0.84	
Grand Mean	4.01	A	4.03	A

Legend: 1.00-1.79 "Strongly Disagree (SD)" 1.80-2.39 "Disagree (D)" 2.40-3.39 "Neutral (N)" 3.40-4.19 "Agree (A)" 4.20-5.00 "Strongly Agree (SA)"

Considering the grand mean, students exhibited an overall awareness level of 4.01 ("Agree"), while teachers showed a slightly higher grand mean of 4.03 ("Agree"), highlighting strong recognition of gender-responsive policies among both groups. The standard deviation values of 0.77 for students and 0.84 for teachers suggest that, although responses were relatively consistent, teachers displayed slightly more

variability in their perceptions, implying that individual differences in understanding and exposure to gender-responsive policies may be more evident among teachers.

In Table 5, the highest weighted mean for students (4.25, "Strongly Agree") was observed in statement 1, "I am aware of initiatives that promote gender equality in all aspects of learner development at school." Similarly, for teachers, statement 1 also had the highest weighted mean (4.29, "Strongly Agree"), indicating a strong awareness of gender equality initiatives in both groups.

On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean for students (3.69, "Agree") was recorded for statement 4, "I am aware that the school provides training and capacity-building activities for teachers and staff on gender-responsive education." A similar trend was found for teachers, with the lowest weighted mean (3.71, "Agree") for the same statement. Though both groups acknowledged the existence of these training initiatives, the lower ratings suggest a need for further focus on capacity-building efforts.

Overall, these findings suggest that while gender-responsive policies and initiatives are recognized by both students and teachers, there is a clear need to enhance professional development efforts to strengthen their practical implementation.

B. Source of Information

The Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Policy serves as a source of information through orientations, training, materials, discussions, and official communications. Ensuring access to accurate information fosters awareness and engagement in gender-responsive education.

Table 6.

Students and Teachers' awareness on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy in terms of source of information.

Item Statement	Student		Teacher	
Source of Information	WM	VI	WM	VI
<i>As a senior high school student/teacher of BTECH,</i>				
1. I have received information about gender-responsive policies through official school orientations or briefings.	3.92	A	3.86	A
2. I have learned about gender-responsive policies through events, training sessions, or seminars organized by the school.	4.21	SA	4.14	A
3. I have accessed information about gender-responsive policies through printed or digital school materials.	3.69	A	3.29	A
4. I have been informed about gender-responsive policies through discussions with teachers, school staff, or peers.	4.27	SA	4.00	A
5. I have learned about gender-responsive policies through official school communication channels such as newsletters, announcements, or the school website.	4.32	SA	3.86	A
Standard Deviation	0.77		0.75	
Grand Mean	4.08	A	3.83	A

Legend: 1.00-1.79 "Strongly Disagree (SD)" 1.80-2.39 "Disagree (D)" 2.40-3.39 "Neutral (N)" 3.40-4.19 "Agree (A)" 4.20-5.00 "Strongly Agree (SA)"

Considering the grand mean, students

demonstrated an overall awareness level of 4.08 ("Agree"), while teachers had a slightly lower grand mean of 3.83 ("Agree"). Furthermore, the standard deviation values of 0.77 for students and 0.75 for teachers suggest a relatively consistent set of responses, with teachers showing slightly less variation in their perceptions. This implies that while awareness is generally high, there may be differences in how information is disseminated and accessed among teachers and students.

As shown in Table 6, the highest weighted mean for students (4.32, "Strongly Agree") was for statement 5, "I have learned about gender-responsive policies through official school communication channels such as newsletters, announcements, or the school website." This indicates that students primarily receive information through formal school communication platforms. For teachers, the highest weighted mean (4.14, "Agree") was for statement 2, "I have learned about gender-responsive policies through events, training sessions, or seminars organized by the school." This suggests that teachers rely more on structured learning sessions for information about gender-responsive policies.

On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean for students (3.69, "Agree") was recorded in statement 3, "I have accessed information about gender-responsive policies through printed or digital school materials." Among teachers, statement 3 also had the lowest weighted mean, but at a slightly lower 3.29 ("Neutral"), suggesting that printed or digital materials may not be a primary source of information for them. These results imply that while formal school communication and organized training sessions play a crucial role in raising awareness of gender-responsive policies, the effectiveness of printed and digital materials as a source of information may need to be strengthened, especially for teachers. This aligns with previous studies emphasizing that institutional policies must be communicated through multiple channels to ensure accessibility and engagement (UNESCO, 2021).

C. Perception of Relevance

The perception of relevance refers to how students and teachers view the importance and impact of the Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Policy in the school environment. It reflects their beliefs about the policy's role in fostering inclusivity, preventing discrimination, and promoting a supportive learning atmosphere. A strong perception of relevance indicates that respondents recognize the value of gender-responsive education in creating a fair and equitable academic setting.

Table 7.

Students and Teachers' awareness on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy in terms of perception of relevance.

Item Statement	Student		Teacher	
Perception of Relevance	WM	VI	WM	VI
<i>As a senior high school student/teacher of BTECH,</i>				
1. I believe that gender-responsive policies are essential for promoting <u>inclusivity</u> in education.	4.35	SA	4.43	SA
2. I find the initiatives related to gender responsiveness relevant and beneficial to both students and teachers.	4.45	SA	4.43	SA
3. I perceive gender-responsive practices as an integral part of creating a supportive learning environment.	4.16	A	4.43	SA
4. I believe that implementing gender-responsive policies contributes to the holistic development of all learners.	4.40	SA	4.43	SA
5. I consider gender-responsive policies essential in preventing discrimination and fostering respect among students and staff.	4.39	SA	4.57	SA
Standard Deviation	0.84		1.02	
Grand Mean	4.35	SA	4.46	SA

Legend: 1.00-1.79 "Strongly Disagree (SD)" 1.80-2.59 "Disagree (D)" 2.60-3.39 "Neutral (N)" 3.40-4.19 "Agree (A)" 4.20-5.00 "Strongly Agree (SA)"

Observing the grand mean, both students (4.35, "Strongly Agree") and teachers (4.46, "Strongly Agree") consistently acknowledge the significance of gender-responsive policies in education. This demonstrates a shared understanding between both groups on the importance of these policies in fostering inclusivity, preventing discrimination, and promoting holistic development.

In addition, the standard deviation values of 0.84 for students and 1.02 for teachers indicate that while students' responses remain relatively stable, teachers display slightly more variability in their

perceptions. This variation may be attributed to differences in engagement or exposure to gender-responsive initiatives among faculty members.

As presented in Table 7, the highest weighted mean for teachers (4.57, "Strongly Agree") was for statement 5, "I consider gender-responsive policies essential in preventing discrimination and fostering respect among students and staff." This underscores that teachers strongly recognize the role of these policies in creating an inclusive and respectful school environment. Meanwhile, for students, the highest weighted mean (4.45, "Strongly Agree") was recorded in statement 2, "I find the initiatives related to gender responsiveness relevant and beneficial to both students and teachers." This suggests that students perceive these initiatives as essential in shaping an equitable learning experience.

On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean for students (4.16, "Agree") appeared in statement 3, "I perceive gender-responsive practices as an integral part of creating a supportive learning environment."

Among teachers, however, no statement fell below the "Strongly Agree" threshold, with statement 3 also registering the lowest weighted mean at 4.43. This indicates that while students generally agree on the relevance of gender-responsive practices, teachers exhibit a more uniformly strong affirmation of their importance.

These findings suggest that both students and teachers recognize the essential role of gender-responsive policies in ensuring an inclusive and respectful educational environment. This aligns with prior studies emphasizing that awareness and positive perceptions of gender inclusivity contribute to a more equitable learning experience (UNESCO, 2021). Research underscores the positive impact of gender-responsive education policies in fostering inclusivity and equity within schools.

3) *How may the knowledge on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy as assessed by the two groups of respondents described in terms of:*

- understanding of policy objectives;*
- knowledge of policy provisions; and*
- awareness of rights and responsibilities?*

A. Understanding of the Policy Objectives

Understanding of policy objectives refers to the extent to which students and teachers comprehend the goals of the Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Policy. This includes awareness of how the policy promotes gender equality, addresses gender-basic biases, and ensures equal opportunities for all learners. A clear understanding of these objectives enables the school community to actively support and implement gender-

With regard to the grand mean, both students (3.97, "Agree") and teachers (4.09, "Agree") exhibit a positive, albeit slightly varied, understanding of gender-responsive policy objectives. Teachers show a slightly higher level of agreement, which may be attributed to their professional exposure and training related to gender-responsive education.

Moreover, the standard deviation values of 0.72 for students and 0.79 for teachers indicate that responses remained stable, with teachers displaying slightly more variation in their perceptions. This variation could stem from differences in professional development experiences and familiarity with gender-responsive frameworks.

As outlined in Table 8, the highest weighted mean for teachers (4.14, "Agree") was recorded in three statements: statement 1, "I understand the objectives of policies that promote gender-responsive education," statement 4, "I understand how gender-responsive policies aim to address and eliminate gender-based biases in the learning environment," and statement 5, "I am aware of how gender-responsive policies support equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of gender identity or expression." This suggests that teachers have a well-rounded understanding of the key objectives of gender-responsive policies, particularly in addressing biases and promoting equal opportunities.

Similarly, for students, the highest weighted mean (4.12, "Agree") was observed in statement 1, "I understand the objectives of policies that promote gender-responsive education." This indicates that while students generally grasp the purpose of gender-responsive policies, their understanding may not be as comprehensive as that of teachers.

In contrast, the lowest weighted mean for students (3.70, "Agree") was recorded in statement 4, "I understand how gender-responsive policies aim to address and eliminate gender-based biases in the learning environment." This suggests that while students recognize these policies, their comprehension of how they actively address gender biases may be somewhat limited. Among teachers, the lowest weighted mean (4.00, "Agree") appeared in statements 2 and 3, implying that although they understand the broader objectives, there may be minor gaps in their knowledge of specific policy applications.

These findings indicate that while both students and teachers generally acknowledge the importance of gender-responsive policies, further efforts may be required to enhance their understanding—especially regarding the elimination of gender biases and the integration of gender equality into educational practices.

B. Knowledge of Policy Provisions

Knowledge of policy provisions refers to the awareness and understanding of the specific guidelines and standards outlined in the Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Policy. This includes familiarity with the integration of gender and

Table 8.
Students and Teachers' knowledge on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy in terms of understanding of policy objectives.

Item Statement	Student		Teacher	
Understanding of Policy Objectives	WM	VI	WM	VI
<i>As a senior high school student/teacher of BTECH,</i>				
1. I understand the objectives of policies that promote gender-responsive education.	4.12	A	4.14	A
2. I know the goals of integrating gender equality into educational practices.	3.99	A	4.00	A
3. I can explain how gender-responsive policies contribute to my development and well-being.	4.07	A	4.00	A
4. I understand how gender-responsive policies aim to address and eliminate gender-basic biases in the learning environment.	3.70	A	4.14	A
5. I am aware of how gender-responsive policies support equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of gender identity or expression.	3.96	A	4.14	A
Standard Deviation	0.72		0.79	
Grand Mean	3.97	A	4.09	A

Legend: 1.00-1.79 "Strongly Disagree (SD)" 1.80-2.59 "Disagree (D)" 2.60-3.39 "Neutral (N)" 3.40-4.19 "Agree (A)" 4.20-5.00 "Strongly Agree (SA)"

responsive practices in education.

development (GAD) principles in the curriculum, gender-sensitive learning approaches, the use of gender-fair language, and policies ensuring safe and inclusive school environments. A strong knowledge of these provisions enables students and teachers to effectively uphold and implement gender-responsive education.

Table 9.

Students and Teachers' knowledge on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy in terms of knowledge of policy provisions.

Item Statement	Student		Teacher	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
Knowledge of Policy Provisions				
<i>As a senior high school student/teacher of BTECH,</i>				
1. I know about the integration of GAD and human rights competencies in our curriculum across grade levels.	3.79	A	4.00	A
2. I know about the minimum standards on gender sensitivity applied to learning areas, training, and programs in our school.	3.99	A	4.29	SA
3. I know about policies and guidelines enabling gender-responsive learning delivery.	3.59	A	3.86	A
4. I am familiar with the school's policies ensuring the use of gender-fair language in instructional materials and communication.	3.99	A	4.29	SA
5. I am aware of the provisions that promote safe spaces and protection from gender-basic violence within the school premises.	4.17	A	4.57	SA
Standard Deviation	0.93		0.73	
Grand Mean	3.90	A	4.20	SA

Legend: 1.00-1.79 "Strongly Disagree (SD)" 1.80-2.59 "Disagree (D)" 2.60-3.39 "Neutral (N)" 3.40-4.19 "Agree (A)" 4.20-5.00 "Strongly Agree (SA)"

The grand mean shows that students had a mean of 3.90 ("Agree"), while teachers had a slightly higher mean of 4.20 ("Strongly Agree"). This suggests that teachers generally possess a stronger knowledge of policy provisions compared to students, which is expected given their professional responsibilities in policy implementation.

Additionally, the standard deviation values of 0.93 for students and 0.73 for teachers indicate that students' responses varied more, reflecting differing levels of awareness and understanding. Meanwhile, teachers' responses were more consistent, suggesting a more uniform perspective on gender-responsive policy provisions.

As presented in Table 9, the highest weighted mean for teachers (4.57, "Strongly Agree") was found in statement 5, "I am aware of the provisions that promote safe spaces and protection from gender-based violence within the school premises." This highlights a strong level of awareness among teachers regarding policies that ensure the safety and protection of students and staff. Similarly, the highest weighted mean for students (4.17, "Agree") was also in statement 5, suggesting that while students recognize the importance of safe spaces within the school environment, they may still need further understanding or reinforcement regarding specific provisions.

For teachers, statements 2 and 4, which address gender sensitivity in learning areas and the use of gender-fair language, both received a weighted mean of 4.29 ("Strongly Agree"), demonstrating their

strong familiarity with these policy provisions. Meanwhile, students rated the same statements at 3.99 ("Agree"), indicating that while they acknowledge the presence of these policies, they may not be as deeply engaged in their implementation.

On the contrary, the lowest weighted mean for students (3.59, "Agree") was recorded in statement 3, "I know about policies and guidelines enabling gender-responsive learning delivery." This suggests that students may not be fully aware of how gender-responsive teaching strategies are integrated into their learning experiences. For teachers, the lowest weighted mean (3.86, "Agree") was also found in statement 3, indicating that while they recognize gender-responsive learning guidelines, there may still be areas for improvement in training and implementation.

These findings suggest that while both students and teachers acknowledge the presence of gender-responsive policies within the school, there is a need to further enhance students' awareness, particularly in understanding how these policies translate into actual learning experiences.

C. Awareness of Rights and Responsibilities

Awareness of rights and responsibilities refers to students' and teachers' understanding of their roles in upholding the Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Policy. It includes recognizing their rights to a safe, inclusive environment and their duty to promote gender fairness, respect diversity, and prevent discrimination. Strong awareness fosters active participation in a gender-responsive school culture.

Table 10.

Students and Teachers' knowledge on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy in terms of awareness of rights and responsibilities.

Item Statement	Student		Teacher	
	WM	VI	WM	VI
Awareness of Rights and Responsibilities				
<i>As a senior high school student/teacher of BTECH,</i>				
1. I understand my rights and responsibilities as outlined in gender-responsive education policies.	4.29	SA	4.29	SA
2. I understand the roles of administrators, guidance counselors, and teachers in implementing these policies.	4.13	A	4.29	SA
3. I understand how the school ensures a gender-responsive physical and social learning environment.	4.23	SA	4.29	SA
4. I am aware of my right to participate in school activities and programs that promote gender equality and inclusivity.	4.13	A	4.29	SA
5. I understand my responsibility to contribute to a learning environment that respects diversity and upholds gender fairness.	4.25	SA	4.00	A
Standard Deviation	0.82		0.78	
Grand Mean	4.21	SA	4.23	SA

Legend: 1.00-1.79 "Strongly Disagree (SD)" 1.80-2.59 "Disagree (D)" 2.60-3.39 "Neutral (N)" 3.40-4.19 "Agree (A)" 4.20-5.00 "Strongly Agree (SA)"

Considering the grand mean, students had an average of 4.21 ("Strongly Agree"), while teachers had a slightly higher mean of 4.23 ("Strongly Agree"), indicating a generally strong awareness among both groups regarding their rights and responsibilities under gender-responsive education policies. The

standard deviations of 0.82 for students and 0.78 for teachers suggest that while responses were relatively consistent, students' perceptions showed slightly more variability, possibly reflecting individual experiences or application of gender-responsive policies.

As shown in Table 10, the highest weighted mean for students (4.29, "Strongly Agree") was observed in statements 1 and 3, showing a strong understanding of their rights and the school's commitment to creating a gender-inclusive environment. For teachers, the highest weighted mean (4.29, "Strongly Agree") appeared in statements 1, 2, 3, and 4, reflecting consistent awareness of their responsibilities in implementing gender-responsive policies and fostering an inclusive learning environment.

On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean for students (4.13, "Agree") was found in statements 2 and 4, indicating areas where further reinforcement is needed, particularly regarding the roles of administrators and their participation in gender-equality activities. For teachers, the lowest weighted mean (4.00, "Agree") was recorded in statement 5, pointing to the need for additional emphasis on their responsibility to uphold gender fairness in the learning environment.

These results suggest that while both students and teachers exhibit strong awareness of their rights and responsibilities, there are areas where improvements could be made. Strengthening students' understanding of the roles of administrators and their rights to participate in gender-equality programs, as well as reinforcing teachers' responsibility to maintain gender fairness, could be achieved through more structured orientations, training programs, and activities that deepen engagement with gender-responsive policies.

- 4) *Is there a significant difference on the perceptions of the respondents on the awareness and knowledge of the implementation of Gender-responsive basic education policy, when grouped according to their demographic profile?*

Table 11.
Significant difference on the perceptions of the respondents on the awareness and knowledge of the implementation of Gender-responsive basic education policy when grouped according to their demographic profile.

Variables	t-value	p-value	Decision	Verbal Interpretation
Student AWARENESS				
Gender	0.718	0.542	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Grade Level	0.181	0.856	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Student KNOWLEDGE				
Gender	2.508	0.059	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Grade level	0.670	0.504	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Teacher AWARENESS				
Gender	1.684	0.251	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Teacher KNOWLEDGE				
Gender	0.080	0.789	Accept Ho	Not Significant

As shown in Table 11, all the demographic variables examined—student grade level, student gender, and teacher gender—yielded p-values greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis (Ho). This indicates that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of students and teachers regarding their awareness and knowledge of the implementation of the Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) policy when grouped by demographic profile.

The results imply that awareness and knowledge of the GRBE policy are not significantly influenced by demographic factors such as grade level or gender. This uniformity may reflect the effectiveness of existing institutional efforts in promoting gender-responsive education among both students and teachers. However, while the statistical analysis shows no significant differences, it remains important to continue strengthening GRBE policy awareness programs to ensure deeper understanding and application across all demographic groups.

- 5) *Is there a significant difference in the awareness and knowledge on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy as assessed by the two groups of respondents?*

Table 12.
Significant difference in the awareness and knowledge on the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy as assessed by the two groups of respondents

Variables		t-value	p-value	Decision	Verbal Interpretation
Student Awareness	Teacher Awareness	0.161	0.872	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Student Knowledge	Teacher Knowledge	-0.520	0.6.3	Accept Ho	Not Significant

As shown in Table 12, the comparison of awareness and knowledge of the Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) policy between students and teachers yielded p-values greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). This leads to the acceptance of the null hypothesis (Ho), indicating no significant difference between the two groups in terms of their awareness and knowledge of the GRBE policy. Specifically, student and teacher awareness recorded a p-value of 0.872 ("Not Significant"), while student and teacher knowledge had a p-value of 0.63 ("Not Significant"). These results suggest that both students and teachers have a relatively uniform level of awareness and understanding of the GRBE policy, regardless of their role in the educational system.

The findings imply that institutional efforts in promoting gender-responsive education have successfully reached both students and teachers, ensuring a shared understanding of the policy. However, despite the statistical insignificance of the differences, continuous efforts to strengthen awareness programs remain essential to deepen engagement and application across all levels.

6) *How does the implementation of the Gender-responsive basic education policy shaped the experiences, practices, gender biases, and gender awareness of the teachers and students?*

In the conducted interview, teachers and students were asked: "How does the implementation of the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy shape the experiences, practices, gender biases, and gender awareness of teachers and students?" Their responses revealed a mix of positive changes, challenges, and areas for further improvement in the school environment.

A teacher shared a positive perspective on how the policy influenced their teaching methods: "The Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy has helped me become more aware of how I interact with my students. I've learned to be more inclusive in my language and teaching strategies, ensuring that no one feels left out because of their gender identity. I've also seen a positive change in my students' many are more open-minded, and classroom discussions about gender equality have become more meaningful. This policy has definitely made our school a safer and more accepting space for everyone."

Similarly, a student expressed appreciation for the policy's impact on their school experience: "I really appreciate the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy because it makes me feel safer and more accepted at school. Before, I felt like I had to hide certain things about myself, but now, I see teachers and classmates being more open-minded. Discussions about gender equality are more common, and I don't feel as judged as before. It's nice to know that the school is trying to create an inclusive environment for all of us."

However, not all students and teachers share the same optimism. Another student expressed their frustration with the policy's inconsistent implementation: "Even though the school says it promotes gender inclusivity, I feel like not much has changed. Some teachers still make gendered comments, and students continue to tease or exclude those who don't fit traditional roles. It feels like the policy is just on paper, but in reality, not everyone follows it. I think more needs to be done to actually change people's attitudes."

A teacher also admitted that while they support gender-responsive education, not all of their colleagues share the same enthusiasm: "At first, I struggled to adjust my teaching methods because I was raised in a more traditional mindset. But after attending training sessions, I started to understand why gender inclusivity matters. However, not all teachers feel the same way. Some still resist the idea, thinking it's unnecessary or too difficult to implement. While I believe we're making progress, full acceptance of gender-responsive education is still a challenge, especially among those who aren't willing to unlearn old biases."

Another student echoed this sentiment, explaining that while progress has been made, challenges

remain: "I've seen some positive changes, like teachers correcting gender stereotypes in class and supporting students who identify differently. However, I also notice that not everyone takes it seriously. Some students still joke about gender issues, and not all teachers are comfortable discussing it. I think the policy is a good start, but it will take more time before everyone truly understands and respects it."

The Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy has initiated progress, its effectiveness depends on the willingness of teachers and students to embrace change. While some have seen improvements in awareness and inclusivity, others believe that more effort is needed to fully implement and integrate gender-responsive education into the school culture. Continuous training, stronger enforcement of the policy, and open discussions about gender inclusivity remain crucial in ensuring long-term positive change.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the relationship between school communication, access to gender-responsive materials, and the knowledge and awareness of gender-responsive policies among students and teachers at BTECH for the School Year 2024–2025. Based on the responses, official school communication channels—such as announcements, newsletters, and the school website—were identified as the primary sources of information. Both students and teachers agreed that these platforms played a crucial role in enhancing their understanding of gender-responsive policies. This finding supports (Smith and Tyler 2018) [12], who emphasized that effective communication strategies are essential in bridging the gap between policy awareness and implementation in inclusive education settings.

Regarding the availability of printed and digital materials, students reported moderate accessibility, while teachers perceived these resources as less available. This discrepancy suggests a potential barrier to deepening understanding and engagement. The study by (Reyes 2021) [13], similarly highlighted that although awareness of Gender and Development (GAD) programs was generally high, the lack of accessible and practical learning materials limited their effective application. In terms of knowledge and awareness, most participants demonstrated familiarity with gender-responsive policies; however, varied responses indicated differences in depth of understanding. This aligns with (Garcia and Santos 2020) [14], who found that teachers may know about gender-related policies, such as DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017, but often lack familiarity with its specific provisions and classroom implications.

Furthermore, the study found a significant difference between students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the accessibility and effectiveness of gender-responsive information. These findings affirm (UNESCO's 2021) [15], position that while awareness is important, equitable access to materials and continuous professional development are vital for fostering consistent and meaningful

understanding. Ultimately, the strong correlation found between school communication, access to materials, and knowledge and awareness suggests that enhancing communication efforts and expanding access to gender-responsive resources can strengthen both awareness and policy implementation among students and teachers.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, there is a significant difference between the perceptions of students and teachers regarding the accessibility and effectiveness of gender-responsive policies at BTECH. While both groups recognize the importance of these policies, their views differ when it comes to the availability of printed and digital materials. The study also revealed a strong relationship between school communication, material accessibility, and the level of knowledge and awareness of gender-responsive education. Effective communication channels—such as announcements, newsletters, and school websites—were found to play a critical role in raising awareness. This supports the findings of Smith and (Tyler 2018) [16], who emphasized that well-structured communication strategies are key in promoting policy understanding and bridging awareness gaps within inclusive education settings.

Despite a generally good level of awareness among students and teachers, varied levels of exposure suggest a need for more inclusive and consistent dissemination strategies. Limited access to relevant learning materials was identified as a challenge, especially among teachers—a finding consistent with (Reyes 2021) [17], who noted that insufficient availability of GAD-related materials can hinder the effective implementation of gender-responsive initiatives. Similarly, (Garcia and Santos 2020) [18], highlighted that while teachers may be aware of policies like DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017, many are not fully familiar with their practical applications in the classroom. These observations reinforce (UNESCO's 2021) [19], call for equal access to resources and ongoing professional development to support meaningful engagement with gender-responsive education. (Mensch et al. 2019) [20], argue that equal access to both digital and print resources is critical in fostering an inclusive learning environment that supports gender equity in education. Strengthening information dissemination and ensuring equitable access to both digital and printed materials will enable schools to promote greater gender inclusivity and equality across educational practices.

RECOMMENDATION

In light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby presented:

- 1) Students must engage with school-provided materials on gender-responsive policies through accessible and diverse learning resources.
- 2) Teachers and School Staff should undergo training on effective communication strategies to better implement gender-responsive policies in classrooms.
- 3) School administrators must improve access to printed and digital materials on gender-responsive policies through various platforms to ensure wider awareness.
- 4) Future researchers must conduct further studies on gender-responsive policies, focusing on their impact on student engagement and academic performance.

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