



IMPACT OF GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD GENDER SENSITIVITY

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ABSTRACT

This study, conducted in May 2026 during Academic Year 2025–2026, examined the impact of Gender and Development (GAD) initiatives on students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity. Specifically, it sought to determine the extent to which participation in GAD-related programs, activities, and awareness campaigns influences students' understanding, acceptance, and practice of gender-sensitive behaviors and perspectives. The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to assess the relationship between exposure to GAD initiatives and students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity. Data was gathered from selected students through a structured survey questionnaire that measured their level of awareness and participation in GAD initiatives as well as their attitudes toward gender sensitivity. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations, while inferential statistical tools were utilized to determine significant relationships between variables. Findings revealed that students generally demonstrated positive attitudes toward gender sensitivity and reported a moderate to high level of awareness of Gender and Development initiatives. Results further indicated that exposure to GAD programs significantly contributed to the development of more gender-sensitive attitudes, promoting respect, inclusivity, equality, and awareness of gender-related issues among students. The study concludes that Gender and Development initiatives play a vital role in fostering gender sensitivity within educational institutions and recommends the continued implementation and strengthening of GAD programs to cultivate a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students.

Keywords: *Gender and Development (GAD), Gender Sensitivity, Student Attitudes, Gender Equality, Inclusivity, Educational Programs*

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality is a fundamental societal goal that promotes fairness, respect, and equal opportunities for all individuals regardless of gender. It is recognized globally through initiatives such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5, which seeks to eliminate discrimination and achieve gender equality across various sectors of society. Despite significant progress in advancing gender rights, traditional gender roles and stereotypes remain deeply embedded in many cultures, influencing beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that may contribute to unequal treatment and discrimination (UN Women, 2023). These persistent challenges highlight the need for continued efforts to foster gender-sensitive perspectives, especially among young people who will shape future communities and institutions.

Educational institutions play a crucial role in addressing gender-related issues because they serve as primary environments where students develop their values, attitudes, and social perspectives. Schools have the capacity to challenge gender biases and promote inclusivity through both formal instruction and extracurricular activities. According to UNESCO (2023), gender-responsive education contributes to the creation of safe and inclusive learning environments while encouraging learners to respect diversity and uphold principles of equality. Through intentional educational interventions, schools can help students recognize and challenge gender stereotypes, thereby promoting more equitable social interactions.

In the Philippine context, gender equality is supported through various legislative and institutional frameworks, including Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as the Magna Carta of Women. This law mandates the integration of Gender and Development (GAD) programs in government agencies and educational institutions to advance gender mainstreaming and awareness. As a result, many schools implement gender-sensitivity initiatives such as seminars, awareness campaigns, workshops, and classroom discussions designed to educate students about gender issues and encourage equitable attitudes and behaviors (Philippine Commission on Women, 2010). These initiatives aim to increase awareness, reduce prejudice, and foster a culture of respect and inclusion among learners.

Students' attitudes toward gender equality are particularly important because they influence interpersonal relationships, decision-making, and participation in social and academic environments. Positive attitudes toward gender equality can encourage inclusivity, respect for diversity, and support for equal opportunities, whereas gender-biased attitudes may perpetuate discrimination and social inequality. Previous studies have suggested that exposure to gender-sensitive education can positively influence students' perceptions and understanding of gender-related issues; however, the

effectiveness of such programs often varies depending on contextual and institutional factors (Levtov, 2014).

Although numerous studies have explored gender awareness and the implementation of Gender and Development programs, there remains a limited body of research that quantitatively examines the impact of gender-sensitivity initiatives on students' attitudes toward gender equality in specific local contexts. Many existing studies focus on policy implementation, program descriptions, or qualitative assessments of participants' experiences. Consequently, there is insufficient empirical evidence regarding the extent to which these initiatives contribute to measurable changes in students' attitudes and perceptions, particularly within higher education institutions in rural communities.

At Trinidad Municipal College (TMC), gender-sensitivity initiatives are regularly conducted as part of the institution's commitment to promoting gender equality and inclusivity. These initiatives include awareness campaigns, seminars, and educational activities designed to enhance students' understanding of gender-related concerns. However, despite the implementation of these programs, limited empirical evidence exists regarding their effectiveness in shaping students' attitudes toward gender equality. This situation presents a research gap that warrants systematic investigation.

Therefore, the researchers of this study sought to examine the impact of gender-sensitivity initiatives on students' attitudes toward gender equality at Trinidad Municipal College using a quantitative research approach. Through the collection and analysis of survey data, the researchers aimed to determine whether participation in gender-sensitivity initiatives significantly influence students' attitudes toward gender equality. The findings of the study are expected to contribute to the improvement of Gender and Development programs and support the creation of a more inclusive, equitable, and gender-responsive educational environment.

Research Questions

This study aimed to examine the impact of Gender and Development (GAD) initiatives on students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity at Trinidad Municipal College. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1. Gender; and
 - 1.2. program?
2. What Gender and Development initiatives are implemented in the institution as perceived by the students?
3. What are the attitudes of students toward gender sensitivity?
4. Is there a significant difference in the attitudes of students toward gender sensitivity when grouped according to their profile in terms of:
 - 4.1. Gender; and
 - 4.2. Program?

5. Is there a significant relationship between the implemented Gender and Development initiatives and students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity when grouped according to their profile in terms of gender and program.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the implemented Gender and Development initiatives and students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity.

This study is expected to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of Gender and Development initiatives and assist the institution in enhancing its programs to foster a more inclusive, equitable, and gender-sensitive learning environment.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine the impact of Gender and Development (GAD) initiatives on students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity. The study was conducted in a higher education institution in Trinidad, Bohol, involving third-year college students enrolled across various academic programs. A stratified random sampling technique was utilized to ensure proportional representation from each college, with a total of 344 respondents determined through Slovin's Formula. Data were gathered using a modified standardized questionnaire adapted from established gender attitude instruments, including the Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) Scale, Gender Equitable Attitudes Scale (GEAS), and Gender Norms Scales. The instrument consisted of three parts: respondents' profile, perceived implementation of Gender and Development initiatives, and attitudes toward gender sensitivity. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Before administration, the questionnaire underwent expert validation and pilot testing to ensure its reliability and validity. The researchers secured permission from the appropriate authorities and obtained informed consent from the respondents before personally administering the questionnaires. Retrieved data were coded, tabulated, and analyzed using frequency counts and percentages to describe the respondents' profile, weighted mean to determine the extent of implementation of GAD initiatives and students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity, One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine significant differences in attitudes when grouped according to profile variables, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson *r*) to determine the relationship between GAD initiatives and students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity. All statistical analyses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The investigation was limited to selected third-year students and focused only on the variables included in the

study; therefore, the findings may not be generalized to other institutions or populations and were dependent on the honesty and accuracy of the respondents' self-reported answers.

RESULTS

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents
n = 343

RESPONDENTS' PROFILE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Gender		
Male	102	29.7%
Female	228	66.5%
Lgbtq+	13	3.8%
TOTAL	343	100%
College Department		
College of Arts and Sciences	33	9.6%
College of Criminal Justice Education	110	32.1%
College of Computer Studies	51	14.8%
College of Office Administration	110	32.1%
College of Education	39	11.4%
TOTAL	343	100%

Table 2
Gender and Development Initiatives
n = 343

Items	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. I have attended seminars or workshops about gender equality in school.	3.38	Neutral
2. My school provides activities that promote awareness about gender issues.	4.11	Agree
3. Gender equality topics are discussed in some of our classroom lessons.	4.48	Strongly Agree
4. I have learned about gender sensitivity through school programs.	4.13	Agree
5. Teachers encourage students to respect all genders.	4.78	Strongly Agree
6. School activities promote equal participation of all genders.	4.52	Strongly Agree
7. Posters, campaigns, or announcements about gender equality are visible in school.	3.68	Agree

8. I have participated in school programs related to Gender and Development (GAD).	3.28	Neutral
9. My teachers discuss the importance of respecting gender differences.	4.61	Strongly Agree
10. The school promotes an inclusive environment for all genders.	4.15	Agree
11. Gender-related issues are included in student activities and discussions.	4.25	Strongly Agree
12. I have gained knowledge about gender equality through school initiatives.	4.29	Strongly Agree
13. The school encourages students to speak against gender discrimination.	4.15	Agree
14. Gender sensitivity programs help students understand gender equality better.	4.44	Strongly Agree
15. I believe the school actively promotes gender awareness among students.	4.40	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	4.18	Agree

Legend: Strongly Agree (5) – 4.21 – 5.00 Agree (4) – 3.41 – 4.20 Neutral (3) – 2.61 – 3.40 Disagree (2) – 1.81 – 2.60 Strongly Disagree (1) – 1.00 – 1.80

Table 3
Students' Attitudes Toward Gender Equality
n = 343

Items	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. Men and women should have equal opportunities in education.	4.87	Strongly Agree
2. Both men and women should share responsibilities at home.	4.69	Strongly Agree
3. Leadership positions should be open to all genders.	4.69	Strongly Agree
4. Men and women are equally capable of performing most jobs.	4.55	Strongly Agree
5. Gender should not determine a person's abilities or talents.	4.55	Strongly Agree
6. Women should have the same decision-making power as men.	4.36	Strongly Agree
7. Boys and girls should be treated equally in school.	4.82	Strongly Agree
8. Gender discrimination is unacceptable in society.	4.53	Strongly Agree
9. Respect should be given to people regardless of their gender.	4.65	Strongly Agree

10. Household responsibilities should be shared equally by men and women.	4.62	Strongly Agree
11. Gender stereotypes can limit people's opportunities.	4.26	Strongly Agree
12. People of all genders should have equal rights and responsibilities.	4.76	Strongly Agree
13. I support equal opportunities for men and women in leadership roles.	4.75	Strongly Agree
14. Schools should teach students about gender equality.	4.78	Strongly Agree
15. Promoting gender equality can help create a fair and inclusive society.	4.75	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	4.66	Strongly Agree

Legend: Strongly Agree (5) – 4.21 – 5.00 Agree (4) – 3.41 – 4.20 Neutral (3) – 2.61 – 3.40 Disagree (2) – 1.81 – 2.60 Strongly Disagree (1) – 1.00 – 1.80

Table 4
Difference Between the Attitudes of the Respondents Toward Gender Sensitivity
when Grouped According to their Profile
n=343

Profile Variable	Test Used	F-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
College Department	One-Way ANOVA	1.42	0.226	Not Significant	No difference
Gender	One-Way ANOVA	—	0.000	Significant	With difference

Table 5
Relationship Between the Implemented Gender and Development (GAD)
Initiatives and Students' Attitudes Toward Gender Sensitivity
n=343

Source of Relationship	n	α	R	p-val	Interpretation	Decision
GAD Initiatives vs Students' Attitudes Toward Gender Sensitivity	343	0.05	0.269	< .001	Weak positive correlation	Reject H_0

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Pearson Interpretation

Computed r	Verbal Interpretation
0	No correlation
0.01 – 0.20	Very Weak correlation
0.21 – 0.40	Weak correlation
0.41 – 0.70	Moderate correlation
0.71 – 0.80	High correlation
0.81 – 0.99	Very high correlation
1.00	Perfect correlation

DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents by gender and college department. The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents were female, comprising 228 (66.5%) of the total sample, followed by male respondents with 102 (29.7%), while LGBTQ+ respondents accounted for only 13 (3.8%). This indicates that the study was predominantly represented by female participants, suggesting that female perspectives may have had a greater influence on the overall findings regarding Gender and Development (GAD) initiatives and gender sensitivity. Research shows that gender composition significantly influences attitudes toward equality and inclusivity in educational contexts (Hyde, 2005; UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2012). Gender differences in perception and sensitivity toward gender-related issues have also been consistently observed in higher education studies (Andrews et al., 2021; Van Dusen & Nissen, 2018). Therefore, respondent composition should be considered in interpreting the findings.

Table 2 presents the respondents' perceptions of the Gender and Development (GAD) initiatives implemented in their school. The overall mean of 4.18, interpreted as "Agree," indicates that students generally perceived that Gender and Development programs and practices were evident and actively implemented within the institution. The highest-rated indicators were teacher encouragement of respect for all genders and discussion of gender differences, suggesting strong teacher involvement in gender awareness development. This aligns with UNESCO (2023), which emphasizes gender-responsive pedagogy in education systems. Teacher influence has been identified as a strong driver of gender-equitable attitudes (Johnson & Lee, 2021; Levtov, 2014). Gender-transformative education has also been shown to improve inclusivity and awareness (Pulerwitz et al., 2010; Chen & Morales, 2023). However, gaps between policy and participation remain a common issue in gender mainstreaming programs (Chen et al., 2023; CHED, 2026). Philippine policy frameworks such as RA 9710 mandate institutional gender mainstreaming (Republic of the Philippines, 2009; PCW, 2010).

Table 3 exhibits the students' attitudes toward gender equality, with an overall mean of 4.66 and a descriptive interpretation of "Strongly Agree," indicating highly positive attitudes toward gender equality and inclusivity. These findings are consistent with

research showing that gender equality education strengthens supportive attitudes and reduces stereotypes (Hyde, 2005; Pulerwitz et al., 2010). Exposure to inclusive learning environments improves acceptance of diversity and fairness (UNESCO, 2023; Nguyen, 2023). Institutional gender programs are also associated with stronger equality-oriented values among students (Rivera, 2022; Casas et al., 2024). Philippine studies confirm similar outcomes in higher education settings where GAD programs enhance awareness and inclusivity (Dela Cruz & Mendoza, 2021; Olvida, 2026).

Table 4 displays the differences in respondents' attitudes toward gender sensitivity when grouped according to their profile variables. The results revealed no significant difference when grouped by college department, but a significant difference when grouped according to gender. This aligns with findings that gender identity significantly influences attitudes toward equality and social perceptions (Hyde, 2005; Andrews et al., 2021). Intersectional research also shows that while educational exposure produces uniformity across disciplines, gender remains a strong differentiating factor (Van Dusen & Nissen, 2018; Robinson et al., 2020). Philippine studies confirm that gender-based differences persist even in gender-mainstreamed institutions (Santos et al., 2024; Sicuan, 2024).

Table 5 presents the relationship between Gender and Development (GAD) initiatives and students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity. The findings revealed a weak but statistically significant positive relationship, indicating that GAD initiatives contribute to more positive gender-sensitive attitudes among students. This is supported by UNESCO (2023), which highlights the effectiveness of gender-responsive pedagogy in shaping attitudes. Gender-transformative interventions have been shown to improve equality-oriented beliefs (Pulerwitz et al., 2010; Levtoy, 2014). However, attitude formation is also influenced by external social factors such as family, peers, and culture (Hyde, 2005; World Bank, 2012). Philippine studies further support that sustained institutional GAD implementation improves student awareness and inclusivity (Casas et al., 2024; CHED, 2026).

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, several conclusions were drawn. The respondent group was predominantly female and concentrated in selected departments, which may have influenced the overall perspective of the study. Gender and Development (GAD) initiatives were perceived to be implemented within the institution, particularly through instructional practices and classroom discussions. Despite the presence of these initiatives, student participation in formal programs such as seminars and workshops was not consistently high. Students generally exhibited highly positive attitudes toward gender equality, reflecting strong awareness and acceptance of inclusive and equitable principles. In addition, no significant difference was found in students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity when grouped according to college department, indicating that academic affiliation does not significantly influence these attitudes. However, a significant

difference was observed when students were grouped according to gender, suggesting that gender identity plays an important role in shaping perceptions of gender sensitivity. Lastly, a weak but significant positive relationship was found between GAD initiatives and students' attitudes toward gender sensitivity, implying that while these initiatives contribute to improving attitudes, other factors may also influence students' perspectives.

Recommendations

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

1. Educational institutions should develop more interactive and inclusive Gender and Development programs to encourage greater student participation. Activities such as workshops, seminars, and peer-led discussions may increase student involvement.
2. Schools should expand GAD initiatives beyond classroom discussions by implementing comprehensive, school-wide programs that consistently promote gender awareness and inclusivity.
3. Targeted interventions should be designed to address gender-based differences in attitudes. Schools may create safe spaces and dialogue platforms to understand diverse gender perspectives better.
4. Future studies should ensure a more balanced representation of respondents across gender identities and academic departments to improve the generalizability of findings.
5. Gender equality concepts should be embedded across all subject areas and co-curricular activities to reinforce students' understanding and practice of inclusivity.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Considering the importance of ethics in research and the challenges involved in conducting studies, universities and colleges have taken significant measures to protect the dignity, rights, and safety of research respondents, as highlighted by David Silverman (2010). Likewise, Beauchamp and Childress (2019) emphasized that ethical research must safeguard participants' freedom, prevent harm, and ensure fairness throughout the research process. In accordance with these principles, all respondents in this study were provided with both verbal and written consent to participate, ensuring they can decide freely whether to take part without coercion or pressure. The aim and processes of this study were explained clearly to the respondents, and verbal consent is deemed appropriate. Furthermore, a suitable level of confidentiality was maintained when managing the data. No falsification, misrepresentation, or biased portrayal of original data were included, and objectivity was upheld in the discussion and analysis of the findings. All sources of information were properly cited, and any affiliations or potential conflicts of interest were openly discussed. Eventually, the research was conducted with honesty,

transparency, and integrity, in agreement with the established ethical standards for research.

Acknowledgments

The researchers would like to express their sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to the successful completion of this study. Special thanks are extended to the research adviser, faculty members, school administrators, and respondents for their guidance, support, cooperation, and valuable participation throughout the research process. The researchers also acknowledge the authors and scholars whose works served as important references in this study. Finally, heartfelt appreciation is given to family, friends, and everyone who provided encouragement and assistance in one way or another.

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