

Inclusive Gender-Related Content and Gender-Sensitive Pedagogical Practices in Social Science Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the relationship between the inclusion of gender-related content and gender-sensitive pedagogical practices in Social Science classrooms. It specifically established the level of inclusive gender related content in the prescribed Social Science instructional materials, the level of gender-sensitive pedagogies among the Social Science teachers, and the significant relationship between the two variables as perceived by the students and the teachers. The study adopted a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. Data were obtained from 181 Grade 10 students and nine Social Science teachers from three public secondary schools in the Talacogon East District, Division of Agusan del Sur. A researcher-made questionnaire measured gender-related content in terms of representation of women, representation of LGBTQIA, gender-based social structure, patriarchal system, and narrative framing, as well as gender-sensitive pedagogical practices in terms of inclusive learning, equitable classroom participation, integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives, challenging gender stereotypes, and promotion of critical thinking on gender roles. The instrument was validated by experts and pilot-tested, yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.96. Weighted mean and Spearman's rho were used in the analysis. Results indicated that both students and teachers perceived the presence of gender-inclusive content and gender-sensitive practices, although teachers rated these areas higher. Inclusive content and pedagogical gender sensitivity were strongly positively correlated with student-rated correlations, whereas most teacher rated correlations were not significant. In general, the study shows that they are needed to transform representation into meaningful and equitable learning experiences that need to be addressed both in the pedagogy and in the classroom. Overall, the study demonstrates that gender-responsive pedagogy requires both inclusive content and intentional classroom practices that transform representation into critical, equitable, and meaningful learning experiences.

Keywords: Gender-Responsive Pedagogy, Gender-Related Content, Gender-Sensitive Pedagogical Practices, Social Science Education, Inclusive Instruction

INTRODUCTION

The idea of Gender responsive pedagogy (GRP) becomes vital in the context of education as classrooms are expected to be equitable, respectful and inclusive. This is especially relevant in the field of Social Science education as in this subject the learning of social science is closely related to the society, culture, power, identity, rights and history. Teaching materials and teaching methods reflect the diversity of women, LGBTQIA learners and gendered experiences fairly, allowing students to explore social structures and challenging limiting stereotypes. However, if these dimensions are disregarded or dealt with briefly in Social Science classrooms, traditional gender stereotyping can be unwittingly perpetuated.

Inclusive teaching is not just about what is included in the curriculum, but also how teaching and learning in the classroom is organized by the teacher. As mentioned by UNESCO (2021), biased encounters can be replaced

with gender sensitive pedagogy, while making the classroom an inclusive and safe space. Similarly, Dorji (2020) highlighted the need for awareness and gender responsive pedagogy to develop learning environment for students to learn without any discrimination. Canuto and Espique (2023) also emphasized the importance of developing a good teacher resource materials and application in the classroom, and Lumidao et al. (2024) emphasized that teachers' practices in the areas of gender-awareness are still important.

The constructivist learning and inclusive education are the grounds of this study. Vygotsky's sociocultural approach to learning suggests that learning is developing in the context of social interaction, dialogue, and meaningful engagement. This is significant in the context of teaching social sciences in a gender responsive way since students are not just handed gender information in a book, they interpret it through the teacher's questions, examples in the classroom, group discussion and common reflections on the topic. Constructivist learning is described by Almulla (2023) as a learning method that builds up critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills, which is required in the study of gender roles and social realities. Similarly, inclusive education calls for equity, positive classroom discourse and valuing diversity (Hogan & Sathy, 2022; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The following perspectives support the idea that being gender sensitive in pedagogy needs to be integrated with classroom mediation, where the learner can interpret what he or she has learned, question the content, and apply it.

While gender-fair education has become common topic of discussion, the relationship between the content of SS textbooks and the implementation of gender-sensitive pedagogy in the classroom has not been sufficiently investigated. While many studies highlight the importance of gender responsive teaching in a general sense, few illustrate the correlations between the presence of women, LGBTQIA identities, gendered social structures, patriarchy, and how these are presented in SS materials and students'/teachers' perceptions of classroom practice. The gap is significant because of the direct discussion of gender roles, power relations, civic identity and social inequality in one of the subjects, namely Social Science. To fill this void, this study looked at the coverage of the content of the prescribed Social Science instructional materials for inclusivity of gender and the levels of gender sensitivity in the instructional practices and the correlation between the two variables as perceived by students and teachers. The findings can assist teachers, curriculum improvements and school leaders to enhance not only content-representative but also transformative and critical Social Science education.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the relationship between inclusive gender-related content and gender-sensitive pedagogical practices in Social Science classrooms. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the extent of inclusive gender-related content currently present in the prescribed Social Science instructional materials in terms of representation of women, representation of LGBTQIA, gender-based social structure, patriarchal system, and narrative framing?
2. What is the level of gender-sensitive pedagogical practices among Social Science teachers in terms of inclusive learning, equitable classroom participation, integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives, challenging gender stereotypes, and promotion of critical thinking on gender roles?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of inclusion of gender-related content and the level of gender-sensitive pedagogical practices?

METHODOLOGY

The research design of this study was quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component was employed to establish the level of gender related content in prescribed Social Science instructional materials and the level of pedagogical practices of Social Science teachers' gender sensitivity. The correlational component was employed to analyze the correlation between the level of inclusiveness of gender related content and the level of gender sensitive pedagogical practices.

This study was carried out in three public secondary schools located in Talacogon East District, Division of Agusan del Sur, Philippines namely Corpuz National High School, Causwagan National High School and Del Monte National High School. A total of 181 grade 10 students and 9 teachers in the field of Social Science were the respondents during the School Year 2025-2026. The student respondents were taken using stratified sampling technique to obtain proportional representation from the selected schools. The teacher respondents were selected because they were directly involved in the teaching and learning of Grade 10 Social Science, and they were knowledgeable of the prescribed materials for teaching and learning in Social Science and its classroom practices.

The main instrument was a researcher-made questionnaire, which was based on the research questions and literature on gender-responsive pedagogy. The first part identified content related to the gender dimension within the taught social studies curricula in terms of representation of women, representation of LGBTQIA, gender-based social structure, patriarchal system, and the framing of the narrative. The second section examined gender-sensitive pedagogical practices in terms of inclusive learning, equitable participation of learners in the classroom, integration of gender diverse contexts and perspectives, challenging gender stereotyping and promoting critical thinking on gender roles. Likert-type items were used on an instrument to assess higher the mean scores, the more evidence of inclusive content or of greater agreement with gender-sensitive classroom practices. Faced and content validity was obtained from experts regarding the clarity, relevance, wording and relationship between the items and the study indicators. This instrument was also piloted in one public high school of the Prosperidad District. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the pilot results was 0.96, which is a very high level of internal consistency.

Before the data collection, consent was obtained from the appropriate school authorities. The participants were briefed on the objective and scope of the study, the voluntary nature and the confidentiality of their responses. The filled in questionnaires were retrieved, cleaned up, coded and statistically analysed. The extent of inclusive gender related content and level of gender sensitive pedagogical practices were presented in terms of weighted mean. Spearman's rho was used because the data were based on ordinal Likert-type responses and the study sought to determine the direction and strength of the association between the two variables. The level of significance was set at 0.05. The study was limited to Grade 10 Social Science classes in the selected schools and relied on respondent perceptions; thus, the results may not represent all Social Science classrooms in other districts or regions.

RESULTS

The results are presented according to the three research questions of the study.

Table 1: Extent of Inclusive Gender-Related Content in Prescribed Social Science Instructional Materials

Indicator	Students Mean	Students Verbal Description	Teachers Mean	Teachers Verbal Description
Representation of Women	3.76	Evident	4.49	Highly Evident
Representation of LGBTQIA	3.74	Evident	4.51	Highly Evident
Gender-based Social Structure	3.70	Evident	4.42	Highly Evident
Patriarchal System	3.68	Evident	4.36	Highly Evident
Narrative Framing	3.71	Evident	4.49	Highly Evident
Overall	3.72	Evident	4.45	Highly Evident

Table 1 shows that students rated the inclusion of gender-related content as evident across all indicators, with an overall mean of 3.72. Teachers rated the same indicators as highly evident, with an overall mean of 4.45. Among students, representation of women obtained the highest mean, while patriarchal system obtained the lowest mean. Among teachers, representation of LGBTQIA obtained the highest mean, while patriarchal system obtained the lowest mean.

Table 2: Level of Gender-Sensitive Pedagogical Practices Among Social Science Teachers

Indicator	Students Mean	Students Verbal Description	Teachers Mean	Teachers Verbal Description
Inclusive Learning	3.96	Agree	4.87	Strongly Agree
Equitable Classroom Participation	3.82	Agree	4.73	Strongly Agree
Integration of Gender-Diverse Contexts and Perspectives	3.72	Agree	4.62	Strongly Agree
Challenging Gender Stereotypes	3.71	Agree	4.40	Strongly Agree
Promotion of Critical Thinking on Gender Roles	3.68	Agree	4.53	Strongly Agree
Overall	3.78	Agree	4.63	Strongly Agree

Table 2 indicates that students perceived the gender-sensitive pedagogical practices of Social Science teachers as agree, with an overall mean of 3.78. Teachers rated their practices as strongly agree, with an overall mean of 4.63. For both groups, inclusive learning obtained the highest mean, while promotion of critical thinking on gender roles obtained the lowest mean among students and challenging gender stereotypes obtained the lowest mean among teachers.

Table 3A: Student-Rated Relationship Between Inclusive Gender-Related Content and Gender-Sensitive Pedagogical Practices

Content Indicator	Pedagogical Practice	r	p-value	Interpretation
Representation of Women	Inclusive learning	0.3171	<0.001	Significant
Representation of Women	Equitable classroom participation	0.3830	<0.001	Significant
Representation of Women	Integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives	0.3051	<0.001	Significant
Representation of Women	Challenging gender stereotypes	0.2541	0.0006	Significant
Representation of Women	Promotion of critical thinking on gender roles	0.3585	<0.001	Significant
Representation of LGBTQIA	Inclusive learning	0.3330	<0.001	Significant
Representation of LGBTQIA	Equitable classroom participation	0.3328	<0.001	Significant
Representation of LGBTQIA	Integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives	0.2446	0.0009	Significant
Representation of LGBTQIA	Challenging gender stereotypes	0.1681	0.0241	Significant

Representation of LGBTQIA	Promotion of critical thinking on gender roles	0.3461	<0.001	Significant
Gender-based Social Structure	Inclusive learning	0.2406	0.0011	Significant
Gender-based Social Structure	Equitable classroom participation	0.3239	<0.001	Significant
Gender-based Social Structure	Integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives	0.2738	0.0002	Significant
Gender-based Social Structure	Challenging gender stereotypes	0.2755	0.0002	Significant
Gender-based Social Structure	Promotion of critical thinking on gender roles	0.4740	<0.001	Significant
Patriarchal System	Inclusive learning	0.3852	<0.001	Significant
Patriarchal System	Equitable classroom participation	0.3713	<0.001	Significant
Patriarchal System	Integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives	0.4180	<0.001	Significant
Patriarchal System	Challenging gender stereotypes	0.3985	<0.001	Significant
Patriarchal System	Promotion of critical thinking on gender roles	0.4646	<0.001	Significant
Narrative Framing	Inclusive learning	0.4509	<0.001	Significant
Narrative Framing	Equitable classroom participation	0.4111	<0.001	Significant
Narrative Framing	Integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives	0.3789	<0.001	Significant
Narrative Framing	Challenging gender stereotypes	0.3146	<0.001	Significant
Narrative Framing	Promotion of critical thinking on gender roles	0.4912	<0.001	Significant

Table 3A shows that all student-rated relationships between inclusive gender-related content and gender-sensitive pedagogical practices were significant. This indicates that students who perceived stronger inclusion of gender-related content also tended to perceive stronger gender-sensitive pedagogical practices.

Table 3B: Teacher-Rated Relationship Between Inclusive Gender-Related Content and Gender-Sensitive Pedagogical Practices

Content Indicator	Pedagogical Practice	r	p-value	Interpretation
Representation of Women	Inclusive learning	0.0051	0.9895	Not Significant
Representation of Women	Equitable classroom participation	-0.1864	0.6311	Not Significant
Representation of Women	Integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives	-0.3180	0.1405	Not Significant
Representation of Women	Challenging gender stereotypes	-0.8301	0.0056	Significant
Representation of Women	Promotion of critical thinking on gender roles	-0.4178	0.2631	Not Significant
Representation of LGBTQIA	Inclusive learning	0.1947	0.6157	Not Significant
Representation of LGBTQIA	Equitable classroom participation	-0.2160	0.5767	Not Significant
Representation of LGBTQIA	Integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives	-0.1764	0.6499	Not Significant
Representation of LGBTQIA	Challenging gender stereotypes	-0.3517	0.3533	Not Significant
Representation of LGBTQIA	Promotion of critical thinking on gender roles	0.0043	0.9912	Not Significant
Gender-based Social Structure	Inclusive learning	0.0457	0.9070	Not Significant
Gender-based Social Structure	Equitable classroom participation	-0.1211	0.7563	Not Significant
Gender-based Social Structure	Integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives	-0.2287	0.5538	Not Significant
Gender-based Social Structure	Challenging gender stereotypes	-0.5087	0.1620	Not Significant

Gender-based Social Structure	Promotion of critical thinking on gender roles	-0.0746	0.8488	Not Significant
Patriarchal System	Inclusive learning	0.4061	0.2781	Not Significant
Patriarchal System	Equitable classroom participation	0.2258	0.5591	Not Significant
Patriarchal System	Integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives	-0.1860	0.6319	Not Significant
Patriarchal System	Challenging gender stereotypes	-0.4468	0.2279	Not Significant
Patriarchal System	Promotion of critical thinking on gender roles	-0.1039	0.7902	Not Significant
Narrative Framing	Inclusive learning	-0.0752	0.8475	Not Significant
Narrative Framing	Equitable classroom participation	-0.0886	0.8208	Not Significant
Narrative Framing	Integration of gender-diverse contexts and perspectives	0.0133	0.9729	Not Significant
Narrative Framing	Challenging gender stereotypes	-0.0809	0.8362	Not Significant
Narrative Framing	Promotion of critical thinking on gender roles	0.3204	0.4006	Not Significant

Table 3B shows that most teacher-rated relationships were not significant. The only significant teacher-rated relationship was between representation of women and challenging gender stereotypes, which was negative. This contrast suggests a gap between students' experience of classroom inclusivity and teachers' self-perception of practice.

DISCUSSION

The findings showed that there was gender-related content in the approved social science instructional materials. Students found that representation of women, representation of LGBTQIA, gender-based social structures, the patriarchal system, and framing the narrative were evident. This indicates that students knew about gender-related content, but not in a way that made it so prominent or so frequently mentioned. However, teachers saw the same indicators as very 'evident' confirming that they felt the materials already had some aspects of gender responsiveness.

Differences between teacher and student rating may reflect mismatched curriculum design and students' classroom life experience. Gender related content can be obvious to teachers who know the aim of the lesson and the components of the lesson that are intended to contain gender-responsive ideas. Students, however, can only identify such content through explicit discussion, context and link to classroom activities. Within the sociocultural perspective of Vygotsky, gender related content is not meaningful automatically and when it is found in a text. When teachers mediate the material by asking questions, discussing, providing examples, engaging in group activities and reflecting, it becomes a learning tool. This reinforces the argument of UNESCO (2021), Dorji (2020) and Canuto and Espique (2023) that gender responsive pedagogy needs an inclusive set of tools and an active facilitation of the classroom.

The pedagogical practices based on the gender sensitivity were also rated positively. Students validated teachers' practices of inclusive learning, equity in the classroom participation, integration of gender-diverse contexts, challenging gender stereotypes, and the promotion of critical thinking on gender roles. These indicators were strongly endorsed by the teachers, which means that they felt they had been implementing gender sensitive approaches consistently. In both groups the most rated practice was inclusive learning, indicating a high level of respect and of general classroom inclusiveness. However, a lower rating for students' promotion of critical thinking about gender roles indicates greater depth in addressing gender issues remains to be enhanced. This discovery reveals that although a classroom may have a spirit of respect and inclusion, there may be a need for more intentional questioning, analysis and discussion of gender roles and stereotypes.

One of the most important findings of the study is the correlation results. Every gender-related content in the inclusive relationships and gender-sensitive pedagogical practices were significant that have been rated by student. This implies that students view content and pedagogy as integral components of one learning process. They also tend to feel stronger sense of representing them and more critical discussions in the instructional

materials, which, in turn, lead them to feel better about inclusive and equitable teaching practices. Based on a constructivist point of view, the outcome indicates that learning about gender is constructed through interaction. Content that is inclusive in meaning is better conveyed when guided by the teacher, shared in class and followed up by reflection.

However, most teacher-rated relationships were not significant. In this case, teachers might be able to conclude that there is gender-related material present but not always link it to their own pedagogical actions. There is a strong negative correlation between representation of women and challenging gender stereotype, which also indicates that visibility does not necessarily result in critical teaching. The teacher might recognize women in the materials but not necessarily challenge stereotypes and unequal power relations. This indicates potential challenges including time pressures, sensitivity to gender-based conversations, limited training, and lack of local examples, and institutional guidance to address gender considerations. In order to make the inclusive content transformative, it is essential that schools enable teachers not only to identify inclusive content, but also to make that content come alive through language, questioning and reflection in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that the prescribed SS classroom texts contained inclusive gender related content. Content was observed as evident by the students and highly evident by the teachers. This implies that the materials contained some gender responsive elements, but the elements will become more salient and meaningful to the students if teachers make a conscious effort to structure them in the classroom through discussion, contextualization and reflection.

The study further revealed that, gender sensitive pedagogical practices existed in the Social Science classrooms. Students generally agreed and teachers strongly agreed that teachers practiced inclusive and equitable strategies. But there is a need to correspond the teacher's intent with the students' experience, as the rating gap indicates, especially in fostering critical thinking and challenging gender stereotypes.

Finally, the presence of gender-related content was highly correlated with gender sensitive pedagogical practices, from the students' point of view. This demonstrates that inclusive content and gender responsive teaching are mutually reinforcing when it is lived by the students in the same process of the classroom. However, the relationships rated by teachers are mostly not significant, suggesting that more effective support is needed for teachers to implement inclusive content intentionally and critically in their classrooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Social Science teachers can reinforce the intentional use of gender-related issues in discussion, activities and examinations in the classroom. Representation in the materials should also be discussed, reflected on, analyzed, and critically examined through lessons that further processing students' thinking around the representation of women, LGBTQIA identities, gender based social structures, patriarchy, and narrative framing.

Professional development on gender responsive pedagogy may be offered by school administrators. These trainings can support teachers to go beyond the general concept of inclusiveness and provide them with specific strategies to engage in challenging stereotypes, to promote equitable participation and to facilitate sensitive but critical conversations around gender roles. It is important to have institutional support as teachers need guidance, time and safe structures to be able to deal with issues of gender in a responsible way.

To improve the quality of Social Science lessons and materials, curriculum developers and writers of teaching materials can incorporate age appropriate, contextually relevant illustration of gender difference and equality. Localized incidents, stories in the context of culture and activities for the classroom can engage students in their own experiences and community life.

Future research can be done in the classroom via observation, interviews, or mixed methods studies to assess if perceived gender-sensitive practices are carried out in practice across the classroom. The effectiveness of the

supplementary materials in strengthening the implementation of teacher gender-responsiveness in teaching Social Science can also be tested in future studies, especially M.U.L.A.T.

Limitations of the Study

The results must be considered based on the social science classes of grade 10 in Talacogon East District where the study was conducted. Data was based on perceptions collected using questionnaires, so responses could be of how the students and teachers made sense of or perceived the content and pedagogy of gender in the classroom and not necessarily a direct observation of the classroom. Another limitation of the study was the small size of the teacher group, which could have influenced the results for the correlations. While the study has its drawbacks, it does offer valuable insights into the perceptions of inclusive content and gender sensitive pedagogy in SS classrooms and the continued need for classroom mediation in meaningful gender sensitive instruction.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher followed ethical standards for research. Permission was obtained from the schools involved and information was given to the participants about the study and their voluntary participation before data collection. Informed consent was achieved and confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed to the respondents. Personal information that will call out the respondents was not revealed in the presentation and interpretation of the outcomes. All respondents' welfare was protected during the data collection. The researcher declares: I did not have any conflict of interest with the process of this study. Plagiarism was not used and all the sources used were cited and the findings were interpreted without bias. Only language refinement, language organization and formatting assistance were provided by the use of AI tools, and the analysis, interpretation and scholarly process was the responsibility of the researcher.

Data Availability

Data underlying the findings are not publicly available due to the need for protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents. Summary of the results is presented in manuscript; Data related to the manuscript are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request, with ethical and institutional restrictions.

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