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EFFECTIVENESS OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE INQUIRY-BASED STRATEGY IN FACILITATING LEARNING OF GENDER ISSUES IN SOCIAL STUDIES

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Abstract
Gender education is essential in Social Studies, yet conventional instruction often leaves learners with an abstract, surface-level understanding. This study determined the effectiveness of the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy in facilitating the learning of gender issues among Grade 10 students in Social Studies at Mactan National High School during the School Year. The research employed a one-group pre-test–post-test design involving a group of students. Instruments measured learning across four dimensions: knowledge of gender norms and roles, understanding of gender roles and norms, awareness of gender issues and inequalities, and recognition of gender rights and equality. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and appropriate statistical tests to determine significant differences. Pre-test results showed consistent developing-level proficiency across all indicators. Post-test scores rose significantly to an overall proficient rating, with the strongest gain observed in understanding of gender roles and norms. Analysis confirmed highly significant improvements directly attributable to the intervention. No student remained at the lowest proficiency tiers following implementation. Findings demonstrate that inquiry-driven, gender-responsive pedagogy effectively transforms learners from passive recipients to critical thinkers who recognize equity as actionable practice. An enhanced teaching guide was developed to institutionalize this approach. Recommendations emphasize sustained implementation across grade levels, curriculum integration, and further research to validate long-term impacts.

Keywords: Teaching Social Studies; Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy; gender issues; one-group pre-test–post-test design; Mactan; Lapu-Lapu City.

Introduction

Gender equality and inclusive quality education are central to global development commitments, as articulated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, while SDG 4.7 explicitly requires that by 2030, all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including through education for gender equality, human rights, and global citizenship (United Nations, 2015; UNESCO, 2020). Social Studies serves as a critical platform for realizing these goals, as it equips learners to understand social structures, challenge inequalities, and participate meaningfully in civic life. However, achieving these outcomes requires more than just including gender topics in the curriculum; it demands teaching strategies that are responsive to diverse gender experiences, encourage critical inquiry, and enable learners to actively examine and transform stereotypes and inequities.

The international literature describes persistent stereotypes in textbooks, underrepresentation of marginalized groups, and reliance on teacher-centered methods. UNESCO (2023) discusses curricular representations and limited preparation for gender-transformative pedagogy. UNESCO (2024) and Tomé et al. (2024) discuss inquiry approaches in which students investigate real-world problems, analyze evidence, and debate perspectives. These accounts frame gender responsiveness as a matter of how learners construct knowledge as well as which topics appear in a curriculum. They provide a background for the present instructional approach rather than evidence about the participating Grade 10 learners.

Within Southeast Asia, the study situates gender-responsive education alongside regional commitments and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. UNESCO (2025) and SEAMEO (2024) discuss uneven implementation, the treatment of gender as an additional topic, and limited opportunities to connect concepts with local circumstances. The review emphasizes the need to examine experiences, cultural

expectations, and intersecting identities rather than restrict teaching to memorized legal rights. This regional discussion supports the study's focus on contextualized inquiry into gender issues in Social Studies.

In the Philippines, the study identifies DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017, or the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy, as an institutional basis for inclusive curricula, instructional materials, and teaching practices. It connects that policy with the critical-thinking and contextual orientation of Araling Panlipunan. Bautista (2023) and Generale (2025) discuss implementation gaps, including continued dependence on lectures, outdated representations, and difficulty addressing sensitive questions concerning identity, power, and inequality. These concerns explain the relevance of an instructional approach that helps learners investigate gender issues through familiar social situations.

At Mactan National High School, the rationale identifies concerns about abstract lessons, limited connections with community experiences, unequal classroom participation, gendered bullying, stereotypes about leadership and work, and the representation of women and LGBTQIA+ persons. It also identifies teachers' need for usable inquiry activities and respectful discussion of sensitive questions. These concerns are presented as the study's contextual rationale; the quantitative results reported here concern performance on the gender-learning assessment. The selected participants were Grade 10 remediation learners whose previous assessments indicated difficulty with gender-related topics.

The study addresses the intersection of gender-responsive pedagogy and inquiry-based learning in a Philippine public secondary school. The review discusses substantial attention to policy implementation, materials, and general gender attitudes, while identifying a local need to examine learning across specific gender-related domains. The investigation therefore compared the same learners' performance before and after a Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy. Its four areas were knowledge of gender norms and roles, understanding of gender roles and norms, awareness of gender issues and inequalities, and recognition of gender rights and equality. The results informed an enhanced teaching guide for the school context. The study's purpose does not extend the test results into independently measured changes in civic conduct or community action.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The study organizes its framework around four perspectives: Critical Feminist Transformative Pedagogy, Socio-Constructivist Inquiry Learning Theory, Intersectional Gender Theory, and Gender-Responsive Inquiry as Epistemic Justice Theory. Each provides a different rationale for instructional choices, including dialogue, social interaction, attention to overlapping identities, and recognition of diverse experiences. Figure 1 presents the theoretical and legal relationships framing the investigation. These perspectives guide the approach; the study's score comparisons do not independently validate the theories or isolate their separate contributions.

Critical Feminist Transformative Pedagogy

Critical Feminist Transformative Pedagogy by Paulo Freire (1970) and bell hooks (1994). Critical Feminist Transformative Pedagogy is an educational framework rooted in the belief that learning must challenge systemic oppression, dismantle dominant power structures, and foster equitable, inclusive consciousness, especially as they relate to gender. Drawing from Paulo Freire's foundational call for education as "practice of freedom" rather than banking-style knowledge transfer, it rejects passive instruction and centers dialogue, critical reflection, and action to transform both learners and society. bell hooks extends this by emphasizing that pedagogy must be both rigorous and loving, acknowledging how gender intersects with class, race, and other identities to shape marginalization, while positioning students not as passive recipients but as co-creators of knowledge. This approach prioritizes interrogating how educational systems perpetuate gender bias and reorienting learning toward justice and self-determination. It further anchors on integrating gender responsiveness into all learning processes, emphasizing curricula and teaching methods that address stereotypes, center marginalized voices, and equip learners to advocate for equality in their communities.

In the present study, this perspective informed an approach in which learners investigated and questioned gender-related assumptions rather than received definitions alone. The four assessed domains concerned factual knowledge, interpretation of roles and norms, awareness of inequalities, and recognition of rights. Dialogue and reflection were therefore relevant to the instructional aims, particularly when learners examined who defines social expectations and whose experiences receive attention. The theory offers a way to connect subject content with questions of fairness and participation. However, the documented assessment outcomes are scores; they do not by themselves establish that learners became advocates, changed their conduct, or transformed social relations.

Socio-Constructivist Inquiry Learning Theory

Socio-Constructivist Inquiry Learning Theory by Lev Vygotsky (1978). Socio-Constructivist Inquiry Learning Theory is an educational framework grounded in the principle that knowledge is not passively received but actively built by learners through social interaction, cultural context, and guided investigation. Rooted in Lev Vygotsky's core concepts, particularly the Zone of Proximal Development, where learners advance with targeted support from peers or more knowledgeable others, and the role of language and social collaboration in shaping cognitive growth, this approach prioritizes meaningful, question-driven exploration over rote memorization. It further emphasizes that inquiry-based learning is situated in authentic, real-world contexts that connect new ideas to learners' lived experiences and existing beliefs. It can also be noted that structured inquiry fosters critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving, as learners negotiate perspectives, test assumptions, and co-construct understanding through dialogue, rather than relying solely on direct instruction.

This perspective informed guided investigation, peer discussion, and the use of learners' experiences as entry points for examining gender issues. The four domains were approached as related understandings that learners could discuss and reconsider through social exchange, rather than as disconnected definitions. The teacher's role included helping learners formulate questions, examine cases, and explore possible explanations. Comparing pre-test and post-test performance described development in the assessed areas after that experience. It did not separately measure the Zone of Proximal Development or establish that peer interaction was the particular cause of a score gain. The theoretical connection concerns the design and interpretation of learning activities.

Intersectional Gender Theory

Intersectional Gender Theory, developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989). This holds that gender cannot be fully understood in isolation; instead, it intersects with other social identities such as class, ethnicity, ability, and cultural background to shape distinct experiences of privilege and marginalization. Crenshaw first articulated this framework to highlight how single-axis analyses erase the overlapping discrimination faced by women who hold multiple marginalized identities, noting that systems of oppression operate together rather than separately. This perspective emphasizes that meaningful engagement with gender requires recognizing these complex interactions rather than relying on broad, generalized assumptions about what it means to be male, female, or non-binary.

For the instructional strategy, the intersectional perspective supported considering how gender relates to class, culture, ability, and other aspects of learners' contexts. It encouraged questions about why experiences of advantage or disadvantage may differ within as well as across gender groups. The four learning domains provided opportunities to examine social expectations, inequalities, and rights without assuming that all members of a gender have identical experiences. This perspective was especially relevant to contextualized examples and discussion of community situations. Nevertheless, domain score differences do not constitute a separate test of intersectional understanding or show which identity-related examples were most influential for individual learners.

Gender-Responsive Inquiry as Epistemic Justice

Gender-Responsive Inquiry as Epistemic Justice Theory, attributed to Elaine Unterhalter (2019). This frames education as a site where knowledge is distributed, validated, or silenced along gendered lines. It posits that true equity in learning requires addressing how dominant systems have long dismissed, marginalized, or erased gendered perspectives, especially those of women, gender-diverse groups, and people from intersecting marginalized backgrounds, as legitimate sources of knowledge. This approach holds that inquiry-based practice must be intentionally designed to correct these imbalances: it should center underrepresented voices, challenge biased narratives embedded in standard curricula, and grant learners agency to investigate questions that reflect their own realities and lived experiences. It further asserts that equitable learning is not merely about sharing facts, but about supporting equal opportunities for learners to shape, produce, and value knowledge about gender.

The study connects this perspective with inclusive, student-led investigation and recognition of learners' contributions as relevant to knowledge about gender. It informed attention to whose experiences were represented in cases, whose ideas were heard, and how learners could ask questions about familiar situations. The strategy's use of varied examples and shared roles was intended to support participation across genders. The four assessment domains supplied the quantitative learning measures, while epistemic justice supplied an interpretive orientation for teaching. A statistically significant score difference alone cannot establish that all classroom knowledge relations became equitable or that every learner experienced equal authority in practice.

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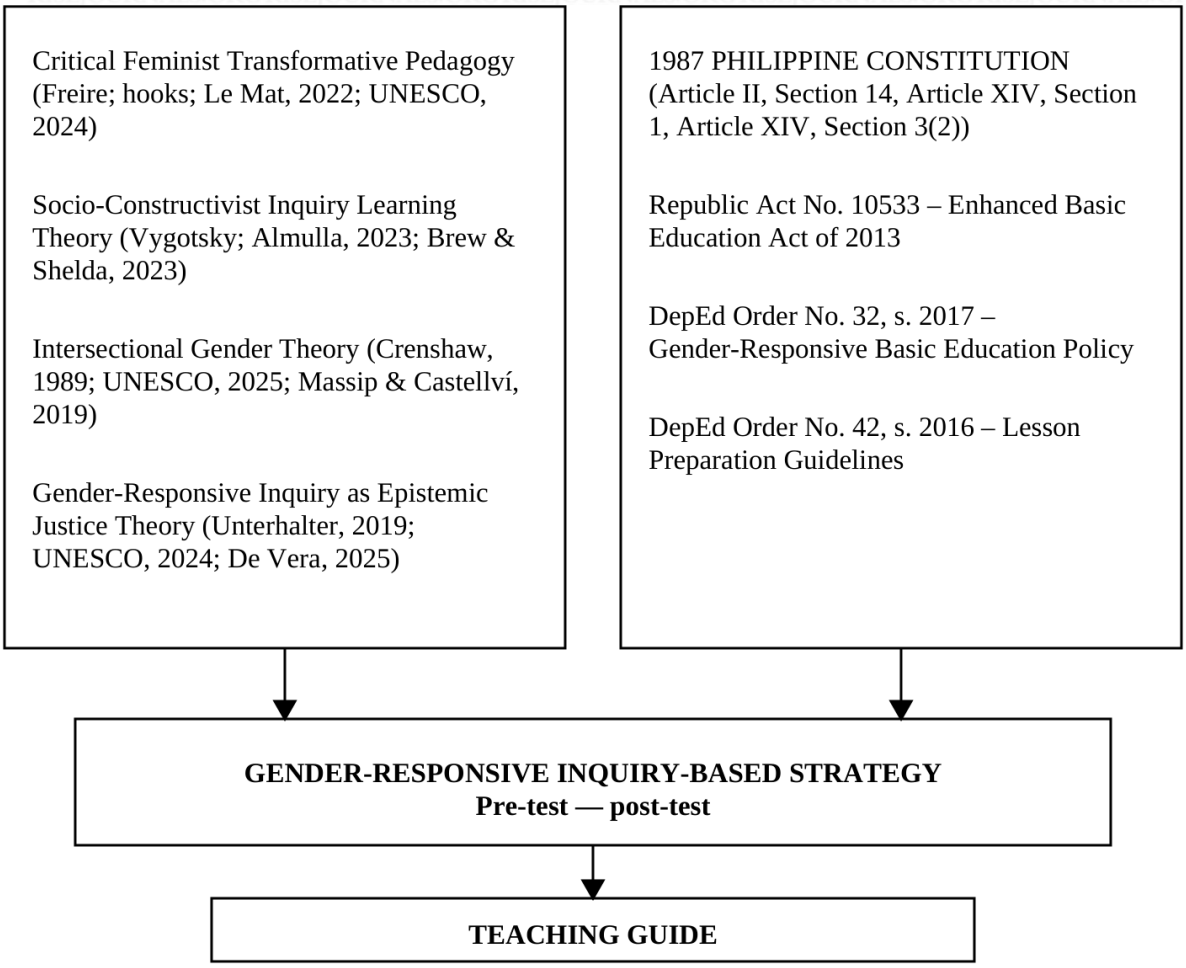

Figure 1. Theoretical Background of the Study

Legal and Policy Bases

The study identifies four legal and policy bases for the instructional approach: the 1987 Philippine Constitution, Republic Act No. 10533, DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017, and DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2016. These are discussed as the study's policy context for inclusive education and learner-centered instruction. These bases explain the policy context within which the instructional approach was developed.

1987 Philippine Constitution

The study draws on Article II, Section 14, Article XIV, Section 1, and Article XIV, Section 3(2) in discussing gender equality, human dignity, access to quality education, and education's social purposes. The study relates these broad concerns to learners' understanding of gender concepts, social roles, inequalities, and rights. In its instructional rationale, equitable learning includes opportunities to question stereotypes and participate in meaningful classroom inquiry. These provisions are presented as the constitutional context identified in the study.

Republic Act No. 10533

The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 provides a basis for learner-centered, inclusive, and relevant education. The study connects the law with attention to varied learner needs, critical thinking, and engagement with social issues. Within that rationale, inquiry offers a means of relating gender topics to experiences that Grade 10 learners can examine and discuss. The four domains provide an instructional focus for knowledge, interpretation, awareness, and rights-related understanding. Their assessment supplies evidence about performance in this study, while the policy

discussion explains why inclusive and relevant learning was an educational priority. Test improvement is not treated as proof of full statutory compliance or of changes in all values and behaviors associated with the law's broader aims.

DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017

The Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy is the study's principal institutional basis for addressing stereotypes, bias, discrimination, and unequal opportunities in education. The study relates it to curricula, materials, methods, and school environments. The strategy responds through questions about gender expectations, inclusive examples, shared participation, and examination of inequality. The policy discussion also highlights that classroom implementation requires more than formal recognition of gender topics. Appropriate activities and support for teachers are relevant to translating policy aims into instruction. The current study reports learning-test results and a proposed guide; it does not present a separate audit of policy implementation across the school or evidence that every policy objective was achieved.

DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2016

The Lesson Preparation Guidelines are discussed in relation to alignment among objectives, activities, and assessment, student-centered teaching, and higher-order thinking. The study connects these principles with varied strategies, problem-solving, collaborative learning, and the use of learners' experiences. In this study, the four gender-related domains supplied a common focus for instruction and pre-test–post-test assessment. Inquiry tasks and guided discussion provided the proposed connection between the learning aims and classroom processes. The policy serves as part of the planning rationale rather than independent validation of effectiveness. Score differences address the assessed learning outcomes; they do not separately establish change in every cognitive or affective aim mentioned in the broader lesson-planning discussion.

Related Research

Nugraha (2026) reports that gender bias persists in both what is taught and how it is delivered in social studies and sociology instruction. Most curricula only add gender topics superficially rather than revising frameworks deeply, while teaching practices often reinforce stereotypes portraying men as authoritative or rational and women as domestic or secondary through lesson content, discussion prompts, and assigned roles. Diverse gender experiences and intersecting identities are also rarely centered, leaving learners with limited ability to recognize or analyze systemic inequality. The study concludes that eliminating bias requires more than inclusive content alone; it demands gender-responsive instructional approaches and dedicated teacher development to transform how gender is understood in the classroom.

Miralles-Cardona (2025) reports that gender-responsive pedagogy is only moderately integrated into teacher education curricula, with content skewed heavily toward gender-based violence and equal opportunities while foundational gender concepts, identity, and critical frameworks receive far less attention. Instructional methods also remain reliant on traditional lectures rather than interactive, inquiry-driven, or gender-transformative approaches. While pre-service teachers who received dedicated gender training reported higher confidence in applying gender-responsive practice, overall institutional commitment and systematic implementation remain limited. It concludes that realizing meaningful gender equality in education requires not just adding gender topics to existing lessons, but revising content, adopting participatory teaching strategies, and strengthening sustained institutional support for both educators and learners.

Laro (2024) frames teen pregnancy in the Philippines as a critical outcome of persistent gender inequality, and explores how curriculum design can better address such gender-related challenges. Drawing on international best practices, the study develops and proposes the TEACH Framework, a structured guide to help educators meaningfully integrate gender-sensitive concepts and perspectives into regular classroom instruction. It concludes that embedding gender responsiveness into curriculum frameworks is essential to equip learners with the awareness and critical understanding needed to address gender-based issues, and provides a locally relevant reference for strengthening inclusive education across Philippine basic education.

Roda (2026) reports that while people-centered gender inclusion efforts are well-established in participating schools, formal policies and actual programs, activities, and projects remain only moderately effective and need further strengthening. Though overt gender-related problems are relatively low, LGBTQIA+ students still face consistent discrimination and exclusion; additionally, higher levels of gender mainstreaming are linked to better management of

gender issues. The study concludes that schools must move beyond basic awareness to fully align policies, activities, and inclusive support systems especially for marginalized genders with DepEd standards, and proposes a targeted revitalization plan to make gender-responsive practice more consistent and impactful.

Luna and Babaran (2022) examined the practical and systemic barriers faced by Social Studies teachers in embedding gender equality into daily instruction. Key challenges include limited access to ready-made gender-responsive resources, insufficient teacher training on gender-sensitive pedagogy, restrictive curriculum pacing, and persistent cultural or community norms that resist discussions on gender issues. These hurdles often lead to superficial or inconsistent delivery of gender-related lessons, and the study concludes that developing localized, ready-to-use gender-responsive instructional materials is a critical need to support teachers and strengthen the teaching of gender topics in Philippine Social Studies classrooms.

Seni (2026) examines how gender-responsive pedagogy is actually applied in daily teaching practice across technical subjects. Findings show that while teachers recognize the value of gender equity, actual implementation remains inconsistent: lessons often still reinforce traditional stereotypes about ability, and few use inquiry-based or inclusive methods that actively engage all learners regardless of gender. Key barriers include limited specialized training, lack of locally adapted gender-responsive resources, and heavy workloads that constrain lesson innovation. The study concludes that successful use of gender-responsive approaches requires more than policy mandates; it needs targeted capacity-building, ready-to-use materials, and ongoing support to help teachers shift from passive instruction to equitable, student-centered practice.

Mendizabal (2024) examined the experiences of six senior high school mathematics teachers in Quezon City, finding that gender stereotypes, implicit bias, and gender-based discrimination remain persistent barriers even as teachers recognize the importance of inclusive practice. The study identified three key approaches used by educators to address these issues: building gender awareness through self-reflection, applying gender sensitivity via inclusive language and materials, and practicing gender responsiveness through intentional grouping and equitable participation. It concludes that while individual teachers adopt effective strategies, sustainable progress requires a whole-school approach that includes dedicated training, institutional support, and wider family and community engagement.

Bastida Jr. et al. (2025) report that while teachers are generally familiar with gender-related policies and issues, many struggle to translate this awareness into effective classroom practice. Key barriers include the absence of a clear integration framework, lack of GAD specialists, insufficient contextualized plans, cultural differences, low institutional prioritization, coordination gaps, limited depth of gender knowledge, and unsuitable implementation methods. The study proposes the “Praxis-Oriented Construction of Gender-Responsive Classrooms” theory and concludes that successful mainstreaming requires clear, well-supported policies and guidance to turn policy awareness into meaningful, inclusive teaching.

Aguilar and Parentela (2025) assess how consistently DepEd’s Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy is being put into practice across schools. Findings show that while policy awareness is relatively high, actual implementation remains moderate overall, with stronger performance in visible areas like safety and anti-discrimination measures but weaker progress in revising curricula, adapting teaching methods, and integrating gender responsiveness into daily instruction. Key barriers include limited training, insufficient local resources, and uneven institutional support. The study concludes that moving from compliance to meaningful practice requires targeted capacity-building, ready-to-use instructional materials, and regular monitoring focused on how teaching strategies such as gender-responsive inquiry actually shape student learning and attitudes.

Lomibao (2024) reports findings from Caloocan City public secondary schools indicating that DepEd’s Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy is generally perceived as well-implemented across key areas including curriculum, instruction, assessment, and school operations. However, there are significant differences in how implementation is viewed based on respondents’ gender, age, teaching experience, and position. While awareness and overall compliance are strong, consistent, equitable application across all school levels and roles remains a challenge, and the study recommends targeted support to ensure the policy translates fully into inclusive classroom practice.

Doydoy and Lomarda (2025) report findings from 169 elementary teachers in Bukidnon indicating that GAD implementation across learner development, learning delivery, environment, resources, and assessment is very high, while teachers also strongly practice core work values such as creativity, patience, and commitment to achievement. The study further confirms a significant positive relationship: teachers who uphold sound professional values are more likely to consistently apply gender-responsive practices in their instruction. The reported association supports considering professional values and institutional support together, without establishing a causal effect of values on policy implementation.

Gepilano (2026) reports findings from Grades 4 to 10 teachers in Bukidnon indicating that GAD policy implementation is very high across learning environment, learning materials, learning delivery, assessment, and

learner development. Teachers also consistently demonstrate strong GAD-aligned educational practices in areas such as discipline, creativity, orderliness, patience, decisiveness, and accomplishment. However, the study found no significant relationship between how fully GAD policies are implemented and the extent of these practices. The discussion identifies socio-cultural norms and institutional support as possible contextual considerations; nonsignificance is not proof of no relationship or no effect. It concludes that while policy compliance is strong, deeper contextual and systemic measures are needed to fully align institutional mandates with daily teaching practice.

Nikghadam-Hojjati et al. (2025) frame gender-responsive practice as essential for eliminating systemic bias that prioritizes men's perspectives across research, innovation, and policy. Drawing on mixed methods including expert consultations, they identify core barriers such as lack of gender awareness, male-dominated fields, insufficient data, limited funding, and weak institutional accountability. The study emphasizes that gender-responsive approaches must go beyond inclusion to actively address intersecting identities, and proposes practical strategies from capacity building and inclusive design to coordinated policy and disaggregated data to ensure solutions serve all genders fairly. It concludes that embedding gender responsiveness throughout the research and innovation lifecycle leads to more ethical, effective, and equitable outcomes across sectors including education.

Egitim (2024) reports that integrating gender perspectives into a nine-week critical inquiry-based action learning program effectively shifted students' views toward more inclusive and impartial understandings of leadership, moving beyond traditional gendered assumptions. This inquiry-driven approach also boosted student motivation, participation, and engagement in learning. The study concludes that using critical inquiry as a core strategy is a powerful way to challenge stereotypes and foster more equitable gender attitudes among learners.

In the TESCEA Gender Learning Brief (INASP, 2022), the document outlines how gender-responsive approaches strengthen teaching and learning across secondary education, emphasizing that inquiry-based and student-centered methods are particularly effective at helping learners examine gender norms, challenge bias, and build inclusive understanding. It highlights key gaps including limited teacher confidence, lack of locally adapted materials, and the need to link gender content to real-world social issues. The brief concludes that integrating gender responsiveness into inquiry practice improves both critical thinking and equitable participation, and recommends sustained professional development and institutional support to make these approaches mainstream.

Akhigbe and Adeyemi (2020) report that the Gender Responsive Collaborative Learning Strategy significantly improved both academic achievement and positive learning attitudes among students, regardless of gender, outperforming traditional instruction in both virtual and hands-on settings. Notably, the strategy produced even stronger learning gains for students in single-sex schools compared to coeducational environments. The study concludes that intentionally designed gender-responsive collaborative approaches effectively level learning opportunities and reduce disparities, making them highly recommended for equitable teaching practice.

Link Education Ethiopia (2025) reports that applying gender-responsive and inclusive pedagogy significantly improves student engagement, academic performance, and confidence especially among girls, who demonstrated stronger results in literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking after targeted training. Shifting from teacher-centered to student-centered methods, using inclusive language, and connecting lessons to learners' lived experiences helps reduce stereotypes, lower dropout rates, and create safer classroom environments. The report concludes that sustained impact requires integrating these approaches into national policies, teacher training, curriculum design, and community partnerships, rather than relying on isolated interventions.

Taken together, the literature identifies recurring concerns about stereotypes, teacher preparation, contextualized resources, equitable participation, and the gap between policy awareness and instructional practice. The studies and reports cover different subjects, age groups, settings, and research designs. They therefore supply a rationale for the present inquiry rather than direct replication evidence. The Grade 10 remediation study contributes a local pre-test–post-test comparison across four specified domains and uses the findings to inform a teaching guide. Its interpretation remains bounded by that design, assessment, and participant group.

Significance of the Study

The study's significance concerns the potential use of its findings and proposed guide by education stakeholders. Its immediate evidence comes from forty Grade 10 remediation learners at Mactan National High School. The intended benefits described below concern instructional planning and further inquiry; they are not additional outcomes measured through a separate stakeholder assessment.

For the Department of Education and policy makers, the study offers a local account of how gender-responsive education can be approached through classroom instruction. The four domain assessments provide a focus for considering learning alongside policy aims. The results may inform discussion of practical instructional support, while

the single-group design limits conclusions about effectiveness across schools. The proposed guide is an example of an instructional resource developed from the study, rather than a validated system-wide implementation model.

For school administrators, the study identifies the relevance of support for gender-responsive teaching within the school's remediation arrangements. Coordination, appropriate resources, and attention to inclusive participation are part of the study context. Administrators may consider the guide when planning support for teachers and learners, taking account of the distinction between the one-week intervention and the longer proposed guide. The study does not supply a school-wide evaluation of staffing, resources, or implementation capacity.

For Social Studies teachers, the guide provides an organized means of connecting gender concepts with inquiry questions, familiar situations, group investigation, and reflection. Its activities address knowledge, understanding, awareness, and recognition of rights through specific teacher and learner roles. The remaining differences in post-test proficiency support continued monitoring and assistance rather than uniform assumptions about mastery. Teachers may adapt the resource to documented classroom needs without assuming that every activity will produce identical results in a different group.

For Grade 10 learners, the intended contribution is more accessible engagement with gender concepts, roles, inequalities, and rights. The strategy places learners in an active position to ask questions and examine social situations with others. The reported tests describe changes in assessed learning after the sessions. Respect for differences, critical reflection, and equitable participation remain instructional aims; the study did not separately measure all of these as lasting personal or community outcomes.

For parents and community stakeholders, the study highlights the connection between classroom learning and experiences beyond school. Familiar family and community situations provide contexts for discussing gender expectations and fairness. The study may support awareness of the role of education in shaping perceptions and the relevance of home–school collaboration. It does not report a separate parent survey, community intervention, or measured change in family practices.

For the researcher, the findings provide an account of the strategy within the existing research environment and a basis for sharing an instructional resource. For future researchers, the study offers a reference for examining gender-responsive pedagogy, inquiry-based learning, and Social Studies education. Further inquiries can consider the questions left open by the present design, including broader applicability and sustained outcomes. Such uses build on the documented study rather than treating its results as a complete evaluation of all aspects of gender learning.

Methods

Design and Setting

The study used a one-group pre-test–post-test design to examine Grade 10 students' learning of gender issues before and after a Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy. It was conducted at Mactan National High School in Mactan, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu, during School Year 2026–2027. The same cohort supplied both sets of assessment results. There was no separate comparison group. The design involved a single cohort within the school's existing remediation arrangements, assessed at two points. The analysis therefore describes within-group change following the intervention rather than isolating a causal effect.

The approach operated within existing class and remediation arrangements. A pre-test provided the initial measure across the four learning domains; the post-test provided a corresponding measure after the sessions. The comparison addressed the research questions about learning levels and reported differences. It also supplied a basis for identifying instructional priorities for the enhanced guide. The design did not evaluate the guide's subsequent implementation, compare alternative teaching methods, or establish how long any learning differences persisted.

Mactan National High School is described as a very large public secondary school serving approximately 3,000 learners from varied socioeconomic, cultural, and community backgrounds in Mactan and nearby areas. The study identifies inclusive participation, integration of gender perspectives, and policy alignment as relevant instructional concerns in this setting. The researcher's established role at the school facilitated coordination with the administration and access to the remediation program. The guide was developed for this local context; the size and diversity of the school do not make the purposively selected group representative of all its learners or of other schools in Central Visayas.

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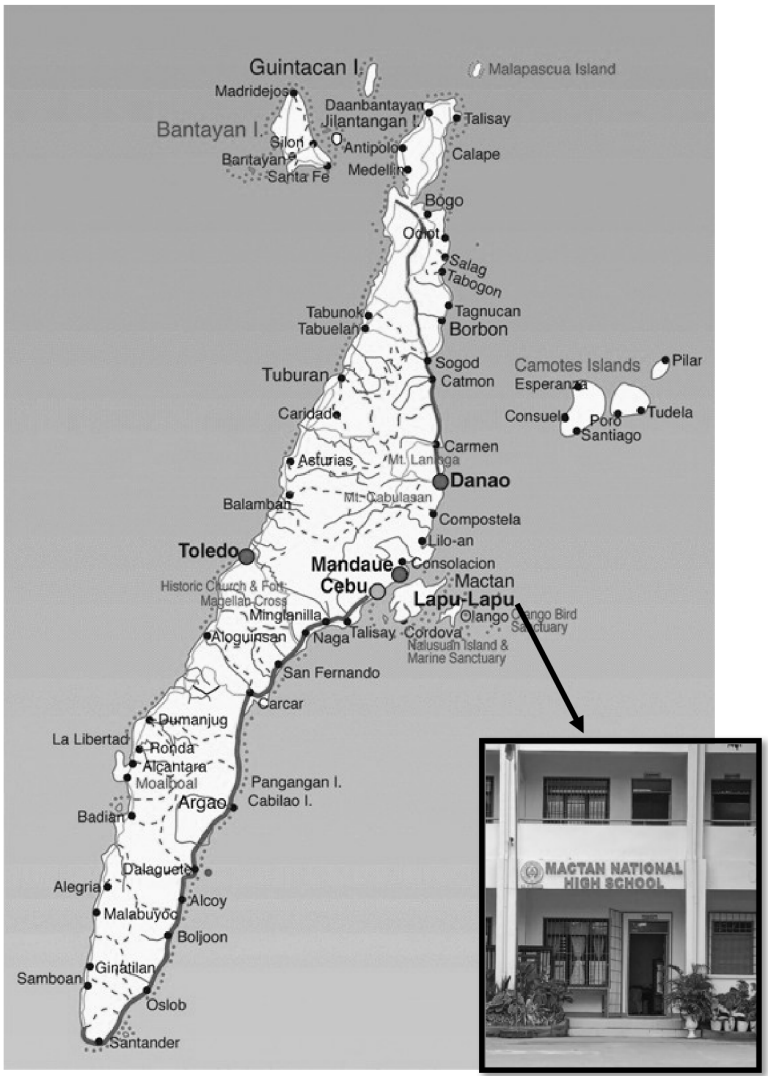

Figure 2. Location Map of the Research Environment

Participants and Sampling

The respondents of this study were forty (40) Grade 10 students officially enrolled at Mactan National High School in Mactan, Lapu-Lapu City, who were selected through purposive sampling based on specific inclusion criteria aligned with the study's objectives. All participants belonged to the school's remediation program in Araling Panlipunan (Social Studies) and had consistently obtained below-proficiency ratings in prior assessments covering the gender issues topic including gender concepts, roles, norms, inequalities, and rights, which indicated persistent difficulty specifically in understanding and mastering this particular area of the subject. All forty (40) students participated in both the pretest and posttest to measure changes in their grasp of gender issues before and after the intervention. This targeted sampling was appropriate because the study aimed primarily to evaluate whether the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy could address the learning gaps and difficulties that these learners experienced specifically with the gender issues topic in Social Studies. The findings guided the development of an Enhanced Instructional Teaching Guide that responded directly to the unique learning needs of students who struggled with this specific area of the curriculum.

The inclusion criteria focused on difficulty with the gender-issues topic within Araling Panlipunan, rather than on a random sample of the Grade 10 population. Prior below-proficiency ratings were the stated basis for identifying the remediation group. The forty participants completed both assessment occasions, providing the group described in the

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results. Table 1 presents the male–female distribution: 12 male students and 28 female students. These categories describe the reported sample composition and are not used to infer unreported differences in achievement by gender. The findings apply directly to this participating group; broader use requires consideration of different learner needs and classroom conditions.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents

Mactan National High School	Frequency (f)	Percentage(%)
Male	12	30
Female	28	70
Total	40	100

Instrument and Scoring

The researcher adapted the test instrument originally developed by Nugraha (2026) from the study Gender Bias in Social Studies Education: Representation and Pedagogical Practices in Sociology Learning. Wording and contextual alignment were refined to ensure relevance and clarity: the researcher made necessary modifications and adjustments to the items to align them with the Grade 10 Social Studies curriculum, DepEd standards, and the specific objectives of this study. Language adaptation formed another key revision: selected items were translated into Filipino/Tagalog to ensure clarity and accessibility for the learners. The adapted instrument covered four domains with 10 items each: knowledge of gender concepts and definitions, understanding of gender roles and norms, awareness of gender issues and inequalities, and recognition of gender rights and equality, totaling 40 items; this same tool was used for both the pre-test and post-test to ensure consistent measurement.

The adapted assessment was reviewed by three experts holding master's degrees in Social Studies. Their review focused on adjusted phrasing, translated items, and contextual adaptations for the Philippine Grade 10 setting. The documented review concerned the adapted content and contextual suitability. The same adapted test was used at both assessment occasions.

Each domain contained ten items, allowing performance to be presented separately for the four areas. The first domain addressed foundational gender concepts, with the research questions and results referring to knowledge of gender norms and roles. The remaining domains concern understanding of roles and norms, awareness of issues and inequalities, and recognition of rights and equality. Table 2 presents the scoring categories and their interpretations. The integer raw-score bands classify individual domain scores. The group-mean interpretations are reported separately in the results.

Table 2. Scoring Procedure

Level of Proficiency	Raw Score Range (Per Dimension = 10)	Verbal Interpretation
Proficient	8 – 10	Demonstrates comprehensive and critical understanding of gender concepts; accurately defines gender norms/roles, analyzes issues and inequalities, and consistently applies knowledge of gender rights and equality in real-life situations without guidance.
Approaching Proficiency	6 – 7	Demonstrates satisfactory understanding; correctly explains gender roles and norms, identifies most inequalities, and recognizes gender rights; can discuss and apply these concepts with minimal teacher prompting.
Developing	4 – 5	Demonstrates basic understanding; recalls some definitions and identifies simple examples of gender topics; needs further support to explain differences, analyze causes, or connect ideas independently.
Beginning	0 – 3	Demonstrates limited understanding; struggles to define key terms or distinguish gender-related concepts; requires constant guidance to recognize roles, identify issues, or explain what gender equality means.

Note. The maximum raw score for each dimension is 10.

Intervention and Data Collection

The data gathering for this study was conducted in three major stages: Preliminary Stage, Data Gathering Stage, and Post-Data Gathering Stage. Each stage outlined systematic steps to organize the conduct of the research process.

Preliminary Stage

Preliminary Stage. The researcher secured formal approval directly from the School Head of Mactan National High School to conduct the study within the institution. After receiving the School Head's positive confirmation, the researcher met with the selected participants during their free time to briefly explain the study's purpose, scope, and procedures. When they expressed willingness to participate, the researcher distributed the informed consent forms, which clearly outlined the study details, as well as the participants' rights, including voluntary involvement and the freedom to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Data Gathering Stage

Data Gathering Stage. Upon finalizing all preparations, the researcher administered the pre-test to the selected respondents. The intervention was implemented over one week, delivered during the school's regular remediation program and spanning five one-hour sessions in total. The researcher applied the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy across the four focused topic areas: 1) Knowledge of gender norms and roles; 2) Understanding of gender roles and norms; 3) Awareness of gender issues and inequalities; and 4) Recognition of gender rights and equality. In each session, the researcher guided learners through student-centered investigation tied to these specific domains. Instead of simply presenting information, the researcher encouraged the students to formulate their own questions, examine real-life cases from their community, and collaboratively explore answers and solutions with attention to equal participation, challenging stereotypes, and highlighting diverse experiences across genders. The researcher rotated group roles fairly, validated contributions from all learners, and integrated examples that challenged traditional assumptions, so the students not only learned about each topic area but also experienced inclusive practice directly. After the fifth and final session, the same instrument was administered as the post-test to measure changes in learning outcomes across the four domains. All activities upheld ethical standards, including confidentiality, anonymity, and respect for participants.

Post-Data Gathering Stage

Post-Data Gathering Stage. Once all tests were completed, the quantitative data were compiled, tallied, and subjected to appropriate statistical analysis across the four measured domains. The processed results were then synthesized to answer the specific research questions and served as the basis for developing the Enhanced Instructional Teaching Guide focused on gender-responsive instruction in Social Studies.

The intervention duration was one week, with five sessions of one hour each in the regular remediation program. The sessions addressed the four topic areas through student-centered investigation and collaborative discussion. This implemented schedule is distinct from the proposed guide, which describes an approximately four-week scheme and four 45-minute phases. The latter is an output for future instructional use rather than an additional intervention tested in the reported pre-test–post-test comparison.

Input–Process–Output Model

The study followed an Input–Process–Output model. Inputs comprised the pre-test and post-test scores across the four gender-learning domains. The process included obtaining approval, seeking informed consent, administering the pre-test, implementing the instructional strategy, administering the post-test, retrieving and organizing assessment materials, and analyzing the quantitative results. The output was an Enhanced Instructional Teaching Guide in Gender Issues using the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy in Social Studies. Figure 3 presents the flow from the learning domains through data collection and analysis to the teaching guide. The instructional guide follows the measured domains and the local remediation context.

Ethical Considerations

The study reports permission from the administration of Mactan National High School before data gathering. The school-level permission enabled the researcher to coordinate the study within the institution. Informed consent was obtained from student participants and their parents or guardians. The researcher explained the purpose, procedures, and intended benefits. Participation was voluntary, and the stated right to withdraw did not carry a penalty or affect the students' school standing. The consent process emphasized the participants' rights throughout the study.

Confidentiality arrangements covered test scores and personal information, use of information for the study, and exclusion of names or identifying details from the report. Data-management arrangements involved password-protected files and locked physical storage where applicable. The stated protocol provided for retaining the complete data set for six months after completion and then permanently disposing of it. The retention period was specified relative to completion of the study.

AI assistance was used with literature organization, paraphrasing, formatting, and initial data sorting. It states that AI was not used to fabricate data, alter results, or replace the researcher's analysis, interpretation, and critical judgment. Reviewing and refining AI-supported work remained the researcher's responsibility. The use of AI supported preparation and organization while preserving the researcher's responsibility for the analysis.

Statistical Analysis

Frequencies and percentages described the distribution of learners across the supplied proficiency categories for each domain. Means and mean percentage scores summarized performance before and after instruction. The maximum domain score was ten, so mean percentage scores express domain performance relative to that maximum. The overall weighted mean combined the four equally sized domains. The domain results and overall summary were presented alongside their descriptive interpretations.

Standard deviations described the dispersion of individual domain scores around each group mean at both assessment occasions. They concern variation within the group, rather than the magnitude of improvement or the significance of a difference. Domain standard deviations were interpreted separately for each assessment period. Descriptive ratings such as Developing or Proficient apply to the reported performance categories, not to an SD.

Paired-sample t-tests were used to compare the same learners' pre-test and post-test scores. The significance threshold was .05, and the tables report $p < .001$ for each domain and the overall comparison. The comparisons are presented with their mean differences, t statistics, decisions, and interpretations. These tests concern within-group score differences. Statistical significance describes the reported paired differences and does not establish that the instructional strategy alone caused the changes.

Operational Meanings of the Study Variables

Gender Issues refers to the collective subject matter of the study, comprising the four specific domains: knowledge, understanding, awareness, and recognition of gender-related concepts that served as the topics in the pre-test and post-test and to which the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy was applied during the remediation sessions.

Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy refers to the learner-centered teaching approach implemented across the five one-hour sessions, wherein students actively investigated, discussed, and explored the four gender-related topics: knowledge, understanding, awareness, and recognition, with emphasis on fair participation, inclusive examples, and respect for different perspectives.

Knowledge of Gender Norms and Roles refers to the foundational topic measured in the pre-test and post-test and the first area to which the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy was applied. It pertains to the students' capacity to recall, define, and describe established social expectations, functions, and behaviors associated with different genders, as shown by their scores before and after the intervention.

Understanding of Gender Roles and Norms refers to the interpretive topic examined in the pre-test and post-test and the second area where the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy was applied. It represents the students' ability to explain, analyze, and discuss how social expectations and practices around gender are formed, vary across contexts, and may change over time, as indicated by their pre-test and post-test results.

Awareness of Gender Issues and Inequalities refers to one of the core topics covered in the pre-test and post-test and the specific focus of instruction where the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy was applied. It describes the

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students' demonstrated ability to identify gaps, disparities, and unfair situations experienced by different genders in school, family, and community settings, as reflected in their test scores before and after the intervention.

Recognition of Gender Rights and Equality refers to the concluding topic assessed in the pre-test and post-test and the final domain where the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy was applied. It reflects the students' ability to affirm, value, and uphold the principle that all persons deserve equal dignity, opportunities, and treatment regardless of gender, as measured by their performance before and after the lessons. In this study, the operational evidence is assessment performance; conduct outside the test was not separately measured.

Enhanced Teaching Guide in Gender Issues refers to the evidence-based instructional resource developed from the study's findings, designed to support Social Studies teachers in delivering lessons on the four identified gender-related topics using the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy, and tailored to the learning needs of Grade 10 students at Mactan National High School.

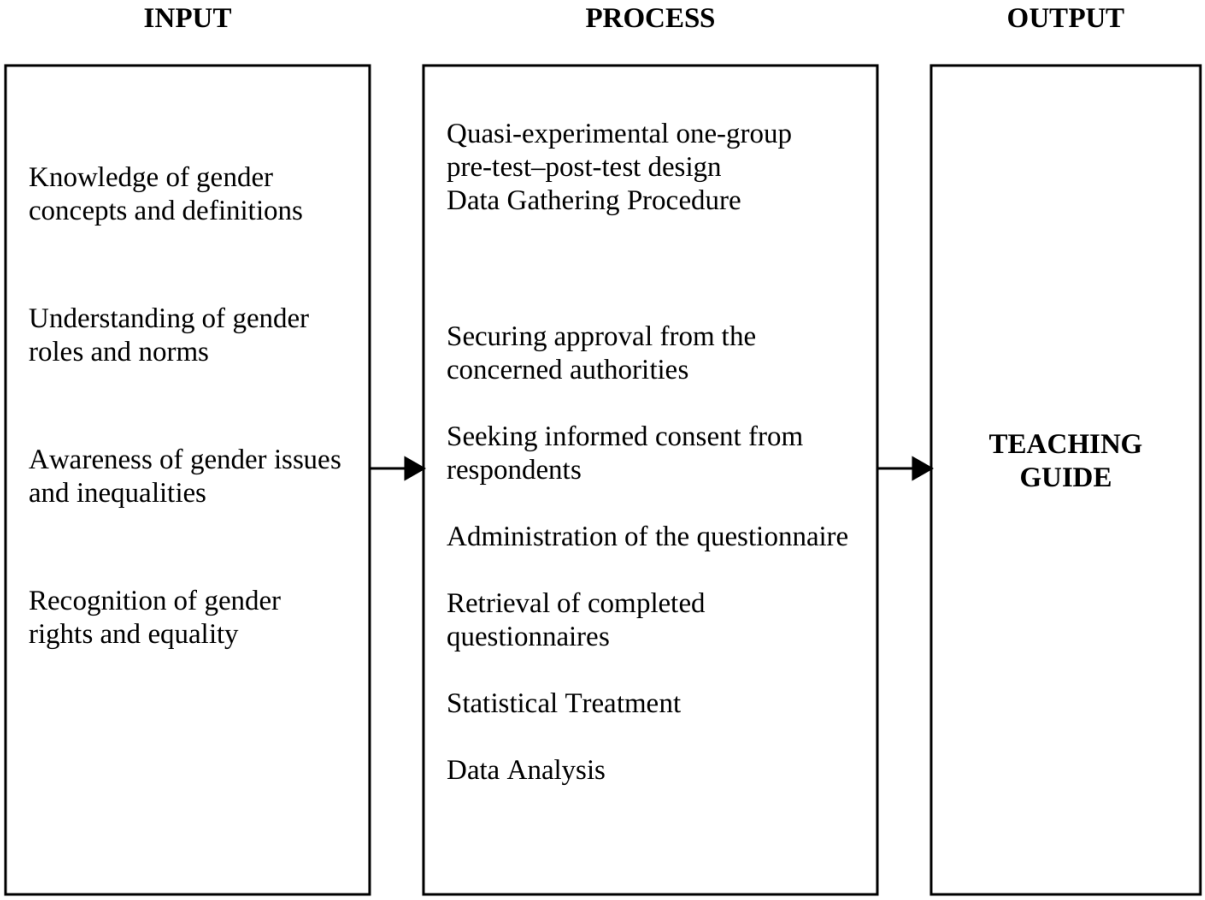

Figure 3. Flow of the Study

Results

Results are presented as frequencies, percentages, domain means, mean percentage scores, standard deviations, and test statistics. Proficiency distributions describe individual score categories, while the mean ratings summarize group performance. These are distinct: a group mean rated Proficient does not imply that every learner was Proficient.

Pre-test Performance

Before the intervention, 21 students (52.50%) were Approaching Proficiency, 18 (45.00%) were Developing, and one (2.50%) was Beginning. None was Proficient. The reported mean was 5.50, the mean percentage score was 55.00%, and the SD was 0.99. Table 3 presents the distribution and reported descriptive statistics.

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Table 3. Pre-test: Knowledge of Gender Norms and Roles

Score	Frequency	Percentage	Level
8 – 10	0	0.00%	Proficient
6 – 7	21	52.50%	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 5	18	45.00%	Developing
0 – 3	1	2.50%	Beginning
Total	40	100%	
Mean Raw Score	5.50		
Mean Percentage Score	55.00%		
Standard Deviation	0.99		

Two students (5.00%) were Proficient, 16 (40.00%) were Approaching Proficiency, and 22 (55.00%) were Developing; none was Beginning. The reported mean was 5.53, the mean percentage score was 55.25%, and the SD was 1.11. Table 4 presents the distribution and reported descriptive statistics.

Table 4. Pre-test: Understanding of Gender Roles and Norms

Score	Frequency	Percentage	Level
8 – 10	2	5.00%	Proficient
6 – 7	16	40.00%	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 5	22	55.00%	Developing
0 – 3	0	0.00%	Beginning
Total	40	100%	
Mean Raw Score	5.53		
Mean Percentage Score	55.25%		
Standard Deviation	1.11		

One student (2.50%) was Proficient, 19 (47.50%) were Approaching Proficiency, 18 (45.00%) were Developing, and two (5.00%) were Beginning. The reported mean was 5.47, the mean percentage score was 54.75%, and the SD was 1.26. Table 5 presents the distribution and reported descriptive statistics.

Table 5. Pre-test: Awareness of Gender Issues and Inequalities

Score	Frequency	Percentage	Level
8 – 10	1	2.50%	Proficient
6 – 7	19	47.50%	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 5	18	45.00%	Developing
0 – 3	2	5.00%	Beginning
Total	40	100%	
Mean Raw Score	5.47		
Mean Percentage Score	54.75%		
Standard Deviation	1.26		

Three students (7.50%) were Proficient, 18 (45.00%) were Approaching Proficiency, 15 (37.50%) were Developing, and four (10.00%) were Beginning. The reported mean was 5.50, the mean percentage score was 55.00%, and the SD was 1.55. This domain had the highest pre-test SD and the largest Beginning category. Table 6 presents the distribution and reported descriptive statistics.

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Table 6. Pre-test: Recognition of Gender Rights and Equality

Score	Frequency	Percentage	Level
8 – 10	3	7.50%	Proficient
6 – 7	18	45.00%	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 5	15	37.50%	Developing
0 – 3	4	10.00%	Beginning
Total	40	100%	
Mean Raw Score	5.50		
Mean Percentage Score	55.00%		
Standard Deviation	1.55		

Post-test Performance

After the intervention, 22 students (55.00%) were Proficient and 18 (45.00%) were Approaching Proficiency. None was Developing or Beginning. The reported mean was 7.92, the mean percentage score was 79.25%, and the SD was 1.19. Table 7 presents the distribution and reported descriptive statistics.

Table 7. Post-test: Knowledge of Gender Norms and Roles

Score	Frequency	Percentage	Level
8 – 10	22	55.00%	Proficient
6 – 7	18	45.00%	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 5	0	0.00%	Developing
0 – 3	0	0.00%	Beginning
Total	40	100%	
Mean Raw Score	7.92		
Mean Percentage Score	79.25%		
Standard Deviation	1.19		

Thirty-three students (82.50%) were Proficient and seven (17.50%) were Approaching Proficiency. None was Developing or Beginning. The reported mean was 8.50, the mean percentage score was 85.00%, and the SD was 1.11. This was the highest post-test domain mean. Table 8 presents the distribution and reported descriptive statistics.

Table 8. Post-test: Understanding of Gender Roles and Norms

Score	Frequency	Percentage	Level
8 – 10	33	82.50%	Proficient
6 – 7	7	17.50%	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 5	0	0.00%	Developing
0 – 3	0	0.00%	Beginning
Total	40	100%	
Mean Raw Score	8.50		
Mean Percentage Score	85.00%		
Standard Deviation	1.11		

Twenty-nine students (72.50%) were Proficient, nine (22.50%) were Approaching Proficiency, and two (5.00%) remained Developing. None was Beginning. The reported mean was 8.18, the mean percentage score was 81.75%, and the SD was 1.30. Table 9 presents the distribution and reported descriptive statistics.

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Table 9. Post-test: Awareness of Gender Issues and Inequalities

Score	Frequency	Percentage	Level
8 – 10	29	72.50%	Proficient
6 – 7	9	22.50%	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 5	2	5.00%	Developing
0 – 3	0	0.00%	Beginning
Total	40	100%	
Mean Raw Score	8.18		
Mean Percentage Score	81.75%		
Standard Deviation	1.30		

Twenty-five students (62.50%) were Proficient and 15 (37.50%) were Approaching Proficiency. None was Developing or Beginning. The reported mean was 7.95, the mean percentage score was 79.50%, and the SD was 1.24. Table 10 presents the distribution and reported descriptive statistics.

Table 10. Post-test: Recognition of Gender Rights and Equality

Score	Frequency	Percentage	Level
8 – 10	25	62.50%	Proficient
6 – 7	15	37.50%	Approaching Proficiency
4 – 5	0	0.00%	Developing
0 – 3	0	0.00%	Beginning
Total	40	100%	
Mean Raw Score	7.95		
Mean Percentage Score	79.50%		
Standard Deviation	1.24		

Summary of Pre-test and Post-test Performance

The reported overall domain mean increased from 5.50 (Developing) to 8.14 (Proficient). Understanding of gender roles and norms had the highest post-test mean (8.50), followed by awareness (8.18), recognition of rights and equality (7.95), and knowledge of norms and roles (7.92). The two latter domain means were interpreted as Approaching Proficiency. Table 11 preserves the reported mean ratings; the individual distributions show that two learners remained Developing in awareness, and not all learners attained Proficient in every domain.

Table 11. Summary of Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Indicators	Mean (Pre-test)	Level	Mean (Post-test)	Level
Knowledge of gender norms and roles	5.50	Developing	7.92	Approaching Proficiency
Understanding of gender roles and norms	5.53	Developing	8.50	Proficient
Awareness of gender issues and inequalities	5.47	Developing	8.18	Proficient
Recognition of gender rights and equality	5.50	Developing	7.95	Approaching Proficiency
Overall Weighted Mean	5.50	Developing	8.14	Proficient

Reported Pre-test–Post-test Differences

The reported paired-sample tests yielded $p < .001$ for each domain and the overall measure. The largest reported mean difference was 2.98 points for understanding of gender roles and norms. The remaining reported differences were 2.70

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for awareness, 2.45 for recognition of rights and equality, and 2.42 for knowledge of norms and roles. The overall difference was 2.64. Table 12 presents the reported test statistics, decisions, and interpretations.

Table 12, Part A. Reported Paired-sample Test Statistics

Indicators	Mean (Pre-test)	Mean (Post-test)	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Knowledge of gender norms and roles	5.50	7.92	2.42	10.46	<0.001
Understanding of gender roles and norms	5.53	8.50	2.98	13.76	<0.001
Awareness of gender issues and inequalities	5.47	8.18	2.70	11.89	<0.001
Recognition of gender rights and equality	5.50	7.95	2.45	7.56	<0.001
Overall Weighted Mean	5.50	8.14	2.64	10.92	<0.001

Table 12, Part B. Decisions and Interpretations

Indicators	Decision	Interpretation
Knowledge of gender norms and roles	Reject H_0	There is a significant difference
Understanding of gender roles and norms	Reject H_0	There is a significant difference
Awareness of gender issues and inequalities	Reject H_0	There is a significant difference
Recognition of gender rights and equality	Reject H_0	There is a significant difference
Overall Weighted Mean	Reject H_0	There is a significant difference

Note. Parts A and B report the statistics and decisions for the same paired comparisons.

Discussion

Overview of Learning Differences

The pre-test profile showed Developing mean performance in all four domains. Although some learners were already Approaching Proficiency or Proficient in particular areas, the distributions indicated an instructional need across knowledge, understanding, awareness, and recognition of rights. The remediation setting is important to interpretation: participants were selected because previous assessments indicated below-proficiency performance on gender issues. Their initial results therefore describe this targeted group rather than the general level of all Grade 10 learners at the school.

After the intervention, every domain mean was higher. Understanding of gender roles and norms had the highest post-test mean and the largest reported gain. Awareness of gender issues and inequalities also reached a Proficient group mean but retained two learners in the Developing category. Knowledge and recognition of rights had Approaching Proficiency group means, despite substantial proportions of learners attaining Proficient individual scores. The distributions qualify the overall Proficient mean: the group improved on the assessment, but universal mastery was not demonstrated.

Knowledge of Gender Norms and Roles

The knowledge domain moved from a pre-test mean of 5.50 to a post-test mean of 7.92. Initially, none of the learners was Proficient, and 19 were Developing or Beginning. At post-test, 22 were Proficient and 18 were Approaching Proficiency. These changes show a different distribution of performance on the domain assessment after instruction. The remaining Approaching Proficiency group indicates that further work on foundational terms and social expectations remained relevant, even though the lower categories were no longer represented.

The discussion connects foundational knowledge with the need to move beyond memorized labels and examine how expectations are encountered in daily life. Socio-constructivist inquiry provides an instructional rationale for beginning with familiar examples and using discussion to clarify concepts. Nugraha (2026) and Miralles-Cardona (2025), as reviewed in this study, identify limitations in superficial inclusion of gender content. Luna and Babaran

(2022) emphasize usable, localized instructional resources. These connections support the guide's use of concrete examples and inquiry prompts; they do not establish which activity produced an individual learner's gain.

For instructional planning, the knowledge results support distinguishing familiarity with a social expectation from examination of whether that expectation is equitable. The source discussion proposes unpacking how norms are formed, maintained, and challenged, and comparing them across social and cultural contexts. These are directions for follow-up inquiry, rather than conclusions that the test established every learner's reasoning process. The guide consequently begins with recognizable situations and moves toward discussion of the assumptions behind them. This progression connects foundational terms with the broader interpretive domains assessed in the study.

Understanding of Gender Roles and Norms

Understanding increased from a reported mean of 5.53 to 8.50, with a reported mean difference of 2.98. The proportion classified as Proficient rose from 5.00% to 82.50%, while seven learners remained Approaching Proficiency at post-test. This was the strongest post-test domain result in the reported summaries. It concerns learners' assessment performance in interpreting gender roles and norms, including how expectations are formed and vary across contexts. It does not independently show that the learners applied those interpretations consistently outside the assessment.

The discussion relates this domain to questioning who defines roles and how social expectations can be examined rather than accepted without reflection. Critical Feminist Transformative Pedagogy offers a rationale for dialogue about assumptions and unequal relations. The strategy's collaborative investigation and community cases were consistent with that orientation. Egitim (2024) is discussed in the review as an example of critical inquiry addressing gendered assumptions, while Laro (2024) provides a Philippine curriculum-oriented reference. Their different settings and measures limit direct comparison. The present results support continued attention to interpretive inquiry without treating the score gain as a test of the entire theoretical framework.

The instructional implication for understanding is to move from listing roles toward examining their origins, functions, and effects. Questions can direct attention to who defines an expectation, how it is communicated or reinforced, and whether it supports or hinders equity. These concerns are part of the source's interpretation of the domain and are reflected in the proposed inquiry sequence. The performance categories identify a need for such instructional support without showing precisely which questions an individual learner could or could not answer. Continued guided explanation is therefore consistent with the seven learners who remained Approaching Proficiency.

Awareness of Gender Issues and Inequalities

Awareness increased from a reported mean of 5.47 to 8.18. At pre-test, 20 learners were Developing or Beginning; at post-test, 29 were Proficient, nine were Approaching Proficiency, and two remained Developing. This residual Developing group is important for instructional planning. The higher overall domain mean does not remove the need to identify and address individual difficulties. The guide therefore includes monitoring and targeted support rather than assuming that a single intervention resolves every learner's needs.

The intersectional perspective in the framework helps organize questions about how inequalities can differ across family, school, and community contexts. It encourages attention to overlapping identities and cautions against treating gender experiences as uniform. The reviewed studies by Roda (2026), Nugraha (2026), and Nikghadam-Hojjati et al. (2025) identify concerns about exclusion, representation, and contextual barriers. These studies provide a rationale for examining patterns of inequality through concrete cases. The assessment did not separately determine the specific reasons why two learners remained Developing, so no psychological explanation, personal experience, or additional participant statement is inferred.

Awareness instruction also needs to avoid assuming that a class shares a common recognition of inequality. The source discussion distinguishes obvious incidents from less visible patterns and recommends connecting particular situations with broader social structures. Scaffolded discussion can help learners compare perspectives and ask whether a concern is isolated or recurring. Such questions provide an instructional response to variation in the domain scores. They do not justify assigning personal experiences or beliefs to learners on the basis of proficiency categories. The proposed guide's contextual examples and targeted support address this teaching priority.

Recognition of Gender Rights and Equality

The rights domain had a pre-test mean of 5.50 and a post-test mean of 7.95. At baseline, four learners were Beginning, the largest Beginning category among the domains. Its pre-test SD of 1.55 was also the highest reported baseline SD.

After instruction, 25 learners were Proficient and 15 were Approaching Proficiency; none was Developing or Beginning. The results indicate higher assessed recognition of rights and equality, while the Approaching Proficiency group still provides a reason for reinforcement.

The study links rights-related teaching with dignity, fair opportunities, and equal treatment in familiar situations. Its epistemic-justice perspective emphasizes that different learners' experiences and contributions should receive recognition during inquiry. Bastida Jr. et al. (2025) and Aguilar and Parentela (2025) are discussed in relation to the difficulty of translating policy awareness into classroom practice. That connection informed activities examining classroom participation, peer relationships, family decisions, and community circumstances. The study measured test performance, however, and did not separately observe whether learners upheld these rights in everyday conduct.

The rights-related discussion in the source emphasizes accessible examples rather than abstract definitions or policy statements alone. Classroom participation, peer interactions, family roles, and community leadership provide settings for considering what equal dignity and opportunity mean. The guide uses such situations to connect rights with treatment, voice, safety, and participation. This approach is intended to make the content relevant to learners who enter with different levels of familiarity. The baseline dispersion supports attention to varied learning needs, but it does not establish that learners confused kindness with legal rights or held any particular misconception. Those possibilities would require evidence beyond the grouped scores.

Instructional Implications and the Proposed Guide

Across the domains, the instructional approach joined contextualized questions, group investigation, inclusive examples, and guided reflection. These features correspond with the literature's emphasis on active participation and student-centered teaching. Akhigbe and Adeyemi (2020) discuss gender-responsive collaborative learning in science; Egitim (2024) examines critical inquiry; and the TESCEA brief (INASP, 2022) discusses gender-responsive teaching and support needs. Their findings help situate the instructional choices, but differences in subject area, participants, duration, and design prevent treating them as direct confirmation of the present results.

The enhanced teaching guide organizes the same four domains into a practical sequence. Baseline Developing performance supports starting from accessible concepts and familiar experiences. The stronger understanding results support continued use of discussion and analysis of social expectations, while the remaining Developing category in awareness supports differentiated assistance. Knowledge and rights remained Approaching Proficiency at the group-mean level, so the guide retains reinforcement rather than treating these domains as fully mastered. Its activities and monitoring fields are proposed resources, not additional outcomes already demonstrated by the study.

The policy and implementation literature also points to the need for teacher preparation, appropriate materials, and institutional support. The review discusses differences between policy awareness and classroom implementation across studies, including Aguilar and Parentela (2025), Lomibao (2024), Doydoy and Lomarda (2025), and Gepilano (2026). These differing accounts suggest that implementation depends on setting and cannot be inferred from policy adoption alone. The proposed guide responds with localized inquiry activities and teacher roles; the study does not establish how a wider rollout would operate across other classes or grade levels.

Interpretive Limits

The reported paired-sample tests indicate statistically significant within-group differences under the analysis described. A one-group pre-test–post-test design does not isolate the strategy from other influences on repeated assessment. The same test was administered before and after a one-week intervention, and participants were purposively selected for remediation needs. These conditions limit causal attribution and generalization. The reported differences should therefore be described as gains following the intervention, rather than conclusive evidence that the strategy alone caused them.

The four theoretical perspectives supply complementary ways of understanding the instructional design. Collaborative knowledge-building, questioning assumptions, considering intersecting identities, and including diverse voices are plausible instructional features within that framework. They were not separately tested as mechanisms. Likewise, the assessment does not independently demonstrate lasting attitude change, critical consciousness in daily life, civic agency, or community engagement. The proposed guide's approximately four-week scheme is distinct from the five one-hour sessions implemented in the study; its longer-term use and outcomes remain to be examined.

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Output of the Study

ENHANCED TEACHING GUIDE: Facilitating the Teaching of Gender Issues Using the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy in Social Studies

The reported overall mean increased from 5.50 to 8.14 after the one-week intervention, and all four domain means were higher at post-test. The enhanced guide organizes inquiry around those four domains, using familiar experiences, collaborative investigation, and reflective discussion. It is intended to support further teaching of gender issues in Social Studies; the one-group results do not establish its effectiveness in other classes or settings.

The guide retains targeted support because two learners remained Developing in post-test awareness of gender issues and inequalities, while the knowledge and rights domain means were Approaching Proficiency. Its proposed implementation differs from the study's five one-hour sessions: the guide proposes approximately four weeks and lists four 45-minute phases. The guide is presented below as a proposed instructional resource, with expected learning aims rather than guaranteed outcomes.

I. Rationale

Gender education in Social Studies concerns social dynamics, human rights, and inclusive communities. The study's Developing pre-test mean and higher post-test results informed a guide connecting gender concepts with everyday situations through structured inquiry. The guide draws on the four theoretical perspectives described in the study and seeks to make concepts relatable through dialogue, critical reflection, and participation. Its use beyond the participating group requires further monitoring and evaluation.

II. Objectives

This teaching guide aims to equip Social Studies teachers with a structured, evidence-based framework for facilitating the teaching of gender issues through the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy. Specifically, it seeks to:

Table 13. Objectives of the Enhanced Teaching Guide

No.	Objective
1	Enhance learners' comprehension of gender-related concepts, including knowledge of norms and roles, critical understanding of their social construction, awareness of issues and inequalities, and meaningful recognition of rights and equality by presenting these as accessible, relatable, and actionable principles rather than abstract ideas;
2	Develop teachers' pedagogical capacity to design and deliver inquiry-driven, gender-responsive lessons that encourage critical reflection, value diverse experiences, and examine how gender intersects with other aspects of identity, ensuring that all learners participate and progress equitably regardless of their starting proficiency; and
3	Foster a transformative and inclusive learning environment where students move beyond surface-level familiarity to apply their understanding of equity and rights in daily interactions, school practices, family relationships, and community engagement, thereby contributing to the cultivation of a just, respectful, and equitable society.

III. Scheme of Implementation

The proposed implementation of this guide follows a four-phase inquiry cycle aligned with the study's four core learning dimensions, designed to be delivered over approximately four weeks of integrated Social Studies instruction. Phase One focuses on exploring gender norms and roles, beginning with students' lived experiences to surface prior understanding, identify assumptions, and guide collaborative investigation into how norms are formed, expressed, and sustained across different social settings, building from shared observation toward consolidated knowledge without reinforcing stereotypes.

Phase Two advances to critical analysis of gender roles and norms, engaging learners in problem-posing inquiry that examines who defines such roles, how they are communicated, and in what ways they can both enable and limit

individuals and groups, encouraging students to recognize that social arrangements are not fixed or natural but can be examined, questioned, and transformed.

Phase Three broadens awareness to gender issues and inequalities, guiding learners to identify real and varied examples of unfair treatment, consider how gender intersects with culture, class, ability, and other factors to shape different experiences, and distinguish between isolated incidents and broader systemic patterns, ensuring representation of diverse voices and situations that reflect the learners' own communities.

Phase Four translates understanding into recognition of rights and equality, linking principles to classroom policies, peer relationships, family expectations, and community leadership so that rights are understood not as abstract legal terms but as active, practical guides for fair and respectful interaction; throughout all phases, assessment is continuous and supportive, with feedback that validates progress, clarifies misconceptions, and directs additional assistance where needed, with the aim of supporting every learner's progress toward meaningful comprehension.

IV. Enhanced Teaching Guide

A. Core Framework

The Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy is anchored in four interconnected theoretical foundations: Socio-Constructivist Inquiry Learning Theory, which places students' collaborative investigation and dialogue at the center of knowledge-building; Critical Feminist Transformative Pedagogy, which invites learners to question established patterns and envision more equitable alternatives; Intersectional Gender Theory, which highlights how gender operates alongside other identities to shape diverse experiences; and Gender-Responsive Inquiry as Epistemic Justice Theory, which emphasizes equal access for all learners regardless of starting proficiency to clear, meaningful, and empowering knowledge.

B. Guiding Principles

Table 14. Guiding Principles

Principle	Application
Inquiry-First Approach	Every lesson opens with a student-centered question rather than a teacher-given answer.
Context-Relevant Examples	Concepts are introduced through situations students encounter at home, in school, and in their community.
Safe and Inclusive Space	All perspectives are respected; discussions are guided to build understanding without judgment.
Progressive Skill Building	Learning moves sequentially from knowing → understanding → recognizing → applying.
Equitable Access	Complex terms are explained in everyday language; no student is left behind due to limited prior exposure.

C. Phase-by-Phase Teaching Sequence

Table 15. Phase-by-Phase Teaching Sequence

Phase	Focus	Duration	Core Inquiry Question
1	Knowledge of Gender Norms and Roles	45 minutes	"What patterns do we observe, and how did they come to be?"
2	Understanding of Gender Roles and Norms	45 minutes	"Who defines these roles, and how can they be reimagined?"
3	Awareness of Gender Issues and Inequalities	45 minutes	"Who experiences disadvantage, and what are the broader patterns?"
4	Recognition of Gender Rights and Equality	45 minutes	"What are our rights, and how do we live them every day?"

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Table 16. Phase 1: Knowledge of Gender Norms and Roles

Component	Teaching Details
Opening Activity	Students share observations of roles and expectations they have noticed at home, in school, or in media. Responses are listed and discussed without labeling as "right" or "wrong."
Inquiry Task	In small groups, students investigate how norms have changed over time and identify factors that influence these shifts.
Consolidation	The class co-constructs a working definition of gender norms and roles, emphasizing that they are shared social expectations rather than fixed personal traits.
Teacher Role	Facilitates dialogue, clarifies generalizations, and ensures all voices are heard; avoids presenting personal views as fact.

Table 17. Phase 2: Understanding of Gender Roles and Norms

Component	Teaching Details
Opening Activity	Students review their Phase 1 observations and identify which patterns benefit, limit, or create mixed experiences for different people.
Inquiry Task	Groups select one norm or role and analyze: Who created it? Who maintains it? Who may be disadvantaged? What could be more equitable?
Consolidation	Learners present their findings; the teacher guides the class to recognize that roles are socially constructed and therefore can be examined, questioned, and transformed.
Teacher Role	Models critical questioning, connects discussions to broader social concepts, and validates thoughtful challenges to established views.

Table 18. Phase 3: Awareness of Gender Issues and Inequalities

Component	Teaching Details
Opening Activity	Students examine real-life, age-appropriate cases — including local examples to identify situations involving fairness or disadvantage.
Inquiry Task	Learners explore how gender combines with other factors such as culture, income, or ability to create different experiences; they distinguish between one-time events and recurring, systemic patterns.
Consolidation	The class develops a shared understanding of visible and less visible forms of inequality and discusses how awareness is the first step toward fair treatment.
Teacher Role	Ensures diverse representation in examples, guides sensitivity in discussion, and helps learners avoid overgeneralization or stereotyping.

Table 19. Phase 4: Recognition of Gender Rights and Equality

Component	Teaching Details
Opening Activity	Students list what they believe everyone deserves—respect, opportunity, safety, and voice—and link these to the concept of rights.
Inquiry Task	Groups examine how rights apply in specific contexts: classroom participation, peer relationships, family decisions, and community roles. They propose practical ways to uphold equality in each setting.
Consolidation	The class creates a shared Equity in Action commitment of observable behaviors and practices they will adopt; rights are framed as active responsibilities as well as entitlements.
Teacher Role	Connects student proposals to DepEd values and policies, supports realistic implementation, and reinforces that consistent, small actions contribute to meaningful change.

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D. Assessment and Monitoring

Table 20. Assessment and Monitoring

Component	Procedure
Formative Assessment Throughout	Observation checklists, inquiry progress journals, peer feedback, and brief written reflections all focused on growth rather than perfection.
Feedback Practice	Responses acknowledge effort, clarify understanding, and guide next steps; phrased constructively to encourage continued participation.
Targeted Support	Individual check-ins, simplified guiding materials, and paired work are intended to help students address remaining needs; progress is tracked against personal starting points as well as shared standards.
Post-Application Review	After completing the sequence, the teacher reviews overall progress, identifies areas for strengthening, and adapts materials for future use.

E. Adaptation and Sustainability

Table 21. Adaptation and Sustainability

Area	Application
Across Grade Levels	Adjust examples and inquiry depth to match learners' experiences and maturity; the four-phase framework remains consistent.
Cross-Subject Integration	Connect gender-responsive inquiry to topics in Araling Panlipunan, Values Education, and related learning areas to reinforce understanding.
Professional Collaboration	Share practices with colleagues; invite school heads to observe and support implementation; involve parents and community members in appropriate activities.
Continuous Improvement	Document effective practices and refine this guide collectively with other teachers to build a shared, evolving resource aligned with local needs and DepEd standards.

The guide is intended to support inquiry, inclusive participation, and the practical application of gender-related concepts. Teachers may use its monitoring procedures to identify progress and remaining needs, provide additional assistance, and refine activities. These are intended benefits of proposed use, not assured outcomes for every learner.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy is effective to deepens students' grasp of gender-related concepts, moving them from basic, surface-level familiarity to proficient, critical understanding across all dimensions of learning. Rooted in Socio-Constructivist Inquiry Learning Theory, Critical Feminist Transformative Pedagogy, Intersectional Gender Theory, and Gender-Responsive Inquiry as Epistemic Justice Theory, the intervention shifts learning beyond passive acceptance of established norms toward active, reflective investigation that makes abstract principles tangible, relatable, and inclusive for every learner. The consistent, statistically significant gains confirm that when gender education is delivered through guided exploration, collaborative dialogue, and context-relevant inquiry, it not only clarifies knowledge but also empowers students to recognize and value equity, rights, and fairness as actionable principles in their daily lives. This demonstrates that purposefully designed, inquiry-driven instruction is essential to bridge gaps in understanding, address uneven access to meaningful learning, and foster the critical consciousness needed to build more inclusive and equitable communities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that school administrators and education leaders formally institutionalize the Gender-Responsive Inquiry-Based Strategy within the school's gender education framework and professional development programs to ensure consistent, sustainable, and inclusive implementation across grade levels and learning areas; Social Studies teachers are encouraged to fully adopt and adapt the enhanced teaching guide, embedding inquiry, critical reflection, and intersectional awareness into daily lessons through

relatable, real-world examples rather than abstract discussion, while maintaining ongoing monitoring to provide targeted support for all learners; curriculum planners and material developers are advised to mainstream this gender-responsive inquiry approach throughout the K–12 Social Studies curriculum, enriching existing resources with diverse local narratives and validated inquiry tasks and making the enhanced teaching guide widely accessible through district and division platforms; and future researchers may validate the strategy across larger and varied populations, extended timeframes, and related learning areas, including qualitative exploration of its long-term influence on student attitudes, behaviors, and community engagement to further advance inclusive, equitable, and transformative education practice.

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