

Gender Mainstreaming in Department of Education (DepEd) Central Luzon; Towards A Proposed Gender and Development (GAD) Agenda

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Abstract — This study analyzed the state of gender mainstreaming in the Department of Education (DepEd) Central Luzon and its implications for fostering inclusivity and equity in public administration. Utilizing a quantitative correlational research design and total enumeration sampling, the research engaged 230 respondents from the Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS).

The study aimed to analyze the demographic profile of respondents, evaluate the level of gender mainstreaming, and explore the relationship between gender mainstreaming and variables such as gender, position, age, salary, years of involvement, training attendance, educational attainment, and recognitions received. It also sought to identify challenges, document best practices, and propose actionable solutions. By employing survey questionnaires, interviews, and documentary analysis, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of GAD initiatives within DepEd.

The findings revealed that the overall gender mainstreaming score for DepEd was 58.23, classified as Level 2: Installation of Strategic Mechanism, with the Enabling Mechanisms sublevel reaching Level 3: GAD Application. The analysis highlighted that training attendance had a strong positive correlation with all sublevels of gender mainstreaming, while weak correlations were observed between gender and these sublevels. Specific variables such as age, position, and salary demonstrated varying degrees of association with specific aspects of gender mainstreaming. Challenges identified included underutilized GAD funds, inadequate tools for budget attribution, insufficient advocacy efforts, poor coordination among stakeholders, and the absence of gender-disaggregated data. Despite these issues, DepEd exhibited best practices in capacity building, planning, budgeting, implementation, and evaluation, which formed the foundation for the crafted GAD agenda.

Based on the findings, the study recommends the continuous implementation and refinement of the crafted GAD agenda aligned with the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) guidelines to address identified challenges. Strengthening training programs is essential to enhance the understanding and application of GAD concepts, especially among higher-level officials. Advocacy and awareness campaigns should be intensified to promote gender equality within the organization and among stakeholders.

I. Introduction

Gender mainstreaming has emerged as a globally recognized strategy for promoting gender equality by integrating gender perspectives into policymaking, governance, and institutional processes at all levels. At the macro level, this strategy operates within international organizations,

national governments, and regional frameworks to address systemic inequalities and power imbalances between genders.

Studies like those of True and Parisi (2015) highlight how gender mainstreaming often faces obstacles such as weak institutional support, lack of resources, and resistance to transformative change. In many countries, entrenched patriarchal systems and economic inequalities hinder progress, particularly in developing nations where women remain underrepresented in decision-making processes and bear the burden of unpaid care work.

The Philippines has long been recognized for its progressive stance on gender equality. Consistently ranked high in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, the country has institutionalized several gender-responsive frameworks to address disparities across sectors. The Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710), enacted in 2009, and its subsequent guidelines remain foundational in advancing gender and development (GAD) programs nationwide.

In education, the Department of Education (DepEd) has taken significant strides to integrate gender mainstreaming into its policies and operations. DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017, institutionalized the GAD agenda within the department, requiring the integration of gender perspectives in school operations, curricula, and teacher training programs. Recent initiatives, such as the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy (DepEd, 2020), aim to foster inclusive learning environments and eliminate gender biases in educational materials and practices.

On the other hand, this is within DepEd and the various functions of basic education in accordance with the function of the state to exercise reasonable supervision and regulation of all educational institutions. Gender mainstreaming shall be gauged among the Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS) of the Regional Office and twenty-one (21) Schools Division Offices (SDOS) in Central Luzon.

Understanding the historical context is imperative to appreciate the complex interplay of factors that have shaped the institutionalization of GAD in Region III. As a region that has experienced economic shifts, urbanization, and social change, Region III reflects the broader transformations occurring in the Philippines. The integration of GAD into the regional agenda is not only a response to global calls for gender equality but also a recognition of the intrinsic link between gender equity and sustainable development.

Moreover, disparities in the understanding and application of GAD concepts among educators and administrators further complicate the region's efforts to promote gender equality. These challenges are exacerbated by socio-economic factors that disproportionately affect vulnerable groups, particularly girls from low-income households. There is a growing recognition of the need for tailored strategies that address these regional nuances while aligning with national and global standards. Gender and Development (GAD) serves as a vital framework for promoting gender equality and fostering inclusive development across various sectors. In the context of the Department of Education Regional III, the institutionalization of GAD, particularly through the

Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS), is of utmost importance. Given the education sector's pivotal role in shaping societal norms and values, effectively mainstreaming GAD principles is essential for cultivating an inclusive, equitable, and gender-responsive educational environment.

As a GAD advocate, the researcher has encountered numerous challenges stemming from the lack of a comprehensive GAD Agenda within the Department of Education. This gap has resulted in the non-endorsement of GAD Plans, Budgets, and Accomplishment Reports by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) to the Commission on Audit (COA). In response, this study proposed a GAD Agenda designed to enhance the gender responsiveness of programs, projects, and activities implemented within the region. Additionally, the study is grounded in the recognition that despite national policies advocating for GAD integration, there is a need for a localized and context-specific examination of its institutionalization within the Department of Education Regional III. Moreover, the study identified best practices that would lead to successful GAD institutionalization. These practices can serve as models for other educational institutions and contribute to the development of a robust and adaptable framework for mainstreaming GAD principles.

Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to evaluate the level of gender mainstreaming within the Department of Education in Central Luzon, Philippines, with the goal of developing a Gender and Development agenda. The focus was specifically on evaluating the effectiveness of the Gender and Development Focal Point System in implementing gender-responsive Programs, Projects, and Activities (PPAs) using appropriate tools.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions

1. How may the respondents be described in terms of their demographic profile as to
 - 1.1 Gender
 - 1.2 Position in the GFPS
 - 1.3 Number of years as a member
 - 1.4 Age
 - 1.5 Salaries
 - 1.6 Trainings Attended
 - 1.7 Educational Attainment
 - 1.8 Awards and Recognitions

2. What is the level of gender mainstreaming in DepEd?
3. What is the relationship between the demographic profile and the level of gender mainstreaming?
4. What are the problems encountered in the gender mainstreaming of DepEd?
5. What are the best practices that the DepEd have in gender mainstreaming?
6. What Gender and Development Agenda can be proposed to solve the prevailing problems?
7. What are the implications of the study to Public Administration?

II. Methodology

The study adapted the quantitative-correlational research approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of the mainstreaming of Gender and Development (GAD) in Region III, the problems encountered and showcased the relationships between the demographic profile and level of mainstreaming in the Regional Office and the twenty-one Schools Division Offices. The researcher employed total enumeration sampling, ensuring that key groups—such as various leadership levels, years of experience, and training backgrounds—were fully represented.

The local of study will be in Region III, Central Luzon. Central Luzon, officially designated as Region III, is an administrative region in the Philippines occupying the central section of [Luzon](#). It covered seven (7) [provinces](#), namely, [Aurora](#), [Bataan](#), [Bulacan](#), [Nueva Ecija](#), [Pampanga](#), [Tarlac](#), and [Zambales](#), as well as 2 highly urbanized cities. The regional center is the city of [San Fernando](#).

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study include stakeholders actively engaged in Gender and Development (GAD) initiatives within DepEd Region III. These are members of the Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS), directly involved in the planning, organizing, execution, monitoring, and evaluation of GAD-related programs, projects, and activities.

Overall, the study will involve 264 GFPS members across the Regional Office and Schools Division Offices in Central Luzon.

The data gathering procedure for this study was conducted systematically to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.. These instruments were validated through a pilot test and expert feedback to confirm their suitability for the study. Coordination with the respondents followed, wherein the researcher sent formal request letters to the DepEd Regional Office III and Schools Division Offices within Region III. Quantitative data was gathered through structured surveys/questionnaires. These included questions related to demographic information of respondents, Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS) in the implementation of

mainstreamed Gender-Responsive Programs, Projects and Activities (PPAs). The questionnaire utilized in the level of Gender Mainstreaming is an adopted tool published by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) in 2016, specifically the Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF).

In-depth qualitative insights were obtained through semi-structured interviews with key informants, including GAD focal persons.

III. Results and Discussion

1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic profile of respondents plays a crucial role in research, as it provides essential information that helps contextualize the findings and interpret the data meaningfully.

The gender profile of the respondents, highlights the diversity within the Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS) in the Department of Education – Region III. Females constitute the majority, with the highest frequency of 113 (49.1%), followed by males at 81 (35.2%). LGBTQIA+ individuals (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual) or non-binary account for 36 respondents (15.7%).

1.2 Position

The position held by an individual within an organization is an important factor that significantly impacts their responsibilities, influence, and ability to contribute to organizational goals. The largest proportion of respondents are Senior Education Program Specialists, accounting for 57 individuals (24.8%) of the total. Following them are Education Program Specialists, with 39 respondents (17.0%). The data also highlights that 24 respondents (10.4%) hold the position of Master Teacher, demonstrating significant representation in this role. Education Program Supervisors make up 22 (9.6%) of the respondents, while Chief Education Supervisors comprise 17 (7.4%). Planning Officers were represented by 16 respondents (7.0%), and Chiefs of the School and Governance Division (SGOD) were noted by 14 respondents (6.1%). It further indicates that 13 respondents (5.7%) are Engineers, underscoring the technical expertise present within the group. The role of Teachers was represented by 9 respondents (3.9%), and Accountants accounted for 8 respondents (3.5%). Budget Officers were the least represented among the primary roles, comprising 7 respondents (3.0%). Lastly, Head Teachers were represented by 4 individuals (1.7%).

1.3 Number of Years as a Member of GFPS

The number of years that respondents have spent as members of the Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS) provides valuable insights into their experience and depth of involvement within the system.

The data from the result reveals that the majority of respondents, 193 individuals (83.9%), have been members for 0-5 years, indicating that they are relatively new to the system. This suggests a significant level of recent involvement, reflecting the more recent institutional emphasis on gender and development in the Department of Education. In comparison, 37 respondents (16.1%) reported having 6-10 years of experience as members of the GFPS, showing that a smaller segment of participants has a moderate level of tenure.

1.4 Age

Age serves as a critical demographic element that can provide a deeper understanding of the diversity and composition of a group. It significantly impacts individuals' experiences, perspectives, and their approach to engaging with various initiatives and activities within an organization.

The results show that the majority of the respondents, 81 individuals or 35.2%, are aged between 28-35 years. This group represents the younger segment of the workforce, likely encompassing those who are relatively early in their careers but have already progressed to important roles within the organization. The second largest group, 58 respondents or 25.2%, falls within the 44-51 age range.

Additionally, 45 respondents (19.6%) are aged between 36-44 years, which indicates a mid-career stage where individuals have gained considerable experience and are possibly in higher management or specialist roles. The age group of 20-27 years, consisting of 30 respondents or 13.0%, represents the entry-level and early-career stage, suggesting that while younger employees are present in the organization, they are fewer in number compared to the older age groups. Meanwhile, 16 respondents or 7.0% are aged between 52-59 years, indicating that there are still experienced professionals close to retirement who continue to contribute significantly to the organization's work.

1.5 Salary

Salary is an important aspect of employment as it directly impacts individuals' financial stability, job satisfaction, and overall quality of life. In the context of the Department of Education (DepEd) Central Luzon, salary structures reflect the organization's commitment to recognizing the value of its personnel and ensuring fair compensation for the roles they undertake.

The data reveals that a significant portion of the respondents, specifically 127 individuals or 55.2%, receive a monthly salary within the range of ₱50,000 - ₱59,000. This indicates that a majority of the participants fall into this mid-to-upper salary bracket, which is reflective of their professional roles and responsibilities within the Department of Education (DepEd) Central Luzon.

Following this, 31 respondents (13.5%) earn between ₱90,000 - ₱99,000 per month, suggesting that these individuals hold some of the highest-paying positions within the department.

An equal number, 22 respondents (9.6%), fall into the ₱70,000 - ₱79,000 salary range, with another 22 respondents (9.6%) earning between ₱40,000 - ₱49,000. This distribution shows a notable spread among the respondents, indicating a variety of salary levels based on different factors such as job title, tenure, and job responsibilities.

Additionally, 19 respondents (8.3%) have a monthly salary in the range of ₱30,000 - ₱39,000, while 9 respondents (3.9%) fall into the ₱80,000 - ₱89,000 category. The presence of salaries across these ranges further highlights the diversity of positions held within the workforce, demonstrating a wide spectrum of pay scales within the department.

These results align with the earlier findings that revealed respondents occupying higher positions are likely to receive higher salaries.

1.6 Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is an essential indicator of the professional qualifications and intellectual capital possessed by individuals in any organization. It significantly shapes the skills, knowledge, and competencies that employees bring to their roles, directly influencing their performance and potential for leadership. Gender mainstreaming programs aimed at promoting equality and inclusivity within the educational system. The findings reveal that nearly half of the respondents, 99 individuals (43.0%), hold doctoral degrees, indicating a strong emphasis on advanced education among the participants. This is followed by 54 respondents (23.5%) who have completed coursework for a doctorate but have not yet earned their degree, often referred to as doctorate unit earners. The predominance of respondents with post-graduate education can be attributed to the nature of their roles within the Department of Education (DepEd) Central Luzon. Higher positions, which many respondents occupy, often require advanced degrees as a prerequisite for promotion and eligibility for more significant responsibilities.

1.5 Trainings Attended

Training and professional development are integral to ensuring that employees remain competent, adaptable, and effective in their roles. The data on the participation of respondents in various Gender and Development (GAD)-related seminars within the Department of Education – Region III reveals several key trends that demonstrate the department's ongoing efforts to promote gender awareness and responsiveness. The Seminar on Gender and Sexuality/Gender Awareness, with the highest participation rate of 83.04% (191 respondents), indicates the department's strong commitment to building a foundation of gender and sexuality knowledge. This seminar is crucial in fostering a gender-sensitive environment, as it enables participants to understand the dynamics of gender issues and reduce stereotypes. Additionally, Work Ethics and Anti-Sexual Harassment (WEASH) seminars, with 52.61% (121 respondents), and Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting, with 48.26% (111 respondents), indicate a moderate level of engagement in these critical areas of workplace ethics and gender-focused financial planning. These results reflect ongoing efforts to address issues such as sexual harassment and gender disparities in budget

allocation, which are essential for meeting the legal and policy requirements under the Magna Carta of Women (R.A. 9710).

1.6 Awards and Recognitions

Awards and recognitions play a significant role in acknowledging the dedication, hard work, and exceptional achievements of individuals within an organization.

The data indicates that the most common recognition received by the respondents is the *Outstanding Teacher* award, with a total of 139 instances recorded. It is essential to note that this number does not represent the actual number of individuals who received the award but rather the frequency with which it was awarded. This distinction is important as it reflects the respondents' repeated recognition for their teaching excellence, signifying consistent high performance over time. On the other end of the spectrum, some awards were less frequently received. The *Outstanding Head Teacher* award was recorded only four times, suggesting that fewer respondents may hold or have been recognized for this particular role. Similarly, the *Model Employee* award was noted five times, the *CSC Pag-asa ng Bayan* award appeared six times, and the *Innovation Champion* award was given eight times. The results also imply that many of these awards are associated with higher-level positions, which may serve as prerequisites for promotions and professional growth. The achievements and recognition in these awards can act as both a validation of past performance and a motivating factor for future accomplishments and professional advancement within the organization.

2. Level of Gender Mainstreaming of DepEd

The following section addresses the second problem of the research, which aimed to determine the level of gender mainstreaming. To accomplish this, the Enhanced Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF), developed by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), was employed as the evaluation tool.

Policy

The Policy assessment examines whether gender considerations are integrated into the agency's official policies and how they are reflected in practice. The total score for policy is 13.85, which corresponds to Level 2: Installation of Strategic Mechanisms.

People

The People questionnaire assesses the extent to which the personnel of DepEd are aware of and equipped to address gender-related issues. Overall, the score is 13.36, which corresponds to Level 2: Installation of Strategic Mechanisms. This level indicates that DepEd has moved beyond foundation formation, which is Level 1. Level 2 also signifies that there are efforts to establish key people, necessary policies, support structures, systems, and mechanisms to facilitate gender mainstreaming and that conditions for sustaining gender mainstreaming and initial

applications of GAD concepts are in place (PCW, 2016). The gender mainstreaming level for People is again at Level 2. While this is not the lowest level, it is not the highest either. T

Enabling Mechanisms

The Enabling Mechanisms assessment focuses on evaluating whether the Department of Education (DepEd) has established adequate systems, resources, and structures to facilitate gender mainstreaming. This component of the framework is crucial, as it acknowledges that institutional support and capacity-building mechanisms are critical for translating gender policies into actionable outcomes.

The next part of the GMEF assessment tool is the Enabling Mechanisms Organizational Assessment. It contains 23 descriptors that evaluate the organization's progress in ensuring that systems for integrating the GAD perspective are established and fully operational (PCW, 2016).

The Enabling Mechanisms score, as rated by the respondents, has a subtotal of 16.17, which is equivalent to Level 3: GAD Application. A Level 3: GAD Application means that the organization effectively utilizes more than the required 5% GAD budget allocation, maintains a fully operational monitoring and evaluation system, and has established a Knowledge Management System.

Programs, Activities, and Projects (PAPs). Overall, the subtotal score is 14.85, which corresponds to Level 3: GAD Application. Once again, DepEd achieved Level 3 for this aspect of the GMEF. A Level 3 rating for PAPs means that the organization has established a GAD agenda or strategic framework to guide its gender mainstreaming initiatives through the GAD Plan and Budget.

Overall Level of Gender Mainstreaming

The GMEF Questionnaire is divided into four entry levels: Policy, People, Enabling Mechanisms, and Programs, Activities, and Projects (PAPs). The respondents gave a score of 13.85 for Policy, which is equivalent to Level 2: Installation of Strategic Mechanisms; 13.36 for People, also equivalent to Level 2: Installation of Strategic Mechanisms; 16.17 for Enabling Mechanisms, which corresponds to Level 3: GAD Application; and 14.85 for PAPs, which is also equivalent to Level 3: GAD Application. The overall level of gender mainstreaming in DepEd, according to the respondents, is 58.23, which corresponds to Level 2: Installation of Strategic Mechanisms.

3. Correlation Between the Profile and the Level of Gender Mainstreaming

The overall significant association between gender and gender mainstreaming is a weak association ($\eta = .340$, $\eta^2 = .116$). The null hypothesis of no association between gender and the level of gender mainstreaming can be rejected. This means that there is at least a significant association, however, the association is weak, so gender does not highly influence gender mainstreaming.

The present position of the respondents was correlated to the level of gender mainstreaming using Spearman's rho. The correlation revealed that the present position has a low positive and significant relationship with the gender mainstreaming level ($r=-.189$, $p=.004$). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected as there is a significant relationship between positions and gender mainstreaming. The relationship is also positive which means that the higher the present position the higher the likelihood of having a higher level of gender mainstreaming.

In conclusion, while the correlation between awards and recognitions and the level of gender mainstreaming within the Department of Education – Region III appears to be negligible, the findings underscore the need for a more nuanced approach to recognizing efforts related to gender equality.

Problems Encountered

Gender mainstreaming in the Department of Education (DepEd) Central Luzon, as in many other regions, is an essential process for fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment. The Department of Education (DEPED) faces several challenges in effectively implementing gender mainstreaming, these are: failure to endorse Gender and Development (GAD) plans to the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) due to the absence of a clear GAD agenda in many school and department plan, lack of proper attribution of GAD activities within the Programs/Projects/Activities (PPA) makes it hard to track and measure the impact of gender initiatives, next is low utilization of allocated GAD funds, another is, the lack of familiarity with GAD concepts among senior officials and decision-makers. Another is a lack of advocacy and promotion for GAD within the department. The absence of tools for tracking and attributing GAD budgets also complicates the allocation and utilization of funds. The lack of sex-disaggregated data presents another challenge. Finally, poor coordination between DEPED and other stakeholders, such as local government units (LGUs), impedes the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming efforts.

Best Practices in Gender Mainstreaming

Theme 1 for best practices of DepEd in gender mainstreaming is the capacity building reported by the participants. Planning activities before the implementation of GAD is the central theme for Theme 2. This includes ensuring that there is sufficient planning before crafting GAD plans and proposals are seen to be the best practices of the The Third Theme is the budgeting phase. This includes allotment, sourcing, and utilization of the budget needed for successful gender mainstreaming. Categories about the actual practices in implementing GAD plans and gender mainstreaming are arranged in Theme 4 – Implementation. Participants enumerated activities that included information drives like posters, leaflets, and tarpaulin that showed support for gender mainstreaming. Finally, Theme 5 is about the evaluations of the accomplishments from the GAD plans. Accomplishment reports should be prepared also to assess the implementation of the plans.

Gender and Development (GAD) Agenda

The GAD Agenda is a crucial component of gender mainstreaming in government institutions, designed to guide agencies in integrating gender considerations into their operations, programs, and policies.

GAD Agenda	
Agency:	Department of Education – Region III
Mandate:	The Department of Education was established through the Education Decree of 1863 as the Superior Commission of Primary Instruction under a Chairman. The Education agency underwent many reorganization efforts in the 20th century to better define its purpose vis a vis the changing administrations and charters. The present-day Department of Education was eventually mandated through Republic Act 9155, otherwise known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001.
GAD Vision:	Personnel regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression contribute meaningfully to a gender-inclusive workplace that translates to gender-sensitive education.
GAD Mission:	To promote gender-inclusive education and workplace through mainstreaming gender and development in the Department of Education’s policies, plans, programs, and projects.
GAD Goals:	Increase the gender mainstreaming capacity of the Department of Education to achieve gender equality and inclusivity. Ensure the integration of the Gender Mainstreaming Framework in all entry points in the framework Increased participation of women and LGBTQ+ individuals in educational leadership and decision-making bodies.

Implications of the Study to Public Administration

The findings of this study on gender mainstreaming in DEPED Central Luzon and the proposed GAD Agenda have significant implications for public administration. It underscores the need for a more systematic and strategic approach to integrating gender perspectives into public sector planning and policy implementation. The proposed GAD Agenda offers a framework that public administrators can adopt to strengthen gender sensitivity in their operations and decision-making processes, ensuring that gender equality is prioritized and embedded in all levels of governance.