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PROMOTING GENDER SENSITIVITY IN HOME ECONOMICS: THROUGH THE LENSES OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the lived experiences of Home Economics teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics classes. Using a qualitative phenomenological design, the study examined how teachers promoted equal participation, challenged gender stereotypes, applied inclusive strategies, and created supportive classroom environments. Participants were PRC-licensed Home Economics teachers from selected secondary schools in the Division of Digos City with at least three years of teaching experience and involvement in gender-sensitive instructional practices. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with six teachers and a focus group discussion with four teachers. Thematic analysis was used to identify emerging themes from the participants' narratives. Findings revealed that teachers promoted gender sensitivity by encouraging equal participation, challenging stereotypes in practical tasks, using learner-centered strategies, ensuring fairness through role rotation, and following school and DepEd gender-sensitive policies. Teachers coped with challenges through respectful communication, gradual integration of gender-related topics, resourcefulness despite limited materials and training, collaboration with colleagues, and reflective teaching adjustments. The study emphasized the importance of strengthening collaborative and inclusive learning activities, applying role rotation, creating flexible and student-centered activities, maintaining a safe and supportive classroom environment, and promoting practical skills beyond gender expectations to ensure fairness and equal participation among learners. Teachers were encouraged to provide learners with opportunities to lead, assist, report, present, cook, sew, organize materials, and perform hands-on tasks regardless of gender. These practices help prevent gender-based role assignments, develop confidence, promote equality, cooperation, and inclusivity in the classroom.

KEYWORDS: *Gender Sensitivity, Home Economics, Inclusive Instruction, Learner-Centered Teaching, Role Rotation, Digos City Division.*

INTRODUCTION

Home Economics, as a core component of the junior high school curriculum, plays a vital role in equipping students with essential life skills and fostering personal development. Beyond its practical applications, the subject holds the potential to promote gender sensitivity and equity by challenging traditional gender norms and encouraging inclusive practices in the classroom. In the context of basic education reforms and inclusive education frameworks, integrating gender awareness in Home Economics becomes increasingly relevant. This study aims to explore the role of Home Economics in advancing gender-sensitive and equitable learning experiences for junior high school students, with a focus on how the subject contributes to inclusive education efforts.

In the United States, despite global efforts to promote gender equality in education, studies across various countries reveal persistent gaps in how gender sensitivity is integrated into classroom instruction, particularly in practical subjects like Home Economics. In the United States, while gender equity policies are embedded in school systems, research shows that stereotypical perceptions of Home Economics as "feminine" persist, limiting male student participation and broader curriculum impact. (Robinson & Zajicek, 2021)

In Australia, studies emphasize the importance of inclusive education and the integration of gender equity principles across the curriculum. However, while policy frameworks such as the Australian Curriculum promote values of equity and respect, the actual classroom implementation often falls short, particularly in practical subjects like Health and Human Development, which are closely related to Home Economics. Research highlights that many educators feel underprepared or lack the necessary professional development to address gender issues in their teaching confidently. As a result, opportunities to challenge traditional gender norms are frequently missed, and instructional materials sometimes continue to reflect outdated stereotypes. This disconnect between policy and practice highlights a need for more structured and intentional approaches to integrating gender sensitivity into classroom pedagogy. (Keddie, 2020)

Similarly, in the United Kingdom, while there is growing awareness of gender diversity in education, studies reveal that subjects like Food Technology or Textiles, modern equivalents of Home Economics, are still often perceived along gendered lines, with limited curriculum emphasis on promoting equity and sensitivity. These findings reveal a global need to revisit how Home Economics is taught and how it can be more intentionally used to foster gender-sensitive, inclusive educational practices. (Warin, 2020)

In the National Capital Region (NCR), where educational policies are generally well-disseminated, studies have shown that while teachers are aware of gender sensitivity mandates, their classroom practices often remain superficial or compliance-based. Many educators integrate gender-related

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content only during GAD (Gender and Development) week or when explicitly required, rather than embedding it consistently across subjects like Home Economics. (Caraan & Andal, 2022)

In Western Visayas, research highlights a lack of localized teaching materials that promote gender equity, making it challenging for teachers to contextualize gender-sensitive instruction. Moreover, gender-related content is often underrepresented in technical-vocational and livelihood (TVL) tracks, leading to persistent gender-role stereotypes among learners. (Dela Cruz & Abanador, 2021)

In Southern and Central Mindanao, where cultural and religious diversity is high, implementing inclusive education that addresses gender issues is often hindered by traditional norms and community resistance. Teachers report difficulties in promoting gender sensitivity due to fear of backlash, lack of administrative support, or inadequate training (Mansalay & Alibasa, 2023).

These regional gaps underscore the need for targeted interventions, teacher capacity-building, and curriculum integration to effectively promote gender equity through Home Economics education.

There is a noticeable gap at the local level, particularly within Digos City National High School. Despite the presence of Gender and Development (GAD) initiatives and mandated gender-responsive programs, classroom practices in Home Economics often lack deliberate strategies to challenge traditional gender roles or promote equitable participation among students. Observations and informal feedback reveal that teaching approaches still reinforce stereotypical tasks as gender-specific, limiting the subject's potential to foster gender equity.

Moreover, there is a scarcity of localized research that examines how Home Economics can be leveraged as a tool for inclusive education in the junior high school setting within the Digos City Division. This gap highlights the need for an in-depth inquiry into current practices, teacher perspectives, and student experiences, thus prompting the conduct of this study to explore how Home Economics can be used to promote gender sensitivity and equity in the local educational context.

Overall, the review of global, national, and local contexts reveals that while policies promoting gender equity in education exist, the integration of gender sensitivity in practical subjects like Home Economics remains inconsistent and often superficial. International studies show persistent gender stereotypes, limited teacher preparedness, and missed opportunities to challenge traditional norms in classroom practice, while Philippine regional findings highlight similar issues such as lack of contextualized materials, cultural resistance, and policy-practice gaps.

Within Digos City National High School, despite mandated GAD initiatives, Home Economics instruction continues to reflect traditional gender roles rather than actively promoting equitable participation and inclusive learning. These gaps collectively underscore the urgent need for intentional, research-based strategies to strengthen the role of Home Economics as a platform for advancing gender-sensitive and gender-equitable educational experiences for junior high school students.

Objectives of the Study

The study explored the lived experiences of teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics classes. Specifically, it sought to:

1. Describe the lived experiences of teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics classes.
2. Identify the coping mechanisms employed by teachers in addressing challenges related to the promotion of gender-inclusive practices in Home Economics; and
3. Determine the activities that can be proposed to enhance gender sensitivity in Home Economics classes.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it sheds light on the experiences of teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics classes. By examining their lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities, this research aims to uncover how teachers address gender stereotypes, encourage equal participation, and create inclusive learning environments for junior high school learners. The insights generated from this study may serve as a valuable reference for education officials, school administrators, teachers, learners, stakeholders, and future researchers in strengthening gender-sensitive and learner-centered instruction.

Learners. The study may benefit learners by promoting classroom practices that encourage fairness, respect, and equal participation regardless of gender. Through gender-sensitive Home Economics instruction, learners may become more confident in performing practical tasks, more open to different roles, and more respectful of the abilities of others.

Home Economics Teachers. The study may help Home Economics teachers gain a deeper understanding of how gender sensitivity can be integrated into classroom instruction. The findings may provide practical strategies such as mixed grouping, role rotation, collaborative activities, guided discussions, and safe learning spaces that can help teachers challenge gender stereotypes and promote inclusive participation.

School Administrators. The study may provide school heads and instructional leaders with insights on how to support gender-sensitive teaching practices. The findings may guide them in conducting orientations, classroom monitoring, technical assistance, and school-based programs that promote gender equality and inclusive education.

Department of Education Officials. The study may guide DepEd officials in strengthening policies, training, and support mechanisms related to Gender and Development and gender-responsive basic education. The results may also help in developing instructional materials, teacher training programs, and curriculum support that promote gender sensitivity in practical subjects like Home Economics.

Stakeholders. Parents, community members, and partner organizations may benefit from this study by gaining awareness of the importance of gender sensitivity in education. The

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findings may encourage stronger support for classroom practices and school programs that promote fairness, respect, and equal opportunities for all learners.

Future Researchers. Future researchers may use this study as a reference for related studies on gender sensitivity, inclusive education, and Home Economics instruction. It may also serve as a basis for comparative research involving other learning areas, grade levels, schools, or divisions.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study examined the lived experiences of teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics classes. It explored how Home Economics teachers integrate gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive practices in their instruction, particularly in relation to equal participation, role rotation, classroom task assignments, practical activities, group work, guided discussions, and learner-centered strategies. The study also investigated the challenges encountered by teachers in promoting gender sensitivity, including learners' hesitation, traditional gender beliefs, limited instructional materials, lack of regular training, and the need for stronger support mechanisms. It further examined the coping mechanisms employed by teachers in addressing these challenges and the activities that may be proposed to enhance gender sensitivity in Home Economics classes.

The study was conducted among selected Home Economics teachers from secondary schools within the District of Digos City, namely Schools A, B, C, D, and E as their codes. The participants were PRC-licensed Home Economics teachers, either male or female, who were currently teaching Home Economics, had at least three years of continuous teaching experience, and had engaged directly or indirectly in instructional practices related to gender sensitivity or equity. Data were gathered through qualitative methods, particularly in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, to obtain meaningful insights into their actual experiences, teaching strategies, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities in promoting gender-sensitive instruction.

However, the study was limited to a specific geographic area and a selected group of Home Economics teachers within the District of Digos City; therefore, the findings may not fully represent the experiences of Home Economics teachers in other districts, divisions, regions, or school contexts. The study relied mainly on the self-reported experiences and narratives of the participants, which may be influenced by personal views, teaching experiences, memory, and individual interpretation of classroom situations. It also focused on the perspectives of Home Economics teachers and did not extensively include the views of learners, parents, school administrators, guidance personnel, curriculum developers, or other stakeholders who may also contribute to the promotion of gender sensitivity in schools.

Furthermore, the study did not conduct classroom observation, curriculum audit, or technical evaluation of actual lesson plans, instructional materials, assessment tools, or school-based Gender and Development documents. Instead, it focused on understanding the participants' lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities based on their narratives. Time limitations, availability of participants, and accessibility of schools may have also affected the breadth of data gathered. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into how Home Economics teachers promote gender sensitivity, address challenges in gender-inclusive instruction, and develop classroom activities that support fairness, respect, equal participation, and learner-centered education.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

Teachers' Experiences Promoting Gender Sensitivity in Home Economics Class. Home Economics has evolved into a platform for life skills and inclusivity, yet subtle biases remain. Robinson and Zajicek (2021) and Allen and Osgood (2021) noted that outdated associations with femininity still marginalize male learners. Talbot (2021) explained that while the subject once empowered women, it also reinforced traditional roles. Bem (2020) emphasized that gender expectations are socially constructed, while Pankhurst (2020) observed that curricula in developing countries continue to highlight domestic roles. Sigal (2021) added that integration of gender-neutral content remains inconsistent. Teachers can promote equity through role rotation, mixed-group collaboration, and guided reflection, but HomeNet International (2025) and The New Yorker Review (2021) found that curricula often lack a gender-equity lens. Initiatives such as Southern Living / Home Equity Curriculum (2023) show promise, though the Teach for Gender Equality Project (2024) reported that teachers still lack clear guidelines.

Teachers Cope With the Challenges Encountered in Promoting Gender Sensitivity. McCloat and Caraher (2020) explained that the historical framing of Home Economics as "Domestic Science" continues to influence perceptions, with most teachers being female. Pendergast et al. (2020) noted that its association with domestic roles discourages male students, while Zevenergen (2019) observed that boys may disengage to avoid appearing interested in skills perceived as feminine. Caraan and Andal (2022) added that stereotypes influence career choices. Teacher biases further complicate implementation, as NCBI (2020) and Lynch and Lyons (2020) highlighted unconscious biases in classroom language and feedback. Wright (2023) and Benn (2024) noted that outdated curricula and textbooks perpetuate narrow roles, while Sullivan (2019) emphasized that weak policy support leaves teachers without resources to implement inclusive practices.

Insights to Enhance Home Economics as a Tool for Inclusivity. Pendergast et al. (2020) argued that the subject's hands-on nature allows learners to challenge stereotypes. Wright (2023) and Benn (2024) stressed the need to modernize curricula by integrating financial literacy, sustainability, and food science. Harris and Dwyer (2022) emphasized teacher preparation in inclusive pedagogy, while Okafor and Delos Santos (2023) noted that parental expectations must be addressed through awareness campaigns. Munro and Estevez (2021) highlighted the importance of institutional support, and Rivera and Holmgren (2022) advocated for male representation and diverse role models to redefine the subject as inclusive for all learners.

Related Studies. Allen and Osgood (2021) in Australia, Warin (2020) in the UK, and Branlat and Sano (2022) in Japan and Norway all observed that teachers lacked training or avoided

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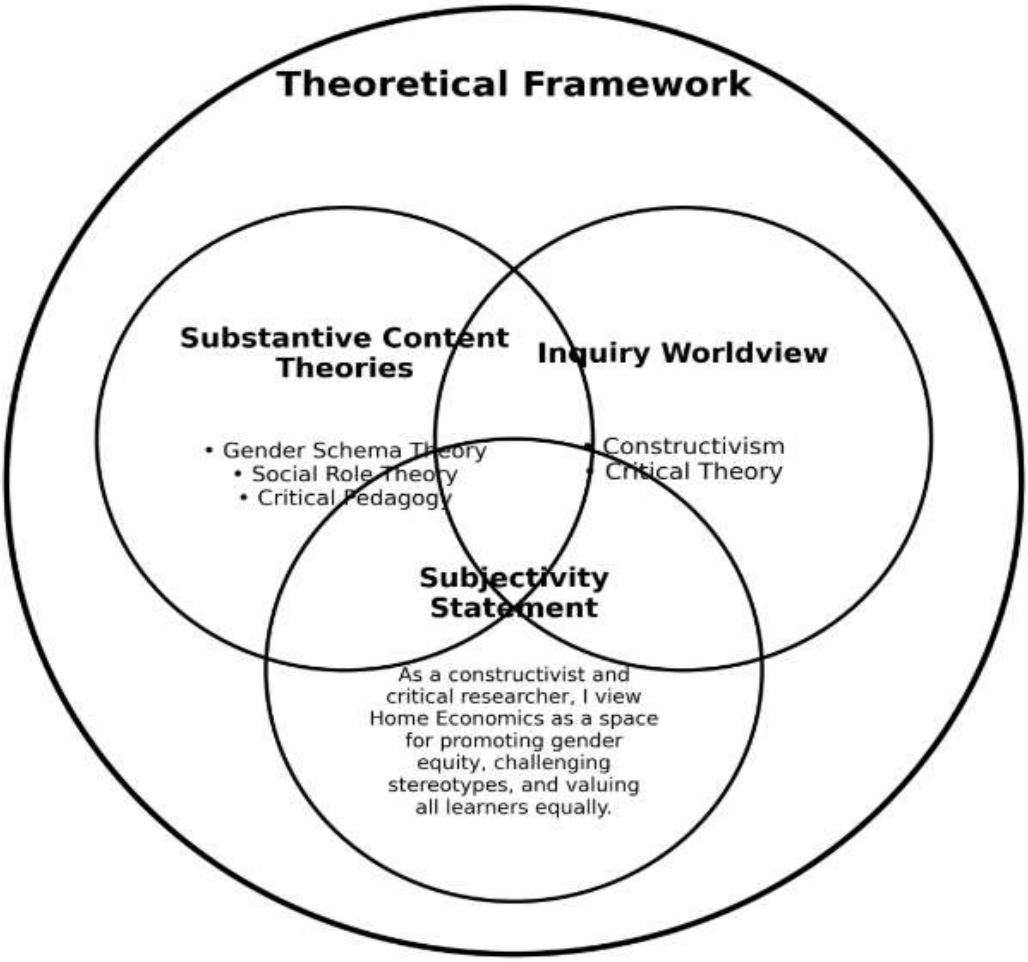
explicit discussions, allowing stereotypes to persist. Chelagat et al. (2019) and Maina et al. (2019) in Kenya noted that Home Economics remained perceived as feminine. In the Philippines, Quinones and Carandang (2020) and Caraan and Andal (2022) found that gender topics were limited to special observances, while Mansalay and Alibasa (2023) highlighted cultural resistance in Mindanao. Dela Cruz and Abanador (2021) pointed to the lack of localized materials, and Roberts and Miller (2021) noted limited integration of LGBTQ+ topics. Clarke (2021) and Tanaka and Smith (2020) emphasized experiential learning and updated curricula as effective strategies, while Harris and Dwyer (2022), Okafor and Delos Santos (2023), Munro and Estevez (2021), Rivera and Holmgren (2022), and Lopez and Yamashita (2023) underscored the importance of teacher training, community involvement, institutional support, and diverse representation in sustaining inclusive practices.

Theoretical Lens

This study is grounded in three perspectives: **Gender Schema Theory**, **Social Role Theory**, and **Critical Pedagogy**, supported by Constructivism and Critical Theory as worldviews. Gender Schema Theory (Bem, 1981) explains how teachers and students internalize assumptions about which tasks are "appropriate" for each gender, often unconsciously reinforcing stereotypes. Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987) highlights how long-standing societal structures institutionalized men as providers and women as caretakers, shaping Home Economics as a feminine-coded subject and discouraging male participation. Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 2020) offers a transformative lens, urging educators to challenge dominant ideologies and reframe Home Economics beyond domesticity by integrating financial literacy, sustainability, and equitable family dynamics.

Together, these theories show how biases, social structures, and institutional practices intersect in shaping classrooms. At Digos City National High School, strategies will include gender-neutral task assignments, curriculum revision, teacher training, updated materials, and policy support. Diverse role models and parental involvement will reinforce equity, though challenges such as student resistance, limited resources, and parental discomfort are expected.

The framework figure illustrates how these theories explain the roots of bias while Constructivism and Critical Theory guide interpretation. Constructivism emphasizes meanings formed through lived experiences, while Critical Theory examines inequality and power in education. Overall, the study is positioned to both understand and transform Home Economics into a tool for gender sensitivity and inclusive education.



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METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology employed in the study on the lived experiences of Home Economics teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics classes. It discusses the research design and approach that guided how the study was conducted, emphasizing the qualitative nature of the inquiry to capture the lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities of teachers in promoting gender-inclusive practices.

The chapter identifies the research participants, who were Home Economics teachers responsible for integrating gender sensitivity and equity in classroom instruction. It also describes the research environment, which includes the selected secondary schools where Home Economics instruction takes place. Furthermore, the role of the researcher is explained, outlining the responsibilities undertaken such as interviewer, moderator, transcriber, translator, and data analyst to ensure accuracy, credibility, and depth in understanding the phenomenon.

The data gathering procedures are also elaborated, covering the sources of data, instruments used, and the step-by-step process of collecting and organizing qualitative data. Finally, this chapter discusses the data analysis techniques applied to interpret participants' narratives, as well as the measures taken to ensure trustworthiness, including credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Ethical considerations are also highlighted to ensure that the rights, privacy, safety, and dignity of the participants were protected throughout the research process.

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative phenomenological research design. Phenomenology is appropriate for this study because it seeks to understand the lived experiences of Home Economics teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in their classes. This design allowed the researcher to explore how teachers experienced, interpreted, and gave meaning to their roles in integrating gender-inclusive practices in Home Economics instruction.

In this study, the phenomenological approach was used to describe the experiences of teachers in promoting equal participation, challenging gender stereotypes, applying learner-centered and interactive strategies, using role rotation, and creating inclusive classroom environments. It also focused on how teachers coped with challenges such as learners' hesitation, traditional gender beliefs, limited instructional materials, lack of regular training, and limited support. Through this design, the researcher was able to gather meaningful insights into the lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities of teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics class.

Sources of Data

The sources of data in this study were the responses and narratives of Home Economics teachers from selected secondary schools in the Division of Digos City. The data were gathered through in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. The participants shared their actual experiences, challenges, strategies, and proposed activities in promoting gender sensitivity and gender-inclusive practices in Home Economics classes.

The study also used field notes and relevant research documents as supporting sources of information. These helped the researcher understand the context of the participants' responses and provided additional support in analyzing their lived experiences in relation to gender-sensitive instruction.

Research Participants

This study was conducted among selected Home Economics teachers from five secondary schools within the Division of Digos City, The participants were PRC-licensed Home Economics teachers, either male or female, who were currently teaching Home Economics. They must have at least three years of continuous teaching experience in Home Economics and must have engaged, either directly or indirectly, in instructional practices or initiatives related to gender sensitivity or equity.

A total of ten participants were selected for the study. Six Home Economics teachers participated in the in-depth interviews, while four Home Economics teachers participated in the focus group discussion. To protect their identities and ensure confidentiality, the participants were assigned identification codes. Those selected for the in-depth interviews were labeled P-IDI-1 to P-IDI-6, while those in the focus group discussion were labeled P-FGD-1 to P-FGD-4.

The participants were chosen because they had direct experience in handling Home Economics classes and were able to provide rich and meaningful narratives on how gender-inclusive practices were promoted, challenged, and sustained in their classroom instruction.

Sampling Data

The study used purposive sampling in selecting the participants. This sampling technique was appropriate because the study required participants who had direct experience in promoting gender sensitivity and gender-inclusive practices in Home Economics instruction. The participants were chosen based on established criteria.

The criteria for selection were the following: the participant must be a PRC-licensed Home Economics teacher, must be currently teaching Home Economics in any of the selected secondary schools in the Division of Digos City, must have at least three years of continuous teaching experience in Home Economics, must have engaged in instructional practices related to gender sensitivity or equity, and must be willing to participate in the study.

These criteria ensured that the participants had sufficient experience, knowledge, and direct involvement in the integration of gender-sensitive practices in Home Economics classes.

Research Instrument

The primary research instruments used in this study were a semi-structured interview guide and a focus group discussion guide. The interview guide contained open-ended questions designed to gather in-depth responses from the participants regarding their lived experiences in promoting gender

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sensitivity in Home Economics classes.

The questions focused on the participants' experiences in promoting equal participation, addressing gender stereotypes, using inclusive strategies, and creating supportive classroom environments. The guide also included questions about the challenges they encountered, the coping mechanisms they used, and the activities they proposed to enhance gender sensitivity in Home Economics class.

The semi-structured format allowed the researcher to ask follow-up and probing questions to obtain richer and clearer responses. The interview and focus group discussion guides were reviewed and validated to ensure that the questions were aligned with the research questions and appropriate for the purpose of the study.

Data Gathering

Before data collection, the researcher first sought formal endorsement and permission to conduct the study. A letter requesting approval was submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent of Digos City, together with the necessary documents, including the research chapters, research instruments, and selection criteria for participants. After securing approval, the researcher communicated with the school heads of the identified secondary schools, namely school A, B, C, D, and E. The purpose and procedures of the study were explained to the school heads and participants.

The participants were given informed consent forms stating the purpose of the study, their role as participants, their right to withdraw, and the confidentiality of their responses. After consent was obtained, the researcher scheduled the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion at a time convenient for the participants.

During the interviews and focus group discussion, the researcher used the validated interview guide. With the permission of the participants, conversations were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy in transcription. Field notes were also taken during the data gathering process to capture important observations and contextual details.

After the interviews and focus group discussion, the recorded responses were transcribed verbatim. Since some participants used Bisaya or vernacular expressions, the researcher translated their responses into English while preserving the original meaning of their statements. The transcribed data were then prepared for coding and thematic analysis.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was appropriate for this study because it enabled the researcher to systematically identify, analyze, organize, and report meaningful patterns or themes drawn from the participants' narratives. This method allowed the researcher to examine the lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities of Home Economics teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in their classes.

The first phase involved familiarization with the data. The researcher carefully read and reread the transcribed responses from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion to gain a deeper understanding of the content, context, and meaning of the participants' statements. The audio recordings were also reviewed to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the transcripts.

The second phase involved generating initial codes. The researcher identified significant words, phrases, and statements that were relevant to the research questions. These included responses related to the teachers' lived experiences in promoting gender sensitivity, the challenges they encountered, the coping mechanisms they employed, and the activities they proposed to enhance gender-inclusive instruction.

The third phase involved searching for themes. Similar codes were grouped together to form broader patterns of meaning. These patterns reflected recurring ideas in the participants' narratives and served as the basis for developing the initial themes of the study.

The fourth phase involved reviewing the themes. The researcher examined whether the themes accurately represented the coded data and the entire set of participants' responses. Themes were refined, merged, or adjusted when necessary to ensure coherence, relevance, and alignment with the research questions.

The fifth phase involved defining and naming the themes. Each theme was clearly described and labeled according to the central idea it represented. This process helped ensure that the themes captured the essence of the participants' experiences and reflected the meaning of their narratives.

The sixth phase involved producing the report. The final themes were presented in an organized and meaningful manner, supported by significant narratives from the participants. These narratives helped provide evidence for the findings and preserved the authentic voices of the Home Economics teachers.

To strengthen the validity and trustworthiness of the findings, triangulation was also employed. The researcher compared and cross-checked the data gathered from the in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, field notes, and significant participant narratives. This process helped confirm the consistency of the emerging themes and ensured that the findings were not based on a single source of data alone. Through thematic analysis and triangulation, the researcher was able to develop a clearer, more credible, and well-supported understanding of the lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities of Home Economics teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in their classes.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were central to this study to ensure that the dignity, rights, privacy, and welfare of all participants were protected throughout the research process. The study involved Home Economics teachers who shared their lived experiences in promoting gender sensitivity and gender-inclusive instruction. Since the topic involved personal teaching practices, beliefs, classroom experiences, and possible challenges related to gender stereotypes, ethical sensitivity, respect, and confidentiality were observed at every stage of the study.

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Coordination with appropriate school and division authorities was secured before the conduct of the study to ensure that all procedures were properly approved and aligned with institutional expectations. Ethical standards guided participant selection, data gathering, data analysis, and presentation of findings to uphold integrity, transparency, and participant trust.

Researcher Qualifications. As a Home Economics teacher and graduate student, I possessed both content expertise and academic training necessary to conduct the research responsibly. Professional experiences in the field provided contextual understanding of challenges in integrating gender-sensitive instruction. Research ethics training and coursework in qualitative methods guided methodological decisions. I acknowledged the importance of reflexivity as a practitioner-researcher and approached the study with integrity, humility, and responsibility.

Social Value. The social value of this research lies in its potential to improve gender-sensitive instruction in Home Economics classes. By documenting the experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities of Home Economics teachers, the study may provide useful inputs for strengthening inclusive teaching practices, curriculum enhancement, teacher training, and learner-centered classroom activities.

The findings may benefit teachers, learners, school administrators, DepEd officials, parents, and future researchers by offering a deeper understanding of how gender sensitivity can be promoted in practical subjects such as Home Economics.

Informed Consent. Prior to data collection, informed consent was secured from all participants. The consent form clearly explained the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, the expected time commitment, confidentiality measures, possible risks and benefits, and the voluntary nature of participation. The participants were informed that they had the right to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

They were also given the opportunity to ask questions before signing the consent form. This ensured that their participation was based on full understanding, voluntariness, and personal willingness.

Vulnerability of Research Participants. The researcher recognized that the participants may experience vulnerability when discussing their teaching practices, classroom challenges, gender-related issues, and personal reflections on inclusive education. Some participants might feel uncomfortable sharing experiences involving gender stereotypes, resistance from learners or parents, limited training, or lack of instructional support.

To address this, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in a respectful, supportive, and non-threatening environment. Participants were reminded that they could refuse to answer any question, request clarification, pause the interview, or withdraw from the study whenever they felt uncomfortable.

Risks, Benefits, and Safety. The study posed minimal risk to the participants. The possible risks were limited to the time required for participation and possible discomfort in discussing sensitive classroom experiences related to gender and inclusivity. To minimize these risks, the researcher ensured that the interviews and discussions were conducted respectfully and privately. No participant was pressured to answer questions that caused discomfort.

The benefits of the study included giving participants the opportunity to reflect on their teaching practices and share insights that may help improve gender-sensitive instruction in Home Economics. The findings may also support future training, curriculum improvement, and inclusive classroom initiatives.

Privacy and Confidentiality. Privacy and confidentiality were strictly observed throughout the study. Participants were assigned codes or pseudonyms to protect their identities, and no real names or identifying details were disclosed in the final report. Any information that could reveal the identity of the participants or their schools was removed or generalized.

Audio recordings, transcripts, consent forms, field notes, and other research materials were stored securely in password-protected files accessible only to the researcher. The participants' narratives were presented with care to ensure that their identities were protected while preserving the meaning of their responses.

Community Involvement. The researcher coordinated with the concerned school and division authorities to promote transparency, cooperation, and proper implementation of the study. Communication with participants and school officials was maintained to ensure that the research process was clearly understood and respectfully conducted.

The involvement of Home Economics teachers from different schools helped ensure that the study reflected varied teaching contexts and classroom experiences. This engagement also promoted shared responsibility in improving gender-sensitive and inclusive practices in Home Economics instruction.

Plagiarism and Fabrication. The researcher strictly observed academic honesty and integrity in conducting the study. All sources used in the research were properly acknowledged and cited. The researcher ensured that no data were fabricated, altered, or misrepresented.

The participants' responses were transcribed and interpreted as accurately as possible while maintaining the meaning and context of their narratives. Any translated responses were carefully checked to preserve the original intent of the participants. This ethical practice ensured that the study remained credible, authentic, and faithful to the lived experiences of Home Economics teachers in promoting gender sensitivity.

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Trustworthiness of the Study. Ensuring the trustworthiness of this qualitative study was vital in establishing the credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability of its findings. Since the study explored the lived experiences of Home Economics teachers in promoting gender sensitivity, methodological rigor was necessary to ensure that the results accurately reflected the participants' realities, challenges, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities.

Guided by Lincoln and Guba's trustworthiness criteria, the researcher employed strategies such as triangulation, member checking, thick description, audit trail, and reflexive documentation. These processes helped strengthen the authenticity of the findings and reduce possible researcher bias.

Credibility. Credibility was achieved through in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, triangulation, persistent observation, and member checking. The researcher established rapport with the teacher-participants to encourage honest and meaningful sharing of their experiences in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics class.

The participants' narratives were compared with field notes and emerging themes to ensure consistency and accuracy of interpretation. Member checking was also conducted by sharing the transcribed responses and preliminary findings with the participants for verification. This process helped ensure that the findings truly represented their experiences, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities.

Dependability. Dependability focused on the consistency and stability of the research process. To ensure dependability, the researcher carefully documented the procedures followed in participant selection, data gathering, transcription, coding, theme development, and data analysis.

A clear record of the research process was maintained so that the study could be reviewed and examined by other researchers or academic evaluators. The researcher also used an audit trail to document methodological decisions, interview procedures, and analytical steps. Peer review and consultation with the research adviser helped ensure that the research process was systematic, transparent, and aligned with qualitative research standards.

Transferability. Transferability was achieved by providing rich and detailed descriptions of the research setting, participants, selection criteria, and research procedures. The study described the context of Home Economics teachers in the District of Digos City, including their role in promoting gender sensitivity, addressing gender stereotypes, using inclusive strategies, and developing activities that support gender-sensitive instruction.

Although the findings were not intended for broad statistical generalization, the detailed presentation allows readers, teachers, school leaders, and future researchers to determine whether the findings may apply to similar educational contexts.

Confirmability. Confirmability was established by ensuring that the findings were grounded in the actual responses of the participants rather than the personal assumptions of the researcher. The researcher maintained reflexivity throughout the research process by being aware of possible biases and by carefully distinguishing personal interpretations from participant narratives.

An audit trail was kept, including raw data, transcripts, coding notes, theme clusters, field notes, and analysis outputs. Triangulation of interview responses, focus group discussion data, and field notes also helped verify the findings from different sources. Through these measures, the study ensured that the conclusions faithfully reflected the lived experiences of Home Economics teachers in promoting gender sensitivity.

Through these trustworthiness measures, the study maintained the credibility, accuracy, and integrity of its findings. The use of member checking, triangulation, thick description, audit trail, and reflexivity strengthened the overall quality of the qualitative inquiry and ensured that the participants' voices were represented with fairness, clarity, and authenticity.

RESULTS

This chapter presented the results of the study based on the narratives and lived experiences shared by the teacher-participants regarding their efforts, challenges, and practices in promoting gender sensitivity and equity in Home Economics instruction. The findings were organized around the research questions that guided the investigation to provide a deeper understanding of teachers' experiences, coping strategies, and professional insights in integrating gender-inclusive principles in junior high school classrooms at Digos City National High School, Davao del Sur Division. Each section highlighted the themes that emerged from the data, supported by relevant literature and enriched by the participants' authentic voices, which reflected their observations, instructional adjustments, encountered barriers, and reflective practices in fostering gender-responsive pedagogy and advancing inclusive and equitable education through Home Economics as a transformative learning space.

Lived Experiences of Teachers in Promoting Gender Sensitivity in Home Economics Class

Theme 1: Equal Participation. Teachers promoted fairness by using mixed grouping and cooperative tasks so boys and girls could share responsibilities equally. One participant noted, *"I adjust classroom tasks so everyone can participate, regardless of gender"* (P-IDI-2). This shows that inclusivity is achieved when participation is not determined by gender.

Theme 2: Challenging Stereotypes. Teachers intentionally rotated roles and encouraged learners to try tasks beyond traditional expectations. As one shared, *"I mix groups in cooking and sewing so everyone can try different roles"* (P-IDI-1). This practice helps dismantle the idea that certain skills belong only to boys or girls.

Theme 3: Learner-Centered Strategies. Interactive approaches such as role-playing, guided discussions, and reflection tasks made gender sensitivity more meaningful. A participant explained, *"I use collaborative learning and role-playing to*

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help students understand equality in real situations" (P-IDI-4). These strategies foster active engagement and deeper reflection.

Theme 4: Fairness Through Role Rotation. Teachers ensured equal expectations by rotating leadership and support roles. One participant stated, *"I make sure tasks and expectations are the same for everyone, and I rotate roles so all can lead, assist, and present"* (P-IDI-5). This prevents bias and builds confidence among learners.

Theme 5: Policy Guidance. DepEd's GAD Program and school orientations provided direction for inclusive teaching. A participant shared, *"In our school, we follow DepEd Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy to ensure gender-sensitive teaching"* (P-IDI-2). Policies strengthen classroom practices but teachers emphasized the need for more training and updated resources.

Coping Mechanisms of Teachers in Promoting Gender Sensitivity in Home Economics Class

Theme 1: Addressing Resistance Through Respectful Communication. Teachers encountered hesitation from learners and parents due to cultural norms and personal beliefs. They coped by using open dialogue and careful explanations. One participant shared, *"Sometimes, students or parents are not comfortable discussing gender issues… I addressed this through open communication"* (P-IDI-5). This shows that respectful communication reduces tension and sustains inclusivity.

Theme 2: Gradual Integration of Gender-Related Topics. Instead of forcing discussions, teachers introduced gender concepts slowly using simple examples and short activities. A participant explained, *"I integrate gender ideas in small ways through simple examples and short discussions"* (P-FGD-1). Gradual integration helped learners adjust and prevented resistance.

Theme 3: Resourcefulness Amid Limited Materials and Training. Teachers coped with lack of resources by modifying materials, creating their own activities, and using real-life situations. One participant noted, *"When materials are lacking, I create my own activities based on real-life situations"* (P-FGD-2). Others watched educational videos or took online courses to strengthen their knowledge.

Theme 4: Collaboration With Fellow Teachers. Sharing ideas and consulting colleagues provided practical strategies for inclusive lessons. A participant stated, *"I collaborated with co-teachers and adapted materials to make lessons more inclusive"* (P-IDI-1). Collaboration fostered support and continuous improvement.

Theme 5: Reflective and Flexible Teaching Adjustments. Teachers observed learners' reactions and adjusted strategies accordingly. One participant shared, *"I adjust my strategies depending on the situation of the class"* (P-IDI-6). Reflection and flexibility allowed them to redesign activities and maintain inclusivity despite challenges.

Proposed Activities to Enhance Gender Sensitivity in Home Economics Class

Theme 1: Strengthening Collaborative and Inclusive Learning Activities. Teachers suggested group work and teamwork-based tasks to ensure balanced participation. One participant shared, *"I design tasks that encourage collaboration, equal participation, and shared responsibilities"* (P-IDI-4). Collaboration helps learners value one another's contributions regardless of gender.

Theme 2: Using Role Rotation to Ensure Equal Participation. Role rotation was emphasized to prevent gender-labeled assignments. A participant explained, *"I focus on hands-on tasks, group problem-solving, and role rotation so all learners can contribute based on their strengths"* (P-IDI-2). This strategy allows students to explore varied responsibilities fairly.

Theme 3: Creating Flexible and Student-Centered Activities. Teachers proposed adjusting strategies based on class situations and learner comfort. One participant noted, *"I adjust my strategies depending on the class situation"* (P-IDI-6). Flexibility ensures inclusivity and builds learner confidence.

Theme 4: Creating a Safe and Supportive Learning Environment. Safe spaces were highlighted to help learners participate without fear of judgment. A participant shared, *"In teaching Home Economics, I realized the importance of creating a safe space where learners can learn without judgment"* (P-FGD-2). Supportive environments encourage exploration of diverse abilities.

Theme 5: Promoting Practical Skills Beyond Gender Expectations. Teachers encouraged learners to explore all tasks without labeling them as masculine or feminine. One participant stated, *"I encourage students to explore different roles without labeling them for boys or girls"* (P-IDI-2). This helps learners develop confidence and independence in practical life skills.

Discussion

Lived Experiences of Teachers in Promoting Gender Sensitivity

Teachers' narratives revealed that inclusivity in Home Economics is achieved through equal participation, role rotation, and learner-centered strategies. These practices challenged stereotypes that domestic tasks are only for girls and leadership roles only for boys. This finding supports **Robinson & Zajicek** (2021), who emphasized fairness in classroom participation, and **Pendergast et al.** (2020), who highlighted dismantling traditional roles in practical subjects. Policy guidance from DepEd and GAD programs strengthened teachers' efforts, though continuous training remains necessary.

Coping Mechanisms of Teachers in Promoting Gender Sensitivity

Teachers coped with challenges such as resistance, limited resources, and lack of training through respectful communication, gradual integration of gender topics, and resourcefulness. They modified materials, created activities, and collaborated with colleagues to sustain inclusivity. Reflection and flexibility allowed them to adjust strategies based on learners' reactions. These coping mechanisms highlight teachers' resilience and align with **Sullivan** (2019), who noted that institutional support and teacher initiative are critical in advancing equity.

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Proposed Activities to Enhance Gender Sensitivity

Teachers proposed collaborative tasks, role rotation, flexible strategies, safe learning environments, and promoting practical skills beyond gender expectations. These activities aim to ensure that learners are treated as capable individuals, not limited by gender labels. Narratives emphasized teamwork, confidence-building, and safe spaces where learners can explore abilities without fear of judgment. This aligns with **Clarke** (2021) and **Tanaka & Smith** (2020), who stressed experiential learning and updated curricula as effective tools for inclusivity.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of the study's major findings, the implications derived from the results, and the recommendations based on the analysis of the lived experiences of teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics class. It highlights how teachers experienced gender-sensitive instruction in relation to equal participation, gender stereotypes, learner-centered strategies, role rotation, and policy-guided classroom practices. The chapter also discusses the coping mechanisms of teachers in addressing resistance, limited materials and trainings, and the need for reflective and flexible teaching adjustments. Finally, it provides recommendations to strengthen gender-sensitive instruction, inclusive classroom activities, teacher collaboration, and support systems in Home Economics classes.

Summary of Findings

This study explored the lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities of teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics class. The findings were drawn from the narratives of the participants and organized according to the three research questions of the study. The results revealed that promoting gender sensitivity is not only an instructional practice but also a classroom management responsibility that requires fairness, respect, inclusivity, flexibility, and learner-centered teaching. The data showed three major areas of findings: lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and proposed activities to enhance gender sensitivity.

1. The study found that the lived experiences of teachers in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics class are characterized by promoting equal participation through inclusive classroom practices, challenging gender stereotypes in practical tasks, using learner-centered and interactive strategies, ensuring fairness through role rotation and equal expectations, and guidance from school and DepEd policies on gender-sensitive instruction. Teachers experienced the need to create activities where both boys and girls could participate equally, share responsibilities, and perform practical tasks without being limited by gender expectations. They used mixed grouping, collaborative tasks, role-playing, guided discussions, reflection activities, and role rotation to help learners understand that Home Economics skills are for everyone.

2. The study revealed that teachers cope with the challenges of promoting gender sensitivity through addressing resistance using respectful communication, gradually integrating gender-related topics, being resourceful in addressing limited materials and trainings, collaborating with fellow teachers, and making reflective and flexible teaching adjustments. Teachers encountered hesitation from some students and parents due to personal beliefs, cultural norms, and traditional views about gender roles. Despite these challenges, they used open communication, simple and relatable examples, redesigned activities, modified available materials, created their own activities, attended trainings, watched educational videos, and sought ideas from co-teachers to sustain gender-sensitive instruction.

3. The study further found that the proposed activities to enhance gender sensitivity in Home Economics class emphasize strengthening collaborative and inclusive learning activities, using role rotation to ensure equal participation, creating flexible and student-centered activities, creating a safe and supportive learning environment, and promoting practical skills beyond gender expectations. The participants emphasized that group work, collaborative tasks, hands-on activities, peer collaboration, problem-solving activities, teamwork-based tasks, and safe learning spaces can help learners participate fairly and confidently. These activities also help students explore different roles, discover their strengths, and understand that practical skills should not be labeled as only for boys or only for girls.

Implications

This study provides important implications for Home Economics teachers, school heads, curriculum implementers, education leaders, and policymakers in strengthening gender-sensitive instruction. The findings emphasized that gender sensitivity in Home Economics is not only about discussing equality but also about designing learning experiences that promote fairness, respect, shared participation, and inclusive skill development.

1. The findings imply that Home Economics teachers need to intentionally design classroom activities that promote equal participation among all learners. Since some learners may still carry traditional beliefs about gender-based roles, teachers must ensure that classroom tasks, practical activities, leadership roles, and group responsibilities are assigned fairly. This implies that teachers should avoid gender-based task assignments and instead provide equal opportunities for all learners to lead, assist, present, cook, sew, collaborate, and perform hands-on tasks.

2. The findings imply that teachers must actively challenge gender stereotypes in Home Economics classes. Since Home Economics involves practical life skills that may be affected by traditional gender expectations, teachers should help learners understand that skills are not limited by gender. This suggests that lessons should include role rotation, mixed grouping, collaborative learning, and guided discussions that allow learners to experience different responsibilities and develop confidence in their abilities.

3. The challenges encountered by teachers imply the need for respectful and gradual approaches in discussing gender-related topics. Some learners, parents, or colleagues may feel uncomfortable when gender issues are introduced because of personal beliefs or cultural norms. This implies that teachers should use open communication, simple examples, real-life situations, and short discussions to help learners understand

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fairness and inclusivity without creating discomfort or resistance in the classroom.

4. The coping mechanisms of teachers imply the importance of resourcefulness, collaboration, and continuous professional growth. Since some teachers experience limited materials, lack of updated resources, and limited training opportunities, they need support in developing gender-sensitive instructional strategies. This indicates that schools should encourage teacher collaboration, peer sharing, self-directed learning, and access to relevant training materials to strengthen inclusive teaching practices.

5. The proposed activities imply that gender-sensitive instruction should be flexible, student-centered, and supportive of diverse learner needs. Learners have different strengths, interests, confidence levels, and learning styles. This implies that teachers should create safe and supportive learning environments where students can participate without fear of judgment and where they are treated as capable individuals regardless of gender.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and implications of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen gender sensitivity in Home Economics classes:

Home Economics teachers are encouraged to strengthen inclusive classroom practices by using mixed grouping, collaborative tasks, group work, and shared responsibilities. These strategies may help ensure that both boys and girls are given equal chances to participate and contribute in class activities.

Teachers should practice role rotation in practical and classroom tasks. Learners should be given opportunities to experience different responsibilities such as leading, assisting, reporting, presenting, cooking, sewing, organizing materials, and performing hands-on activities. This can help prevent gender-based role assignments and promote fairness in participation.

Teachers should integrate gender-related topics gradually and respectfully. Simple examples, real-life situations, guided discussions, role-playing, and reflection activities may be used to help learners understand equality, respect, and fairness in a way that is appropriate to their level of understanding.

Schools should provide more trainings, seminars, modules, and instructional materials on gender-sensitive teaching. These capacity-building activities can help teachers deepen their knowledge and improve their strategies in promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics class.

School heads should strengthen monitoring and support for inclusive classroom practices. Regular orientations, classroom observation, technical assistance, and feedback sessions may help ensure that gender-sensitive instruction is consistently practiced in Home Economics and other subject areas.

Teachers should collaborate with fellow teachers in developing gender-sensitive activities and instructional materials. Sharing of best practices, peer mentoring, lesson sharing, and informal discussions may help teachers become more resourceful and confident in addressing gender-related concerns.

Teachers should create a safe and supportive learning environment where learners are not judged or limited based on gender. Classroom activities should focus on learners' abilities, interests, strengths, and participation rather than traditional expectations about what boys or girls should do.

Further research is recommended to explore gender sensitivity in other learning areas and school contexts. Future studies may focus on the experiences of learners, parents, school heads, or teachers from different grade levels to gain a broader understanding of how gender-sensitive education is practiced and strengthened in schools.

Overall, the findings of the study affirm that promoting gender sensitivity in Home Economics class is both an instructional and values-based responsibility. Teachers must be fair, inclusive, respectful, flexible, and intentional in designing learning activities that allow all learners to participate and develop practical skills. Strengthening teacher training, school support, collaborative planning, and inclusive classroom practices can help ensure that Home Economics becomes a meaningful space for equality, confidence, and respect among all learners.

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