

Gender Sensitivity and Interest of Grade 7 Technology Livelihood and Education Students

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Abstract

This study was anchored on Gender Role Theory and Cognitive Development Theory. It investigated the relationship between the gender sensitivity and interest of grade 7 students in their technology and livelihood education exploratory courses. The study adopted the descriptive research design and utilized a researcher-made, expert validated research instrument. A total of 120 students were purposively sampled. Results of the study showed that the composition of the respondents is almost evenly participated by male and female. It was also discovered that a vast majority of the respondents' parents were supportive of their gender preferences and majority of them were at the average or can manage socio-economic status.

The findings also showed that the teacher has very high level of gender sensitivity in terms of academic support, emotional support, and socio-relational support. Similarly, data on the status of the seventh-grade students' interest in TLE exploratory courses indicated very high results.

The null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the profile of the seventh-grade students and the status of their interest in TLE exploratory courses was accepted. On the other hand, null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the teacher's gender sensitivity and the status of interest in TLE exploratory courses was partially rejected. The results for the teacher's gender sensitivity in terms of socio-relational support and the status of their interest in TLE exploratory courses with regards to studying with group or partner and eliminating distractions showed significant relationship.

It was recommended for the teacher to sustain the practice of ensuring gender sensitivity in terms of academic support, emotional support, and socio-relational support to promote a sense of safety and security among learners particularly to those who are experiencing fear due to their gender preferences. Students are advised to motivate themselves further in their TLE courses. School and other officials should also promote the inclusion of gender sensitivity in offering TLE exploratory courses. Finally, future researchers may conduct studies on the lived experiences of students particularly those who belong to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning (LGBTQQ). This would allow to create a better picture of their deeper thoughts and feelings on their daily experiences.

Keywords: Gender sensitivity and interest, Technology and Livelihood Education, Grade 7

1. Main text

Technology and Livelihood Education or TLE is a subject offered as part of the basic education curriculum in the Philippines. It is geared toward the development of technological proficiency and is anchored on knowledge and information, entrepreneurial concepts, process and delivery, work values and life skills (Philippine Schools Overseas, 2019). On the other hand, interest is one of the important elements present in students to succeed in any field of TLE (Abe Abe, 2013). Understanding students' interests will help teachers to provide them with quality learning opportunities. Teachers' responsiveness to students' academic and emotional needs is important for it makes them feel valued and respected (Ruzek et al., 2016).

In 2017, TLE teachers faced the challenges of bringing out the best in their TLE students as an urgent call since the quality of Philippine education was continuously declining (Pressreader, 2017). Assessment tasks enable the teacher to efficiently provide students with information on the strengths and weaknesses of students 'works (Magsino, 2017). One way of showing variety and fairness in assessing performance is through gender sensitivity - the manner by which teachers treat male or female students (Fehringer et al., 2017). In a deeper sense, gender sensitivity is more analytical and critical since it clarifies issues about gender differences and gender inequalities (Kalakoti, 2018 and Rajesh, 2017).

The Department of Education (2017) issued a policy which provides guidelines for a gender-responsive basic education which encourages the integration of gender equality, gender equity, gender sensitivity, non-discrimination, and human rights in the provision and governance of basic education. Specifically, schools are directed to promote inclusive education that ensures girls' and boys' and women's and men's equal access to learning opportunities fair treatment in learning process, and equitable outcomes.

There is an urgent need to undertake further research on this topic considering the important role which education plays in the achievement of gender equality. The principle of gender sensitivity must be observed in every aspect of learning experience in order to produce graduates who view both sexes equally. This begins with making sure that both males and females are given fair opportunities in school. Thus, this study shall look into how gender sensitivity is practiced in the chosen schools, particularly in TLE which is a skill-based subject.

1.1. Structure

This investigation on the gender sensitivity and performance of students in exploratory TLE subjects is based on the Gender Role Theory

Gender role theory emphasizes environmental conditions and the influence of socialization, or the process of transferring norms, values, beliefs, and behaviors to group members, in learning how to behave as a male or female (Lumen Candela, n.d.). Socialization theories of gender development such as this one view gender differences as a byproduct of the differential treatment girls and boys receive from the people in their lives and the pervasive gender stereotyped messages that children are exposed to in their environment. Considering this principle, the teachers as a very influential factor in molding students' role in the society should be extra careful.

Teachers' gender stereotypes and prejudices shape the students' classroom behavior in at least three ways. First, teachers often model gender stereotypic behavior. Female teachers, for example, often exhibit "math phobic" behaviors. Second, teachers often exhibit differential expectations for males and females (e.g., creating "dress-up" and "construction" centers and accepting—even facilitating—gender-differentiated use). Third, teachers facilitate children's gender biases by marking gender as important by using it to label and

organize students. Other teachers ignored students’ gender. Young children whose teachers labeled and used gender showed higher levels of gender stereotyping than their peers (Bigler, Hayes, and Hamilton, 2013).

Another Theory governing this investigation is the Cognitive Developmental Theory. According to cognitive developmental theory, gender identity is postulated as the basic organizer and regulator of children's gender learning. Students develop the stereotypic conceptions of gender from what they see and hear around them. Once they achieve gender constancy --the belief that their own gender is fixed and irreversible -- they positively value their gender identity and seek to behave only in ways that are congruent with that conception. Cognitive consistency is gratifying, so individuals attempt to behave in ways that are consistent with their self-conception. In this view, much of children's conduct is designed to confirm their gender identity. Once students establish knowledge of their own gender, the reciprocal interplay between one's behavior (acting like a girl) and thoughts (I am a girl) leads to a stable gender.

Conceptual Framework

To illustrate the approach which the researcher observes in undertaking this investigation, a paradigm of the study labeled as Figure 1 is shown in this section. This paradigm follows the IV-DV Model. According to the University of Nebraska – Lincoln (n.d.) the terms IV (independent variable) and DV (dependent variable) are most appropriately used when describing the relationship between "causal" and "effect" variables.

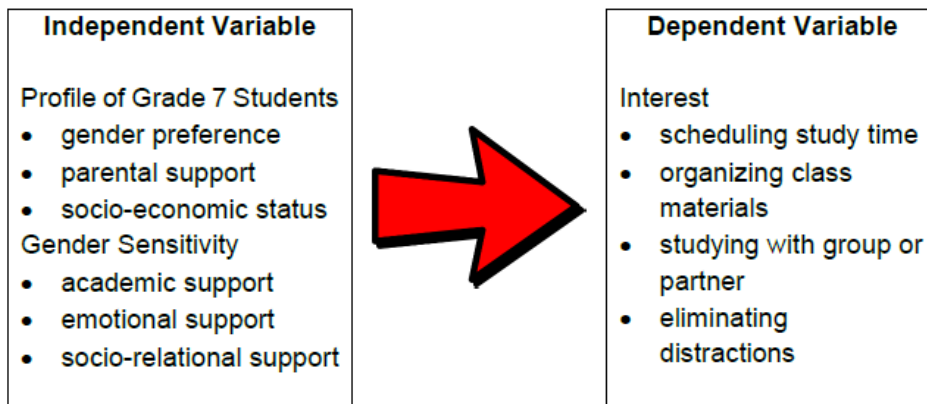


Figure 1. The Research Paradigm of the Study

1.2. Tables

Results and Discussions

Status of Teacher’s Gender Sensitivity

Gender sensitivity in is being considerate with the perspectives and feelings of the opposite gender. Teacher’s gender sensitivity is of much importance because they play a very important role in the upbringing of the students.

In this study, status of teacher’s gender sensitivity was described in terms of academic support, emotional support and socio-relational support and was determined by the weighted mean and standard deviation.

Table 1. Profile of the Grade 7 Students in Terms of Academic Support

Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
<i>In terms of academic support, my TLE teacher...</i>			
1. asks us if we need assistance in the learning tasks without showing favoritism	4.42	0.59	Strongly Agree
2. gives us copies of the materials we need without gender bias	4.47	0.59	Strongly Agree
3. invites and welcomes us in online consultations regardless of our gender	4.35	0.63	Strongly Agree
4. talks to our parents and guardians to discuss our performance impartially	4.37	0.59	Strongly Agree
5. gives us a fair chance to comply with our deficiencies without looking at our gender	4.34	0.64	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.39		Strongly Agree
Interpretation		Very High	

Table 1 presented the status of teacher’s gender sensitivity in terms of academic support which was *very high* as denoted by the grand (M=4.39). This further implies that respondents *strongly agree* that the TLE teachers shows support with them regardless of their gender.

Table 2. Profile of the Grade 7 Students in Terms of Emotional Support

Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
<i>In terms of emotional support, my TLE teacher...</i>			
1. listens to our problems without making us feel judged because of our gender	4.40	0.57	Strongly Agree
2. considers our emotions when discussing sensitive issues on gender	4.33	0.64	Strongly Agree
3. avoids gender discrimination in assigning activities	4.34	0.68	Strongly Agree
4. takes care of our feelings when discussing our behavior with our parents	4.37	0.59	Strongly Agree
5. does not judge our performance based on our gender	4.31	0.63	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.35		Strongly Agree
Interpretation		Very High	

Table 2 presented the status of teacher’s gender sensitivity in terms of emotional support which was very high as denoted by the grand (M=4.35). This implies that respondents strongly agree that the TLE teachers shows support to their emotional needs regardless of their gender.

Table 3. Profile of the Grade 7 Students in Terms of Socio-Relational Support

Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
<i>In terms of socio-relational support, my TLE teacher...</i>			
1. allows us to work in groups considering our choice	4.27	0.66	Strongly Agree
2. does not show bias in grouping the class	4.30	0.60	Strongly Agree
3. allows different gender to work together in an activity	4.31	0.63	Strongly Agree

4. encourages us to respect each other's gender preference	4.30	0.63	Strongly Agree
5. does not give awful remarks on different genders	4.35	0.62	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.31		Strongly Agree
Interpretation		Very High	

Table 3 presented the status of teacher's gender sensitivity in terms of socio-relational support which was very high as denoted by the grand (M=4.31). This implies that respondents strongly agreed that the TLE teacher shows support to their socio-relational needs regardless of their gender.

Table 4. Status of the Grade 7 Students' Interest in Terms of Scheduling Study Time

Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
<i>In terms of scheduling study time, I...</i>			
1. have a definite time for working on my TLE module	4.36	0.66	Strongly Agree
2. observe the schedule of learning tasks in the weekly home learning plan	4.29	0.60	Strongly Agree
3. contact teacher for questions and clarifications within the given period	4.33	0.63	Strongly Agree
4. finish my tasks within allotted time	4.35	0.63	Strongly Agree
5. avoid breaking my schedule for unnecessary stuff	4.48	0.62	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.36		Strongly Agree
Interpretation		Very High	

The respondents strongly agreed that they avoid breaking their schedules for unnecessary stuffs (M = 4.48, Sd = .56). Likewise, they finish their tasks within allotted time (M = 4.35, SD = 0.64). Though recorded as lowest mean, respondents also strongly agreed that they observe the schedule of learning tasks in the weekly home learning plan (M = 4.29, SD = 0.64).

Table 5. Status of the Grade 7 Students' Interest in Terms of Organizing Class Materials

Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
<i>In terms of organizing class materials, I...</i>			
1. take good care of my learning materials in TLE	4.34	0.64	Strongly Agree
2. have a particular space where I keep my tools, materials, or equipment for TLE	4.36	0.59	Strongly Agree
3. prepare my outputs in TLE with neatness and creativity	4.30	0.62	Strongly Agree
4. make sure that all the outputs I submit would get high grades	4.29	0.63	Strongly Agree
5. use labels for each subject to help my parents easily drop them in appropriate boxes.	4.44	0.61	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.35		Strongly Agree
Interpretation		Very High	

Table 5 showed the status of the Grade 7 students' interest in TLE exploratory courses with respect to organizing class materials. The grand mean of 4.35 implied that they strongly agreed.

Table 6. Status of the Grade 7 Students’ Interest in Terms of Studying with Group or Partner

Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
<i>In terms of studying with group or partner, I...</i>			
1. do not mind asking help from a classmate when I am confused with the tasks	4.36	0.63	Strongly Agree
2. am willing to help others complete their outputs	4.39	0.63	Strongly Agree
3. feel happy when we work in groups whether physically or virtually	4.36	0.64	Strongly Agree
4. have a regular group of friends with whom I work on learning tasks	4.33	0.64	Strongly Agree
5. am more confident in what I do when working with a partner or a team.	4.38	0.61	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.36		Strongly Agree
Interpretation		Very High	

Table 6 exhibited the status of the seventh-grade students’ interest in TLE exploratory courses with respect to studying with group or partner. The grand mean of 4.36 implied that they strongly agreed and have very high level of interest in working with group or partner.

Table 7. Status of the Grade 7 Students’ Interest in Terms of Studying with Eliminating Distractions

Statement	Mean	SD	Remarks
<i>In terms of studying with eliminating distractions, I...</i>			
1. have a study space at home where I could concentrate with my lessons in TLE	4.38	0.62	Strongly Agree
2. make sure that unnecessary mobile apps are off when working on my TLE activities	4.41	0.63	Strongly Agree
3. make sure that the surrounding is silent during kumustahan in TLE	4.30	0.66	Strongly Agree
4. finish all household chores before working on my TLE activitie	4.38	0.61	Strongly Agree
5. clear my mind from all worries when doing TLE stuff	4.42	0.62	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.38		Strongly Agree
Interpretation		Very High	

Table 7 exhibited the status of the seventh-grade students’ interest in TLE exploratory courses with respect to studying with eliminating distractions. The grand mean of 4.38 implied that they strongly agreed and have very high level of interest in eliminating distractions.

Findings and Conclusions

Results of the study showed that the composition of the respondents is almost evenly participated by male and female. It was also discovered that a vast majority of the respondents’ parents were supportive of their gender preferences. The data also indicted that majority of them were at the average or can manage socio-economic status.

The findings also showed that the teacher has very high level of gender sensitivity in terms of academic support, emotional support, and socio-relational support. Similarly, data on the status of the Grade 7 students' interest in TLE exploratory courses indicated very high results.

Study further found that the profile of the seventh-grade students in terms of gender, parental support and socio-economic status conveyed no *significant* relationship with their interest in TLE exploratory courses in terms of scheduling study time, organizing class materials, studying with group or partner and eliminating distractions. These meant further that the profile of the respondents bears no relationship with their interest in learning TLE exploratory courses. The respondents' enthusiasm to learn is not associated with their gender, parental support and socio-economic status.

Finally, it was found that the teacher's gender sensitivity in terms of academic support and emotional support had no *significant* relationship to the status of students' interest in TLE exploratory in terms scheduling study time, organizing class materials, studying with group or partner and eliminating distractions.

On the other hand, the results for the teacher's gender sensitivity in terms of socio-relational support and the status of their interest in TLE exploratory courses with regards to studying with group or partner and eliminating distractions showed significant relationship.

After thorough analyses of the gathered and treated data, the researcher arrived at the following conclusions.

The null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the profile of the seventh-grade students in terms of gender, parental support and socio-economic status and the status of their interest in TLE exploratory courses with regards to scheduling study time, organizing class materials, studying with group or partner and eliminating distractions was not rejected. It implies that the respondents' enthusiasm to learn is not associated with their gender, parental support and socio-economic status. Similarly, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the teacher's gender sensitivity in terms of academic support, emotional support, and socio-relational support and the status of their interest in TLE exploratory courses with regards to scheduling study time, organizing class materials, studying with group or partner and eliminating distractions was partially rejected. The results for the teacher's gender sensitivity in terms of socio-relational support and the status of their interest in TLE exploratory courses with regards to studying with group or partner and eliminating distractions showed significant relationship. These imply that when teachers increase their level of gender sensitivity in terms of socio-relational support, their students' status of their interest in TLE exploratory courses with regards to studying with group or partner and eliminating distractions also increase.

Recommendations

Considering the findings and conclusions of this investigation, the researcher made the following recommendations.

1. For the teacher to sustain the practice of ensuring gender sensitivity in terms of academic support, emotional support, and socio-relational support. This would promote a sense of safety and security among learners particularly to those who are experiencing fear due to their gender preferences.
2. For the students to motivate themselves in proper scheduling of their study time and organizing their class materials. They are also encouraged to sustain their practice of studying with group or partner via online platform and of eliminating distractions. They may also opt to attend webinars that could help them gain more knowledge on how they could increase their interest in TLE exploratory courses.

3. For school and other officials to promote the inclusion of gender sensitivity in offering TLE exploratory courses. This would help break the notion of gender-based vocations and professions.

4. For future researchers to conduct further studies in the lived experiences of students particularly those who belong to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning (LGBTQQ). This would allow to create a better picture of their deeper thoughts and feelings on their daily experiences.

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