



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Gender-Responsive Pedagogy of Kalanguya MTB-MLE Teachers in Promoting Gender Role Awareness

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Received: Jul 3, 2024

Accepted: Sep 8, 2024

Keywords

Gender-Responsive Education

Gender-Responsive Pedagogy

Gender-Responsive Teaching Methods

Gender Role Awareness

Kalanguya

Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE)

Integrating gender-responsive pedagogy or gender-responsive teaching methods in mother tongue education is crucial in the promotion of gender role awareness as it allows the inclusion of diverse perspectives and experiences within the familiar context of students' native culture and language. This study explored the gender-responsive pedagogy of the elementary teachers handling Kalanguya Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in promoting gender role awareness among their students, including how gender-responsive teaching methods were utilized in support to gender awareness and gender-responsive education. The teachers involved used the Kalanguya language as the mother tongue in their subject instructions at the elementary level of the Department of Education, Tinoc District, Ifugao, Philippines. Data were gathered using interviews subjected to thematic analysis, following a phenomenological approach. It was determined that the gender-responsive pedagogies integrated by the Kalanguya MTB-MLE teachers include facilitating learning through teacher-talk with the aid of technology, collaboration and creative strategies, and learning by doing and vicarious education. These also encompass their use of teaching methods, such as visual materials, question and answer, discussions, collaborative activities, role-playing, differentiated instruction, and applying constructivist approach. With gender-responsive pedagogy, there was an effective incorporation of gender-related content and teaching practices that resonate with students' lived experiences in the Tinoc District. Using mother tongue, the teachers could promote gender role awareness and effectively address and challenge gender-related issues within students' Kalanguya cultural context. This establishes equitable access to educational opportunities for all genders, and tackles gender-related concerns, achieving gender equality among the students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Gender awareness in education is a critical issue that contributes to shaping how individuals perceive and internalize gender roles and related issues. In academic institutions, promoting gender awareness and diverse portrayals of gender helps to challenge gender stereotypes and promote a more inclusive environment (Bando et al., 2024; Canuto & Espique, 2023; Lumidao et al., 2024). Teaching methods (Canuto & Espique, 2023) and educational resources (United States Agency for International Development [USAID], 2018) often reflect and reinforce societal norms and biases, influencing students' understanding of gender and its implications to the society. Educators and policymakers can better understand the impact on students' dynamics by examining how genders are represented, whether through stereotypical roles or diverse and equitable portrayals. Addressing

these issues in education is essential for fostering a more inclusive and equitable learning environment that supports the development of all students, regardless of gender (USAID, 2018).

Gender-responsive pedagogy, synonymous with gender-responsive teaching methods (USAID, 2018), is one of the most effective means to promote gender role awareness in schools (Canuto & Espique, 2023; Skovgaard & Chapin, 2021; USAID, 2018). It embraces an educational approach that actively acknowledges and addresses students' diverse needs, experiences, and perspectives of all genders to promote equitable learning environments. It involves integrating gender considerations into teaching practices, curricula, and classroom dynamics to challenge stereotypes, reduce biases, and support the academic and personal growth of every student, regardless of gender identity (Canuto & Espique, 2023; Mukagiahana et al., 2024; Skovgaard & Chapin, 2021; USAID, 2018), and thus, all male and female students will benefit significantly (Chapin, 2020; Skovgaard & Chapin, 2021). By fostering an inclusive and respectful atmosphere, gender-responsive pedagogy reflects and enhances teaching methods, educational resources, and student engagement and achievement while preparing them to navigate and contribute to a diverse society, regardless of their gender. Considering this, the terms gender-responsive teaching methods and gender-responsive pedagogy will be used interchangeably in this study.

Sex and gender are two common and important terms that are interchangeably used. Cameron and Kulick (2003) explained the relationship existing between the terms, stating that gender is heavily anchored on sex as manifested via the use of the term "sexuality", however, Wardhaugh (2006) admitted that using "gender" seems to be the current trend. To draw a boundary, sex is described as biologically determined in contrast to gender, which is a social construct (Peralta et al., 2019; Wardhaugh, 2006). Attached to the discussion of gender is the topic of gender roles, which was admitted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2017) as lacking of universal definition simply because a deemed male role in one group may be considered as a female role in another group, and vice versa. Drawing from the cited definitions of gender, it could be concluded that gender roles encompass the responsibilities of women and men shaped by a particular cultural perspective observed in a certain society. As Miville (2013) purported, gender roles are the behaviors that men and women enact congruent with the socially constructed ideals of masculinity and femininity. The possibility of having multiple definitions for gender roles could not be denied, but the definition cited will be considered in the context of the current undertaking.

In the Philippines, academic institutions are progressively mitigating gender-related issues (Bando et al., 2024; Canuto & Espique, 2023; Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2015; Department of Education [DepEd], 2017; Lumidao et al., 2024; Philippine Commission on Women [PCW], 2024a, 2024b). For instance, the nation has been actively involved in conducting Gender and Development (GAD) activities and programs that aim to challenge the validity of traditional gender roles given to men and women, work to alter society's economic, political, and social systems, and promote gender equality as a key concept to guide decisions connected to development (PCW, 2024a). In relation, DepEd implements its Gender-Responsive Basic Education (GRBE) Policy, establishing equitable access to educational opportunities for all genders and tackling gender-related concerns, therefore, achieving gender equality among the students (DepEd, 2017). Similarly, CHED encouraged the conduct of gender-related studies among Higher Education and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (CHED, 2015). Such mandates align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Global Goals established by the United Nations (UN) in 2015. It is primarily aligned with SDG 5: Gender Equality, aiming to achieve genuine and enduring gender equality for women and girls in all aspects of life (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2024).

In the Philippine K to 12 Curriculum, DepEd acknowledges the use of the mother tongue in language education in the lower elementary levels through the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education or MTB-MLE (DepEd, 2011, 2012, 2016). When the mother tongue is integrated with gender-responsive pedagogy, it creates a more inclusive and equitable educational environment by acknowledging both linguistic and gender diversity (Benson, 2005). This combined approach ensures that all students, regardless of gender or language background, have access to an affirming and an equitable learning experience. In Tinoc District, DepEd Division of Ifugao, the *Kalanguya*

language is adopted as a mother tongue. The term *Kalanguya* refers to both the language and the people or speakers of the language (Albano et al., 2015; Balangcod, 2010; Balangcod & Balangcod, 2011). It is observed that the Kalanguya mother tongue, integrated with gender-responsive pedagogy, not only improves comprehension and engagement, but also allows the incorporation of gender-sensitive content and teaching practices that resonate the students' lived experiences in the Tinoc District. By using their mother tongue, the teachers can promote gender role awareness and effectively address and challenge gender biases and stereotypes within the Kalanguya cultural context of the students, thereby supporting their unique gender identities, and promoting a more nuanced and respectful approach to gender issues.

1.1. Research gap

Though it is observed that the use of Kalanguya mother tongue and gender-responsive pedagogy enhances students' ability to engage with gender issues in a culturally relevant and personally meaningful way, an exploration of teachers' employment of teaching methods to promote gender role awareness in Tinoc District remains lacking. Exploring teachers' teaching methods helps identify how culturally and linguistically relevant strategies can effectively challenge and reshape students' perceptions of gender roles. By examining these methods, researchers and educators can understand how instruction in a student's native language can address and deconstruct gender stereotypes within a familiar cultural context, leading to more meaningful and impactful learning experiences. This exploration can reveal how linguistic and cultural nuances affect the delivery of gender-sensitive content and how tailored teaching approaches can foster greater gender equity and awareness. It helps develop best practices that enhance gender responsiveness in education, while respecting and leveraging the linguistic diversity of students.

1.2. Research aims and research questions

The study aimed to examine the gender-responsive pedagogy implemented by the elementary teachers handling Kalanguya language education in promoting gender role awareness among their students. It also aimed to determine how these gender-responsive teaching methods were utilized by the teachers. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What gender-responsive teaching methods are implemented by the elementary teachers handling Kalanguya Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) to promote students' gender role awareness?
2. How do the teachers utilize these gender-responsive teaching methods?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Gender role awareness in education

The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) in 2006 states that gender roles are generally learned at an early age where girls are usually taught to embody modesty, submissiveness, and nurturing nature, in contrast to boys who are molded to show assertiveness and some leadership capabilities, a concept parallel with the idea postulated by Peralta et al. (2019) which maintained that Filipino girls are expected to possess the qualities of gentleness, care, and affection, while boys are supposed to exemplify strength, assertiveness, and even some sort of roughness. Accordingly, these expectations influence the choices of females and males in their field of study, and the type of employment they seek (NCRFW, 2006; Peralta et al., 2019), and thus, the roles they will be performing.

As such, the significance of raising gender awareness starting at the nursery level is advocated (Wingrave, 2018). Some studies on gender role representation in the elementary levels reveal under-representation of females, gender bias, and gender stereotyping in different areas including gender roles (Gouvias & Alexopoulos, 2018; Filipović, 2018; Law & Chan, 2004; Lee, 2014a, 2014b; Ullah & Skelton, 2013). In relation, a lack of awareness among early childhood educators and elementary

teachers on the existence of gender patterns is likewise observed (Filipović, 2018; Gouvias & Alexopoulos, 2018). Such findings once more intensify the call for the heightening of gender awareness as a must in all education levels (Bando et al., 2024; Canuto & Espique, 2023; Lumidao et al., 2024).

2.2. Teaching pedagogies to promote gender role awareness

In reflection of the DepEd's GRBE Policy, Canuto and Espique (2023) determined several teaching approaches, methodologies, and strategies used by some teachers in promoting gender awareness and equality in their classrooms. These includes the use of assessments, gender-fair language, and active participation of students to gender-related school activities. The teachers also observed gender awareness in using collaborative activities, such as group works, projects, reporting, and sharing. With these teaching methods, it was noted that the students developed higher self-confidence. In addition, there was an observed gender equality constructs in the teachers' classrooms.

The use of educational resources is also integrated in gender-responsive pedagogy. Educational material, commonly and locally referred to as instructional material (IM), is integral among teachers and beneficial to students (Canuto, 2023; Fabillar et al., 2024; Libiado & Canuto, 2023). The contents of educational materials immensely influence students' perception of themselves, other members of the community (Ndura, 2004), and society as a whole (Cho & Park, 2016; Ndura, 2004). Selecting, designing, and developing educational resources encompasses preciseness and reliability (Ildefonso & Lumidao, 2022), and embodies the teachers' efficiency and preparedness in supporting students' learning experiences (Canuto, Choycawen, et al., 2024). In this sense, educational material that reflect diverse gender perspectives can promote gender equality and challenge traditional roles, affecting students' perceptions of gender roles. When educational materials depict a range of gender roles in a balanced and respectful manner, students are encouraged to see beyond traditional stereotypes, and thus, embrace and promote inclusivity and equality.

2.3. Kalanguya language as mother tongue and medium of instruction

Connell (2013) recognized the significance of language as an aspect of gender. Several studies show that the use of gendered languages leads to a gendered division of household work (Hicks et al., 2014), and a gender gap in the educational attainment of the individuals involved (Davis & Reynolds, 2018). Banking on Whorf's (1965) theory of linguistic relativity, it emphasizes that using gendered language may result in a higher tendency to highlight gender distinctions in the mind of the speaker, leading to more pronounced gender roles, resulting in greater gender disparities (Davis & Reynolds, 2018).

The DepEd highly supports academic endeavors in language education, specifically on medium of instruction (MOI) and MTB-MLE (DepEd, 2011, 2012, 2016). The focus on MTB-MLE supports UNESCO's efforts in encouraging its member-states to adapt and implement Mother-tongue Education (MTE), initiated via the publication of *The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education* in 1953. It is also strengthened by the 1996 Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, which accentuates the right to use one's language, create harmonious relations with one's language community, and freedom and opportunity to use one's language in any media platform (Olaoye, 2013). Together with the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it recognizes the education of indigenous groups in their native tongue (Renganathan & Kral, 2018).

As MTE became more popular, longitudinal experiments were carried out across the globe to test its effectiveness (Llaneta, 2010; Walter & Decker, 2011). In the Philippines, Walter and Decker's (2011) findings became instrumental in the country's adoption of MTB-MLE. It is a key component of the newly implemented basic education program, the K to 12 Curriculum, that took effect through RA 10533, also known as The Enhanced Education Act of 2013. Section 4 of RA No. 10533 articulates, "For kindergarten and the first three (3) years of elementary education, instruction, teaching materials and assessment shall be in the regional or native language of the students..." stating further

that "...mother language or first Language (L1) refers to language or languages first learned by a child, which he/she identifies with, is identified as a native language user of by others, which he/she knows best, or uses most..." In addition to being used as the MOI, mother tongue is likewise treated as a separate learning area from Kindergarten to Grade 3 (Official Gazette, 2013).

In the Tinoc District, the Kalanguya language, was adopted as the mother tongue to be used as its MOI and integrated in its MTB-MLE. Kalanguya is one of the native languages spoken in the province of Ifugao in addition to Tawali and Ayangan. As a language, Kalanguya is spoken by a hundred thousand individuals as of 2010 (Simons & Fennig, 2018), and the figure continues to increase as evidenced by its level five language status, considered to be in the developing stage.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design

This study used a qualitative approach to explore the gender-responsive pedagogy employed by the elementary teachers involved in the Kalanguya MTB-MLE. It used descriptive phenomenology to explore and describe the teachers' lived experiences (Christensen et al., 2017), and further understand their experiences' aspects (Matua & Van Der Wal, 2015). A semi-structured interview was used to collect data, ensuring that it encompasses the teachers' knowledge and experiences (Magnusson & Marecek, 2015) in promoting gender role awareness in their classes. The study was conducted from August 2022 to June 2023.

3.2. Participants

There were 24 elementary teacher participants involved in this study. The teachers came from the 16 elementary schools in DepEd, Tinoc District, Ifugao, Philippines. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants, identifying and selecting individuals or groups who are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with the phenomenon. The low student population and the number of schools in the district reflected the number of teacher participants. The teachers, fluent in the Kalanguya language, were teaching in the Kindergarten up to the Grade 3 Levels. They were specifically selected for their knowledge and first-hand experience along Kalanguya MTE-MLE. They were involved in teaching using the Kalanguya educational materials, using Kalanguya as a language of instruction, and teaching Kalanguya as a subject, reflecting the Tinoc Districts' MTB-MLE.

3.3. Procedure

The researchers proposed the study and sought approval from the ethics committee board of their affiliated institutions. Afterward, they asked for permission from the concerned offices relevant to the study's conduct. A letter was addressed to the DepEd Officials and School Principals/Heads seeking permission for the data gathering. With the approval, schedules were made for when the researchers could visit the different schools. A consent form was handed to all the teacher participants for their interview. Every detail of the research was personally discussed with the participants before the interview to ensure that they had a sufficient understanding of what the research was all about. The participants were asked to consent to the use of recording materials during the interview. Although one of the researchers is of Kalanguya ethnic descent, the researcher belongs to the Kalanguya group in Benguet, Philippines, not in Tinoc, Ifugao, Phillipines. As such, to ensure the correctness of the analysis, the aid of a native interpreter was sought. The interview with the teachers lasted from approximately 45 minutes to more than an hour. After the interviews were transcribed, thematization, coding, and category construction followed through. Interpretation, discussion, and presentation of the findings concluded the study.

3.4. Data analysis and management

All teacher participants were randomly arranged and represented through letter and number codes, that is from P1 to P24. The data that were gathered during the interview were transcribed. After

transcribing all the responses of the teacher participants, the transcribed data underwent analysis. Thematization, coding, and category construction were observed. The data collected from the interviews were subjected to cool and warm analysis. The cool analysis consists of identifying the significant statements from the teachers. The significant statements were used as the basis for the warm analysis stage. The emerging concepts were arranged logically, and the themes and categories were then identified.

3.5. Ethical consideration

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. The teacher participants were asked to consent their participation in the study. Likewise, they were informed that participation in the study must be voluntary, and hence, their decision to participate or not was respected. Further, they were assured that confidentiality and anonymity would be observed to protect their privacy on their shared insights, observations, and judgments.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The interviews with the teacher participants led to the emergence of three major themes of gender-responsive teaching methods used by teachers to raise gender role awareness among their students. These are: (a) Facilitating learning through the 3T Strategy (Teacher-talk with the Aid of Technology); (b) Facilitating learning through collaboration and creative strategies; and (c) Facilitating learning by doing and through vicarious education.

4.1. Facilitating learning through 3T Strategy: Teacher-talk with the aid of technology

4.1.1. Visual materials

In the current endeavor, it was revealed that using visual and audio-visual materials was a favored method. The visuals were usually pictures from the Big Books and small books that the teachers were using, plus video clips and slide presentations that trigger discussions on gender due to the gender-related matters that they contain. For instance,

P6 said: "I will show them the picture and then the pupils will tell what is seen in the picture. Usually, pictures are about those observed in our community like harvesting."

Another participant shared, P21: "...and I will tell them, these are farmers composed of males and females and they are all harvesting carrots in the garden. This shows that the roles of males can be accomplished by females. Then I will relate it with the household chores by asking them, 'when you reach home and you see piles of unwashed dishes, who should do that? If you're a male, do you have to wait for your mother or sister to wash the dishes?' and they would answer, 'I will be the one to wash the dishes'. So, from there, I will tell them that they are correct because washing of dishes can be done by males or females."

The use of visuals during discussion reinforces roles observed at home and in the community, as claimed by P6 and P21. The answer of P21 denotes the effectiveness of visual materials in furthering discussions of different gender roles, especially those seen in the community and in the students' dwellings, hence, very relatable with the students. On the other hand, the succeeding statement supports the idea postulated by Wingrave (2018) on the need to strengthen gender awareness at the elementary level. P19 raised the possible occurrence of bullying due to gender preferences, which could be combated by allowing students to watch related videos.

P19: "The truth is, for our first grading, the topics are connected with gender roles. For example, knowing about myself, my family, and others, and for a new teacher like me, what I do is to let my pupils view video clips, like those that contain issues on bullying."

Furthermore, the interviews with the participants disclose that visual materials such as big books, small books, and other IMs used during discussions help preserve positive norms of being a man and a woman in the Kalanguya community. For example,

P2 said: *"Through pictures, we tell our pupils the good deeds of females so that they will follow. Same is through with the males, we use pictures, role playing or storytelling to inculcate what males are supposed to do."*

P2 accentuates the pivotal role of visuals in instilling good acts among children, specifically, those done by older family members, both females and males, who are projected as models for the young ones. Moreover,

P9 supposed: *"Yes, in the story book, for instance, for an image of a mother working, I tell the students that the picture shows that despite experiencing difficulties, she remains enduring."*

The statement of P9 divulges the impressive use of visual materials in bringing out positive female characteristics such as patience, industry, and responsibility, and the perceived inherent nature of being loving and caring, which inspire them to accomplish diverse roles. These are implicitly embedded in the Big Books which reflects the local study by Canuto, Lumidao, et al. (2024) who identified the effective use of Big Books in language education among elementary students.

In general, the teachers' statements denote that the visual materials used in their discussions efficaciously bring out the shared efforts of females and males in accomplishing similar roles. This scenario manifests that educational materials are instrumental in perpetuating norms and standards observed in students' immediate community, as given by Gebregeorgis (2016, 2017), and the various societal ideologies and practices by Canale (2016). Further, the aforementioned discussion evidenced the significance of visual materials in the teaching-learning process, such as in aiding the understanding and retentiveness of lessons as implied by Corpuz and Salandanan (2003, 2015), as well as in the enhancement of critical skills of young students according to Stan (2015).

4.1.2. Question and answer

Question and Answer (Q&A) is closely linked with discussion alongside the use of visual materials as a means to elicit responses from students, and effectively relate gender discussions. For example, in the following statement of P21, which was also cited earlier, thought-provoking questions were asked:

P21: *"...and I will tell them, these are farmers composed of males and females and they are all harvesting carrots in the garden. This shows that the roles of males can be accomplished by females. Then I will relate it with the household chores by asking them, 'when you reach home and you see piles of unwashed dishes, who should do that? If you're a male, do you have to wait for your mother or sister to wash the dishes?' and they would answer, 'I will be the one to wash the dishes'. So, from there, I will tell them that they are correct because washing of dishes can be done by males or females."*

The questions helped the young students understand and realize that household chores are for both females and males. This proves the essential function of asking questions as a method where the teacher is a facilitator who helps students construct meaning by asking appropriate questions, as indicated by Mangram et al. (2015). Further, Q&A is also viewed as useful in gauging and aiding understanding, establishing the accuracy of information, enhancing the creative nature of students, assessing comprehension, and motivating students to actively participate in class, as described by Corpuz and Salandanan (2003) and Serrano and Paez (2015).

In connection, the statements of the following participants show that Q&A and storytelling are inseparable in reinforcing gender-role learning.

P11 supposed: *“Q & A is done after telling stories.”*

Further, another participant said, P20: *“Usually, Q & A is used after telling a story. For example, I would ask, ‘Are you helping in the accomplishment of household chores at home?’ ‘Are you helping your parents in cleaning your house?’ Those are some of the questions I asked; it is about household chores if the story is about such.”*

P20 showed the effective practice of asking questions to beef up the idea of sharing household chores. More importantly, the statements mentioned by P11 and P20 reassert the didactic nature of literature as an effective tool in the development of the personality of young students and in the whole teaching-learning activity, as Stan (2015) implied.

4.1.3. Discussions

Discussion remains the most commonly used method, along with visuals and Q&A, in satisfying the students' queries regarding the existence of members of other gender identities or preferences as they observed in their immediate community and through multi-media platforms. Similar to the concept of gender arbitrariness, most teachers agreed that such topics are not thoroughly discussed in the lower elementary level, and is only tackled when brought about by the students. The teachers, however, acknowledged the existence of other gender identities in the early stage of formal education.

P11 shared: *“Even an innocent first grader, for instance, he already considers himself as a female.”*

In addition, P14 said: *“We have the gay and lesbian now, right? The children seem excited about this, one of them even said, ‘I am also like that...’. They are already stating the truth about their gender preferences.”*

Furthermore, another participant supposed, P16: *“For me, when I observe in the classroom that there is someone doing like that (sways hands in a very feminine way), I discouraged him. I said ‘you are a boy, and you are a girl, so you should act as a boy and you should act as a girl. No acting like that’ (sways her hands again in a feminine manner) because there is nothing like that in our place. It will be up to them when they grow older, that will be their decision but while they are young, I tell them to always remember that they are a boy and a girl.”*

Serrano and Paez (2015) recognize the centrality of discussion towards the enhancement of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), especially the use of teacher-guided discussion where the teacher uses questions in order to draw responses from the students, thus leading to the development of higher cognitive skills.

4.2. Facilitating learning through collaboration and creative strategies

4.2.1. Collaborative activities

Different ways were observed to foster interaction and collaboration among young students. Corpuz and Salandanan (2015) view collaboration as something that entails students' effort to work together towards a common goal, such as when students work with a pair, or group members. Indeed, the present study found that assigning students to work in groups allows collaboration. For example,

P3 said: *“Group work is one. In grouping the students, of course, it should be a mixture of females and males. You do not ask the males to be in one group, you mix them with females.”*

P13 likewise shared: *“Assigning of cleaners is done by groupings, and each group is comprised of females and males. All of them will clean the windows so that even the males, they will learn how to tidy the house.”*

Further, the following participants said, P14: *“In giving activities, I usually mix males and females together. We do not say, ‘Girls, this will be your task’. Group activities are usually composed of females and males, like there are three girls and three boys as cleaners in a day.”*

P6: *“I usually apply cooperative learning, for example, in the different group activities. In doing the group activities, I made sure that each group has males and females as I always emphasize the concept of ‘kung anong kaya ni misis, kaya din ni mister’ (what the wife can, the husband can do, too). So I let everyone do the sweeping, fetching of water, and fixing their chairs. I let them wipe the tables, too, as this is not a job for the females alone. Also, after eating, since we have supervised recess, I really let them clean their areas.”*

The statements above show that participants disagree with grouping students based on sex and believe that group works are utilized to conclude different academic and non-academic tasks. Group work is, therefore, instrumental in accomplishing tasks during class hours and after, such as maintaining the cleanliness and orderliness of the physical environment. These efforts help instill equality among very young students since the practices mentioned earlier are observed as early as among kindergarteners. Moreover, females and males are made to sit together instead of following a setup where students of the same sex are seated together. For instance,

P2 said: *“Females and males are mixed together, so for their seating arrangement, females and males are seated together to avoid being very noisy. If females are seated together, they keep talking. Also, peer teaching is observed; an advanced male can teach a female who is academically behind and vice versa.”*

P9 shared: *“Actually, during our seminars, we are always told to promote the appreciation of different gender roles. And we execute it. Hence, we do not say, ‘boys are to seat in this column and girls will seat in this column.’ Likewise, in doing group activities, we usually mix males and females together.”*

Favoring or alienating any gender identity or preference is discouraged in support of the directive of DepEd officials to promote gender awareness in academic institutions, as noted in the above statement of P9. In like manner, P2 suggests allowing females and males to sit together to maintain discipline in the classroom. More importantly, the same participant also mentioned the use of peer teaching, another method that promotes the active involvement of students based on Corpuz and Salandanan (2003) and Mangram et al. (2015), in order to help academically challenged students acquire knowledge and skills through the assistance of their friends.

4.2.2. Role-playing

Role-playing is another method that teachers use which involves interaction and collaboration among students. Indeed, Houston (1995) said that strategies that encourage the involvement of students include the observance of role-playing, as cited in Mangram et al. (2015). In the current undertaking, the responses of the participants proved the popularity of role-playing in highlighting the roles performed by females and males, as best elaborated in the following selected statements:

P6 stated: *“For example, the theme there is about family, for the roles of the family, I will let the pupils role play what the father does in the family and what the mother does also in the family, and what do the members of the family do in the family. Mostly role playing. Mostly, the children will portray that they are going to the garden and dig soil. During harvest time, they will also carry the vegetables that they harvested.”*

Additionally, P7 said: *“I usually use role playing and storytelling. For instance, role playing is used to portray household chores like washing of dishes. This should not only be accomplished by females; males should be taught how to do it, too.”*

Furthermore, P24 shared: *“It can be through drama or role playing, then you relate it with the reality. For example, the bayanihan or ubbô. This can be done by both males and females.”*

The foregoing statements recognize the function of role-playing to evince various household and economic-related roles such as gardening and farming, including traditions such as the ubbô, the cultural practice of the Kalanguya people which entails collective efforts in order to accomplish farm or garden works. Obviously, role-playing is seen by the participants as an effective means of bringing real-life scenarios into the classroom setting, confirming the significance of role-playing and simulations as alternatives to teaching lessons that cannot be satisfied via authentic problem solving and projects, according to Corpuz and Salandanan (2003).

To emphasize the connection of lessons portrayed in the role plays, a follow-through discussion is usually done where the teachers emphasize the sharing of work among family and community members, thereby renouncing the exclusiveness of roles between the two sexes. In connection, storytelling is closely linked with role-playing as the former necessitates the use of the latter, especially on the part of the teacher, who is the storyteller. This is exemplified in the statement of

P9: *“As a teacher, you can also act it out; show it to the students. Especially in storytelling, we are like actors and actresses, when you say, ‘the character runs’, then you have to perform the action, as well.”*

P9 stresses the essentiality of teacher role-playing in effectively delivering a story. Storytelling is an old-school method for educating people, and is very potent in teaching literature, as Li and Hew (2017) described, and in connecting educational content with the students' personal experiences, as Lisenbee and Ford (2018) indicated. In connection, Malita and Martin (2010) found the positive outcomes of using storytelling in the improvement of one's comprehension, which is critical in role-playing.

4.2.3. Differentiated instruction: Drawings, games, and songs

The statement shared by P23 below actuates differentiated strategies in stressing gender roles where two groups perform activities differently, but with the same topic and objective. In this particular situation, P23 allowed the use of role-playing by one group and drawing or illustration by another group.

P23: *“The other group will do a role play, and another group will draw. So, both in the role play and, in the drawing, the roles of the mother like doing the laundry before going to the garden, the role of the brothers like gathering of firewood, and the roles of the sisters will be portrayed.”*

Relative to the use of differentiated instruction, P12 acknowledged its importance in teaching diverse subject matters; thus, it was employed by P23 in elaborating the various roles of females and males.

P12 shared: *“Here in the lower grades, we need to use differentiated instruction, because the students have different levels like basic, average, and advanced.”*

Games and songs were another differentiated instruction used by the teachers to further gender-role discussions.

For example, P8 supposed: *“In imparting the gender roles, sometimes I use games, through pictures, through stories, and other activities.”*

Likewise, P15 said: *"...through songs. You teach the song then explain the meaning."*

P8 encourages the use of games to inculcate gender-related topics aside from utilizing visuals, stories, and role playing. Indeed, several studies on using games in the educational setting yielded positive results. For instance, the works of Selvi and Cosan (2018) and Turgut and Temur (2017) found the effectiveness of employing educational games and also in helping students who have low comprehension to understand the lesson better, according to Ke (2008).

As for the use of songs, P15 made it clear that the songs being referred to contain gender-related issues, which are further explained to the students. Using songs support Corpuz and Salandanan (2015) who agreed that a higher retentivity of lessons is possible through songs, jingles, and raps.

4.3. Facilitating learning by doing and through vicarious education

Learning by doing upholds the principle of constructivist teaching as it ensures the connection of lessons with the learners' lives by ensuring learner involvement in the teaching-learning process (Corpuz & Salandanan, 2003, 2015). Constructivism allows the conception of knowledge by effectively facilitating students' personal experiences (Chrenka 2001, as cited in Mangram et al., 2015). The statements that follow are proofs that sharing of personal experiences of students is highly encouraged as a means of supporting the discussion of gender-related matters. For instance,

P13 noted: *"They are telling the truth about what is happening in their homes, whatever they see from their parents or siblings, even the expressions they hear at home, they spill it out; they say the truth."*

In like manner, another participant remarked, P17: *"Using Question and Answer, I would ask, 'What are you doing at home?' And they will answer, 'We do whatever our mothers tell us to do. We wash the dishes, we clean our house, we look after our younger brothers and sisters, and we wash clothes.' So you see?"*

The preceding statements show that expressing personal experiences and observations among students requires asking a series of questions from the teachers, which support the insights given earlier by P20 and P21 on the use of Q&A in the facilitation of gender-related topics. Furthermore, the participants' responses underscore the undeniable value of inquiry or asking questions to intensify learning, based on Corpuz and Salandanan (2003, 2015), Mangram et al. (2015), and Serrano and Paez (2015). Meanwhile, one of the participants shared about exposing students to events happening in their immediate community.

P22: *"Relative to culture, we can bring the pupils to a wake, for instance, and it is there where they learn what to do and how to behave during such unfortunate occasion. That they are not going there simply to be fed, instead, they are there to help and sympathize. Last year, one of our students lost a love one so the classmates were asked to give even a peso each, then we all went to comfort the bereaved family. Through doing such, they will learn the practice in the community and of course, the value of sympathy."*

Participant 22 stresses the need to allow learners to observe in a natural setting in order to instill learning, which in the case of the above-stated situation, is the teaching of the social roles when attending events such as during the wake of a dead person. Moreover, values such as sympathy, empathy, cooperation, and helpfulness in times of difficult situations are likewise highlighted which are important in the personal development of the learners. This method is one of the identified four main pillars of learning, based on Bilbao et al.'s (2015) work. Additionally, it reinforces the adage that says, "What we have to learn to do, we learn by doing," a principle which was also recognized in the previous statements of some teachers through the use of group work in order for students to accomplish tasks, either academically-related or extra-curricular

The concept of learning by doing is likewise furthered by

P2 who said: *“In our school garden, we all go out and weed, both females and males, weeding is not limited to the males or the females only.”*

Further, one of the participants remarked, P4: *“Mostly, as of now, females and males are doing the same tasks. So, for me, I say, ‘these two boys will sweep this row and the girls will sweep the other row. All will scrub their assigned areas’. And they can do, both males and females can do.”*

In addition to applying the principle of allowing students to learn by performing the activities, the earlier statements emphasized the equal treatment of students regardless of sex and gender identity. For instance, all class members are encouraged to do agriculturally related tasks, as cited by P2. This situation supports the premise that gender roles remain to be strongly influenced by family, educators, and social media according to Atli (2017), and one's culture according to Gebregeorgis (2017) and UNESCO (2000, 2017). It also includes the conventions observed in the society, as established by Peralta et al. (2019), Wardhaugh (2006), and UNESCO (2000, 2017). Indeed, in an agricultural area like the study site, the accomplishment of agriculture-related tasks is expected to have been instilled at home and reinforced in school.

Culturally related activities are likewise strengthened in academic environments, as evidenced in the succeeding statements,

P3: *“When we teach gong beating, because this was believed to be a male role, we say, ‘females, you can also beat the gongs’. They would try and they can do it. They do not say, ‘that is the task of the males’, no, they do not do that. And we observed that they are actually capable of doing it.”*

In like manner, P4 shared: *“Men, but now, we are organizing a women organization because they also want to learn how to beat the gong.”*

The statements of P3 and P4 prove that gong beating, then perceived as a male role, is now taught among all children. P4 emphasizes the need for every individual to be adept with their culture, which beating the gong for cultural dancing is one. Furthermore, the second statement of P3 stresses the role of every individual in the preservation of the environment,

P3: *“Everyone is likewise asked to plant a tree as a requirement, and no one is reacting negatively against it. Even a very small kid is going to do it, the mother will bring the seedling to be planted. Also, the children are given the same project.”*

Clearly, providing care for the environment is a common role of every individual, females and males alike. Also, this particular role of protecting the environment is introduced at a young age, similar to the other roles discussed previously. Moreover, the inclusion of environmental responsibilities is an indication of promoting holistic education as learners are not confined to academic activities, but to extra-curricular training, as well, such as the development of cultural sensitivity and environmental awareness, which are attained through allowing learners to learn by doing and experiencing related tasks.

5. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

The use of gender-responsive pedagogy in the MTB-MLE plays a pivotal role in advancing gender role awareness. Leveraging the cultural and linguistic relevance of students' native languages can effectively address gender issues directly at an early age. By incorporating gender-sensitive content and fostering open discussions in the mother tongue, students are better equipped to critically engage with and reshape societal gender expectations, leading to a more equitable and informed community. In this study, it was determined that the gender-responsive pedagogies employed by the teachers to promote gender role awareness include facilitating learning through teacher-talk with the aid of technology, facilitating learning through collaboration and creative strategies, and

facilitating learning through learning by doing and vicarious education. These reflect the use of visual materials, question and answer, discussions, collaborative activities, role-playing, differentiated instruction, and applying constructivism and learning by doing.

The integration of gender-responsive pedagogy in the Kalanguya mother tongue education supports gender equality among all students in Tinoc District. It helped to identify relevant methods that can effectively challenge and reshape students' perceptions of gender roles in the community, leading to more meaningful and impactful learning experiences. This demonstrates how language and culture influence the effectiveness of gender-responsive education and how customized teaching methods can promote gender role awareness. This approach enabled the teachers to tailor their gender-responsive teaching methods to reflect and challenge local gender norms and biases, promoting an understanding of gender awareness and equality within their students' everyday experiences. In effect, it helped in creating a more inclusive and fair learning environment that acknowledges and values all students' gender perceptions.

It must be noted, however, that the study's findings only reflect the context of Tinoc District, with the use of Kalanguya as the mother tongue, and the methods used by the Kalanguya teachers involved in MTB-MLE implementation in the district. The study's findings are limited to the teacher participants involved rather than most teachers. Also, the teachers involved a small population and did not reflect that of the general population. Nonetheless, the researchers recommend continuous and more diversified use of gender-responsive pedagogy among elementary teachers for the exponential promotion of gender-responsive education. Although the study brought about several gender-responsive pedagogies in the particular context, conducting related research involving a more significant number of participants and academic institutions is encouraged.

Acknowledgement: The authors are grateful to all the Kalanguya MTB-MLE elementary teachers in the DepEd Tinoc District, Division of Ifugao, Philippines, who participated in the study.

Authorship contributions: All authors contributed to the conceptualization, review-editing, literature review writing, and the study's conduct. All authors have read and approved the final and publishable version of this research article.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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