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GENDER MAINSTREAMING PLAN FOR GENDER-RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This study sought to develop a gender mainstreaming plan for gender-responsive public schools. Specifically, the extent of gender mainstreaming practices among public schools and their hindering factors were assessed in this research. A descriptive method of research was employed to investigate the posed objectives in this study. Purposive and random sampling techniques were utilized in the selection of the respondents. Guided by the said sampling procedures, 282 school heads participated in the study. Data were collected through survey-questionnaire and computed using the weighted arithmetic mean (WAM). Results indicated that gender perspectives are relatively mainstreamed in the organizational processes of public schools. Specifically, gender perspectives are less mainstreamed into the policies and PPAs but relatively integrated into their support mechanisms and highly evident among people. However, lack of gender analysis and gender mainstreaming plan, as well as insufficient knowledge and training of internal and external clients are highly hindering factors among public schools to implement gender mainstreaming. Based on the results of this study,

a gender mainstreaming plan was developed to serve as a framework among public schools in mainstreaming gender perspectives on their policies, PPAs, and enabling mechanisms.

Keywords

Enabling Mechanisms, Gender Mainstreaming Plan, Gender-Responsive, People, Policies, PPAs

1. Introduction

The promotion of gender equality among men and women is fundamental to achieving the global initiative towards inclusive, equitable and quality basic education. In support of this, gender mainstreaming has been embraced as a strategy towards achieving gender equality where gender perspective is integrated into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures, and spending programs to ensure that women and men can equally contribute to and benefit from the development (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2022; Philippine Commission on Women [PCW], n.d.). This strategy is also considered to improve the quality of public policies, programs, and projects to ensure a more efficient allocation of resources towards having increased well-being for both women and men (Council of Europe, 2021).

However, the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic has amplified and heightened all existing inequalities (United Nations, 2020; Fisher & Ryan, 2021). Education, being one of the sectors that deliver frontline services are not exempted from the impact of the said global pandemic. As a matter of fact, the Philippines is one of the most severely affected countries by COVID-19 which was confronted by a dramatic disruption in the delivery of education (Cho et al., 2021). This scenario poses evidence that the global health crisis has created unprecedented challenges among school leaders (McLeod & Dulsky, 2021).

On that note, the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines continuously seeks to adopt various strategies amidst this global pandemic to integrate the principles of gender quality, gender equity, gender sensitivity, non-discrimination and human rights, in the provision and governance of quality and equitable basic education for all which is supported by the issuance of the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy [DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017] (DepEd, 2017). It is at this argument that the researcher deemed the necessity of investing in the development of gender mainstreaming plans to serve as a framework among public schools in mainstreaming gender perspectives on their policies, enabling mechanisms, PPAs, and people.

1.1. Research Questions

Generally, the study sought to develop a gender mainstreaming plan for gender-responsive public schools. Specifically, the following problems were investigated:

1. What is the extent of gender mainstreaming practices among public schools in terms of the following entry points:
 - a. Policies;
 - b. Programs, projects and activities (PPAs);
 - c. People; and
 - d. Enabling mechanism?
2. What are the hindering factors for implementing gender mainstreaming among public schools?
3. What gender mainstreaming plan can be proposed to increase the gender responsiveness of public schools?

2. Literature Review

Gender equality requires an approach that ensures girls and boys, women and men are not just gaining access to and complete education cycles but are empowered equally in and through education (Education 2030 Agenda in UNESCO, 2021). On this note, education is considered a pathway towards achieving gender equality (Karam, n.d.). Also, the positive effects of education in the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women include improved maternal health, reduced infant mortality and fertility rates, increased prevention against HIV and AIDs, improved wages and jobs for women, produced healthier and empowered women, challenged stereotypes, and protected girls from harmful practices (Jha & Shah, 2015; Global Partnership for education [GPE], 2018).

However, it is still in question how gender equality is being practised and promoted through education (Jha & Shah, 2015). It is further emphasized that for education to fulfil its potential as an essential pathway to a gender-just world, education systems should be gender-responsive by design (United Nations Girls' Education Initiative [UNGEI], 2022). Thus, education systems must act explicitly to eliminate gender bias and discrimination where there is a need to put in place gender-sensitive policies, planning and learning environment (Education 2030, Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action as cited in UNGEI, 2022).

In the realization of the efforts to have a gender-responsive education, the promotion of gender mainstreaming strategy should be an integral part of the policies, planning and programming

of the schools. As explained by the UNESCO and Bangkok Office Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (n.d.), gender mainstreaming is a holistic strategy to ensure that all individuals' concerns and experiences are considered and integrated into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education policies and programs to ensure gender equality. Thus, gender mainstreaming is an action towards gender-responsive policy making, planning and programming. As defined, gender responsiveness is an outcome that reflects an understanding of gender roles and inequalities and encourages equal participation which includes equal and fair distribution of benefits (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2019).

To further elaborate, gender mainstreaming (PCW, n.d.) involves interventions from different stages of development planning processes, from planning to programming, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation which consists of four critical entry points. These entry points include policies, PPAs, people, and enabling mechanisms.

As to policies (PCW, n.d.), it is defined as the official statements and pronouncements issued by an organization to support gender mainstreaming. The International Republican Institute and the Women's Democracy Network (2020) cited that gender-responsive policymaking can address the different needs and priorities of all persons regardless of their sex. It also ensures that all members of a community are valued equally, and the policies become more effective. It is similar to what Lubani and Coello (2015) said that the promotion of gender-responsive policies in Southeast Europe aims to contribute to the effective implementation of commitments to empower women and achieve gender equality.

Another crucial entry point to gender mainstreaming is the people (PCW, n.d.) who are considered as the relevant stakeholders who mainstream gender perspectives. The Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS) serves as one of the key stakeholders who work to catalyze and accelerate gender mainstreaming (PCW, 2020).

Meanwhile, PPAs (PCW, n.d.) are flagship programs or activities and projects that serve as the most practical entry point in the actual implementation of the mandates of an organization. It is emphasized that all activities organized need to be gender-responsive where gender issues should be considered to ensure that gender is integrated from the content and in the organization of the logistics and facilitation (UNESCO & Bangkok Office Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, n.d.). Also, the UNDP (2019) said that activities for a project or a program should be the results of gender analysis.

Lastly, the systems and mechanisms installed in the organization and the funds allocated for GAD activities are considered the enabling mechanisms (PCW, n.d.). In accordance with Republic Act (RA), 7192 and the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD), 1995-2025, the cost of implementing the GAD Plan shall be at least five percent (5%) of the agency's total budget appropriation (General Appropriation Act, 2000 as cited in Commission on Audit, 2022). This is in line with the proposition that the success of any gender mainstreaming efforts depends largely on the resources allocated and the mechanisms which are institutionalized to implement it (PCW, n.d.).

On the other hand, staff awareness and knowledge on gender mainstreaming are considered barriers to its effective implementation (Wambeti, 2016). Also, the Council of Europe (2015) on the study regarding the evaluation of gender mainstreaming in Cooperation, noted that relevance to work is one consideration in practicing gender mainstreaming. It is further revealed that lack of knowledge, training and tools on gender mainstreaming are obstacles to gender mainstreaming implementation. Thus, the development of dedicated structures, clear roles and responsibilities, capacity building of staff and an accountability and reporting system should be made.

Kirima (2019) further identified hindering factors to gender mainstreaming implementation such as inadequate commitment from top-down to the institution, lack of understanding on gender concepts, inadequate training and awareness of people, inadequate resources and socio-cultural factors, and poor system of monitoring and evaluation. This is further supported by the PCW (2019) stating on their budget report that GAD mainstreaming requires competence, skill and dedication similar to a full-time position in the agency.

Moreover, the lack of gender integration in the policy cycle can be linked to the policy translation from the international level, structural policy barriers at the national level, behaviors and corruption, and lack of knowledge and capacity (Howland et al., 2021). Thus, policymakers should also have gender awareness and competence to integrate a gender perspective into all policies and tend to work within gender-blind institutional structures (Roggeband & Verloo in Lombardo & Merggert, 2016). Gender mainstreaming strategy is also influenced by demographic characteristics (Wakwabubi, 2019) such as the position of stakeholders in the school, age, type of school, category of school and their professional qualification. Thus, detailed needs assessment to identify training needs appropriate in improving the implementation of gender mainstreaming in schools should be made. There is also a need for stakeholders such as parents to become familiar with the benefits of having a positive attitude on implementing gender mainstreaming in schools.

Palmén and Schmidt (2019) also showed how governance framework, top-management commitment, bottom-up participation, framing synergies with the other initiatives, strategies for tackling resistance, resources, sustainability of actions, gender competence, experience, and knowledge, contribute to the gender equality interventions in research and innovation. Thus, there must have policy recommendations for gender mainstreaming at post-primary levels to guide the introduction of gender education (Sahni, 2018). The Independent Evaluation Office (2017), on the other hand, recommended aligning the best practices and standards with the policy, developing an action plan to implement gender policy, ensuring the availability of resources in gender mainstreaming, identifying whether the projects are relevant or not, incorporate gender surveys, sex-disaggregated data and gender specialists in designing and preparing projects, conduct gender analysis, and monitoring and evaluation of the gender mainstreaming progress, and provide capacity development and training to capacitate the members in undertaking gender mainstreaming.

In the conduct of this research, the framework shown below guided the researcher in the development of a gender mainstreaming plan to increase the gender responsiveness of public schools.

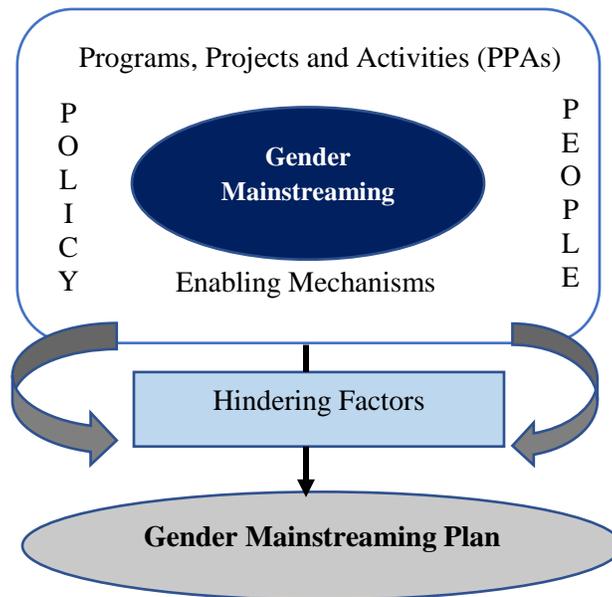


Figure 1: Research Paradigm on Gender Mainstreaming Plan for Gender-Responsive Public Schools
(Source: PCW, 2021; HGDG, 2016)

2.1. Scope and Limitations

Using the descriptive design of research, this study was conducted to develop a gender

mainstreaming plan for gender-responsive public schools in the Schools Division of Quezon Province. Specifically, the study determined the extent of gender mainstreaming practices among public schools in the said Schools Division and the hindering factors for implementing gender mainstreaming. The study was participated by 282 school heads who were chosen through purposive and random sampling techniques.

A self-devised survey questionnaire was employed to collect the data necessary in answering the posed problems. The data were computed using WAM and interpreted using a four-point continuum scale. Due to the existing Philippine Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) community quarantine guidelines to prevent the increasing transmission of COVID-19 in the country, the collection of data was done through an online platform. Hence, this study is limited to certain populations with access to the internet in their respective communities.

3. Methodology

The descriptive design of the research was employed to determine the extent of gender mainstreaming practices among public schools in the Schools Division of Quezon Province in terms of the four critical entry points, and their hindering factors. Samples were calculated using Slovin's formula and were selected using the purposive sampling technique by establishing criteria such as school heads employed in the Schools Division of Quezon Province with at least three (3) years of tenure in the service and with sufficient knowledge on GAD programs. Considering the set criteria, 282 school heads were randomly selected.

A survey questionnaire was devised to collect responses from the samples. The instrument was developed based on the descriptors set in the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines [HGDG] (2016) containing indicators on the extent of gender mainstreaming practices and their hindering factors.

The said instrument was submitted to the panel of experts for face and content validation. Data were computed using WAM and interpreted using a four-point continuum scale.

4. Results and Discussion

The foregoing discussions present the results of this study. Data were presented in textual and tabular form.

4.1. Extent of Gender Mainstreaming Practices Among Public Schools

Table 1: *Extent of Gender Mainstreaming Practices Among Public Schools in Terms of Policies*

No	Indicators	WAM	Verbal Description	Rank
1	Issuance of localized policies that support GAD mandates	1.02	NP	6
2	Development of policies that support the establishment of the following:			
	2.1. Setting up of GFPS or GAD Office	3.67	HP	2
	2.2. Collection and maintenance of sex-disaggregated database;	1.62	NP	4
	2.3. Conduct of organization-wide Gender Audit; and	1.01	NP	7
	2.4. Capacity-building of GFPS	3.99	HP	1
3	Review on the existing policies for consistency with the emerging GAD issues	1.18	NP	5
4	Provision of broad statements of intentions or aspirations to support GAD-related activities	3.37	HP	3
	Average	2.27	LP	

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 = *Highly Practiced (HP)*; 2.51 – 3.25 = *Moderately Practiced (MP)*; 1.76 – 2.50 = *Less Practiced (LP)*; 1.00 – 1.75 = *Not Practiced (NP)*

(Source: HGDG, 2016)

It is depicted in Table 1 that the extent of gender mainstreaming practices among public schools in terms of policies is less practiced (WM=2.27). This suggests that the gender perspectives are less mainstream in the policies of the schools.

The results can be associated with the lack of organization-wide gender audit (WM=1.01); the absence of localized policies that support the GAD mandates (WM=1.02) and consistency with the emerging GAD issues (WM=1.18); and lack of sex-disaggregated database (WM=1.62), respectively.

It is said that mainstreaming gender in the policies remain unpracticed (Kirima, 2019) due to lack of awareness among relevant stakeholders, and inadequate training (Wambeti, 2016; Council of Europe, 2015; Wakwabubi, 2019). Roggeband and Verloo (Lombardo & Merggert, 2016), also noted that policymakers, in general, lack the gender awareness and competence to integrate a gender perspective into all policies and tend to work within gender-blind institutional structures.

Table 2: *Extent of Gender Mainstreaming Practices Among Public Schools in Terms of Programs, Projects and Activities (PPAs)*

No	Indicators	WAM	Verbal Description	Rank
1	Observance of international/ national/ local GAD-related events	3.96	HP	1
2	Conduct Basic GAD Orientation or GST for the school's internal and external clients	3.41	HP	2
3	Conduct consultations with internal and external clients to identify gender issues and corresponding strategies	1.56	NP	3
4	Conduct consultations with PCW and relevant organizations/ individuals on gender mainstreaming	1.26	NP	5
5	Review and revision of existing IEC materials to ensure the use of gender-fair language and images	1.38	NP	4
	Average	2.31	LP	

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 = *Highly Practiced (HP)*; 2.51 – 3.25 = *Moderately Practiced (MP)*; 1.76 – 2.50 = *Less Practiced (LP)*; 1.00 – 1.75 = *Not Practiced (NP)*

(Source: HGDG, 2016)

It is indicated in Table 2 that the extent of gender mainstreaming practices among public schools in terms of PPAs is less practiced (WM=2.31). This shows that the gender perspectives are less mainstream in the PPAs.

The result can be linked to the lack of consultations with the PCW and relevant organizations/ individuals on gender mainstreaming (WM=1.26); failure to conduct review and revision of existing IEC materials to ensure the use of gender-fair language and images (WM=1.38); and lack of consultations with internal and external clients to identify gender issues and corresponding strategies (WM=1.56), respectively.

The results can further be explained by the UNESCO and Bangkok Office Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (n.d.) asserting that all activities organized need to be gender-responsive where gender issues should be considered to ensure that gender is integrated from the content and in the organization of the logistics and facilitation. Also, the UNDP (2019) supported the results claiming that activities for a project or a program should be the results of gender analysis.

Table 3: *Extent of Gender Mainstreaming Practices Among Public Schools in Terms of People*

No	Indicators	WAM	Verbal Description	Rank
1	Designation of people in strategic positions to be members of the GFPS	3.51	HP	5
2	Attendance of GFPS members to appropriate and relevant trainings on GAD	3.63	HP	4
3	Participation of school heads to basic GAD Orientation or GST	3.76	HP	3
4	Involvement of staff members to basic GAD Orientation or GST	3.77	HP	2
5	Conduct of awareness campaign on GAD-related policies and mandates among school head and GFPS members	3.83	HP	1
	Average	3.70	HP	

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 = *Highly Practiced (HP)*; 2.51 – 3.25 = *Moderately Practiced (MP)*; 1.76 – 2.50 = *Less Practiced (LP)*; 1.00 – 1.75 = *Not Practiced (NP)*

(Source: HGDG, 2016)

It is revealed in Table 3 that the extent of gender mainstreaming practices among public schools in terms of people is highly practiced (WM=3.70). This indicates that people are highly regarded as catalysts in the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

The results can be most associated with the conduct of awareness campaigns on GAD-related policies and mandates (WM=3.83); involvement of staff members to basic GAD Orientation or GST (WM=3.77); and participation of school heads to basic GAD Orientation or GST (WM=3.76), respectively.

The findings can further be explained by the Council of Europe (2015) explaining that people tend to practice gender mainstreaming when they find it relevant in their work. Hence, there must have continued support to people to sustain the implementation of gender mainstreaming such as the provision of relevant gender training, tools, and other resources to which they can benefit from and contribute to.

Table 4: *Extent of Gender Mainstreaming Practices Among Public Schools in Terms of Enabling Mechanisms*

No	Indicators	WAM	Verbal Description	Rank
1	Creation/reconstitution of GFPS in accordance with MCW and pertinent policies issued by concerned oversight agencies	3.64	HP	1
2	Initiation of exploratory activities with PCW or other agencies, institutions and/or individuals to facilitate gender mainstreaming	1.91	LP	5
3	Institutionalization of sex-disaggregated database	2.76	MP	3
4	Collection of gender information to enhance M&E system	3.16	MP	2
5	Establishment of other enabling mechanisms to support gender mainstreaming	2.37	LP	4
	Average	2.77	MP	

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 = *Highly Practiced (HP)*; 2.51 – 3.25 = *Moderately Practiced (MP)*; 1.76 – 2.50 = *Less Practiced (LP)*; 1.00 – 1.75 = *Not Practiced (NP)*

(Source: HGDG, 2016)

It is confirmed in Table 4 that the extent of gender mainstreaming practices among public schools in terms of enabling mechanisms is moderately practiced (WM=2.77). This implies that the systems and mechanisms to support gender mainstreaming are already installed in the organization.

The findings can still be linked to the creation/reconstitution of GFPS in accordance with Magna Carta of Women (MCW) and pertinent policies issued by concerned oversight agencies (WM=3.64); the collection of gender information to enhance M&E system (WM=3.16); and the institutionalization of sex-disaggregated database (WM=2.76), respectively.

Therefore, Wambeti (2016) recommended having the capacity building, education, and dissemination strategies, as well as claiming for ownership to ensure sustainable resource mobilization which serves as the enabling mechanisms to implement gender mainstreaming. The Council of Europe (2015) also suggested having an established structure, mechanisms, and tools to ensure the effective practice of gender mainstreaming at the institutional level.

Table 5: *Overall Result on the Extent of Gender Mainstreaming Practices Among Public Schools*

Indicators	WAM	Verbal Description	Rank
Policies	2.27	Less Practiced (LP)	4
Programs, projects and activities (PPAs)	2.31	Less Practiced (LP)	3
People	3.70	Highly Practiced (HP)	1
Enabling mechanisms	2.77	Moderately Practiced (MP)	2
Average	2.76	Moderately Practiced (MP)	

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 = *Highly Practiced (HP)*; 2.51 – 3.25 = *Moderately Practiced (MP)*; 1.76 – 2.50 = *Less Practiced (LP)*; 1.00 – 1.75 = *Not Practiced (NP)*

(Source: HG DG, 2016)

It is depicted in Table 5 that the overall result on the extent of gender mainstreaming practices among public schools is moderately practiced (WM=2.76). This indicates that the gender perspectives are relatively mainstream among public schools.

Considering the entry points to gender mainstreaming, the results reveal that people ranked as the highest (WM=3.70) with a verbal description of highly practiced. This is followed by the enabling mechanisms (WM=2.77) with a verbal description of moderately practiced, PPAs (WM=2.31) with a verbal description of less practiced and polices (WM=2.27) which obtained the lowest rank with a verbal description of less practiced.

The results imply that people are highly regarded in the implementation of gender mainstreaming where there are systems and mechanisms installed already to support such a strategy. Meanwhile, the gender perspectives are less mainstream in the policies and PPAs.

As explained by the UNESCO and Bangkok Office Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (n.d.), gender mainstreaming is a holistic strategy to ensure that all individuals' concerns and experiences are considered and integrated into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education policies and programs to ensure gender equality. Thus, gender mainstreaming should serve as an action towards gender-responsive policy making, planning, and programming.

In connection, gender mainstreaming (PCW, n.d.) involves interventions from different stages of development planning processes, from planning to programming, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation which consists of four critical entry points such as policies, programs and projects, people, and enabling mechanisms. Thus, the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming should consider the said entry points in the implementation process.

4.2. Hindering Factors for Implementing Gender Mainstreaming Among Public Schools

Table 6: *Hindering Factors for Implementing Gender Mainstreaming Among Public Schools*

No	Indicators	WAM	Verbal Description	Rank
1	Lack of support from the higher officials to implement gender mainstreaming	1.51	NH	9
2	Insufficient knowledge of internal and external clients on gender mainstreaming	3.63	HH	4
3	Absence of gender analysis to determine appropriately existing gender issues to address	3.71	HH	1
4	Inadequate provision of training among internal and external clients on gender mainstreaming	3.65	HH	3
5	Insufficient resources to implement gender mainstreaming	3.20	MH	6
6	Expressed hesitation among internal and external clients on the implementation of gender mainstreaming	2.29	LH	7
7	Lack of data information to identify the needs and strategies for gender mainstreaming	1.77	LH	8
8	Lack of monitoring and evaluation system to ensure the implementation of gender mainstreaming	3.59	HH	5
9	Unstructured GFPS to support the implementation of gender mainstreaming	1.40	NH	10
10	Absence of a gender mainstreaming plan to guide the school in the implementation of PPAs to support mainstreaming	3.68	HH	2
	Average	2.84	MH	

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 = Highly Hinderling (HH); 2.51 – 3.25 = Moderately Hinderling (MH); 1.76 – 2.50 = Less Hinderling (LH); 1:00 – 1.75 = Not Hinderling (NH)

(Source: HGDG, 2016; Wambeti, 2016; Council of Europe, 2015; Kirima, 2019)

It is confirmed in Table 6 that there are moderately hindering factors for implementing gender mainstreaming among public schools as shown by the mean value of 2.84. The finding is mostly linked to the absence of gender analysis to determine appropriately existing gender issues (WM=3.71); absence of a gender mainstreaming plan to guide the school in the implementation of PPAs to support mainstreaming (WM=3.68); inadequate provision of training among internal and external clients on gender mainstreaming (WM=3.65); insufficient knowledge of internal and external clients on gender mainstreaming (WM=3.63); and lack of monitoring and evaluation system to ensure the implementation of gender mainstreaming (WM=3.59), respectively.

Some barriers identified to gender mainstreaming include inadequate and lack of staff

awareness and knowledge, lack of training and tools on gender mainstreaming, inadequate commitment from top-down to the institution, policy translation from the international level, structural policy barriers at the national level, and behaviors and corruption (Wambeti, 2019; Council of Europe, 2015; Kirima, 2019; Howland et. al., 2021). Hence, GAD mainstreaming should require competence, skill, and dedication similar to a full-time position in the agency (PCW, 2019). Also, policymakers should have gender awareness and competence to integrate a gender perspective into all policies and tend to work within gender-blind institutional structures (Roggeband & Verloo in Lombardo & Merggert, 2016).

4.3. Gender Mainstreaming Plan for Gender-Responsive Public Schools in the DepEd Quezon Province

Based on the results of this study, a gender mainstreaming plan is developed with key components such as specific targets/objectives, activities, assigned responsibilities, required budget/resources, and set timelines. This plan of action would serve as a guide for public schools in the Schools Division of Quezon to enhance their gender mainstreaming practices. Specifically, the plan focuses on the gender mainstreaming practices as to policies, PPAs and enabling mechanisms. As to policies, the conduct of organization-wide gender audit, issuance of localized policies to support GAD mandates, review on the existing policies for consistency with the emerging GAD issues, and collection and maintenance of sex-disaggregated database were highly considered in the course of action. On the PPAs entry point, the conduct of consultations with the PCW and relevant organizations/individuals, review and revision of existing IEC materials to ensure the use of gender-fair language and images and conduct of consultations with internal and external clients to identify gender issues and corresponding strategies were highly considered. As to enabling mechanisms, specific strategies were highlighted as to the initiation of exploratory activities with the PCW or other agencies, institutions and/or individuals to facilitate gender mainstreaming, the establishment of other enabling mechanisms to support gender mainstreaming, institutionalization of the sex-disaggregated database, and collection of gender information to enhance M&E system.

Furthermore, key strategies to mitigate the challenges on the implementation of gender mainstreaming were also provided in the plan. The strategies include the conduct of gender analysis, identification of potential partners for resource mobilization, the establishment of monitoring and evaluation systems, and the provision of relevant gender-related training.

5. Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher draws the following conclusions:

1. Gender perspectives are relatively mainstreamed in the organizational processes of public schools. Specifically, a gender perspective is less mainstreamed into the policies and PPAs but relatively integrated into their support mechanisms and highly evident among people.
2. There are posed challenges on the implementation of gender mainstreaming among public schools due to the lack of gender analysis, gender mainstreaming plan, a mechanism to identify potential partners for resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation system, and inadequate provision of gender training.
3. Gender mainstreaming plan is developed to serve as a guide in further improving the gender mainstreaming practices among public schools in terms of policies, PPAs, and enabling mechanisms.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn in this study, the following are hereby recommended:

1. In terms of policies, public schools should be capacitated on the conduct of organization-wide gender audit, issuance of localized policies to support GAD mandates and development of localized policies to institutionalize the collection and maintenance of the sex-disaggregated database. They should also consider conducting a review of the existing policies for consistency with the emerging GAD issues.
2. In terms of PPAs, public schools should consider the possible conduct of consultations with PCW and other relevant organizations or individuals, as well as with the internal and external clients to support their gender mainstreaming. They should likewise ensure the use of gender-fair language and images through review and revision of their existing IEC materials.
3. As to enabling mechanisms, public schools should initiate exploratory activities with PCW or other agencies, institutions and/or individuals to facilitate gender mainstreaming. They should also consider establishing other enabling mechanisms to support the integration of gender perspectives.

4. The Division GFPS of the Schools Division of Quezon Province should facilitate the conduct of competency development among school heads and members of the GFPS to further capacitate them in the practice of gender mainstreaming.
6. The Gender Mainstreaming Plan proposed in this study for gender-responsive public schools should be considered for utilization in the Schools Division of Quezon Province to serve as a reference in the gender mainstreaming practices.
7. For future researchers, consider examining the suitability, acceptability, and feasibility of the proposed Gender Mainstreaming Plan to further improve the extent of gender mainstreaming practices among public schools.

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