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# CULTURAL NORMS, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, AND COMMUNITY-BASED PREVENTION STRATEGIES: A SOCIO-STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS IN THE SCHOOLS DIVISION OF BOHOL

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study explored teachers' and students' perceptions of gender-related cultural practices, GBV, and community-based preventative measures in some public secondary schools of the Schools Division of Bohol in the school year 2026-2027. The research used a descriptive-quantitative research design. Three hundred respondents, 150 teachers, and 150 students were identified through stratified and simple random sampling and obtained through a researcher-made questionnaire. The data obtained from frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and Pearson's product-moment correlation were subjected to the appropriate statistical tests.*

*Findings from the study revealed that participants were largely in agreement that gender-based cultural expectations (3.33), GBV (3.32), and community-based GBV prevention strategies (3.24) were evident in the school. Further analysis revealed a weak, yet statistically significant positive relationship between cultural norms and GBV ($r=3.4$, $p<.0.001$); however, there was no statistically significant relationship between cultural norms and GBV prevention strategies ($r=0.85$, $p=.141$). There was a statistically significant positive relationship between GBV and GBV prevention strategies ($r=7.2$, $p<.0.001$). Based on these findings, perceptual differences in selected variables by teachers' civil status and students' age group, grade, and sex were significantly identified, and it was therefore in the name of these findings that the SAFE Program Implementation Plan was developed: Strengthening gender sensitivity and Awareness through advocacy, creating violence-free environments, and empowering communities. The proposed program aims to strengthen schools' and communities' capacity to combat gender-based GBV and promote equality and inclusion in learning environments, and identify gender-responsive elements to inform gender-sensitive policy design.*

**KEYWORDS**: *Norms, Gender-Based Violence, Community-Led Prevention, Equality, Secondary Education, SAFE Program Implementation Plan*

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Gender norms and stereotypes seem to influence the views of gender roles, gendered relationships, and acceptable conduct. The norms are to be maintained or challenged depending on the interactions between individuals within the domestic, school, and community contexts. The tolerance for negative gender norms leads to discrimination, harassment, and GBV.In the case of education, this could affect the safety, wellbeing, and participation of learners. According to a study done in the Philippines by Abulencia et al. (2023), some of the issues identified included bullying, microaggression, gender-biased teaching, and lack of gender-responsive school infrastructure, which require school policies and collaboration from various stakeholders.

In the Philippine context, Abulencia et al. (2023) identified concerns such as bullying, microaggressions, gender-biased teaching, and inadequate gender-responsive school facilities, highlighting the need for appropriate school policies and collaboration among stakeholders. Likewise, Arcigal and Resurreccion (2022) studied the initiatives put in place by schools to promote gender equality and prevent GBV in the school context.

Republic Act No. 9710 is called the Magna Carta of Women, and this relates to the rights of women and gender equality. However, Republic Act No. 11313 is named Safe Spaces Act, and this law focuses on the sexual harassment related to gender in general that may even include educational institutions. Moreover, the Department of Education has issued the Child Protection Policy with DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012, and the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy through DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017. The frameworks above have made some recommendations for learner protection and gender sensitivity.

Nevertheless, taking into consideration the above-mentioned frameworks and related research, it is necessary to examine the cultural aspects of GBV and the efficiency of community-based preventive practices in certain local communities. To identify existing views on the topic of gender roles and prevention of GBV among teachers and learners, the study of their perspectives may be useful in the case of the Schools Division of Bohol. Nevertheless, in order to find out if the issue exists in that particular locality, it is necessary to gather appropriate information systematically.

This study intends to analyze traditional gender-based violence within the context of community-based prevention practices available in the Schools Division of Bohol. With inputs from teachers and learners, this research hopes to provide evidence that may be used to design a community-based prevention program. Furthermore, it is expected that the

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program would promote better coordination between schools, families, and community partners as well as promote learner wellbeing and protection, gender fairness, and safe and inclusive learning spaces.

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the cultural norms, gender-based violence, and community-based prevention strategies as perceived by public secondary school teachers and high school students in the Schools Division of Bohol.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, relevant trainings on Gender and Development (GAD); and student-respondents in terms of age, sex, and grade level?
2. What are the gender-based cultural norms as perceived by the two groups of respondents in terms of gender role expectations, power relations and authority, social acceptance of gender-based behaviors, and traditional beliefs and practices?
3. What are the gender-based violence as perceived by the respondents in terms of physical violence, psychological/emotional violence, sexual harassment and abuse, verbal and social discrimination?
4. What are the community-based prevention strategies against gender based violence as perceived by the respondents in terms of school-based policies and programs, community involvement and support, awareness and advocacy initiatives, and reporting and intervention mechanisms?
5. Is there a significant relationship between cultural norms and gender-based violence, between cultural norms and community-based prevention strategies, and between gender-based violence and community-based prevention strategies?
6. Is there a significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents on gender-based cultural norms, gender-based violence, and community-based prevention strategies against gender-based violence when grouped according to respondent type and when grouped according to respondents' profile?
7. Based on the findings, what practical, school-based, and community-oriented output may be proposed?

### 1.3 Hypotheses

The study tested the following null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. $H_{01}$: There is no significant relationship between cultural norms and gender-based violence.
2. $H_{02}$: There is no significant relationship between cultural norms and community-based prevention strategies against gender-based violence.
3. $H_{03}$: There is no significant relationship between gender-based violence and community-based prevention strategies against gender-based violence.
4. $H_{04}$: There is no significant difference between teacher and student respondents' perceptions of gender-based cultural norms, gender-based violence, and community-based prevention strategies against gender-based violence.
5. $H_{05}$: There is no significant difference in respondents' perceptions of gender-based cultural norms, gender-based violence, and community-based prevention strategies against gender-based violence when grouped according to their profile variables.

### 1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze the linkages between cultural norms, gender-based violence (GBV), and community-based prevention strategies in public secondary schools within the Bohol Schools Division. The specific objectives were to understand the perspectives of teachers and junior high school students on cultural norms related to gender-based violence, the prevalence and forms of GBV, as well as the community-based prevention strategies used in schools and communities.

The study was also interested in finding the relationships between the three main variables and the differences in the perspectives based on the respondent type and profile variables. In addition, it was intended to review the community-based prevention strategies, to find possible improvements, and to develop a community-based prevention program in accordance with the results of this study.

Overall, this study intends to contribute to promoting gender equality, protecting learners, and creating gender-responsive learning environments.

### 1.5 Scope and Delimitations

This study considered cultural norms, gender-based violence (GBV), and community-based strategies to prevent GBV as viewed by public secondary school teachers and junior high school students in selected public secondary schools in the Schools Division of Bohol for School Year 2026-2027.

Three main variables served as the focus of this study, namely: (1) gender-based cultural norms which consist of gender roles, gender power and authority, social acceptance of gender-related conduct, and traditions; (2) gender-based violence which involves physical violence, psychological/emotional violence, sexual harassment/abuse, and verbal/social discrimination; and (3) community-based preventive strategies which encompass school-based policies/programs, community support/involvedness, Awareness/advocacy campaigns, and intervention/reporting systems.

The study considered the profile of the respondents. Variables related to the teachers are age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, number of years in teaching, and GAD training. For the students, the variables included age, gender, and grade level. The study used a descriptive quantitative research design, which involved survey questionnaires as a means of gathering data from the selected respondents. It also looked into the relationships among the three main variables as well as the differences in perception based on the type and profile of the respondents.

The study was limited to selected public secondary schools in the Schools Division of Bohol, excluding private schools and other school divisions. The results of the study

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were based only on the responses of the selected teachers and students, as well as the variables included in the research instruments. This study was done as a base for the development of the proposed community-based prevention program against GBV, but not the implementation and evaluation of such a program.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES AND STUDIES

### 2.1 Review of Empirical Studies

***Cultural Norms and Gender Stereotypes***

Norms about gender roles, power relationships, and acceptable interaction with others can vary depending on cultural norms and gender stereotypes. Additionally, if social norms legitimize inequalities within a power relationship or endorse discrimination, such social norms may be contributing to the continuance of GBV. According to Ullman et al. (2025), who reviewed 178 global systematic reviews on interventions to address violence against women and girls, transforming gender attitudes, beliefs, and norms is crucial, but there are still evidence gaps regarding this issue.

In the Philippines, gender issues were researched by Abulencia et al. (2023), who considered the cases of public schools in the Schools Division of Marikina. Issues of bullying, microaggressions, gender bias in teaching, and gender-sensitive school facilities were found in their work. This is an important example of the need to explore the effects of institutional norms and social expectations on gendered experiences in school settings. Even though the study took place in Marikina, it can be used as a local comparison in Bohol.

***Gender-Based Violence in Educational Settings***

GBV has been identified as an issue in schools in that it may impact the security, wellbeing, and involvement of learners in activities in such institutions. In this regard, Farmer et al. (2023) did a systematic review and network meta-analysis on school-based interventions for the prevention of dating and relationship violence and GBV. The authors' analysis reveals that the evidence on GBV prevention is less certain compared to that on dating and relationship violence due to the significant heterogeneity between studies. This implies that school-based interventions ought to be assessed critically before assuming their effectiveness.

In the same manner, Orr et al. (2023) summarized the theories of change behind school-based interventions targeting the prevention of dating and relationship violence and GBV. The review offers a starting point in the evaluation of how such interventions are meant to influence individual attitudes and interpersonal interactions as well as the entire institutional setting. Both articles offer support on evaluating the gender-related issues faced by the learners and the interventions in place within institutions.

***School- and Community-Based Prevention Strategies***

A strategy for GBV prevention should involve consideration of the factors that affect the incidence of violence. The study conducted by Sabri et al. (2023) on GBV prevention interventions in low- and middle-income countries showed the significance of assessing prevention efforts not only in terms of Awareness but also in relation to community engagement and institutionally led activities.

In the study of Villardón-Gallego et al. (2023), the features of successful educational prevention programs in preventing GBV were identified, which included the integration of the content into the curriculum, student participation, scientific evidence, and adaptability of the program. This research can contribute to the development of GBV prevention strategies, considering the characteristics of the learners and their educational institutions.

For the Schools Division of Bohol, such research provides an opportunity to review strategies regarding school policy, community participation, Awareness raising, and reporting of violence. However, the effectiveness of such strategies should be proven based on the local experience and not on the results of the research conducted elsewhere**.**

### 2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is supported by three relevant theories: Social Cognitive Theory, Feminist Theory, and Ecological Systems Theory. Social Cognitive Theory postulates the role played by learning through observation, modeling, and interaction with the environment in learning gender-related behaviors (Bandura, 2001). In this study, it will help understand how teachers and students learn attitudes from families, peers, teachers, and media, which might either perpetuate or oppose the harmful gender norms. The Feminist Theory can be useful to address the root causes of gender inequality, stigmatizing attitudes, and power imbalance, understanding that violence is rooted in discriminatory perceptions of culture and institutions (Brubaker, 2021). Ecological Systems Theory would probably investigate a person's social setting or system, which encompasses the family, school, community, society, and cultural system (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), and how these environments are interconnected and influence behavior. The theory would assert that prevention should be a collective effort through school policies, Awareness/education programs, community participation, and reporting procedures. Overall, these theories form the basis of the study of relationships between cultural norms, GBV, and community-based prevention measures, along with the perception of teachers and students about GBV.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

This study was carried out based on a conceptual framework that includes the relationship between cultural norms, gender-based violence, and prevention measures applied by the community. The conceptual framework showed the demographic situation of teacher and student respondents and thereafter, the conceptual framework depicted the three variables (cultural norms, GB, V, and community-based prevention measures) under investigation and their indicators which are presented in the conceptual framework. Cultural norms are about the norms and expectations of gender roles, power and authority, social acceptance of gender-based behavior, traditional beliefs, fs and practices. includes physical violence, emotional or psychological violence, sexual harassment or abuse, verbal or social discrimination, etc.

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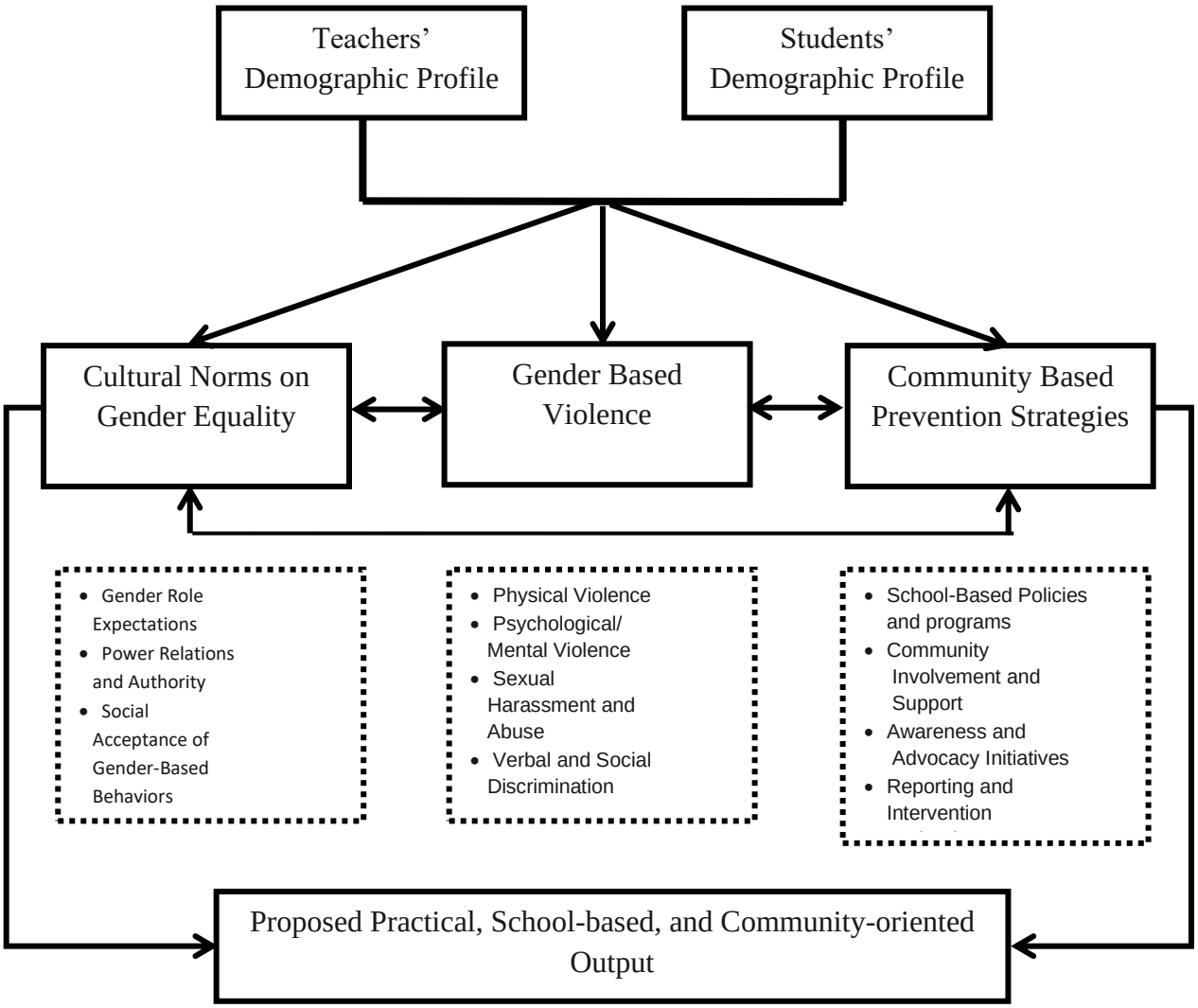


**Fig. 1. The Conceptual Framework of the study**

The double-headed arrows in the framework show the presumed relationships between social norms on GBV, community-based prevention strategies, and GBV. The single-headed arrows show that the researcher analyzed for differences in respondent perceptions, based on the variables of respondent type and profile characteristics. The relationships among the variables may be used to interpret results and to develop a proposed school- and community-based prevention program against GBV. This framework was also used to develop the instruments for the study, especially the questionnaires for the teacher and student respondents.

### 2.4 Research Gap and Justification

Previous research has highlighted the importance of cultural norms, gender equality, and gbv. Yet these themes are often examined separately and provide only a partial understanding of the links between cultural norms, GBV, and prevention interventions within schools and communities.

In the situation of the Philippines, there is a need for context-specific evidence to make clear the understanding of teachers and students of the gender norms in culture, GBV, and existing prevention strategies. Interestingly, the literature, on the other hand, suggests that these interrelations and differences in perception have yet to be tackled by the Schools Division of Bohol.

To address this gap, the study examined the relationships among cultural norms, GBV, and community-based prevention strategies in selected public secondary schools in Bohol. It also investigated differences in respondents' perceptions according to respondent type and profile variables. The findings provide an empirical basis for developing a proposed community-based prevention program that promotes gender equality, strengthens school–community collaboration, and supports safe and inclusive learning environments.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive-quantitative research design to determine cultural practices, GBV, and community-based interventions to prevent GBV as viewed by secondary school teachers and junior high school students of public schools within the Schools Division of Bohol for School Year 2026-2027. Descriptive-quantitative research refers to the gathering and analysis of numerical data to describe variables and investigate relationships among them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study also determined the relationship between the three key variables and differences in respondents' views depending on their demographic backgrounds.

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### 3.2 Population and Sampling

The study involved 300 respondents, comprising 150 teachers and 150 students from three districts. Stratified sampling was used to select schools, followed by simple random sampling to select respondents.

### 3.3 Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public secondary schools in the Schools Division of Bohol, Central Visayas, Philippines. The division was a source of information for the analysis of gender issues such as gender norms, gender-based violence, and community-based prevention.

### 3.4 Research Instrument

Data gathering was done with the help of questionnaires developed by the researchers. Different questionnaires were prepared separately for the teachers and the students. Four different categories included respondents' profiles, cultural norms, gender violence, and prevention strategies in the community. Data for all four categories were gathered on the basis of a four-point Likert scale with numbers from one to four.

### 3.5 Validity and Reliability

Prior to use, the questionnaires were content validated by a panel of experts, and a pilot study was conducted by 5 secondary school teachers and 5 secondary school students not included in the main study. Cronbach's alpha was the measure used to assess the internal consistency of the instruments. The final report manuscript will probably include the actual reliability values.

### 3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Permission to conduct the research was sought from the relevant education authorities and school principals before the data collection. Informed consent from the teachers and parental consent, together with child assent for minors, was required for the students. The questionnaires were then issued and collected.

### 3.6 Data Management and Data Analysis Procedures

The data were encoded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency counts and percentages were used to summarize respondents' demographic profiles, while means and weighted means described their perceptions of cultural norms, gender-based violence (GBV), and community-based prevention strategies. Pearson's product–moment correlation was employed to examine the relationships among the three major variables. Appropriate inferential statistical tests were used to determine differences in perceptions according to respondent type and profile variables. All statistical tests were evaluated at the 0.05 level of significance.

### 3.7 Ethical Considerations

The study included voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and data management. Student participants who were minors required appropriate parental consent and their own assent. Respondents' information was protected in accordance with applicable data privacy requirements, including the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Question 1. What is the profile of the teacher-respondents in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, years of teaching experience, relevant trainings on Gender and Development (GAD); and student-respondents in terms of age, sex, and grade level?**

**Table 1.1**

***Profile of the Teacher-Respondents (n = 150)***

| Profile | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | 25 years old and below | 8 | 5.3% |
| | 26–30 years old | 30 | 20.0% |
| | 31–35 years old | 47 | 31.3% |
| | 36–40 years old | 40 | 26.7% |
| | 41–45 years old | 18 | 12.0% |
| | 46–50 years old | 7 | 4.7% |
| | 51–55 years old | 0 | 0.0% |
| | 56 years old and above | 0 | 0.0% |
| Gender | Male | 43 | 28.7% |
| | Female | 62 | 41.3% |
| | Prefer not to say | 45 | 30.0% |
| Civil Status | Single | 53 | 35.3% |
| | Married | 77 | 51.3% |
| | Separated | 12 | 8.0% |
| | Annulled | 4 | 2.7% |
| | Widowed | 4 | 2.7% |
| Educational Attainment | Bachelor's degree | 4 | 2.7% |
| | With master's units | 56 | 37.3% |
| | Master's degree graduate | 29 | 19.3% |
| | With doctoral units | 45 | 30.0% |
| | Doctoral degree graduate | 16 | 10.7% |

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teaching Experience | 1–3 years | 2 | 1.3% |
| | 4–6 years | 18 | 12.0% |
| | 7–10 years | 46 | 30.7% |
| | 11–13 years | 75 | 50.0% |
| | 14–16 years | 7 | 4.7% |
| | 17 years and above | 2 | 1.3% |
| GAD Trainings/Seminars Attended | Below 5 | 76 | 50.7% |
| | 6–10 | 74 | 49.3% |
| | 11–15 | 0 | 0.0% |
| | 16–20 | 0 | 0.0% |
| | 21–30 | 0 | 0.0% |
| | Above 30 | 0 | 0.0% |

**Table 1.1** shows that most of the teacher-respondents were 31-35 years old (31.3%) and female (41.3%) and were married (51.3%). About level of educational attainment, most of them were able to get through master's level (37.3%). Half of them had 11-13 years of teaching experience (50.0%), and 50.7% of the teacher-respondents had 5 or fewer GAD-related training/seminar exposures. They have 11 to 13 years of teaching experience and are studying at the graduate level. At the same time, it appears that participation of the respondents in training/seminars for GAD could be an avenue for the professional growth of teachers.

Addressing gender stereotypes and discrimination across schools is a key aspect of gender-responsive education (UNICEF, 2021). There is also evidence to indicate that school-based prevention programs may be able to promote positive change around gender-related issues and create safer, more supportive environments (Farmer et al., 2023).

**Table 1.2**

***Profile of the Student-Respondents (n = 150)***

| Profile | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | 15 years old and below | 54 | 36.0% |
| | 16 years old | 40 | 26.7% |
| | 17 years old | 29 | 19.3% |
| | 18 years old | 19 | 12.7% |
| | 19 years old | 7 | 4.7% |
| | 20 years old | 1 | 0.7% |
| | 21 years old | 0 | 0.0% |
| Gender | Male | 64 | 42.7% |
| | Female | 45 | 30.0% |
| | Prefer not to say | 41 | 27.3% |
| Grade Level | Grade 9 | 35 | 23.3% |
| | Grade 10 | 35 | 23.3% |
| | Grade 11 | 45 | 30.0% |
| | Grade 12 | 35 | 23.3% |

**Table 1.2** shows that most of the student respondents were aged 15 and below (36.0%), followed by 16 years (26.7%) and 17 years (19.3%). Concerning sex/sex distribution, the respondents include male students as the biggest group (42.7%), while 30.0% were female, and 27.3% stated the "not indicated" gender. In the context of grade/grades distribution, Grade 11 students contributed many of the respondents (30.0%), and Grades 9, 10, and 12 contributed the same percentage of 23.3%. The respondents from the various age groups correspond to a better understanding of what happens in society concerning culture, gender-based violence, and community-based prevention strategies.

School-based violence prevention interventions might also be helpful to change the attitudes and relationships between students and prevent gender-based violence (Farmer et al. 2023). Prevention actions and programs that focus on gender norms and that work on different levels can also help have a more aligned response to violence against women and girls (Ullman et al. 2025).

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**Question 2. What are the gender-based cultural norms as perceived by the two groups of respondents in terms of gender role expectations, power relations and authority, social acceptance of gender-based behaviors, and traditional beliefs and practices?**

**Table 2**

*Composite Mean of Gender-Based Cultural Norms as Perceived by the Two Groups of Respondents*

| Indicators | Teacher Mean | VI | Student Mean | VI | Composite Mean | VI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender Role Expectations | 3.20 | Agree | 3.41 | Agree | 3.30 | Agree |
| Power Relations and Authority | 3.19 | Agree | 3.47 | Agree | 3.33 | Agree |
| Social Acceptance of Gender-Based Behaviors | 3.19 | Agree | 3.50 | Highly Agree | 3.34 | Agree |
| Traditional Beliefs and Practices | 3.17 | Agree | 3.50 | Highly Agree | 3.33 | Agree |
| **Overall Gender-Based Cultural Norms** | **3.19** | **Agree** | **3.47** | **Agree** | **3.33** | **Agree** |

**Legend:** 3.50–4.00 = Highly Agree; 2.50–3.49 = Agree; 1.50–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.49 = Highly Disagree.

From **Table 2**, it can be seen that the composite mean was 3.33, meaning that Agree is the verbal equivalent of this value and suggests that the teacher and student respondents were largely in agreement with the notion that there are gender-based cultural norms within the school environment. The teachers have an overall mean of 3.19, whereas the students have an overall mean of 3.47. Both social acceptance of gender norms and the traditional practices have a mean of 3.50 and are labeled Highly Agree.

This is consistent with Lomazzi (2023), who studied individual and institutional gender norms in 12 countries and described how 'alleged' gender roles and patriarchy might provide legitimacy to inequalities in practice. Similarly, Bursztyn et al. (2023) found that perceptions of gender norms may be 'misaligned' with actual evidence of social support for gender egalitarianism. Both of these theories help to offer insight into how gendered ideals continue to act as a cause of inequality, despite ongoing modernized shifting attitudes. Kumar et al.'s (2024) study of the effects of modernization on traditional gender stereotypes offers insights into how gender inequality cannot be fully addressed by modernization.

**Question 3. What are the gender-based violence as perceived by the respondents in terms of physical violence, psychological/emotional violence, sexual harassment and abuse, verbal and social discrimination?**

**Table 3**

***Composite Mean of Gender-Based Violence as Perceived by the Two Groups of Respondents***

| Indicators | Teacher Mean | VI | Student Mean | VI | Composite Mean | VI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Physical Violence | 3.30 | Agree | 3.39 | Agree | 3.35 | Agree |
| Psychological/Emotional Violence | 3.36 | Agree | 3.32 | Agree | 3.34 | Agree |
| Sexual Harassment and Abuse | 3.21 | Agree | 3.44 | Agree | 3.32 | Agree |
| Verbal and Social Discrimination | 3.08 | Agree | 3.45 | Agree | 3.26 | Agree |
| **Overall Gender-Based Violence** | **3.24** | **Agree** | **3.40** | **Agree** | **3.32** | **Agree** |

**Legend:** 3.50–4.00 = Highly Agree; 2.50–3.49 = Agree; 1.50–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.49 = Highly Disagree.

**Table 3** implies that both teachers and students agreed with the statements on all types of GBV. The data show that students achieved a composite mean of 3.40, as opposed to that of the teachers' 3.24. The composite mean for physical violence was 3.35, that for Psychological/emotional violence was 3.34, for Sexual harassment/abuse was 3.32, whereas that of verbal/social discrimination was 3.26. The data suggest the potential importance of strengthening prevention activities of schools and the community about different types of GBV.

These results support Bando et al. (2024) since they discovered that Filipino students at universities have high GBV Awareness, especially about physical violence, followed by sexual and psychological forms. Likewise, Lumidao et al. (2024) studied the GBV Awareness of university staff and focused on its forms and institutional Awareness, as well. According to the Council of Europe (2023), forms of GBV include physical, sexual, psychological, and verbal types, which can be related to an imbalance of power and unhealthy social norms.

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**Question 4. What are the community-based prevention strategies against gender based violence as perceived by the respondents in terms of school-based policies and programs, community involvement and support, awareness and advocacy initiatives, and reporting and intervention mechanisms?**

**Table 4**

***Composite Mean of Community-Based Prevention Strategies Against Gender-Based Violence as Perceived by the Respondents***

| Indicators | Teacher Mean | VI | Student Mean | VI | Composite Mean | VI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School-Based Policies and Programs | 3.07 | Agree | 3.49 | Agree | 3.28 | Agree |
| Community Involvement and Support | 3.08 | Agree | 3.42 | Agree | 3.25 | Agree |
| Awareness and Advocacy Initiatives | 3.05 | Agree | 3.45 | Agree | 3.25 | Agree |
| Reporting and Intervention Mechanisms | 3.12 | Agree | 3.26 | Agree | 3.19 | Agree |
| **Overall Community-Based Prevention Strategies** | **3.08** | **Agree** | **3.41** | **Agree** | **3.24** | **Agree** |

**Table 4,** the overall composite mean is 3.24 and has a verbal interpretation of Agree. This means that the respondents generally agree on the community-based prevention strategies against gender-based violence. School-based policies and programs obtained the highest composite mean of 3.28. This was followed by community involvement and support, and awareness and advocacy programs with the same mean of 3.25. The lowest is reporting and intervention mechanisms, with a mean of 3.19. These data imply the need to strengthen the existing school and community-based strategies, especially the reporting and intervention mechanisms.

Supporting this finding, the Regional Memorandum No. NCR-358, s. The Department of Education's 2022 reaffirms the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy and encourages schools to uphold the students' gender expression in their school-initiated activities. The policy already implies the important role of school policies in fostering inclusion and addressing gender-based discrimination. Further, the study by Nason (2025) shows the importance of gender-sensitive curricula and development, gender-sensitive teachers' orientation, institutionalized gender-responsiveness, and inclusive school governance. For schools in the Philippines, the study of Abulencia et al. (2023) reveals bullying and microaggressions, gender bias in teaching, and lack of gender-responsive school facilities as a few concerns that might warrant more vigorous school policies, capacity building, and collaboration of school stakeholders.

**Question 5. Is there a significant relationship between cultural norms and gender-based violence, between cultural norms and community-based prevention strategies, and between gender-based violence and community-based prevention strategies?**

**Table 5.1**

***Significant Relationship Between Gender-Based Cultural Norms and Gender-Based Violence***

| Variables | Statistical Measure | Value |
|---|---|---|
| Gender-Based Cultural Norms and Gender-Based Violence | Pearson Correlation (r) | .234** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) (p) | .000 |
| | Number of Respondents (N) | 300 |

**Table 5.1** provides empirical support for a weak, positive, and significant relationship between gender based cultural norms and gender-based violence (r =.234, p <.001, N = 300). Based on this statistical relationship, it can be concluded that the more a person conforms to gender based cultural norms, the more likely she/he will be to conduct gender-based violence. Thus, the null hypothesis in the study, which stated that there was no statistically significant relationship between the two, was rejected.

This result is consistent with the systematic review by Meiksin et al. (2024), which examined the link between gender, social norms, and adolescent dating and relationship violence. That review reaffirmed the importance of understanding the role of perceived social norms in outcomes regarding violence. Likewise, Seff (2022) studied methodologies for measuring social norms around intimate partner violence and reaffirmed the importance of examining norms in the study of violence.

**Table 5.2**

***Significant Relationship Between Gender-Based Cultural Norms and Community-Based Prevention Strategies Against Gender-Based Violence***

| Variables | Statistical Measure | Value |
|---|---|---|
| Gender-Based Cultural Norms and Community-Based Prevention Strategies | Pearson Correlation (r) | .085 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) (p) | .141 |
| | Number of Respondents (N) | 300 |

**Table 5.2** indicates that there is a very weak positive but statistically insignificant association between gender-related cultural values and community-based prevention measures (r = .085, p = .141, N = 300). In this case, because the value of p is greater than the critical value of 0.05, the null hypothesis could not be rejected.

Among other factors, Villardón-Gallego et al. (2023) argue that key aspects of school GBV prevention are its inclusion in

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the school curriculum, student participation, community involvement, and contextualization. In addition, Farmer et al. (2023) conducted a literature review on dating and relationship violence and GBV prevention interventions. This literature review highlights a need for school prevention programs and intervention efforts.

**Table 5.3**

***Relationship Between Gender-Based Violence and Community-Based Prevention Strategies***

| Variables | Statistical Measure | Value |
|---|---|---|
| Gender-Based Violence and Community-Based Prevention Strategies | Pearson correlation (r) | .729** |
| | p-value (two-tailed) | < .001 |
| | N | 300 |

**Table 5.3** provides evidence of a positive correlation between gender-based violence (GBV) and community-based prevention strategies (r =.729, p <.001, N = 300). The statistically significant, strong positive association indicates that an increase in GBV likely results in an increase in community-based prevention strategies. The null hypothesis was rejected. It is also possible that in doing so, an increased Awareness of GBV also increases the perceived effectiveness of prevention strategies, but this correlation does not prove that these strategies are effective.

Farmer et al. (2023) looked at school-based strategies for preventing dating and relationship violence and gender-based violence, highlighting the role of education in tackling these problems. Similarly, Messman et al. (2024) reviewed anonymous reporting systems to prevent school violence, noting the need for more empirical evidence to support such practices.

**Question 6. Is there a significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents on gender-based cultural norms, gender-based violence, and community-based prevention strategies against gender-based violence when grouped according to respondent type and when grouped according to respondents' profile?**

**Table 6**

***Differences in Respondents' Perceptions of Gender-Based Cultural Norms, Gender-Based Violence, and Community-Based Prevention Strategies According to Profile Variables***

| Profile Variable | Indicator | F | p-value | Decision | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teacher's Age | Gender-Based Cultural Norms | 0.231 | .948 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Gender-Based Violence | 0.310 | .906 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Community-Based Prevention Strategies | 1.402 | .227 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| Student's Age | Gender-Based Cultural Norms | 0.443 | .818 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Gender-Based Violence | 12.592 | < .001 | Reject $H_0$ | Significant |
| | Community-Based Prevention Strategies | 17.628 | < .001 | Reject $H_0$ | Significant |
| Gender | Gender-Based Cultural Norms | 0.686 | .505 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Gender-Based Violence | 0.195 | .823 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Community-Based Prevention Strategies | 1.745 | .176 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| Teacher's Civil Status | Gender-Based Cultural Norms | 2.919 | .023 | Reject $H_0$* | Significant* |
| | Gender-Based Violence | 0.750 | .559 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Community-Based Prevention Strategies | 0.405 | .805 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| Highest Educational Attainment | Gender-Based Cultural Norms | 0.545 | .703 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Gender-Based Violence | 0.385 | .819 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Community-Based Prevention Strategies | 1.492 | .208 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| Teaching Experience | Gender-Based Cultural Norms | 0.451 | .812 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |

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| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Gender-Based Violence | 0.480 | .791 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Community-Based Prevention Strategies | 2.183 | .059 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| GAD Training/Seminars | Gender-Based Cultural Norms | 0.000 | .992 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Gender-Based Violence | 0.843 | .360 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| | Community-Based Prevention Strategies | 0.049 | .825 | Fail to reject $H_0$ | Not significant |
| Student's Grade Level | Gender-Based Cultural Norms | 9.390 | < .001 | Reject $H_0$ | Significant |
| | Gender-Based Violence | 40.891 | < .001 | Reject $H_0$ | Significant |
| | Community-Based Prevention Strategies | 26.428 | < .001 | Reject $H_0$ | Significant |

**Table 6** indicates that there were significant differences in the perceptions of the cultural norms that are related to gender-based issues among teachers based on their civil status ($p = .023$) and among students depending on their grade level ($p < .001$). The perception of gender-based violence also varied significantly based on the age and grade level of students (both $p < .001$).

The same trend is shown by the perceptions about community-based preventive measures that varied significantly based on the age and grade level of students (both $p < .001$). However, no significant differences existed for any of the other demographic variables, whose p-values were above .05.

These findings are consistent with those of Puguon and Bullecer (2025), who explored gender violence among learners in a Philippine public secondary school and found significant differences in students' perception by age and grade but not sex. This study provides relevant local data for comparison with this study, which found significant differences in students' perceptions of gender-based violence by age and grade. Likewise, the significant differences in students' perceptions of community-based prevention strategies suggest the possible need to factor in the educational and developmental context of the learners in the development of programs. Villardón-Gallego et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of school-based interventions that include gender-based violence prevention in the curriculum, promote both student and community participation, and adapt activities to serve the target population.

**Question 7.** Based on the findings, what practical, school-based, and community-oriented output may be proposed?

**SAFE Program Implementation Plan**
**Rationale**

The SAFE Program Implementation Plan was designed to address the results of the research, which indicate that gender-based cultural norms and GBV continue to be problems, highlighting the need for strengthened prevention efforts. Variations in perceptions depending on teachers' civil status and students' age and grade level point to the need for age- and situation-appropriate intervention. The program proposes that gender sensitivity, deconstruction of harmful stereotypes, increased understanding of GBV, strengthening of reporting and response mechanisms, and collaborative strategies between schools, families, and community partners.

**Objectives**

1. Increase the degree of gender sensitivity and awareness among the teachers, students, parents, and other school staff through education.
2. Attain gender equality and inclusiveness by striving for the cessation of any form of gender stereotypes, discrimination, and gender-based expectations.
3. Protect girls from violence by increasing knowledge about the different types of violence, the consequences of these, and ways to prevent them.
4. Establish appropriate reporting and intervention systems by having a reliable, confidential, and accessible reporting system.
5. Form communities through cooperation among the schools, families, LGUs, and other community organizations.
6. Assess the effectiveness of the program implementation through feedback and evaluation.

**Overview**

Safe Program Implementation Plan (Strengthening Gender Sensitivity and Awareness through Advocacy, Fostering Violence-Free Environments, and Empowering Communities) is an implementation plan for an initiative that aims at promoting gender equality and preventing GBV in schools and communities based on findings of the study on gender-based cultural norms, GBV, and community-based strategies for the prevention of GBV. The Safe Program Implementation Plan entails four key elements: strengthening gender sensitivity and Awareness, advocating for gender equality and inclusiveness, fostering a violence-free environment, and empowering communities. It also includes a system of monitoring and evaluation of implementation to improve the implementation process. The Safe Program Implementation Plan targets students, teachers, school administrators, parents, curriculum planners, and community members.

## V. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Summary of Findings**

Findings of the study indicated that the teachers and students generally agreed on the high prevalence of cultural norms based on gender, GBV, and community-based

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prevention strategies in their learning environment, which had an overall mean of 3.33, 3.32, and 3.24, respectively. The results indicated that there was a weak but significant correlation between cultural norms based on gender and GBV (r=.234, p<.001), but not to prevention strategies (r=.085, p=.141). On the other hand, GBV was significantly but positively correlated with the prevention strategies (r=.729, p<.001). There were also significant differences in selected perceptions based on teachers' civil status and students' age and grade level.

**Conclusions**

Cultural norms and GBV remain significant issues in education today. However, even though the majority of people believed that there are measures for preventing these two issues, there is definitely a requirement for improved methods of reporting and intervention. The relationships between the variables emphasize the need to have more effective prevention strategies for cultural norms and GBV without necessarily viewing them as being causally related.

**Recommendations**

Schools need to strengthen the enforcement of GBV-related policies, such as the GBV guidelines, confidentiality reporting procedures, and referrals. There is some evidence that teachers need ongoing gender sensitivity and GAD training and that students should have access to gender Awareness sessions tailored for their age groups. Working with schools, parents, and communities might help in prevention, but more research is needed into other settings and comparative evaluations of different GBV prevention programs.

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