

Research Article

Gender-Based Teaching-Learning Classroom Dynamics in Human Sexuality Education¹

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Abstract: This article investigates the gender-based teaching-learning dynamics during human sexuality education, focusing on how the genders of teachers and students affect classroom discussions. Using Constructivist Grounded Theory, analysis was drawn from classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions with theoretically sampled teachers and students. Documentations of these methods were done through audio-video recording, memoing, field notes and constant comparative analysis of saturated data. Results revealed that the teaching dynamics include gender prejudice; teacher competence; creation and maintenance of a safe environment; playful engagement; code switching and the use of vernacular; personalization and real-life application; teacher-directed instruction; and audio-visual aids utilization. The learning dynamics include sociocultural and multimedia influences, teacher gender preferences, teaching methods, language challenges, and religion's influence. Gender dynamics affect students' comfort levels and engagement, with female teachers being preferred to facilitate due to their perceived ability to foster a more comfortable learning environment. Male teachers face challenges in addressing sensitive topics with female students, leading to discomfort and decreased interactions and engagement. Humor, personalization of lessons, and code-switching also emerged as effective teaching approaches, though their success varies based on the gender composition of the class. These precipitates the need for gender-sensitive teaching strategies, up-training of teachers, and curriculum re-vision to eradicate issues in the teaching-learning process. The research provides valuable insights in improving human sexuality education by encouraging inclusive classroom dynamics.

Keywords: dialogic theory; academic interactions; comprehensive sexuality education; grounded theory; teacher gender matching

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1. Introduction

Gender-based classroom dynamics play a vital role in directing classroom interactions, especially in sensitive concepts like human sexuality education. Lessons in human sexuality is often influenced by societal norms and cultural taboos, causing challenges in open dialogue, particularly when complex topics such as sexual health, contraception, and gender roles are discussed. The hesitancy to engage in open discussions is further complicated by gender-related dynamics between students and teachers.

The Philippine Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012 mandates the delivery of comprehensive sexuality education, integrating reproductive health concepts into subjects like Science, Physical Education, and Social Science (Van et al., 2021). Yet, despite the existence of this legal framework, classroom gender-based dynamics in human sexuality education remain underexplored. Several studies (Mamnoun & Nfissi, 2023) have shown that gender significantly affects how students interact during class discussions, with students often responding differently based on the gender of the mentor and the teaching strategies being

¹ This article delineates part of the findings of the unpublished dissertation of the same author titled *Penis and Vagina's Conversations: A Dialogic Theory Grounded on Academic Intercourse of Human Sexuality* (Nagal, 2023).

used.

This article explores the effects of gender dynamics in the teaching-learning process of sexuality education. Furthermore, it examines how the genders of both teachers and students affects classroom interactions, discussions, and the students' level of comfort when engaging with delicate topics. As enumerated in the original study, it was also aimed to explore how gender impacts dialogue, the use of humor or sexualized metaphors, and overall classroom engagement in the discussions of human sexuality.

Through scientific interpretations of these gender-based classroom dynamics, the study seeks to provide insights into improving the effectiveness of human sexuality education. A more thorough understanding of these interactions can improve teaching methods to create a more inclusive and gender-sensitive classroom milieu, promoting open discourse and lowering levels of discomfort as well as hesitations discussing the subject matter. Ultimately, the study aligns with that of the Department of Education's DepEd Order No. 31, series of 2018, which emphasize gender-sensitive and socio-culturally appropriate comprehensive sexuality education. The study aims to address the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nation, specifically the SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 5 (gender equality), by developing a more inclusive method to human sexuality education (UNFPA, 2020). This research was aimed to develop the underlying principles associated with the nature of gender-related dynamics of teacher-learner classroom discussions of human sexuality by answering the following research questions:

1. How is human sexuality education taught in a classroom setting considering the genders of the teachers and students?
2. How is human sexuality education learned in a classroom setting considering the genders of the teachers and students?

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Research Design

The original study utilized Constructivist Grounded Theory to explore and describe gender-based classroom dynamics in human sexuality education. The goal was to generate a scientific understanding of how the gender of students and teachers influences the teaching-learning dynamics. In this article, the focus is on how these gender-based dynamics affect interaction, dialogue, participation and comfort levels during lessons in human sexuality. Charmaz's Constructivist Grounded Theory method was used to capture the distinct experiences of students and teachers within the classroom. Constructivist grounded theory is a qualitative research methodology that combines ethical principles and symbolic interactionism to better understand human experiences and interactions in various contexts (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2022). The rest of the theory generated from these scientific observations will be published in future articles.

2.2. Study Participants and Key Informants

The participants of this study included the teachers and students in an Integrated SpEd School in the Philippines. For the class observation of a human sexuality education class, one section was chosen from grade ten. The section had four sessions of human sexuality education. Using theoretical sampling, a handful of students were interviewed to identify their experiences, perceptions, beliefs, and reactions towards sexuality education when conducted by a teacher of the same (or opposite) sex based on these criteria: (1) they must have attended the arranged sexuality education class, (2) they must have shown distinct reactions – inhibition or exhibition during the class, and (3) they must be verbose. The two teachers who conducted the lessons were the key informants in the focused group discussions (FGDs). For the purpose of this article, table 1 presents the pseudonyms and profiles of the FGD key informants.

Table 1. The key informants of the focused group discussion.

Informant	Profile
Sir Penis	A 25-year-old male teacher teaching in an integrated special education school teaching science subjects.
Mam Vagina	A 30-year-old female teacher teaching in an integrated special education school teaching social science subjects.

Table 2 showcases the pseudonyms and profiles of the in-depth interview key

informants.

Table 2. The key informants of the in-depth interviews.

Informant	Profile
Dondon	A 16-year-old grade 10 straight male student living two towns away from the integrated special education school he is enrolled in.
Rey	A 16-year-old grade 10 straight male student living a few blocks away from the integrated special education school he is enrolled in.
Simon	A 15-year-old grade 10 who transferred from Luzon whose primary language is Tagalog.
Tricia	A 17-year-old grade 10 female student living a few blocks away from the integrated special education school she is enrolled in.
Maria	She is a 15-year-old grade 10 female student living 3 towns away from the integrated special education school she is enrolled in
Fre	A 15-year-old grade 10 female student who crosses a river, which is a town away, going to the integrated special education school he is enrolled in.

2.3. Data Collection Methods

The research was conducted in a government integrated school in the Philippines between February to May of 2023. At the onset of the study, a formal request was submitted to the DepEd Aklan to seek approval for the research. Participants were oriented about the study's purpose, and informed consent was obtained from teachers, students, and parents. Once approval was granted, data collection commenced using various qualitative methods, including FGDs, in-depth interviews (IDIs), participant observation, theoretical sampling, field notes, memoing, and coding. Such approaches provided a comprehensive understanding of how gender influences classroom interactions during sexuality education.

Four Human Sexuality Education Classes were conducted following the DepEd Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). Two sessions were conducted by a male teacher (aligned with Grade 10 Science), and two sessions by a female teacher (aligned with Grade 10 Social Studies). Sessions were video-recorded and streamed via Facebook Live for research panelists, with participant approval. To capture naturalistic interactions, two cameras were set up in the classroom, and researchers used field notes and memoing to document observations. Transcriptions of these recorded sessions were coded, tabulated, and analyzed using Charmaz's Grounded Theory approach. IDIs with students were conducted using theoretical sampling to gain insights into their experiences, and the transcribed interviews underwent rigorous coding and analysis. Additionally, FGDs with teachers were conducted to assess their perspectives, with discussions transcribed, coded, and analyzed systematically. Constant comparative analysis was applied to ensure consistency, and theoretical saturation was determined using code occurrence, higher-order groupings, and code meanings following Hennink and Kaiser's definitions (2022). To achieve theoretical saturation, additional IDI and FGD sessions were conducted, ensuring the robustness of findings before finalizing interpretations. The final stage involved data analysis and theory generation, where data from IDIs, FGDs, and classroom observations were subjected to Charmaz coding and constant comparative analysis to refine themes and validate interpretations through participant feedback.

2.4. Data Analysis

Charmaz's coding process (Stough & Lee, 2021) was used to analyse the gathered data, which included several tiers of coding. Data from class observations, IDIs and FGDs were documented using audio-video recording, memoing, and field notes. Constant comparative analysis was used to compare data across different tools, aiming to identify recurring themes and patterns. The entire method involved a flexible, iterative, and systematic approach to data analysis. Likewise, member checking and qualitative data analysis validation were done to ensure accuracy of findings. These findings informed the development of theoretical frameworks that explain gender-based teaching-learning dynamics in human sexuality education.

3. Results

The current article's results and discussions emphasizes part of the findings of the

original study. The following results focuses on the gender-based teaching-learning classroom dynamics in the conduct of human sexuality education. Classroom discussion of human sexuality plays a vital role in imparting knowledge and nurturing understanding about the concept of sex and other topics surrounding it. However, an often-overlooked nature of this is the influence of gender dynamics on the teaching and learning process. This study also investigates how human sexuality education is being taught and learned, carefully examining the interplay between the genders of both teachers and students in a classroom setting. By analysing the personal experiences, perspectives, and teaching methods of educators of both genders, as well as considering the unique needs and reactions of students across the gender spectrum, valuable in-sights into the multifaceted nature of sexuality education can be achieved. This study intended to shed light on the complexities of gender dynamics in the classroom processes during human sexuality education, from creating inclusive and safe environments to tackling stereotypes and taboos. This section is divided into two: (1) Teaching Dynamics in Human Sexuality Education, and (2) Learning Dynamics in Human Sexuality Education.

3.1. Teaching Dynamics in Human Sexuality Education

Teachers are responsible for maintaining an inclusive and safe learning environment. Through comprehensive unpacking of curricula and evidence-based approaches, teachers provide accurate information and adopt open dialogue while facilitating the knowledge acquisition of the intricacies of gender, sexual orientation, religion, and sociocultural factors relative to the concepts of human sexuality. Addressing students' diverse needs, educators engage in discussions, challenge misconceptions, and promote critical thinking, consent, and healthy relationships. These efforts help students make informed decisions and contribute to a more equitable society. Based on classroom observations, focus group discussions, and student interviews, eight key factors were identified in teaching human sexuality (Figure 1): gender prejudice; teacher competence; creation and maintenance of a safe and supportive environment; playful engagement; code switching and the use of vernacular terminologies; personalization and real-life application; teacher-directed instruction; and use of audio-visual aids.

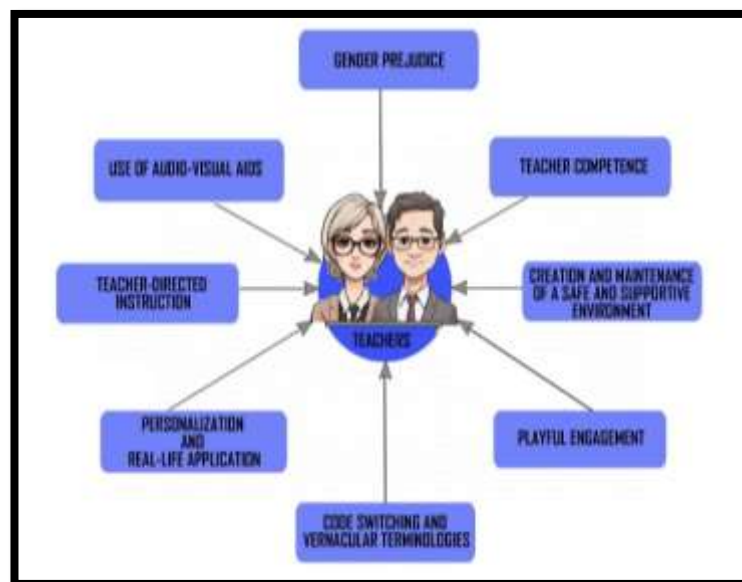


Figure 1. Concept map of teaching dynamics in human sexuality education.

Source: Illustration is original.

Gender prejudice refers to the biased attitudes and preconceived challenges and stereotypes that teachers may hold towards students based on their gender. Gender bias can create challenges in the classroom, particularly for male teachers. Sir Penis expressed concern, stating, *“It would be a challenge for to teach a room full of girls. They might be offended as we are not really open to these kinds of conversations.”* Furthermore, during the class observation, it was noted that Sir Penis had a hard time using the most decent vernacular terms for genitals and sex-related topics. Sir Penis explained, *“I am concerned as to what my students would think about me if I said those terms. Especially the girls.”*

On the contrary, Mam Vagina rejected this stereotyping, emphasizing equal handling of all students, *“I don’t really think I would be having a hard time teaching them because I’m a very open-minded person. Regardless of the student’s gender, I would treat them equally. Thus, I don’t have a challenge teaching both sexes.”*

Teacher competence in sex, gender and related concepts, refers to teachers having in depth understanding of such concepts and being able to engage in discussion, as well as answer student questions. Such teachers foster a safe and inclusive learning environment, promoting open dialogue and critical thinking. They cater to students’ needs, intervene when they need to, and foster greater understanding and positive attitudes about sex and gender issues. Teacher competence is an imperative in spurring evocative conversations related to human sexuality. Sir Penis and Mam Vagina both discussed how they taught their subjects in their class and what they thought about those. Sir Penis, shared, *“I was given assignment to teach the endocrine system with specifically looking at human reproductive system and it’s hormones. I would grade myself as 7.5 out of 10.”* On the other hand, Mam Vagina described her class discussions on human sexual education by saying, *“The lesson I taught was about sex, gender identity, and gender role of men, women and LGBTQAI+. I also discussed the various gender related discrimination and violence across cultures. I’ll give myself 9.5 because the lessons have been remembered by the students and they have positive reactions.”*

These are affirmed through a class observation memo indicating that students responded positively to the discussions, showed understanding, and the researcher confirmed the accuracy of the information shared. Overall, the teachers demonstrate excellent content knowledge and competency in handling rebuttals, sensitive questions, and facilitating discussions on sex, gender, and related concepts. The teachers exhibited strong content knowledge and the ability to handle rebuttals and sensitive questions effectively. They possessed comprehensive knowledge and expertise in sex, gender, and related concepts, which allowed them to facilitate discussions and address student inquiries successfully. Their self-evaluations and positive student responses further reinforce their competence in teaching these subjects.

Maintaining and creating a safe and supportive environment is vital to human sexuality education. Both teachers in the study used diverse strategies to ensure inclusivity: from pacing the room to employing engaging activities. When it comes to starting and maintaining healthy discussions, both teachers have their own approaches. Sir Penis starts by warning students to have an open mind during the discussion, as he anticipates that the topic may evoke exaggerated feelings and unruly behavior. Sir Penis stated, *“Prior to the lesson, I would remind my students to be open-minded during the discussion in order for us to understand the lesson without distraction as the lesson will evoke exaggerated feelings such as rowdy laughter and the students would become unruly.”*

Mam Vagina stressed out the importance of openness, stating, *“If you’re open or approachable (to them), students won’t feel uncomfortable.”* Sir Penis also emphasized creating a classroom environment where students can freely express their ideas and questions the practical application of knowledge, saying, *“I would make the classroom be a place where they can freely express their ideas by giving them time to speak out their opinions or raise their questions about the topics being discussed.”*

Using humor and playful engagement help students feel more comfortable when discussing taboo concepts. The class observation field notes revealed that both teachers incorporate humor, punchlines, and playful banter during their lessons. This elicited varying degrees of emotion among the students, ranging from timid smiles to hearty laughter. It is noted that Mam Vagina delivered the punchlines more naturally, while Sir Penis is more hesitant in injecting jokes.

Mam Vagina held that integrating humor and laughter into the teaching process helps students emotionally engage with sensitive societal issues. When asked about the role of emotions in human sexuality education, Mam Vagina said, *“In the usual teaching process, one does not teach to address student IQ, one must also build up their EQ for them to learn how to deal emotionally with similar taboo issues in the society.”* She also acknowledges that laughter builds rapport, asserting, *“Laughter should be part of our teaching because, psychologically, if you laugh with the students, your rapport will be better.”*

In a class composed of students from diverse language and cultural backgrounds, the use of code switching, and translation is needed. The teachers switched between English, Tagalog, and the local language (*Akeanon*) during their discussions. This helped in accommodating the language needs of the students and facilitated smoother transitions between topics. When sexual vernacular terms are used, students react with giggling and heightened their engagement. The choice of terminologies also elicited varying responses,

ranging from timid smiles to hearty laughter. Both teachers frequently switched between languages to accommodate their students' diverse linguistic backgrounds. Sir Penis confirmed feeling awkward limiting him from achieving the goal of being comfortable using the vernacular language in the class. Mam Vagina, on the other hand, comfortably used vulgar vernacular terms and believed these should be embraced and normalized. Mam Vagina emphasized the importance of evoking emotions and integrating real-life stories to enhance awareness and knowledge retention. Mam Vagina explained, *"Those emotions should be evoked. Plain narrating information is boring. A teacher must also integrate anecdotes, real-life stories of people experiencing similar things and delivering them using the vernacular. They heard these words every day, just like when I taught them about the reproductive system, I uttered a list of reproductive organs such as easog, buto, puyas (testicles, penis, vagina). And since I really said those in the class, students will normalize and embrace the use of these terminologies."*

In a class composed of students from diverse language and cultural backgrounds, personalizing the content topics and relating them to real-life situations were crucial in maintaining student engagement. The class observation field note highlighted that students display disinterest when the topics are purely content knowledge delivery while attention is at peak when the teachers incorporate personal experiences and real-life application of the topics. Mam Vagina starts her lessons with personal stories to draw emotional reactions, ensuring that the content be more relatable. She emphasized that, *"It is very important to help students understand how concepts are relevant to life. Like what's the point of learning if you can't apply it to real-life situation."*

The class observation field notes highlighted the smooth transitions between topics and the interactive teaching style employed by both teachers. The teachers actively engaged students in discussions, asked questions, and encouraged their participation, creating an interactive learning environment. It is also observed that both teachers can command respect from students, regardless of gender. The teachers introduced different topics in a structured manner, allowing students to develop a steady understanding of human sexuality. The teachers ensured a coherent flow of information, promoting effective learning. They used strategies such as increasing voice volume, redirecting students to audio visuals, and giving warnings when necessary. The sequential approach and smooth topic transitions suggested a structured yet flexible teaching methodology where the teachers actively control and direct the discussion. Mam Vagina stated, *"We must set limits as these topics will bring about the students' obnoxious side."* Sir Penis added that the level of student participation and interest also influence the flow of the discussion. If students feel uncomfortable or are not interacting much, the teacher may increase engagement or opt to transition to the next topic.

When asked about how they handle sarcastic rebuttals and sensitive questions, Mam Vagina stated, *"I answer them straightforward whether the topic is sensitive or not. I answer them accordingly to how my references describe or explain it in simple and direct way. If they are asking beyond the topic, I would redirect them to the lesson."*

The class observation field notes highlighted that both teachers utilized audio-visual aids, combining verbal explanations with visual presentations to scaffold student understanding of the topic. Teachers preferred to use illustrations rather than explicit graphics, considering the comfort level of the students. Different visual aids triggered various emotional responses among the students, including laughter and feelings of disbelief, shock, and revulsion when exposed to graphic illustrations such as female genital mutilation. Mam Vagina's use of graphic depictions, such as female genital mutilation, elicited strong emotional reactions from students, while Sir Penis used a subtle, more neutral visuals. When asked about their class discussions, Sir Penis explained that if available, he would rather use a replica of the system to maximize learning experience. Sir Penis stated, *"Aside from using PowerPoint presentations, if resources are available, I would rather show actual body parts using a human torso model."*

3.2. Learning Dynamics in Human Sexuality Education

Learning dynamics in human sexuality education necessitate active learner interaction and an inclusive classroom atmosphere. This is evident when students are encouraged to ask questions, share personal experiences, and participate in open dialogue, where empathy and understanding are present. Teachers use diverse teaching approaches such as interactive lecture-discussions, visual aids, multimedia, and role-playing, to scaffold learning and address differentiated learning styles. These approaches help students acquire knowledge, develop critical thinking, and manifest better understanding of human sexuality. Analysis of collected data from classroom observations, interviews, and FGD identified 5 key factors in the learning dynamics (Figure 2): sociocultural and multimedia influences, teacher gender

preferences, teaching methods, language challenges, and religion's influence.

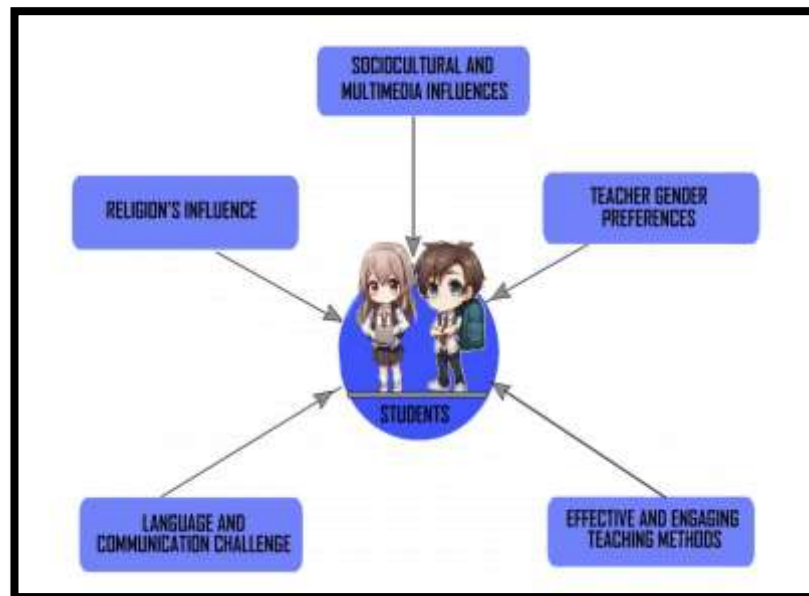


Figure 2. Concept map of learning dynamics in human sexuality education.
Source: Illustration is original.

Current learners are digital natives, accustomed to social media and multimedia, thus, this significantly impact their scientific experiences on human sexuality. Simon said, *“I always use social media. It’s an important part of my life,”* stressing its role in molding his awareness, especially on LGBTQ+ issues. Movies and TV series, particularly “BLs (Boy’s Love)” films, also influence students’ perspectives. Media, in general, was seen as a platform where discussions and posts related to LGBTQ+ issues and gender discrimination take place. Participants believed that exposure to such content on social media increased their awareness and understanding of these topics. Dondon said, *“Yes, sir. I learned a lot about human sexuality from these platforms because a lot of people post about LGBTQ as well as different gender discrimination.”*

While social media inspire learning, it also provides distraction, as one student admitted. Students recognized the negative impact it could have on their studies, as social media use often led to distractions, making it challenging for them to complete tasks on time. Tricia acknowledged its impact as a source of distraction, saying, *“It is a source of distraction while studying. Like for instance you could not finish a homework on time because you are busy browsing your account.”* Dondon, a male student, further elaborated, stating, *“My time gets wasted due to social media. There were times when I forget to study for an exam.”*

All students (both male and female) expressed a preference for female teachers as facilitators in discussing human sexuality concepts. Rey remarked, *“I prefer Mam Vagina’s class because her jokes help me easily remember concepts.”* This is affirmed by class observation field note emphasizing that the female teacher’s class exhibited higher levels of engagement and participation compared to the male teacher’s class. Both teachers used humor and employed similar classroom management techniques. However, emotional reactions are more pronounced in the classes of mam Vagina, while students in Sir Penis’s class displayed hesitation in asking questions and restraining their reactions. Furthermore, students felt more comfortable expressing their ideas and emotions in the classes of the Mam Vagina. Simon, a bisexual male student, explained, *“In my opinion, female teachers are better at explaining things.”* It is noted though that most male students prefer to disclose sexually sensitive matters to male teachers.

Students identified the use of humor, visual aids, and a tolerant atmosphere as essential in knowledge retention in the context of human sexuality. Simon stressed the importance of visual learning style, stating, *“I usually learn through my eyes. When the teacher shows pictures related to the topic, I feel that I can understand human sexuality topics easily.”*

Tricia also agreed that audiovisual aids help in understanding the discussion better. Maria added that audiovisual aids, such as videos and presentations, can help in understanding the topics in a non-judgmental way. Additionally, audiovisual aids contributed to increased engagement and participation in the learning process.

Maria mentioned that in their classroom setting, they learn through lectures, discussions, and interactive activities, covering topics such as reproductive health, sexual orientation, and gender identity. When asked about the class where they find it comfortable and easy to understand or remember human sexuality concepts, Rey responded that he would prefer the medium in the local language, referring to Mam Vagina's class. He explained that her jokes helped him easily remember concepts, mentioning that certain styles she uses, such as putting concepts in a song, aided in concept retention.

Class observation memo took note that the class is consisted of students from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds, some of whom were fluent in various variants of the Filipino language and dialects. While most students could understand standard *Akeanon*, which is a specific dialect, those raised outside of Aklan had difficulty comprehending deep *Akeanon* terminologies, particularly vernacular sexual terms that are not commonly used in daily life. The teachers employed code-switching between English, Tagalog, and *Akeanon*, with students demonstrating more participation when vernacular versions of sexual terminologies were used. Using vernacular terminologies sparked engagement but also presented some issues. Simon asserted, *"The use of vernacular language helps us to understand easier, but there should be caution in the choice of words to avoid being offensive."*

Religious beliefs have been proven to shape students' understanding of human sexuality. Tricia asserted, *"Taking care of your body reflects how compliant to a person is to his religion. For example, engaging in sexual activity prior to marriage is a sin and a violation to the teachings of the bible."*

It is noted that students experienced confusion between the teachings of their churches and the ones discussed at school. The students provided various responses, with some following the teachings of their church or family, while others lean towards scientific knowledge and the teachings of their teachers. Fred expressed his confusion, saying, *"When science books say that we have to use contraceptives methods such as pills and condoms, I become confused since the Bible says otherwise in Genesis telling Adam and Eve to go and multiply."*

Dondon shed light on his biased acceptance of LGBTQIA+ as influenced by religious teachings, stating, *"Our church dictates that there are only two sexes, male and female. Other gender identities were never mentioned."*

4. Discussion

The findings of this study illuminate the significant impact of gender dynamics on the teaching and learning processes in human sexuality education, corroborating and expanding upon existing literature in the field. The observed prevalence of gender prejudice, especially among male educators, seems to be in line with previous research that found that male teachers face much greater challenges than female teachers in sensitizing their female students about gender-sensitive issues. This reticence may suppress open discussions and restrict students' academic learning, as outlined in the research of Lavy and Megalokonomou (2024). The competence that female educators like Mam Vagina exhibit in the study highlights how their ability to facilitate discussions and create a safe space around sensitive topics can be a valuable asset. This finding is in accordance with the study performed by Vebrianto, Rus, Jannah, Putriani, and Syafaren (2020), highlighting the need for informed and flexible educators to encourage critical examination of complex topics, such as gender identity and sexual health.

The study emphasizes that creating a safe and supportive classroom environment is a necessity resonating with the findings by Russell, Bishop, Saba, James, and Ioverno (2021), which support policies that help foster constructive conversations. A pedagogical strategy used successfully by female educators is humor and playful engagement, which validates the findings of Weisi and Mohammadi (2023) that such approaches lead to increased student comfort and knowledge retention on a complex and sensitive material. Furthermore, the deliberate application of code-switching and vernacular language in their interactions with students emphasizes the need for linguistic flexibility in multilingual classrooms, echoing the findings of Masunungure and Maguvhe (2024), who advocated for the adoption of culturally relevant pedagogy. This also agrees with the findings of Nagal (2020) in which the use of local language can scaffold learning.

The findings also highlight the need to make content discussion relevant and relatable to real life. Research indicates that connecting classroom content to real-life situations enhances student engagement. This corroborates with the study of certain scholars (Mebert et al., 2020) claiming that when students see the relevance of their lessons to everyday life, they are more motivated and retain information better. Additionally, the sharing of personal

experiences helped to normalize the subject matter and create engagement and interest in the class sessions as supported by the study of De Haas and Hutter (2021). In this way, it not only enhances student interest but also ensures that the knowledge imparted is clearly understood in relation to daily life.

Finally, audio-visual aids are used to establish student comfort so that they can keep their focus in a synchronous learning environment. The results conform with the study by Tareen, Tareen, and Nazmine (2021) claiming that audio visual aids improve learning outcomes and increase attention in multimedia lectures for students. A study by Shivali (2022) also corroborates this finding advocating the use of appropriate and relevant visual media to encourage the learning whilst also taking care of the comfort of student. In addition, the result is supported by a study of Bawamenevi, Lase, Zega, and Gea (2024) stating that audio-visual media significantly increases students' interest and understanding of explanatory text material, making it a valuable instructional tool. These results also reinforce the findings of Johnson, Flentje, and Bartholomaeus (2020) which emphasizes the importance of effective teaching methodologies on sexuality education.

In terms of learning, the gender dynamics within the classroom significantly affect how students absorb and interact with the content of human sexuality education. Students expressed a preference for female teachers, associating their teaching styles with higher levels of comfort and engagement, which led to more active participation and sharing of personal experiences. This gender preference bias among students corroborates with the study of Russell and Gruys (2021) claiming that teacher sexual misconduct is perceived as less detrimental to students when the teacher is a woman, more acceptable when the teacher is heterosexual, and when the teacher is older. Male students, while comfortable discussing certain topics with male teachers, often felt inhibited in mixed-gender settings, particularly when female teachers addressed sexual health issues. This dynamic indicates that students' comfort levels and engagement are closely tied to the gender composition of the teacher-student relationship.

The findings also show how strongly religious beliefs and multimedia platforms mold students' views on human sexuality education. These findings demonstrate that when used correctly, technology can increase awareness and acceptance of other bodies and identities, corroborating some works (Tareen et al., 2012; Stewart et al., 2021). Thus, the researchers believe that the effective use of technology provides tools for educators to build a more aware and accepting learning environment where gender stereotypes can be challenged. Regarding religion, educators must navigate these complexities by respecting religious views while providing evidence-based information, thus empowering students to engage in critical thinking and discernment in choosing facts from beliefs. This approach aligns with the findings of Slominski (2020) and Mercer (2021), emphasizing the need for sensitivity towards students' diverse socio-cultural backgrounds and beliefs.

The findings indicate that gender-sensitive teaching approaches, in combination with professional development opportunities tailored for educators, and especially male teachers, to enhance their competence and confidence in discussing sensitive topics to both genders of students. This will better allow educators to accommodate individual needs and facilitate human sexuality education classes. Insights gained from this research could contribute to designing more efficient, inclusive, gender-sensitive school-based education approaches, thus creating a more conducive learning environment for all learners.

5. Conclusions

This article emphasized the importance of gender-based dynamics in human sexuality education in the classroom setting. It discovered that gender-inscribed exchanges between teachers and students are critical in shaping the classroom environment and influencing how students engage with sensitive concepts.

Human sexuality education is taught in a classroom setting with significant consideration of the genders of teachers and students. Female teachers often create a more comfortable and inclusive environment, facilitating open discussions and seamless engagement. Male teachers face challenges when addressing sensitive topics with female students, leading to discomfort and reduced interaction. Teaching methods such as humor, personalization, and code-switching are employed to enhance understanding and engagement, but their effectiveness varies based on the gender dynamics in the classroom.

Human sexuality education as learned in a classroom setting is influenced by the genders of teachers and students, with students expressing a preference for female teachers due to

their perceived ability to foster a supportive atmosphere. Learning dynamics are shaped by students' comfort levels, which are higher in female-led classes, leading to healthier interactions. Gender preferences also affect how students engage with content, share personal experiences, and ask questions. Additionally, sociocultural influences, language challenges, and religious beliefs impact students' understanding and acceptance of the material.

The findings of this research underscore the importance of gender dynamics in human sexuality education, revealing that the gender of both teachers and students significantly influences classroom interactions and learning outcomes. The preference for female teachers in discussing sensitive topics suggests that educational institutions should consider gender-sensitive training programs that equip all educators, particularly male teachers, with the skills to navigate discussions around human sexuality effectively. Creating an inclusive and supportive environment is important in facilitating open dialogue, reducing discomfort, and enhancing student engagement. The study emphasizes the need for curriculum revisions that integrate gender-sensitive teaching approaches, allowing for a more comprehensive approach to human sexuality education that addresses the diverse needs of students.

Future research should explore the long-term effects of gender-based teaching dynamics on students' understanding and attitudes toward human sexuality beyond the classroom setting. Longitudinal studies could provide insights into how these dynamics influence students' behaviors and decision-making regarding sexual health and relationships as they transition into adulthood. Additionally, research could investigate the experiences of non-binary and LGBTQ+ students in human sexuality education to ensure that curricula are inclusive and representative of all gender identities. Further studies should also examine the impact of different teaching methods and materials on student engagement and learning outcomes, particularly in diverse classroom settings, to identify best practices that enhance the effectiveness of human sexuality education across various demographics.

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