

Original Article

Examining Gender Discrimination Towards Male Education Students

Gabriel V. Buensuceso , Niña Fe C. Cuyom , Ronalene P. Dampil , Alyssa Joy F. Dela Rosa ,
Russel V. Espanillo , Charlene D. Gomez , Monica G. Junio 

Author Information:

College of Education, Bataan Peninsula State University - Dinalupihan Campus,
Dinalupihan, Bataan, Philippines

Correspondence:
gabrielvbuensuceso@gmail.com

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Abstract. Gender discrimination remains a continuing concern in education, particularly among male students in teacher education programs. This study examined the experiences of gender discrimination among male education students and assessed whether these experiences differed by selected profile variables. Using a quantitative descriptive research design, data were collected from 31 male education students through a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, weighted means, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) with post hoc testing. Results showed that male education students experienced gender discrimination in the form of unequal standards, lack of trust, high expectations, verbal jokes, and being misunderstood because of their gender. No significant differences in discrimination experiences were found when respondents were grouped by year level. However, significant differences were observed across academic programs, particularly in experiences related to verbal abuse and perceived behavior. The study concludes that male education students face specific forms of gender-based discrimination that vary by academic program rather than educational level. These findings highlight the need for awareness programs and inclusive policies to address gender bias in teacher education. The developed information, education, and communication (IEC) materials may help promote understanding and support a more inclusive and respectful learning environment.

Keywords: Gender discrimination; Male educators; Quantitative; IEC material; Philippines.

Gender, as defined by UNESCO (2023), encapsulates socially constructed roles and expectations attributed to both women and men. However, these societal norms often perpetuate gender biases, with boys less inclined than girls to envision teaching careers (Han et al., 2020). Extant research consistently underscores how pervasive gender bias dissuades men from entering traditionally female-dominated fields, notably early education. Moss-Racusin et al. (2022) found that male educators, upon exposure to articles highlighting bias against male elementary school teacher applicants, anticipated discrimination, experienced decreased belongingness, and exhibited diminished interest in the field.

Within the educational sphere, gender discrimination manifests through various mechanisms, perpetuating unequal treatment and limited opportunities for male educators (Wang, 2023). Embedded in prevailing societal norms, male educators face discrimination in the form of undervaluation and differential treatment relative to their female counterparts (De La Torre-Pérez et al., 2022). Recognizing these discriminatory practices is crucial to

understanding the challenges male educators face and their overall professional growth. UNESCO (2023) emphasized the impact of gender imbalances on the academic and professional development of male educators. Their findings indicate that higher attrition rates among male teachers are associated with lower job satisfaction and retention, ultimately affecting educational quality. This attrition results in a loss of diverse perspectives within the teaching workforce, as male educators often exhibit lower work commitment due to greater employment mobility. Efforts to encourage men to pursue teaching careers and improve working conditions are essential to address these challenges.

Despite efforts to enhance gender diversity, elementary education remains predominantly female-dominated, underscoring the imperative to advance gender equality and inclusivity in shaping students' lives through educators. Globally, female teachers constitute 67.28% of the total teaching population, with an even more pronounced gender disparity in the Philippines, where females comprise 87.42% of primary-level teachers as of 2020 (World Bank Data, 2020). Additionally, enrollment data from the Office of the Campus Registrar indicate a significant gender gap in education programs at Bataan Peninsula State University - Dinalupihan Campus during the Second Semester of the Academic Year 2022-2023, with a male-to-female ratio of 1:3, underscoring male underrepresentation in these programs.

Moving forward, it is imperative to develop strategies to effectively address gender discrimination in education. This study seeks to fill this gap by comprehensively examining the gender discrimination experiences of male education students and developing informative *Information, Education, and Communication* (IEC) materials to tackle these issues effectively. Despite growing awareness, a dearth of research specifically focusing on gender discrimination among male education students underscores the need for this study to inform policy and practice in fostering a more inclusive educational environment.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive quantitative research design to systematically collect data on gender discrimination among male students enrolled in an educational program. Specifically, we profile respondents by year level and academic program, describe their experiences of gender discrimination, analyze significant differences by profile, and propose an IEC material based on the findings.

Research Participants

This study focuses on thirty-one (31) male students currently enrolled in education programs at Bataan Peninsula State University- Dinalupihan Campus during the second semester of the Academic Year 2022-2023. The selection of respondents was limited to students from the first year up to the third year, as fourth-year students are currently engaged in pre-service teaching activities. It is important to note that these 31 respondents experienced gender discrimination and willingly participated in a pre-survey conducted before the study.

Research Instrument

This study used a researcher-designed quantitative questionnaire. The quantitative section used a 4-point Likert Scale. The questionnaire was validated by three (3) members of the Gender and Development Committee and one (1) research expert from the university. Moreover, reliability was assessed through a pilot test at Bataan Peninsula State University – Balanga Campus, using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.96$).

Data Gathering Procedure

This study used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-random sampling technique in which participants are selected based on specific characteristics or criteria relevant to the research objectives. It is beneficial in our study for ensuring the representation of male education students who have experienced gender discrimination. (Campbell et al., 2020). The questionnaire was administered face-to-face, and the authors personally distributed completed questionnaires to respondents simultaneously. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, strict health and safety protocols were strictly enforced during the in-person survey, including maintaining physical distance, wearing masks, and providing alcohol-based hand rubs. These measures aimed to ensure the well-being and safety of both the authors and the respondents. The survey administrator created an opportunity to guide respondents, thereby fostering their understanding of the questions and enhancing the accuracy of the data collected.

Ethical Considerations

Using a pre-survey consisting of two yes/no questions, consent was obtained from students to participate in this study. The survey questionnaires were distributed to individuals who indicated they agreed to participate. The consent letter was included in the survey questionnaires. In accordance with RA 10173, the Data Privacy Act of 2012, all collected data was handled with the highest care and secrecy. All methods were conducted ethically and were adequately coordinated with respondents and school officials.

Data Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0*, employing various statistical tools to derive insights. To describe the respondents' profiles, including their Year Level and Academic Program, *frequencies (f)*, *percentages (%)*, and *weighted means* were used. These descriptive statistics provided a comprehensive overview of the distribution and characteristics of the study participants. To assess respondents' experiences of gender discrimination, *means* and *standard deviations (SDs)* were used to quantify the degree of agreement or disagreement with the provided indicators. Furthermore, to identify significant differences in the gender discrimination experienced by respondents based on their profiles, an *Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)* was conducted. ANOVA enabled examination of variations in experiences across demographic categories, such as Year Level and Academic Program. Using ANOVA, the study examined whether these demographic factors significantly affected the extent and nature of gender discrimination experienced by male education students, consistent with Astalini et al. (2021).

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 presents an overview of the respondents' profiles in the study. It outlines the distribution of respondents by year level and academic program. By year level, the table shows that 35.48% of respondents were first-year students, 38.71% were second-year students, and 25.81% were third-year students. This breakdown indicates a relatively balanced representation across the different years of study. Regarding the academic program enrolled in, the table reveals that the *Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd)* program had the highest number of respondents, accounting for 38.71% of the total. The *Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECEd)* program ranked second, with 35.48% of respondents, while the *Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd)* program accounted for 25.81%. The findings of the study's respondent profile align with broader trends observed in global gender disparities in career choices. The 2023 Global Gender Gap Report by the World Economic Forum highlights a persistent gendered division in career paths, with men being underrepresented in fields such as education, health, and welfare, while women are underrepresented in *Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)* fields. This societal pattern is reflected in the distribution of respondents across academic programs in the study, where male-dominated programs such as Engineering, Mathematics, and Physics are represented less frequently than female-dominated fields such as Linguistics, Education, and the social sciences.

Table 1. Profile of Male Education Students in Bataan Peninsula State University - Dinalupihan Campus (S.Y. 2022-2023)

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Year Level		
1st Year	11	35.48%
2nd Year	12	38.71%
3rd Year	8	25.81%
Academic Program Enrolled		
BECEd	11	35.48%
BEEd	12	38.71%
BSEd	8	25.81%
Total	31	100.00%

Moreover, a study found that female students are less likely than their male counterparts to pursue STEM subjects and more likely to exit the STEM pipeline at later stages (Vooren et al., 2022). This phenomenon contributes to the observed disparity in academic program enrollment among respondents, with fewer males enrolling in the BEEd program, which traditionally falls within the education, health, and welfare fields. Similarly, research by Stewart-Williams and Halsey (2021) highlights variations in subject choices influenced by masculine and feminine roles. The study found that more male students gravitate toward disciplines such as Engineering, Mathematics, and Physics. In contrast, female students tend to specialize in fields such as Linguistics, Education, and the social

sciences. These gendered preferences in subject selection may contribute to the observed distribution of respondents across academic programs in the study, further underscoring the broader societal influence on educational and career pathways based on gender norms and expectations.

Gender Discrimination Experiences of Respondents

Table 2 provides a detailed analysis of the gender discrimination experiences reported by the respondents. The table presents statements on various aspects of discrimination, along with their corresponding mean scores and standard deviations. Under the category of "*Different Recognition*," respondents generally disagreed with statements indicating that they were overlooked, undervalued, or inadequately credited because of their sex. The mean subscore for this category indicates an overall disagreement with experiences of discrimination related to recognition. Similarly, in the "*Opportunities in Access*" category, respondents disagreed with statements indicating that opportunities in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, scholarship grants, research projects, and internship programs were limited for them based on sex. The subscore reflects an overall disagreement with discriminatory practices related to access.

Table 2. *Gender Discrimination Experiences of Respondents*

Statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Different Recognition			
I experienced being overlooked because of my sex.	2.42	0.99	Disagree
My contributions to group projects are undervalued because of my sex.	1.94	0.89	Disagree
I rarely get enough recognition for my accomplishments because of my sex.	2.00	0.89	Disagree
My ideas and opinions are not taken seriously because of my sex.	1.97	0.91	Disagree
I was given inadequate credit for my hard work because of my sex.	1.90	0.79	Disagree
Subscore	2.05	0.74	Disagree
Opportunities in Access			
I experienced limited opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities (e.g., sports, theater, music, etc.) because of my sex.	2.03	0.84	Disagree
I am given limited opportunities to attend co-curricular activities (e.g., seminars, training programs, conferences, etc.) because of my sex.	1.90	0.79	Disagree
I am given limited opportunities to apply for scholarship grants because of my sex.	1.94	0.85	Disagree
I am given limited opportunities to work on research projects because of my sex.	1.94	0.68	Disagree
I am given limited opportunities to participate in internship programs because of my sex.	1.77	0.72	Disagree
Subscore	1.92	0.66	Disagree
Evaluation Standards			
My academic performance is evaluated differently because of my sex.	2.03	0.71	Disagree
I face different standards than my female colleagues because of my sex.	2.35	0.84	Disagree
My schoolwork is judged more harshly because of my sex.	2.26	0.82	Disagree
I feel like my sex prevents me from receiving constructive feedback on my work.	1.97	0.84	Disagree
My sex influences my academic performance.	2.16	0.97	Disagree
Subscore	2.15	0.69	Disagree
Expectations			
I experienced being discriminated against because of my sex.	2.45	0.89	Disagree
I face different standards than my female colleagues because of my sex.	2.52	0.89	Agree
I experienced being unable to be trusted to create a specific task because of my sex.	2.77	1.06	Agree
I experienced high expectations from others because of my sex (e.g., excelling in academics).	2.84	1.04	Agree
I experienced being treated differently in a group because of my sex.	2.48	0.93	Disagree
Subscore	2.61	0.78	Agree
Verbal Abuse			
I experienced being subjected to derogatory remarks in relation to my sex.	2.39	0.95	Disagree
I have been subjected to offensive jokes or teasing because of my sex.	2.71	0.97	Agree
I experienced being given less respect because of my sex compared to the other sex.	2.32	0.75	Disagree
I experienced name-calling because of my sex.	2.48	0.89	Disagree
I experienced isolation and a lack of support because of my sex.	2.10	0.91	Disagree
Subscore	2.40	0.79	Disagree
Behavior			
I experienced being misunderstood in my sex because of my actions.	2.61	0.84	Agree
I experienced being misunderstood by others due to the way I dress.	2.16	0.82	Disagree
I experienced being intentionally ignored or neglected because of my gender.	2.39	0.88	Disagree
I experienced being intentionally humiliated or embarrassed because of my gender.	2.32	0.98	Disagree
I experienced losing self-confidence because of my sex.	2.26	1.03	Disagree
Subscore	2.35	0.71	Disagree
Overall Score	2.25	0.60	Disagree

Legend: 1.00-1.74 Strongly Disagree; 1.75-2.49 Disagree; 2.50-3.24 Agree; 3.25-4.00 Strongly Agree

Regarding "*Evaluation Standards*," respondents disagreed with statements suggesting that they face differential treatment in academic performance evaluation, are held to different standards than female colleagues, receive harsher judgments, and lack constructive feedback due to their sex. The subscore indicates a general disagreement with discriminatory evaluation standards. In terms of "*Expectations*," while respondents generally disagreed with experiencing discrimination, they indicated agreement with facing different standards, being unable to be trusted with specific tasks, and experiencing high expectations from others due to their sex. The subscore suggests an overall agreement with discriminatory expectations. Under "*Verbal Abuse*," respondents generally disagreed with experiencing derogatory remarks, name-calling, isolation, and lack of support based on their sex. However, they agreed with experiencing offensive jokes or teasing. The subscore indicates overall disagreement with the statement regarding verbal abuse. In the category of "*Behavior*," respondents generally agreed with feeling misunderstood in their sex because of their actions, and losing self-confidence due to their sex. However, they disagreed with being misunderstood based on their dressing style or intentionally ignored, humiliated, or embarrassed because of their gender. The subscore reflects an overall disagreement with discriminatory behaviors.

Based on the results, the respondents faced different standards than their female colleagues due to their sex. Male teachers' participation is highly advantageous, although they constitute only a small proportion of the teaching population. (Heffernan, 2021). For example, men are not trusted to care for children since society believes that women should do it. Early Childhood Education is generally associated with mothering and being "natural" for women. In contrast, men interested in the subject are frequently seen as "unnatural," as sexual predators, and as sexual deviants. This association significantly contributes to the absence of male educators in the field. As a result, there is a societal perception that women should teach young children (Mistry & Sood, 2022). Furthermore, the respondents were not entrusted with specific tasks because of their gender, indicating a lack of confidence in their abilities.

The results found that male education students received high expectations from others because of their sex. Those who apply pressure to respondents may come from their friends or even their family. Parenting that follows gender stereotypes can have an impact on kids' lives. Children are more likely to have gender-stereotypical expectations in households with traditional gender roles, for instance (Endendijk & Portengen, 2022). Like instructors, parents can have an impact on their children's academic performance by having preconceived notions about their child's potential, as well as conscious and unconscious gender stereotypes and biases.

The results indicated that the respondents experienced offensive jokes or teasing that were explicitly gender-based. According to the Council of Europe, jokes, distributing false information, threats, slander, incitement to violence, and expressions of hate are only a few examples of gender-based hate speech. It tries to degrade, dehumanize, and terrorize an individual or group of people. The respondents experienced being misunderstood in their sex because of their actions (Flor et al., 2022), stating that society sets boundaries that clearly separate the characteristics of men and women. Therefore, it is expected that people behave in ways appropriate to their gender. Many people have the impression that guys who wish to work with kids must be predators, homosexuals, or effeminate. Another notable finding is that respondents faced different standards compared to their female colleagues due to their sex. This observation aligns with existing literature suggesting that male teachers encounter societal perceptions and stereotypes that hinder their participation in the teaching profession, particularly in fields such as Early Childhood Education, which are traditionally associated with mothering roles (O'Connor, 2020). The societal belief that women are inherently more nurturing often leads to mistrust in the abilities of male educators and perpetuates stereotypes that associate men caring for children with suspicion (Skelton, 2023).

Moreover, the study revealed that male education students experienced high expectations from others based on their sex. These expectations, whether from friends or family, can significantly influence individuals' career choices and performance (Endendijk & Portengen, 2022). Parental influences, especially those rooted in traditional gender roles, can shape children's perceptions of their abilities and career paths, potentially reinforcing gender stereotypes and biases. Additionally, the results indicated that respondents encountered offensive jokes or teasing directly related to their gender. Such behavior constitutes gender-based hate speech and contributes to the degradation and dehumanization of individuals based on their gender (Sakki & Castrén, 2022). Furthermore, respondents reported feeling misunderstood in their sex due to their actions, reflecting societal expectations that dictate appropriate behavior based on gender norms (Cislaghi & Heise, 2020). These societal perceptions often create barriers for men interested in careers involving childcare or education, as they may be viewed as deviating

from traditional gender roles and face unjust scrutiny or ridicule.

Differences in Gender Discrimination

Table 3 presents significant differences in gender discrimination experienced by respondents by year level. Regarding *Different Recognition*, *Opportunities in Access*, and *Evaluation Standards*, the analysis indicates no significant differences among respondents by year level. This suggests that perceptions of recognition, access to opportunities, and evaluation standards do not vary significantly across different year levels. However, when examining *Expectations*, a notable difference emerges. Although the differences are not statistically significant, there is a trend indicating that third-year students have higher expectations than first- and second-year students. Significant differences are observed in experiences of *Verbal Abuse* and *Behavior* based on year level. Third-year students report significantly higher levels of verbal abuse compared to first-year and second-year students. Additionally, there is a significant difference in behavioral misconceptions reported by third-year students compared to second-year students.

Table 3. Significant Differences in the Gender Discrimination of the Respondents Based on Year Level

Factors	Year Level	Mean	SD	F-value	Sig.	Interpretation
Different Recognition	First Year	2.07	0.69	0.46	0.64	Not Significant
	Second Year	1.90	0.67			
	Third Year	2.23	0.93			
Opportunities in Access	First Year	1.98	0.55	0.88	0.42	Not Significant
	Second Year	2.03	0.84			
	Third Year	1.65	0.48			
Evaluation Standards	First Year	2.11	0.60	0.43	0.66	Not Significant
	Second Year	2.07	0.90			
	Third Year	2.35	0.42			
Expectations	First Year	2.76	0.78	1.29	0.29	Not Significant
	Second Year	2.33	0.74			
	Third Year	2.83	0.82			
Verbal Abuse	First Year	2.49	0.76	2.21	0.13	Not Significant
	Second Year	2.07	0.73			
	Third Year	2.78	0.81			
Behavior	First Year	2.45	0.71	.063	0.54	Not Significant
	Second Year	2.17	0.66			
	Third Year	2.48	0.81			

Numerous studies have highlighted the significant correlation between educational levels and learning outcomes in online settings. Researchers such as Yu (2021) and Wrigley-Asante et al. (2023) have consistently demonstrated that higher educational levels and gender are associated with better performance and success in online learning. This underscores the importance of considering respondents' educational backgrounds when examining gender discrimination experiences, as educational levels may intersect with gender dynamics to shape individuals' perceptions and experiences. Contrasting findings have emerged regarding gender differences in learning outcomes. While studies such as Yu and Deng (2022) have found no significant gender differences in overall learning outcomes, they have highlighted potential differences in attitudes and engagement between males and females. Similarly, investigations into the relationship between gender and learning styles have yielded inconsistent results, with no significant gender differences in learning outcomes across identified learning styles. Furthermore, studies focusing on learning satisfaction, such as the study by Yawson & Yamoah (2020) on online millennial learners, have found no significant gender differences in satisfaction with the online learning experience.

Table 4 presents significant differences in gender discrimination experienced by respondents across academic programs. In terms of *Different Recognition*, *Opportunities in Access*, and *Evaluation Standards*, the analysis shows no significant differences among respondents by academic program. This suggests that perceptions of recognition, access to opportunities, and evaluation standards do not vary significantly across different academic programs. However, with respect to *Expectations*, there is a noticeable difference. Although the differences are not statistically significant, there is a trend indicating that respondents enrolled in the BEEd program report higher expectations than those in the BECED and BSED programs. The analysis reveals significant differences in experiences of *Verbal Abuse* and *Behavior* across academic programs. Respondents in the BEEd program report significantly higher levels of verbal abuse and behavioral misconceptions compared to those in the BECED and BSED programs. This finding

underscores the importance of addressing and mitigating instances of verbal abuse and behavioral stereotypes within the BEEd program to create a more inclusive and respectful learning environment.

Verbal abuse, defined as emotional abuse aimed at inflicting intense humiliation, denigration, and fear, emerges as a significant issue affecting third-year students. Research by Rapp (2023) underscores the detrimental effects of escalating cascades of verbal abuse from various sources, including parents, peers, or supervisors, on college students' psychological well-being. This finding aligns with the observed higher levels of verbal abuse reported by third-year students in the study. Moreover, Mims (2021) highlights the unpredictability of antisocial behavior, which is often triggered by seemingly minor incidents in the situation. Verbal abuse, particularly in academic settings, can contribute to such behavior, leading to adverse consequences for both the individual and their peers. Akpkip (2021) emphasizes the importance of intervention by school counselors to address verbal abuse and its impact on students' mental health and social relationships.

Table 4. Significant Differences in the Gender Discrimination of the Respondents Based on Academic Program

Factors	Academic Program	Mean	SD	F-value	Sig.	Interpretation
Different Recognition	BECed	1.82	0.69	1.07	0.36	Not Significant
	BEED	2.27	0.86			
	BSEd	2.03	0.57			
Opportunities in Access	BECed	1.87	0.85	0.05	0.95	Not Significant
	BEED	1.92	0.57			
	BSEd	1.98	0.55			
Evaluation Standards	BECed	2.11	0.85	0.04	0.97	Not Significant
	BEED	2.18	0.67			
	BSEd	2.18	0.54			
Expectations	BECed	2.24	0.78	2.80	0.08	Not Significant
	BEED	2.97	0.74			
	BSEd	2.60	0.67			
Verbal Abuse	BECed	2.07	0.72	4.96	0.01	Significant
	BEED	2.90	0.74			
	BSEd	2.10	0.61			
Behavior	BECed	2.05	0.70	5.07	0.01	Significant
	BEED	2.80	0.62			
	BSEd	2.08	0.51			

Conclusion

Male respondents in the study reported encountering distinct standards, a lack of trust in their abilities, and heightened expectations, particularly in academic performance. These experiences, alongside instances of verbal abuse through offensive jokes and feeling misunderstood in terms of behavior due to their gender, underscore the prevalence of gender discrimination within the educational setting. Upon analysis, no significant differences were found in the gender discrimination experienced by respondents across years of study and academic programs, with respect to the following aspects: *Different Recognition*, *Opportunities in Access*, *Evaluation Standards*, *Expectations*, *Verbal Abuse*, and *Behavior*. However, noteworthy disparities were observed concerning *Verbal Abuse* and *Behavior* when comparing the BEEd program with the BECED and BSEd programs. In response to these findings, the authors advocate developing Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to mitigate gender discrimination and foster a more inclusive campus environment. Through the provision of comprehensive resources and engaging content, the authors seek to empower the campus community to challenge harmful stereotypes, embrace diversity, and actively contribute to building a more equitable future.

Contributions of Authors

Author 1: Served as the research leader, overseeing communications, editing presentations and IEC materials, formatting the research paper, sourcing research materials, copywriting, creating the research questionnaire, encoding the results of the research respondents, and coordinating validation with expert validators.

Author 2: Contributed to sourcing research materials, conducting the pre-survey questionnaire, requesting validation from expert validators, encoding the results of the research respondents, and copywriting.

Author 3: Tested the questionnaire's reliability through pilot testing, sourced research materials, conducted the pre-survey questionnaire, encoded the results of the research respondents, and requested validation from expert validators.

Author 4: Sourced research materials, conducted the pre-survey questionnaire, copywrote, finalized the list of respondents, encoded the results of the research respondents, and requested validation from expert validators.

Author 5: Encoded pre-survey, pilot testing, and results of the research respondents, sourced research materials, conducted the pre-survey questionnaire, and requested validation from expert validators.

Author 6: Tested the questionnaire's reliability through pilot testing, sourced research materials, encoded the results of the research respondents, and conducted the pre-survey questionnaire.

Author 7: Sourced research materials, conducted the pre-survey questionnaire, encoded the results of the research respondents, requested validation from expert validators, and copywrote.

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Conflict of Interests

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