

Original Article

Gender and Development (GAD) Discourse in Higher Education Institutions: A Critical Analysis of Institutional Texts in Southern Leyte

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Abstract. This study examined how GAD discourses are translated into institutional texts in HEIs in Southern Leyte using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Specifically, it analyzed the contextualization, production, and linguistic features of GAD-related texts. A qualitative research design was employed, using document analysis, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and in-depth interviews. Data sources included two GAD manuals, three learning modules, and one learning resource collected from four HEIs in Southern Leyte, complemented by interviews with GAD focal persons, administrators, faculty members, and staff participants. The researcher thematically coded and analyzed the data using NVivo 14, while word frequency analysis identified dominant linguistic patterns in institutional texts. Findings revealed that GAD implementation across HEIs remains largely compliance-driven, emphasizing policy reporting and administrative accountability over transformative institutional change. All participating institutions integrated national mandates such as the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710) and the Safe Spaces Act (RA 11313). However, only some demonstrated localized and context-sensitive integration of GAD principles. Institutions with strong organizational support and stable GAD funding produced more participatory and systematically developed texts, whereas resource-constrained HEIs relied on more centralized and less inclusive processes. Linguistic analysis revealed the dominance of bureaucratic terms such as *project* (1.76%), *implementation* (0.55%), *budget* (0.50%), and *monitoring* (0.44%), reflecting the administrative orientation of GAD discourse. Marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and LGBTQ+ communities, remained underrepresented. The study concludes that institutional texts primarily function as mechanisms of compliance rather than transformative instruments for gender equality.

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis; Gender and Development; Higher Education Institutions; Institutional texts; Localization.*

Gender and Development (GAD) has become a central framework for promoting gender equality and inclusive development, particularly within the education sector. As a signatory to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5), the Philippines has institutionalized gender mainstreaming across

government agencies, including Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), recognizing education as a critical site for social transformation (Caywood & Darmstadt, 2024). Beyond knowledge production, HEIs shape social norms, institutional values, and power relations that influence how gender equality is understood and practiced (Marginson, 2019). Consequently, institutional documents such as GAD manuals, policies, and learning modules play a significant role in constructing and communicating gender-related discourses within academic environments.

Recent studies indicate that although higher education institutions widely adopt gender mainstreaming policies, they often implement them in a compliance-driven and procedural manner rather than as transformative initiatives (Cavaghan, 2017; Tildesley, 2023). Research further shows that institutional GAD initiatives frequently struggle with limited contextualization, insufficient inclusivity, and weak integration of intersectional perspectives, particularly regarding marginalized groups such as LGBTQ+ communities, Indigenous Peoples, and persons with disabilities (Silander, 2024; Bowleg, 2022). These studies collectively suggest that the presence of policy frameworks alone does not guarantee meaningful gender-responsive practices.

Within higher education, discourse serves as a form of social practice that both reflects and reinforces institutional priorities and power structures (Fairclough, 1995). Institutional texts, therefore, serve as important sites where gender ideologies are constructed, negotiated, and institutionalized. However, there is limited research on how GAD discourse is translated into institutional texts, particularly in localized and resource-constrained contexts such as provincial HEIs in Southern Leyte. Existing scholarship has largely focused on policy implementation, program evaluation, or quantitative indicators of gender equality, with less attention given to the discursive construction of GAD within institutional documents (Lombardo et al., 2009).

Addressing this gap, the present study examines how GAD discourses are translated into institutional texts in HEIs in Southern Leyte using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Specifically, it analyzes the contextualization, production processes, and linguistic features of GAD-related texts to determine how institutional language reflects commitments, constraints, and priorities regarding gender equality. The study aims to contribute to the development of more inclusive, context-sensitive, and transformative gender-responsive practices in higher education.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis to examine how Gender and Development (GAD) discourses are translated into institutional texts in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Southern Leyte. Specifically, it adopted a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, which views language as a form of social practice and enables the systematic examination of how texts construct, reproduce, and potentially challenge social structures and power relations. CDA operates at three interconnected levels—textual analysis, discursive practice, and sociocultural practice—making it particularly appropriate for analyzing institutional documents such as GAD manuals and learning modules.

The selection of this research design is anchored like the research problem, which focuses on understanding how GAD is articulated, constructed, and institutionalized through language rather than measuring outcomes or testing causal relationships. A qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of meanings, patterns, and contextual nuances embedded in institutional texts and stakeholder perspectives. Unlike quantitative designs that emphasize numerical data, this approach prioritizes interpretation and explanation of linguistic features, discourse production processes, and institutional contexts.

Furthermore, the use of CDA is justified by the study's objective to uncover how institutional language reflects compliance with national GAD mandates while potentially limiting transformative gender practices. By analyzing vocabulary, thematic patterns, and discursive structures, the design enables the identification of dominant narratives, ideological positioning, and the extent to which inclusivity and intersectionality are represented in institutional texts. This approach also facilitates the integration of multiple data sources, including document analysis, Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, and in-depth interviews, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of how GAD discourses are produced and interpreted within HEIs.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants of this study were drawn from four Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Southern Leyte that have established Gender and Development (GAD) structures and possess relevant institutional documents, particularly GAD manuals and gender-related learning modules. The study involved key institutional actors who are directly engaged in the development, implementation, and use of GAD-related texts. These included GAD focal persons, administrators, faculty members, and selected staff, as well as participants in focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. The inclusion of multiple stakeholder groups enabled the study to capture diverse perspectives on how GAD discourses are produced, interpreted, and operationalized within institutional contexts.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select both the participating institutions and individual respondents. This approach is appropriate for qualitative research, particularly when the objective is to obtain rich, relevant, and information-dense data rather than to achieve statistical generalization. The selection of the four HEIs was based on specific criteria, including the availability of GAD-related documents, the presence of institutional GAD mechanisms, and the relevance of these institutions to the research objectives. Within these institutions, participants were selected for their involvement in GAD planning, implementation, or the use of GAD materials, ensuring they possess the necessary knowledge and experience to contribute meaningful insights.

The study included participants who met the following inclusion criteria: (1) individuals officially designated or actively involved in GAD-related functions such as GAD focal persons, coordinators, or committee members; (2) faculty members who utilize GAD-related learning modules in instruction; (3) administrators or staff involved in policy development, implementation, or dissemination of GAD programs; and (4) individuals who participated in Key Informant Interviews (KII), Focus Group Discussions (FGD), or in-depth interviews relevant to the study. The exclusion criteria included individuals with no direct involvement in GAD-related activities, those unfamiliar with institutional GAD documents, and personnel not affiliated with the selected HEIs. This ensured that all participants included in the study had sufficient exposure to and understanding of GAD-related texts and institutional practices.

Table 1. *Profile of the Study Participants*

Participant Code	Institution	Gender	Years in Service	Position/Role
FGD -1	HEI 1	Female	14	GAD Head
FGD -2	HEI 1	Female	35	Faculty Member
FGD -3	HEI 1	Female	9	Faculty Member
FGD -4	HEI 1	Male	9	Faculty Member
IDI - 5	HEI 2	Male	2	Faculty Member
IDI - 6	HEI 2	Male	2	Faculty Member
IDI - 7	HEI 3	Female	20	GAD Head
IDI - 8	HEI 3	Female	5	Faculty Member
IDI - 9	HEI 4	Female	15	Faculty Member
IDI - 10	HEI 4	Male	8	Faculty Member
KII	Higher Education Agency	Female	9	GAD Focal Person

Research Instrument

This study used a combination of researcher-developed and adapted qualitative research instruments to gather data for the analysis of Gender and Development (GAD) discourses in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Southern Leyte. The primary instruments included semi-structured interview guides for Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and in-depth interviews, as well as a document analysis guide for examining institutional texts, such as GAD manuals and learning modules. These instruments were designed to elicit participants' perspectives on the contextualization, production, and linguistic features of GAD-related texts, in alignment with the study's objectives and the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis.

The interview guides were researcher-developed, drawing from the research questions and theoretical constructs of Critical Discourse Analysis, particularly the dimensions of textual analysis, discursive practice, and sociocultural practice (Fairclough, 1995). The questions were also informed by existing GAD frameworks, institutional policies, and prior studies on gender mainstreaming in education, ensuring relevance to both policy and practice. Open-ended questions were used to elicit detailed responses and insights into participants' experiences and institutional processes.

To ensure content validity, the research instruments underwent expert validation prior to data collection. The interview guide validation form was reviewed by subject matter experts in gender studies and research methodology, who assessed the clarity, relevance, and alignment of the questions with the study objectives. Necessary revisions were made based on their recommendations to improve the instruments' accuracy and comprehensiveness. In terms of **reliability**, the study employed strategies appropriate for qualitative research, including consistent interview protocols, systematic data collection procedures, and triangulation of data sources (KIIs, FGDs, in-depth interviews, and document analysis). These measures enhanced the dependability and credibility of the findings.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data for this study were collected through a combination of document analysis, Key Informant Interviews (KII), Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and in-depth interviews conducted across the selected Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Southern Leyte. Prior to data collection, the researcher secured the necessary permissions through formal transmittal letters addressed to institutional authorities, ensuring ethical compliance and access to relevant participants and documents.

The data gathering process began with the collection of institutional documents, specifically GAD manuals and gender-related learning modules, which served as primary sources for discourse analysis. These documents were obtained from the participating HEIs and organized for systematic examination. Following this, the researcher conducted Key Informant Interviews with designated GAD focal persons, administrators, and faculty members who are directly involved in the development and implementation of GAD-related programs. These interviews aimed to gather in-depth insights into the contextualization and production of GAD-related texts.

In addition, Focus Group Discussions were conducted with selected participants to capture shared experiences and collective perspectives regarding the use and interpretation of GAD materials within the institutions. This was complemented by in-depth individual interviews, which enabled exploration of specific issues and viewpoints that might not have emerged in group discussions.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data in this study were analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques guided by Critical Discourse Analysis. The analysis examined how Gender and Development (GAD) discourses are constructed, produced, and represented in institutional texts and stakeholder narratives. Data sources included transcribed interviews from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and in-depth interviews, as well as institutional documents such as GAD manuals and learning modules.

The analysis followed a systematic process. First, all collected data were transcribed, organized, and encoded into NVivo 14 software to facilitate efficient data management. A thematic coding approach was employed to identify recurring patterns, categories, and themes related to the study objectives, particularly on contextualization, production, and linguistic features of GAD-related texts. Codes were generated inductively from the data and refined through iterative review.

Second, textual and linguistic analysis was conducted using NVivo's word frequency and content analysis tools to identify dominant terms and patterns in the institutional documents. This enabled the researcher to examine the prevalence of procedural, gender-related, and transformative language within the texts. The findings from thematic coding and word frequency analysis were then interpreted using the three dimensions of Critical Discourse Analysis: (1) textual analysis, focusing on vocabulary and language patterns; (2) discursive practice, examining how texts are produced and interpreted within institutions; and (3) sociocultural practice, situating the texts within broader institutional and policy contexts.

Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to established ethical standards to protect the rights and welfare of all participants in the research process. Prior to data collection, the researcher secured the necessary approvals and complied with institutional requirements, including obtaining approval from the Research Ethics Committee, as indicated in the study documents.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants before their involvement in the study. Each participant was provided with a clear explanation of the research objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, as well as their rights, including the right to refuse participation or withdraw at any point without penalty. Consent was obtained prior to conducting Key Informant Interviews (KII), Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and in-depth interviews, and permission was sought for audio recording to ensure accurate data capture.

To ensure participant protection and confidentiality, the identities of all respondents were anonymized throughout the research process. Pseudonyms or codes were used in place of real names in transcripts, data files, and the final report. Institutional identifiers were also treated with discretion to prevent unintended disclosure. All collected data, including interview recordings, transcripts, and documents, were securely stored and accessed only by the researcher.

The study also ensured data privacy and security by safeguarding digital and physical files through secure storage systems. Data were used solely for academic and research purposes and were not shared with unauthorized individuals. In line with ethical research practices, all information gathered was handled with strict confidentiality and respect for participants' privacy. Furthermore, the researcher maintained voluntary participation and non-coercion, ensuring that participants were not subjected to any form of pressure or undue influence. The study avoided any procedures that could cause harm, discomfort, or disadvantage to participants. Ethical considerations were also observed in the presentation of findings, ensuring that interpretations were accurate, respectful, and free from misrepresentation.

Results and Discussion

Contextualization of GAD-Related Texts

The analysis of SOP 1 demonstrates that the contextualization of GAD-related texts in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Southern Leyte is organized around five dominant thematic clusters: (1) integration of national policies and laws, (2) localization and relevance of learning materials, (3) use of inclusive and accessible language, (4) inclusion of gender-sensitive support services, and (5) alignment with institutional core values. These themes are not independent dimensions but interconnected components that collectively shape how GAD discourse is translated into institutional practice. The thematic map suggests that the strongest clusters are centered on policy integration and institutional values, indicating that institutional texts primarily frame GAD through formal compliance structures and organizational priorities rather than through transformative and participatory discourse processes. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, these patterns suggest that institutional language not only reflects regulatory expectations but also reproduces existing power structures and institutional norms (Fairclough, 1995).

Figure 1 indicates that policy integration and institutional values serve as organizing mechanisms influencing the remaining themes. The relationship among themes suggests a cascading process in which national policies provide institutional direction, institutional values shape the interpretation of these policies, localization determines contextual relevance, inclusive language influences representation and accessibility, and gender-sensitive support services operationalize these principles into institutional practice. This interconnected structure demonstrates that the effectiveness of GAD discourse depends not on isolated institutional initiatives but on the interaction among policy, language, values, and implementation mechanisms. Weaknesses in one dimension may therefore reduce the effectiveness of the broader institutional GAD framework.

Integration of National Policies and Laws

The findings indicate that all participating HEIs align with national GAD mandates, particularly with legal frameworks such as the Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710) and the Safe Spaces Act (Republic Act No. 11313). Institutional texts strongly emphasize legal awareness, policy compliance, and procedural requirements. While this reflects an institutional commitment to gender mainstreaming, the dominance of policy-oriented language suggests that GAD discourse is often translated into administrative and compliance mechanisms rather than broader, transformative practices.

This finding is significant because policies serve as foundational mechanisms that shape institutional action and determine how gender issues are prioritized. The relationship between policy integration and institutional values suggests that legal mandates set direction, while institutional priorities shape how those mandates are interpreted and implemented. However, limited discussions extending beyond harassment prevention and formal

compliance suggest that institutional engagement with gender concerns may remain narrow in scope. The implication is that HEIs may fulfill regulatory requirements while simultaneously limiting opportunities for critical engagement with broader gender concerns and intersectional perspectives. Similar findings from McCarthy et al. (2021) and Tildesley (2023) suggest that gender mainstreaming often becomes procedural compliance rather than meaningful institutional transformation.

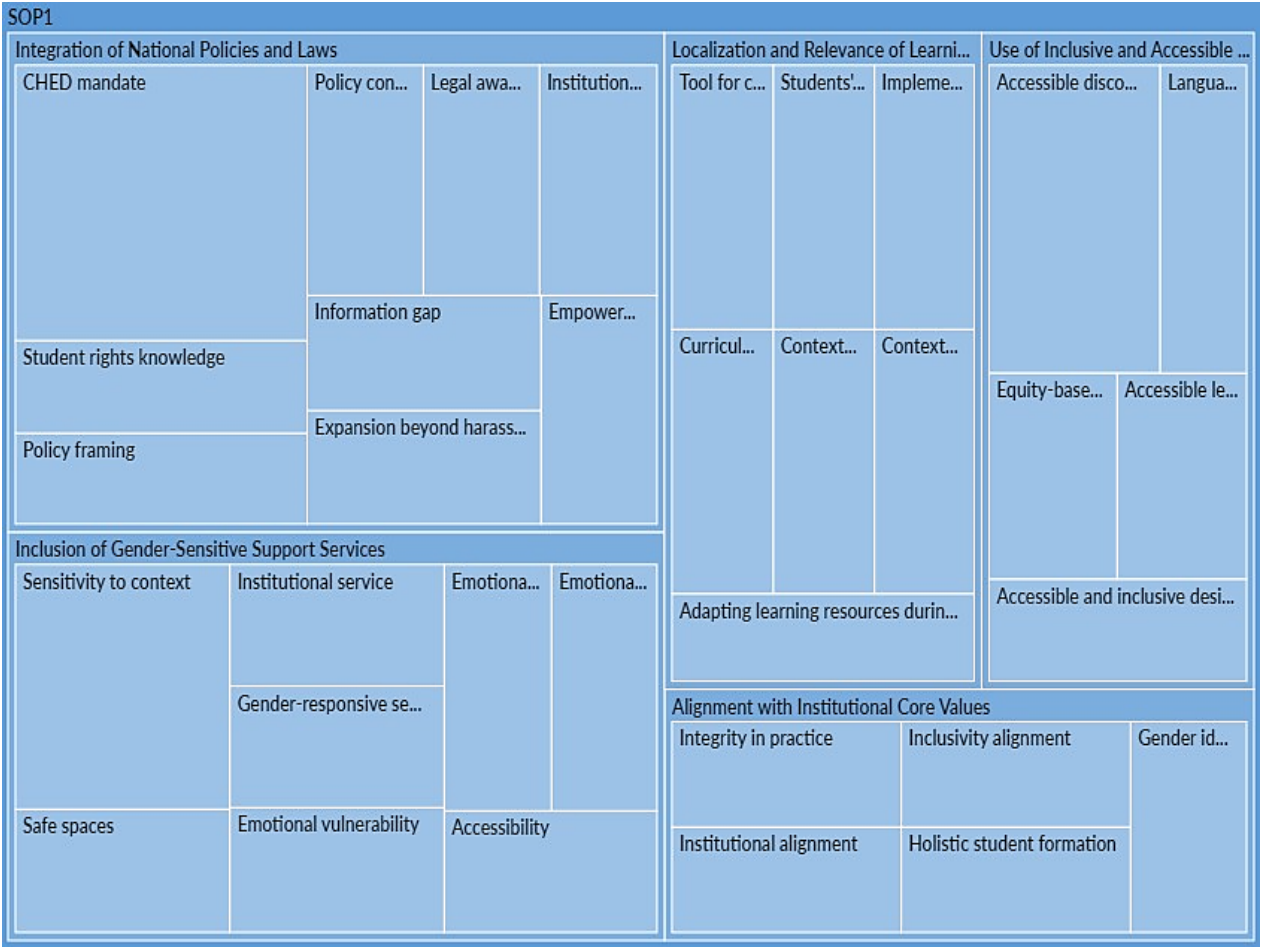


Figure 1. Map Visualization of Emergent Themes on the Contextualization of GAD- Related Texts in HEIs in Southern Leyte, Generated Using NVivo 14

Localization and Relevance of Learning Materials

The findings reveal variations in the extent to which institutions contextualize GAD-related materials. Some HEIs integrate community realities, student experiences, and local concerns into learning materials, while others rely heavily on standardized and generalized content. The dominant themes of contextualization, curriculum alignment, and adaptation of learning resources indicate efforts to connect GAD discourse with institutional and community realities; however, these efforts vary across institutions.

These findings matter because localized materials enhance the relevance and practical application of gender concepts among learners and institutional stakeholders. The relationship between localization and inclusive language suggests that context-sensitive learning materials facilitate stronger representation of diverse experiences and identities. In contrast, generalized materials may produce abstract understandings of GAD that fail to resonate with local realities and institutional contexts. The implication is that insufficient localization may reduce institutional responsiveness and weaken stakeholder engagement with GAD initiatives. Consistent with Caywood and Darmstadt (2024), variations in institutional resources and capacities often influence the extent to which educational content can be effectively contextualized.

Use of Inclusive and Accessible Language

The analysis demonstrates that institutional texts incorporate themes related to accessible communication, equity-oriented language, and inclusive design. However, inclusivity is frequently expressed through broad and generalized statements rather than through explicit representation of diverse gender identities and marginalized populations.

This finding is important because language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a mechanism for constructing institutional norms and identities. The relationship between inclusive language and support services suggests that the ways institutions frame gender issues influence how support mechanisms are perceived and accessed. When institutional discourse minimally represents marginalized groups, exclusion may become normalized despite formal commitments to inclusivity. The implication is that institutional texts may unintentionally reinforce narrow understandings of gender diversity and social inclusion. Piantedosi et al. (2025) similarly observed that institutional discourse often recognizes gender diversity without fully integrating intersectional perspectives into practice.

Inclusion of Gender-Sensitive Support Services

The findings indicate institutional efforts to establish gender-sensitive mechanisms, including safe spaces, counseling services, accessibility provisions, and support systems to promote student well-being. The thematic cluster surrounding support services reflects institutional awareness of student welfare and safety concerns.

However, deeper analysis indicates that these services are commonly framed as protective responses rather than empowerment-oriented initiatives. This distinction matters because institutions that focus primarily on reactive interventions may address immediate concerns without confronting broader structural inequalities. The relationship between support services and inclusive language further suggests that institutional discourse shapes the accessibility and responsiveness of these services. The implication is that GAD initiatives risk becoming mechanisms of issue management rather than instruments for transformative participation and empowerment. Gupta et al. (2019) similarly argued that gender initiatives focused solely on protection may constrain broader institutional transformation.

Alignment with Institutional Core Values

The findings indicate that GAD-related texts are frequently aligned with institutional values such as inclusivity, integrity, respect, and holistic development. Themes involving institutional alignment and holistic formation suggest attempts to integrate GAD principles into broader organizational missions and institutional identities (Bustamante-Mora et al., 2024). This finding is significant because institutional values shape how policies, learning materials, language, and support systems are interpreted and enacted. The thematic map suggests that institutional values function as a connecting mechanism across all dominant clusters, influencing the translation of GAD discourse into organizational practices. However, despite apparent alignment, findings suggest that integration frequently remains symbolic and is not consistently translated into transformative institutional action.

The implication is that institutional values may reinforce compliance narratives if they remain rhetorical rather than embedded within everyday institutional practices and decision-making processes. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, this reflects how institutions may construct a public identity of gender responsiveness while simultaneously maintaining existing organizational structures and power relations (Fairclough, 1995).

Production of GAD-Related Texts

The analysis of SOP 2 indicates that the production of GAD-related texts within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Southern Leyte is organized around four dominant thematic clusters: (1) dissemination strategies, (2) capacity building for instructors, (3) collaborative authorship and approval processes, and (4) resource limitations and challenges. The NVivo thematic map suggests that the most dominant clusters are concentrated around collaborative processes and institutional resources, indicating that the production of GAD-related texts is shaped not only by technical writing processes but also by organizational structures, institutional support, and resource availability. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, text production is not a neutral activity but a social practice embedded within institutional power relations and decision-making structures (Fairclough, 1995). Consequently, institutional texts reflect the priorities, constraints, and participation patterns that characterize the institutions that produce them.

The thematic relationships further suggest an interconnected production process in which institutional resources influence opportunities for capacity building, instructor preparation affects dissemination effectiveness, and collaborative authorship shapes the quality and contextual relevance of produced texts. These relationships indicate that the effectiveness of GAD-related texts depends not merely on the content of the documents but also on the institutional mechanisms that govern how these materials are created, validated, and distributed. Weaknesses in one component may therefore affect the broader institutional implementation of GAD initiatives.

Dissemination Strategies

The findings indicate that participating HEIs use multiple dissemination strategies for GAD-related texts, including orientations, seminars, digital platforms, printed manuals, classroom integration, and institutional activities. However, substantial variation exists in the consistency and reach of dissemination practices across institutions (Berezhna et al., 2025). HEIs with stronger institutional support systems implemented more structured and continuous dissemination mechanisms, whereas resource-constrained institutions relied on limited and often periodic dissemination activities. This finding suggests that dissemination extends beyond the simple distribution of information and functions as an important mechanism through which institutions shape awareness and engagement with GAD principles. From a discourse perspective, dissemination determines which messages become visible and how institutional narratives surrounding gender are communicated and reinforced. This matters because the effectiveness of GAD initiatives depends not only on the existence of institutional documents but also on their accessibility and practical integration into institutional life.

The relationship between dissemination strategies and instructor capacity further suggests that dissemination effectiveness depends on the ability of institutional actors to communicate and contextualize GAD concepts appropriately. Limited dissemination mechanisms may therefore create uneven awareness and inconsistent institutional understanding of gender issues (Hanani et al., 2024). The implication is that weak dissemination practices can contribute to fragmented implementation, reducing the potential of GAD texts to influence institutional culture and stakeholder behavior.

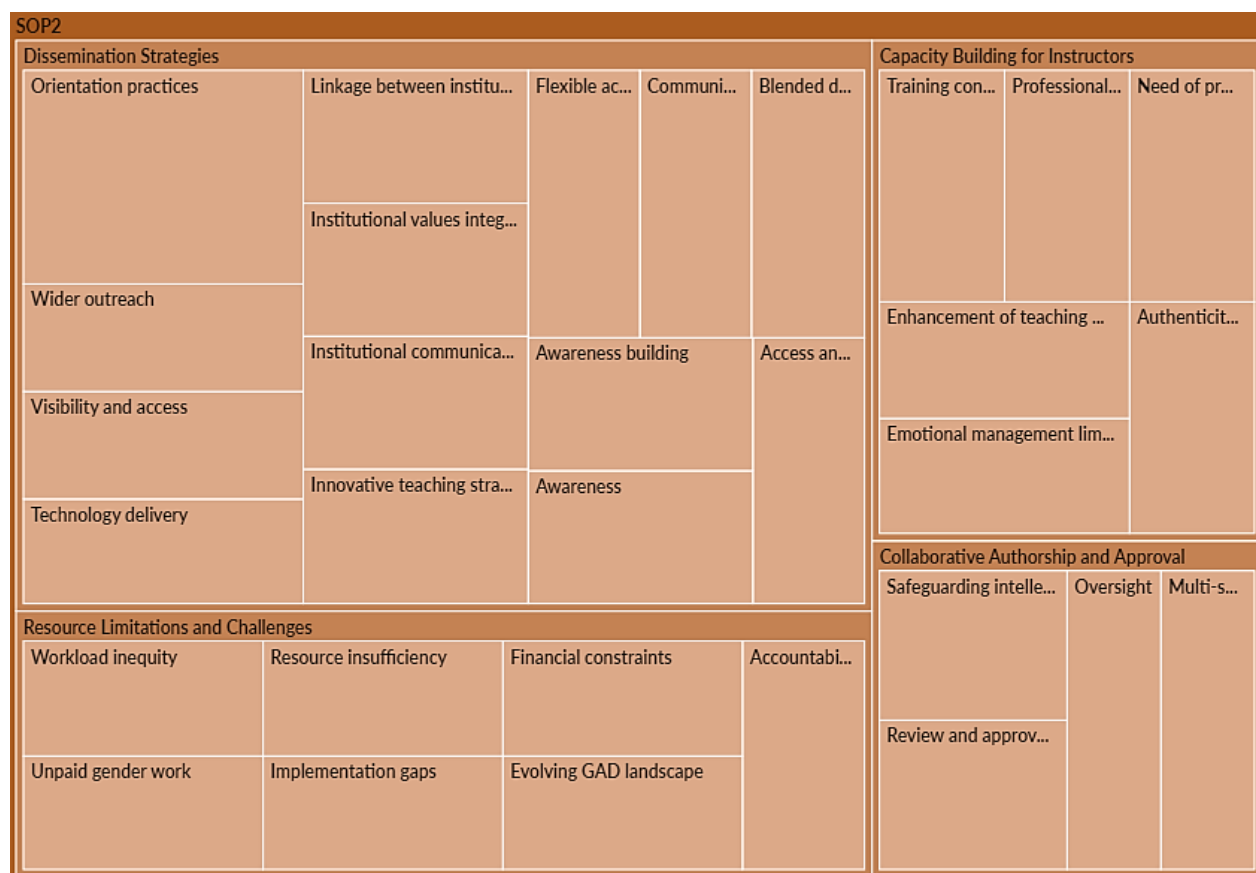


Figure 2. Map Visualization of Emergent Themes on the Production of GAD- Related Texts in HEIs in Southern Leyte, Generated Using NVivo 14

Capacity Building for Instructors

The findings indicate that participating institutions conduct training activities designed to strengthen faculty and staff understanding of GAD principles, gender sensitivity, and institutional responsibilities (Levtov et al., 2014). However, the extent and frequency of these initiatives differ across institutions, with some demonstrating systematic and sustained training programs while others rely on occasional workshops and limited professional development activities.

The findings suggest that capacity building serves as a critical mechanism that enables institutional actors to translate GAD principles into instructional practice and textual production. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, instructors function as mediators of institutional discourse by interpreting, reproducing, and communicating institutional meanings through teaching and curricular practices. This finding matters because the effectiveness of GAD-related texts depends not only on the content of the documents but also on the capacity of the individuals responsible for implementing them.

The thematic relationship between capacity building and collaborative authorship indicates that trained instructors contribute to more inclusive and contextually relevant content development processes. Conversely, limited training opportunities may constrain institutional understanding of emerging gender issues and intersectional concerns. The implication is that insufficient investment in professional development may reduce the quality and sustainability of GAD initiatives and reinforce procedural approaches to implementation (Cavaghan, 2017).

Collaborative Authorship and Approval Processes

The findings reveal that institutions employ varying approaches to developing and approving GAD-related texts. Some institutions involve multiple stakeholders, including GAD focal persons, faculty members, administrators, and relevant institutional units, while others rely on centralized and highly restricted production processes. These institutions implement formal procedures to ensure the quality and legitimacy of GAD materials (Lombardo et al., 2012).

The findings indicate that authorship and approval are not simply technical procedures but institutional mechanisms through which priorities and perspectives are negotiated. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, text production reflects underlying power relations because decisions regarding who participates in content development influence whose perspectives become represented within institutional discourse. These findings matter because participatory production processes may strengthen inclusivity and contextual relevance, whereas centralized approaches may restrict diverse perspectives and reinforce dominant institutional narratives (Kitta & Cardona-Moltó, 2022).

The relationship between collaborative authorship and dissemination further suggests that broader stakeholder involvement increases institutional ownership and acceptance of GAD-related texts. The implication is that institutions relying on limited participation may unintentionally reproduce top-down communication practices that weaken engagement and reduce responsiveness to diverse stakeholder concerns.

Resource Limitations and Challenges

The findings indicate that resource limitations significantly influence the production of GAD-related texts across participating institutions. Constraints related to funding, staffing, technological resources, and institutional infrastructure affected the frequency of updates, the scope of dissemination efforts, and institutions' ability to sustain capacity-building initiatives. Additionally, issues such as implementation gaps and the evolving nature of the GAD landscape indicate ongoing adjustments and inconsistencies in institutional practices (Son Hing et al., 2023).

This finding suggests that resource availability serves as a structural condition that shapes the broader production process. While institutional commitment to GAD principles may exist, practical implementation becomes constrained when resources are insufficient (Ojwala et al., 2022). From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, institutional discourse is influenced not only by ideological commitments but also by material conditions that determine what forms of discourse can be effectively produced and sustained.

The thematic map further suggests that resource limitations intersect with all production themes, serving as a

central factor influencing dissemination, instructor preparation, and collaborative processes. This relationship is significant because resource constraints may create institutional inequalities in the implementation of GAD initiatives. The implication is that resource-constrained institutions may become more dependent on generic templates, centralized production systems, and compliance-oriented practices rather than developing context-sensitive and transformative institutional texts.

Linguistic Analysis of GAD Manuals

The analysis of SOP 3 indicates that the linguistic features of GAD manuals across Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Southern Leyte are organized around four dominant thematic clusters: (1) dominance of institutional and procedural language, (2) gender framing and limited intersectionality, (3) institutional identity and structural orientation, and (4) emphasis on evaluation and performance metrics. The NVivo word frequency analysis in Table 2 shows that the most frequently occurring terms include project, implementation, budget, monitoring, and program, indicating a strong concentration on administrative and operational functions. The thematic map further suggests that institutional and procedural language serves as a central cluster influencing the remaining themes, reflecting the predominance of organizational and compliance-oriented discourse in institutional texts.

From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a mechanism through which institutions construct social realities and establish organizational priorities (Fairclough, 1995). The relationships among the thematic clusters suggest that procedural language shapes how gender issues are framed, institutional identity influences the orientation of discourse, and evaluation mechanisms determine how institutional success is measured. These relationships indicate that the linguistic structure of GAD manuals reflects broader institutional priorities and may shape how stakeholders understand and engage with gender-related concerns.

Table 2. *Top 20 Words from NVivo 14 Word Frequency Analysis for the GAD Manuals*

Rank	Word	Interpretation
1	GAD	Central focus on Gender and Development.
2	Gender	Highlights gender discourse and equality.
3	Project	Emphasizes project implementation.
4	Institution	Reflects institutional identity and policy localization.
5	Women	Focuses on women in GAD discourse.
6	Development	Refers to institutional and gender development.
7	Office	Pertains to GAD offices and administrative units.
8	University	Refers to the higher education context.
9	Possible	Indicates evaluative or conditional processes.
10	Scores	Associated with HGDG evaluation metrics.
11	Implementation	Highlights policy and program execution.
12	Activities	Refers to GAD-related initiatives.
13	Equality	Reflects gender equality objectives.
14	Budget	Indicates GAD funding and budgeting.
15	Responsive	Associated with gender-responsive approaches.
16	Programs	Refers to GAD interventions and activities.
17	Level	Pertains to institutional or evaluation levels.
18	Stakeholders	Recognizes groups involved in GAD efforts.
19	Section	Indicates organizational structure in the manual.
20	Monitoring	Reflects tracking and evaluation processes.

Dominance of Institutional and Procedural Language

The findings reveal that GAD manuals are characterized by the frequent use of institutional and procedural terms such as project, implementation, budget, monitoring, and program. These terms predominantly describe planning activities, reporting requirements, budget allocation, and institutional procedures associated with GAD implementation. The findings suggest that institutional discourse strongly emphasizes administrative functions and organizational processes. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, the repeated use of procedural language indicates that institutional texts construct GAD primarily as a managerial and regulatory responsibility rather than as a broader social transformation agenda. Language, therefore, becomes a mechanism that shapes how institutional actors understand and prioritize gender concerns. These findings support the broader

conclusion that institutional discourse tends to prioritize evaluation, reporting, and accountability, consistent with compliance-driven approaches to gender mainstreaming (Nalavwe & Chibomba, 2025).

This finding is significant because language influences not only communication but also institutional perception and action. When procedural terminology dominates institutional discourse, stakeholders may perceive GAD as a requirement to be fulfilled rather than as a transformative framework for addressing inequality and inclusion. The implication is that institutional efforts may become centered on reporting and compliance activities while broader discussions concerning empowerment and social change receive less attention. The thematic relationship between procedural language and performance metrics further indicates that institutional processes become closely linked with measurement and accountability systems. Consequently, institutional priorities may become increasingly oriented toward measurable outputs rather than transformative outcomes.

Gender Framing and Limited Intersectionality

The findings indicate that while core terms such as gender, women, and equality appear within institutional manuals, references to broader and more diverse identities remain limited. Marginalized groups such as LGBTQ+ communities, Indigenous Peoples, and persons with disabilities are minimally represented within the analyzed texts. The findings suggest that institutional discourse tends to frame gender primarily within conventional policy categories rather than through broader intersectional perspectives (Bowleg, 2022). From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, patterns of representation and omission are equally important because the absence of specific identities may indicate underlying institutional assumptions regarding whose experiences are prioritized.

This finding matters because institutional language contributes to the construction of social visibility and legitimacy. When institutional texts provide limited representation of marginalized sectors, some experiences and concerns may become less visible within institutional priorities and practices. The implication is that institutional manuals may unintentionally reinforce narrow understandings of gender and limit opportunities for more inclusive and responsive approaches to gender mainstreaming. The thematic relationship between gender framing and institutional identity suggests that institutional priorities influence which perspectives become visible within texts. Consequently, limitations in intersectional representation may reflect broader organizational assumptions regarding gender-related concerns.

Institutional Identity and Structural Orientation

The findings reveal that institutional manuals contain language emphasizing organizational goals, mission statements, responsibilities, and institutional mandates. Terms associated with organizational identity and structural functions frequently appear throughout the texts. The findings indicate that GAD manuals function not only as instructional resources but also as mechanisms for constructing institutional identity (Freidenvall, 2020). From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, institutional texts actively communicate organizational values and establish how institutions position themselves regarding gender responsiveness and social responsibility.

This finding is significant because institutional identity influences how stakeholders interpret organizational commitments and priorities. The prominence of organizational language suggests that institutions seek to present themselves as gender-responsive entities while simultaneously maintaining alignment with broader institutional structures and governance mechanisms. The thematic relationship between institutional identity and procedural language further indicates that organizational identity is reinforced through compliance and administrative discourse. The implication is that institutions may construct a public image of gender responsiveness that remains more symbolic than transformative if organizational values are not consistently reflected in institutional practices.

Emphasis on Evaluation and Performance Metrics

The findings indicate frequent references to monitoring systems, assessment procedures, reporting requirements, and performance indicators within the analyzed manuals. Terms associated with evaluation and measurement consistently appear throughout institutional texts. The findings suggest that institutional discourse prioritizes accountability mechanisms and measurable performance indicators (Minto et al., 2020). From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, evaluation systems influence how institutional actors define success and determine which activities receive attention and resources.

This finding matters because measurement frameworks shape institutional behavior. While monitoring systems are essential for accountability and transparency, an excessive focus on measurable outputs may unintentionally

prioritize procedural compliance over substantive institutional change. The thematic relationship between evaluation metrics and procedural language indicates that assessment practices reinforce bureaucratic orientations within institutional discourse. The implication is that institutional success may become defined primarily through documentation and reporting activities rather than through meaningful improvements in gender inclusion and empowerment.

Linguistic Analysis of GAD Learning Modules

The analysis of GAD learning modules indicates that their linguistic features are organized around five dominant thematic clusters: (1) centrality of gender as a conceptual anchor, (2) emphasis on social context and human-centered discourse, (3) educational and reflective orientation, (4) integration of institutional and programmatic elements, and (5) emerging but limited intersectional discourse. The NVivo word frequency analysis (Table 3) suggests that terms associated with gender, society, people, development, community, and students frequently appear throughout the modules, indicating that learning materials frame GAD primarily as a social and educational concern rather than solely as an administrative or regulatory requirement.

The thematic map further suggests that the centrality of gender serves as the dominant cluster influencing the remaining themes. The relationships among themes indicate an interconnected process wherein gender concepts provide the foundation for discussions of social realities, educational approaches shape how learners engage with these concepts, institutional and programmatic elements guide practical implementation, and intersectional discourse broadens the scope of inclusion. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, these relationships demonstrate that learning modules function not merely as instructional materials but as discursive mechanisms that shape understandings of identity, inclusion, and social responsibility (Fairclough, 1995). Consequently, the structure and language of learning modules influence how students interpret gender issues and institutional commitments to equality.

Table 3. *Top 20 Words from NVivo 14 Word Frequency Analysis for the GAD Learning Modules*

Rank	Word	Interpretation
1	Gender	Central focus on gender concepts and issues.
2	Women	Highlights women's roles and experiences.
3	GAD	Reflects integration of the GAD framework.
4	Society	Situates gender within social contexts.
5	Social	Emphasizes social relationships and norms.
6	People	Reflects a human-centered perspective.
7	Development	Links gender to development goals.
8	Men	Indicates inclusion of men in gender discourse.
9	Sex	Refers to biological and gender distinctions.
10	Project	Relates to activity-based gender initiatives.
11	Learning	Emphasizes educational and reflective goals.
12	One	Used for examples and contextual explanations.
13	Also	Connects related ideas and discussions.
14	Life	Frames gender within everyday experiences.
15	Goals	Reflects outcome-oriented gender initiatives.
16	Self	Highlights reflection and identity formation.
17	Institution	Indicates institutional localization of GAD efforts.
18	Different	Refers to diversity and varied experiences.
19	Human	Position gender within a human rights framework.
20	Rights	Highlights alignment with rights-based discourse.

Centrality of Gender as a Conceptual Anchor

The findings indicate that gender is among the most frequently occurring and conceptually dominant terms across the learning modules. Discussions consistently position gender as the central organizing concept around which themes of equality, development, social relations, and institutional responsibilities are structured. The findings suggest that learning modules intentionally establish gender as the primary framework for understanding broader social realities and institutional practices. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, the repeated emphasis on particular concepts reflects how institutions construct and prioritize certain forms of knowledge (Mwiine et al., 2026). The prominence of gender-related terminology indicates an institutional effort to frame gender not merely as an isolated topic but as a fundamental lens through which social relationships and inequalities are interpreted.

This finding is significant because conceptual emphasis shapes how learners construct meaning and understand institutional priorities. Positioning gender as the central anchor may strengthen awareness and encourage critical engagement with gender-related concerns among students and stakeholders.

The thematic relationship between gender centrality and educational orientation further suggests that instructional approaches rely heavily on the effective communication and contextualization of gender concepts. However, if these concepts remain predominantly theoretical without broader contextual integration, understanding may remain limited to conceptual awareness rather than transformative engagement.

Emphasis on Social Context and Human-Centered Discourse

The findings indicate that the learning modules frequently incorporate language related to society, individuals, communities, relationships, and lived experiences. The prominence of these terms demonstrates efforts to situate gender issues within broader social realities and human experiences. The findings suggest that the modules frame gender concerns as socially embedded phenomena rather than as isolated institutional issues (Sporre, 2020). From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, language centered on people and communities reflects attempts to establish connections between individual experiences and broader societal structures.

This finding matters because human-centered discourse allows learners to connect abstract gender concepts with everyday realities. Such contextualization may strengthen learner engagement and facilitate the practical application of gender-related principles beyond the classroom environment. The thematic relationship between social context and educational orientation indicates that contextualized learning materials can strengthen critical reflection and learner participation. The implication is that institutions that emphasize social realities may create stronger opportunities to develop socially responsive and gender-sensitive perspectives among learners.

Educational and Reflective Orientation

The findings reveal frequent use of instructional and reflective language encouraging understanding, learning, awareness, participation, and critical thinking. The modules consistently employ explanatory and reflective approaches designed to facilitate learning (Waluyo et al., 2025). The findings suggest that learning modules prioritize educational engagement rather than procedural compliance. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, instructional language shapes the ways learners interact with institutional discourse and influences how knowledge is internalized and interpreted.

This finding is important because educational and reflective approaches foster critical awareness rather than passive information consumption. Learning materials that encourage reflection may support a deeper understanding of gender issues and increase the likelihood of behavioral and attitudinal change. The thematic relationship between educational orientation and gender centrality suggests that reflection serves as an important mechanism for translating conceptual understanding into meaningful engagement. The implication is that learning modules emphasizing reflective learning may contribute more effectively to long-term awareness and institutional cultural change.

Integration of Institutional and Programmatic Elements

The findings indicate that learning modules incorporate references to institutional responsibilities, GAD programs, policies, and organizational initiatives. Terms related to implementation, activities, institutional mandates, and program structures frequently appear throughout the materials. The findings suggest that learning modules attempt to connect conceptual discussions of gender with practical institutional actions and responsibilities (Lauritzen & Guldvik, 2025). From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, integrating institutional elements into instructional materials represents efforts to align educational content with organizational objectives and policy frameworks.

This finding is significant because connecting theoretical discussions with institutional practices allows learners to understand how gender principles operate within actual organizational settings. Such integration may strengthen awareness regarding institutional responsibilities and encourage active participation in GAD initiatives. The thematic relationship between institutional elements and social context suggests that practical applications become more meaningful when linked to community realities and learner experiences. The implication is that institutions may strengthen GAD implementation when learning materials successfully bridge theory and practice.

Emerging but Limited Intersectional Discourse

The findings reveal the presence of terms associated with diversity, inclusion, and marginalized populations; however, references to intersectional identities remain relatively limited compared with dominant themes (Hankivsky, 2011). Mentions of LGBTQ+ communities, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized sectors appear less frequently within the modules. The findings suggest that while institutions demonstrate awareness of diversity concerns, intersectionality remains an emerging rather than fully integrated component of institutional discourse. From a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, patterns of omission are as meaningful as patterns of inclusion because they reveal which identities and experiences receive greater institutional attention.

This finding matters because intersectional approaches recognize that experiences of inequality vary across multiple social identities and structural conditions. Limited representation of marginalized groups may restrict learners' understanding of the complexity and diversity of gender experiences. The thematic relationship between intersectionality and social context further indicates that broader representation may strengthen the relevance and inclusiveness of learning materials. The implication is that institutions may unintentionally reinforce simplified understandings of gender if diverse experiences remain weakly represented in instructional texts.

Conclusion

This study examined how Gender and Development (GAD) discourses are translated into institutional texts in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Southern Leyte through Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis. The findings demonstrate that the construction of GAD discourse within institutional texts is shaped by the interaction of policy mandates, institutional capacities, and linguistic practices. Although participating HEIs demonstrate formal alignment with national gender frameworks, translating these mandates into institutional texts remains predominantly compliance-oriented rather than transformative. Institutional texts frequently emphasize procedural requirements and administrative accountability, while localized content, participatory approaches, and intersectional perspectives receive comparatively limited attention. The underrepresentation of marginalized sectors, including persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and LGBTQ+ communities, further suggests that inclusivity within institutional discourse remains uneven. These findings indicate a continuing gap between policy rhetoric and the realization of transformative gender-responsive practices within higher education.

The findings carry important policy implications for the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Beyond monitoring institutional compliance with GAD mandates, policy frameworks may benefit from placing greater emphasis on participatory text development, contextual responsiveness, and the integration of intersectional perspectives into institutional documents and programs. Strengthening institutional mechanisms for capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and sustainable resource allocation may further support the more meaningful implementation of GAD initiatives.

The study also presents curriculum implications for higher education. GAD-related learning materials may be strengthened by integrating localized examples, inclusive language, and broader representations of diverse social identities and experiences. Embedding transformative and reflective approaches within instructional materials may contribute to developing gender-responsive learning environments that promote critical engagement, inclusivity, and social responsibility.

Overall, the study highlights that GAD discourse in HEIs should move beyond procedural compliance toward participatory, context-sensitive, and transformative institutional practices that actively advance gender equality and inclusive education.

Contributions of Authors

Author 1: conceptualization, data gathering, data analysis

Author 2: data analysis

Author 3: proposal writing

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