

Baseline Study of Teachers' Knowledge and Implementation of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy at Basic Education Level in Sokoto State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The main thrust of the study was to assess teachers' level of knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy and determine the extent of its implementation in classroom practices. The study adopted a mixed-method research design, combining a descriptive survey design for the quantitative component and a phenomenological design for the qualitative component. The population comprised 1,111 teachers across 24 public basic education levels in Sokoto metropolis. A total of 278 teachers were selected for the quantitative phase using the Research Advisors (2006) sample size table and stratified random sampling technique, among which 17 teachers were purposively selected for qualitative interviews. The instruments used for data collection were a structured questionnaire titled Teachers' Knowledge and Implementation of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy Questionnaire, classroom observation checklist and an interview guide. The instruments were validated by experts in Educational Measurement and Sociology of Education, while reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.70 and 0.73. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean score, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that teachers had a generally low level of knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy (grand mean = 2.49), while the extent of implementation was moderate (grand mean = 2.50). The study concluded that teachers demonstrate limited conceptual understanding but moderate application of gender-responsive practices in classrooms. It recommended continuous teacher training and capacity-building programmes to strengthen teachers' knowledge and ensure more consistent implementation of gender-responsive pedagogy in basic education schools in Sokoto State.

Keywords: Gender-Responsive Pedagogy, Teachers' Knowledge, Classroom Implementation, Basic Education, Stopped

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Introduction

Education is globally recognized as a fundamental instrument for promoting social justice, equity and sustainable development. It serves as a strategic mechanism for reducing inequality, empowering marginalized population and fostering inclusive societal development. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations reinforces the critical role of education in achieving social transformation. Specifically, Goal 5 seeks to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls through the elimination of discrimination in all social institutions, including education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2021). Achieving this goal requires educational systems to adopt deliberate strategies that ensure equitable participation and learning opportunities for both boys and girls. One such strategy is Gender-Responsive Pedagogy (GRP), which depends significantly on teachers' professional knowledge and their capacity to translate such knowledge into classroom practice.

Gender-Responsive Pedagogy is an instructional approach designed to address gender-specific learning needs while eliminating stereotypes and discriminatory classroom practices that hinder equitable participation. According to the Forum for African Women Educationalists (2018), GRP involves integrating gender-sensitive approaches into lesson planning, instructional delivery, classroom interaction, assessment and classroom management to ensure fairness and inclusiveness. It creates enabling classroom environments where both male and female learners can participate actively and achieve academic success without gender-based limitations. Effective implementation of GRP depends on teachers possessing sufficient pedagogical knowledge and professional competence.

The significance of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy is particularly pronounced at the basic education level because this stage forms the foundation of learners' academic identity, self-esteem and social orientation. Teachers at this level shape learners' perceptions of academic potential through instructional practices and classroom interactions. Studies indicate that teachers with adequate pedagogical competence are more likely to foster equitable participation and improve learner outcomes (Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner, 2017). In Sokoto State, Ladan and Jabbi (2025) found that student-teachers in teacher training institutions demonstrated deficiencies in key

pedagogical areas such as classroom management, use of instructional aids, and learner engagement strategies, suggesting possible limitations in teachers' readiness to implement specialized pedagogical practices such as gender-responsive teaching.

Despite efforts toward inclusive education in Nigeria, gender disparities in educational participation and achievement remain significant. These disparities are often linked to socio-cultural beliefs, weak teacher preparation systems, inadequate gender-sensitive instructional resources and institutional limitations affecting classroom inclusiveness (United Nations Children's Fund, 2021). Although educational policies emphasize equality of opportunity, effective implementation depends largely on teachers' understanding and classroom application of inclusive pedagogical principles.

The challenge of gender inequality in education is particularly pronounced in Northern Nigeria, especially in states such as Sokoto, where socio-cultural and religious factors continue to shape educational participation patterns. UNICEF (2021) indicated there is a consistently lower female enrolment, retention and completion rates at basic education compared to male learners in many northern states of Nigeria. In line with this, Ibrahim et al. (2020) considers poverty, early marriage and household responsibilities as factors that continue to hinder equitable educational participation at basic education level. While, parental perceptions of girls' education was considered by Olanrewaju, Anthony and Fashola (2026) as another factor for gender imbalance. These realities underscore the need for classroom-based pedagogical strategies capable of supporting inclusive participation and improved learning outcomes for both genders.

Recent empirical evidence also suggests that classroom experiences significantly influence learners' academic confidence and participation. Gender stereotypes communicated through classroom interaction, teacher expectations and instructional materials can shape pupils' academic identity and self-concept. When learners are exposed to inclusive and supportive instructional environments, they are more likely to participate actively and perform better academically. This highlights the importance of teachers possessing sufficient knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy.

Despite increasing attention to gender-sensitive education globally and nationally, empirical evidence on teachers' knowledge of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy and the extent of its implementation in basic education classrooms

in Sokoto State remains limited. Existing studies in Nigeria have focused mainly on structural educational challenges such as school access, enrolment, retention, completion rates and barriers to girl-child education, with insufficient empirical attention given to teachers' preparedness for implementing gender-responsive classroom practices (UNESCO, 2021; UNICEF, 2022). Yet, teachers' professional knowledge remains a critical determinant of pedagogical effectiveness. Since knowledge influences instructional behaviour and classroom practice, this omission represents an important empirical gap requiring investigation.

Addressing these gaps is essential for strengthening teacher professional development, improving instructional supervision and promoting equitable educational outcomes in Sokoto State. Without empirical evidence on teachers' knowledge levels and implementation practices, interventions designed to improve gender-responsive pedagogy may lack contextual relevance and effectiveness.

It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the level of teachers' knowledge of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy and determine the extent to which teachers implement gender-responsive pedagogical practices in basic education classrooms in Sokoto State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Despite growing global and national emphasis on gender equality in education, effective implementation of gender-responsive pedagogy in basic education classrooms remains uncertain, particularly in Northern Nigeria where socio-cultural factors continue to influence educational participation and classroom experiences of learners. In Sokoto State, although the introduction of Universal Basic Education improves access to education for both boys and girls, evidence still shows disparities in participation, retention and academic outcomes, especially among female learners. These disparities suggest that classroom instructional practices may not be sufficiently gender responsive to promote equitable learning opportunities.

Effective implementation of gender-responsive pedagogy depends largely on teachers' knowledge and professional competence. However, there is limited empirical evidence on the level of teachers' knowledge of gender-responsive

pedagogy and the extent to which such knowledge is translated into classroom practice in basic education schools in Sokoto State.

The absence of such empirical evidence creates a gap in educational planning and teacher professional development, thereby limiting the design of context-specific interventions for promoting inclusive classroom practices. It is against this concern that this study seeks to examine teachers' knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy and determine the extent of its implementation in basic education classrooms in Sokoto State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Gender Socialization Theory, originally developed by Talcott Parsons (1955) and later expanded by scholars such as Ann Oakley (1972) and Sandra Bem (1981). The theory explains how individuals learn and internalize gender roles, norms and expectations through social interaction within institutions such as the family, school, religion and media. Socialization shapes attitudes, beliefs and behaviours toward gender roles and determines how individuals perceive gender relations in society.

Thus, for pupils at basic education teachers' classroom Pedagogical practices are part of what Giddens (2009) refers to as process through which individuals acquire cultural norms and values necessary for social participation, including expectations relating to gender identity and roles. Similarly, Haralambos and Holborn (2013) explained that gender identity is socially constructed and reinforced through social institutions, particularly schools, where cultural expectations are transmitted across generations. In the same vein, Macionis (2012) noted that schools act as important agents of socialization through both formal and hidden curricula, often reproducing traditional gender expectations unless deliberate intervention occurs.

On the basis of above, it can be understood that school serves as a powerful site for gender socialization where teachers shape learners' understanding of gender and gender role expectations through classroom interaction. Gender role expectations as maintains by Rao and Chand (2019) are transmitted and preserved by social institutions through repeated interaction. Educational institution in particular is an important tool for transforming gender relations.

This theory directly supports therefore the first research question, which seeks to assess teachers' knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy. Teachers'

knowledge is influenced by their socialization experiences and professional training. As Oakley (1972) emphasized, gender awareness develops through exposure to alternative perspectives that challenge traditional role expectations.

The theory also supports the second research question, which examines the extent to which teachers implement gender-responsive pedagogy in classrooms. According to Bem (1981), internalized gender schemas influence behaviour and decision-making. Thus, teachers' classroom practices often reflect their beliefs about gender equality and fairness.

Therefore, Gender Socialization Theory provides an appropriate framework for this research problem focusing on examining teachers' knowledge and implementation of gender-responsive pedagogy at the basic education level in Sokoto State.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- I. To determine the level of teachers' knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy at the basic education level in Sokoto State
- II. To examine the extent to which teachers implement gender-responsive pedagogy in basic education classrooms in Sokoto State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The research questions for the study are:

- I. What is the level of teachers' knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy at the basic education level in Sokoto State?
- II. To what extent do teachers implement gender-responsive pedagogy practices in basic education classrooms in Sokoto State?

Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-method research design, combining a descriptive survey design for the quantitative component and a phenomenological design for the qualitative component. This is to enable a comprehensive

understanding of teachers' knowledge and implementation of gender-responsive pedagogy at the basic education level in Sokoto State, Nigeria. The quantitative component employed a descriptive survey design to determine the level of teachers' knowledge and extent of implementation of gender-responsive pedagogy, while the qualitative component adopted a phenomenological design to explore teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding gender-responsive classroom practices.

The population of the study comprised 1,111 teachers across 24 public primary schools offering lower and upper basic education within Sokoto metropolis. For the quantitative component, a sample of 278 teachers was selected using the Research Advisors (2006) Table for Determining Sample Size. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure adequate representation of teachers across schools and grade levels. For the qualitative component, 17 teachers were purposively selected for in-depth interviews. This sample size was considered adequate based on Creswell's (2014) recommendation that qualitative saturation is often achieved between 12 and 20 participants.

Three instruments were used for data collection: the 15 item, 4-point Teachers' Knowledge and Implementation of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy Questionnaire (TKIGRPQ), 15 item, 4-point Classroom Observation Checklist and in depth Interview Guide. TTKIGRPQ consisted of two sections. Section A measured personal information of respondents while section B assessed teachers' knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy. Items on the checklist however measured the extent of implementation of gender-responsive practices in classroom instruction. The in depth Interview Guide was designed to elicit qualitative data on teachers' understanding, experiences and classroom realities relating to gender-responsive pedagogy. The interview explored teachers' awareness of gender issues, classroom implementation strategies and perceived challenges affecting effective practice.

To ensure content validity, the instruments were subjected to expert review by two specialists: one in Educational Measurement and Evaluation and the other in Sociology of Education. Their observations guided item refinement for clarity, relevance and comprehensiveness. Similarly, 2 items on the TKIGRPQ considered irrelevant were expunged.

To establish reliability, the questionnaire and checklist were pilot-tested on 20 teachers drawn from public primary schools outside the study area but with

similar characteristics. Internal consistency was determined using Cronbach’s Alpha, which yielded reliability coefficients of 0.70 and 0.73 indicating acceptable reliability. For the qualitative instrument, trustworthiness was ensured through member checking and repeated questioning in varied forms, as recommended by Best and Kahn (2015).

Data collection was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, copies of the questionnaire were administered to the sampled teachers with the assistance of two trained research assistants and later classroom observations whereby the researchers were physically presented, classrooms sessions were observed using the checklist. In the second phase, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with the 17 purposively selected participants. Each interview lasted 30–45 minutes and responses were recorded using a voice recorder and field notes. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean score while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, involving transcription, coding of responses, categorization into themes and interpretation of emerging patterns to complement the quantitative findings

Results

Data obtained from Quantitative instrument was analysed using mean score and presented in table 1 and 2.

Table 1: Teachers’ Knowledge of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy

SN	Item	Mean	Decision
1	Understanding of gender-responsive pedagogy	2.45	Low
2	Awareness of equal participation of boys and girls	2.85	Moderate
3	Knowledge of gender bias in teaching	2.30	Low
4	Understanding of inclusive classroom practices	2.70	Moderate
5	Exposure to training on gender-responsive pedagogy	1.95	Low
6	Awareness of gender-sensitive instructional materials	2.55	Moderate
7	Ability to design gender-fair lesson plans	2.25	Low
8	Knowledge of strategies for promoting gender equity in the classroom	2.68	Moderate
9	Awareness of gender stereotypes and their effects on learners	2.74	Moderate
10	Understanding of gender-sensitive classroom management techniques	2.60	Moderate
11	Knowledge of gender-responsive assessment practices	2.20	Low
12	Awareness of policies promoting gender equality in education	2.58	Moderate
13	Ability to identify and address gender-related barriers to learning	2.42	Low

Decision rule is 3.50 – 4.00 = High 2.50 – 3.49 = Moderate and 1.00 – 2.49 = Low

Table 1 presents teachers' knowledge of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy at the basic education level in Sokoto State. The results reveal a mixed pattern of knowledge across the measured indicators. Teachers demonstrated moderate knowledge in areas such as awareness of equal participation of boys and girls (Mean = 2.85), understanding of inclusive classroom practices (Mean = 2.70), awareness of gender-sensitive instructional materials (Mean = 2.55), knowledge of strategies for promoting gender equity (Mean = 2.68), awareness of gender stereotypes and their effects on learners (Mean = 2.74), understanding of gender-sensitive classroom management techniques (Mean = 2.60), and awareness of policies promoting gender equality in education (Mean = 2.58). However, teachers recorded low mean scores in understanding of gender-responsive pedagogy (Mean = 2.45), knowledge of gender bias in teaching (Mean = 2.30), exposure to training on gender-responsive pedagogy (Mean = 1.95), ability to design gender-fair lesson plans (Mean = 2.25), knowledge of gender-responsive assessment practices (Mean = 2.20) and ability to identify and address gender-related barriers to learning (Mean = 2.42). The lowest score was observed in exposure to training on gender-responsive pedagogy (Mean = 1.95), suggesting limited opportunities for formal professional development in this area.

The grand mean of 2.49 indicates that teachers' knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy is generally low, although the moderate scores recorded in several indicators suggest that teachers possess some awareness of gender-related educational issues but lack sufficient professional knowledge and training for effective implementation of gender-responsive pedagogy.

Table 2: Extent of Teachers' Implementation of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy

SN	Item	Mean	Decision
1	Teacher provides equal opportunities for boys and girls to participate during lessons	2.45	Low
2	Teacher distributes questions fairly among male and female pupils	2.60	Moderate
3	Teacher uses gender-neutral language during classroom interaction	2.35	Low
4	Teacher encourages girls and boys equally to answer questions	2.75	Moderate
5	Teacher provides equal feedback and reinforcement to both genders	2.50	Moderate
6	Teacher uses instructional materials that portray both genders positively	2.40	Low
7	Teacher avoids making gender-biased comments or assumptions	2.55	Moderate
8	Teacher maintains gender-balanced seating arrangements where applicable	2.20	Low
9	Teacher challenges gender stereotypes when they arise during	2.38	Low

	lessons		
10	Teacher assigns classroom responsibilities fairly to boys and girls	2.68	Moderate
11	Teacher encourages girls' participation in science and mathematics activities	2.30	Low
12	Teacher promotes respectful interaction between male and female pupils	2.72	Moderate
13	Teacher ensures equal access to learning resources for boys and girls	2.65	Moderate
14	Teacher uses examples and illustrations that reflect gender inclusiveness	2.42	Low
15	Teacher monitors classroom interaction to prevent gender domination by either group	2.58	Moderate

Decision rule is 3.50 – 4.00 = High 2.50 – 3.49 = Moderate and 1.00 – 2.49 = Low

Table 2 presents the findings from the classroom observation checklist on teachers' implementation of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy in basic education classrooms in Sokoto State. The results indicate a moderate level of implementation of gender-responsive practices, with a grand mean of 2.50. Observed areas of moderate implementation include fair distribution of questions among pupils (Mean = 2.60), equal encouragement of boys and girls to participate (Mean = 2.75), provision of equal feedback (Mean = 2.50), avoidance of gender-biased comments (Mean = 2.55), fair assignment of classroom responsibilities (Mean = 2.68), promotion of respectful interaction between genders (Mean = 2.72), equal access to learning resources (Mean = 2.65) and monitoring classroom interaction to prevent gender domination (Mean = 2.58).

However, several indicators recorded low mean scores, including the use of gender-neutral language (Mean = 2.35), use of gender-sensitive instructional materials (Mean = 2.40), gender-balanced seating arrangements (Mean = 2.20), challenging gender stereotypes (Mean = 2.38), encouraging girls' participation in science and mathematics activities (Mean = 2.30) and use of gender-inclusive examples and illustrations (Mean = 2.42). The lowest score was recorded in gender-balanced seating arrangements (Mean = 2.20), suggesting that classroom organization remains insufficiently gender-responsive.

The findings suggest that while teachers demonstrate some observable gender-responsive practices in classroom interaction and learner participation, important aspects of gender-responsive pedagogy remain inadequately implemented in classroom instruction. This indicates the need for further

professional support and capacity-building to strengthen teachers' application of gender-responsive teaching practices.

Thematic Analysis of Interview

The interview responses of the 17 teachers were analyzed thematically to complement the quantitative findings, which revealed a low level of teachers' knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy at the basic education level in Sokoto State. The qualitative data revealed varied responses among participants, ranging from complete unfamiliarity with the concept to partial understanding of its meaning and application. Four major themes emerged from the analysis.

Theme 1: Poor Conceptual Understanding of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy

A dominant issue that emerged was teachers' weak conceptual understanding of gender-responsive pedagogy. Several respondents admitted that they had either never encountered the concept formally or could not define it professionally. As Teacher A explained: "I have heard people mention it during school discussions, but I cannot explain what it actually means." Similarly, Teacher D stated: "Honestly, this is my first time hearing the full term clearly." Teacher K remarked: "I do not really understand what makes teaching gender-responsive because we were not taught that in detail." Teacher Q also noted: "The concept sounds familiar, but I cannot confidently define it."

These responses suggest that a significant number of teachers possess very limited conceptual knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy. However, a few respondents demonstrated partial understanding. For instance, Teacher H stated: "I think it means making sure boys and girls are equally considered during teaching." Similarly, Teacher N explained: "It is about avoiding discrimination and ensuring fairness to both genders in class." Although these responses show some awareness, they remain simplistic and lack technical depth.

Theme Two: Misconceptions and Narrow Interpretation of the Concept

Another major issue was the prevalence of misconceptions and narrow interpretations of gender-responsive pedagogy. For example, Teacher B stated: “It simply means allowing boys and girls to sit together during lessons.” Similarly, Teacher F explained: “I believe it is mainly about making sure both boys and girls attend school.” Teacher L remarked: “It is about giving girls more attention so they can catch up with boys.”

These responses reveal misunderstanding of the concept, reducing it to classroom seating arrangement, school access or preferential treatment rather than inclusive instructional strategies. However, Teacher J demonstrated broader understanding when stating: “It involves using teaching methods that allow both boys and girls to participate confidently and equally.” This variation suggests uneven knowledge levels among teachers.

Theme Three: Limited Knowledge of Practical Classroom Strategies

The findings also showed that most teachers lacked practical knowledge of how to implement gender-responsive pedagogy during lesson delivery. As Teacher C admitted: “Even if I know the meaning, I do not know the exact classroom methods to use.” Similarly, Teacher E stated: “I have never learned how to prepare lesson plans that are gender-responsive.” Teacher G remarked: “Nobody has shown us how to select gender-sensitive examples or learning materials.” Likewise, Teacher M explained: “I do not know how to monitor classroom interaction to ensure equal participation.” Teacher P added: “We teach all pupils together, but we do not have specific guidelines for this kind of teaching.” These responses reveal gaps in practical pedagogical competence. A few respondents, however, demonstrated some awareness of practical strategies. Teacher O stated: “A teacher should avoid calling only boys to answer difficult questions and should involve girls equally.” This suggests isolated understanding among a small number of participants.

Theme Four: Inadequate Training and Institutional Support

Participants consistently identified inadequate training opportunities as a key reason for their low knowledge level. As Teacher I explained: “We have not attended any workshop specifically on gender-responsive pedagogy.”

Similarly, Teacher J stated: "Training programmes mostly focus on general classroom management." Teacher P remarked: "Government seminars rarely discuss gender-sensitive teaching practices." Teacher Q added: "Teachers need practical training because many of us are not familiar with this area."

Some respondents linked the issue to institutional neglect. Teacher M observed: "Schools do not emphasize gender-responsive teaching during supervision." Likewise, Teacher R noted: "Even administrators rarely mention it as an expectation." These responses indicate weak systemic support for professional development in this area.

From the foregoing, data from interview thematically analysed revealed low and uneven knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy among teachers at the basic education level in Sokoto State, confirming the quantitative findings. While a few respondents demonstrated partial awareness of fairness and inclusion principles, many lacked conceptual clarity, held misconceptions about the meaning of the concept and showed limited knowledge of practical classroom application. The findings further revealed that inadequate professional training and weak institutional emphasis significantly contribute to the low level of teachers' knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy in the study area.

Summary of Major Findings

Based the analysis of Qualitative and Quantitative data, the following are findings of the study:

1. The study found that teachers have a generally low knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy (grand mean = 2.49). While some demonstrated moderate awareness of gender equity and inclusive practices, many lacked adequate understanding of key concepts and practical strategies.
2. The study also found a moderate level of gender-responsive pedagogy implementation among teachers (grand mean = 2.50). Although some practices like equitable participation and fair interactions were observed, many key aspects were inconsistently applied, indicating a need for further professional training to improve implementation.

Discussion

This study investigated teachers' knowledge and implementation of gender-responsive pedagogy (GRP) at the basic education level in Sokoto State, Nigeria. The first major finding revealed that teachers possess a generally low level of knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy (grand mean = 2.49). This indicates that many teachers in basic education schools in Sokoto State are not sufficiently familiar with the principles, strategies and classroom implications of gender-responsive teaching, although a few demonstrate partial awareness of gender equity concepts.

The thematic analysis strongly reinforced this result, as several respondents admitted weak conceptual understanding and unfamiliarity with the concept. For instance, one respondent stated, "I have heard people mention it during school discussions, but I cannot explain what it actually means" (Teacher A), while another confessed, "Honestly, this is my first time hearing the full term clearly" (Teacher D). These responses reveal notable conceptual gaps among teachers.

The interviews further exposed misconceptions and narrow interpretations of GRP. Some teachers reduced the concept to simplistic practices such as seating arrangements or equal physical access to schooling. For example, one respondent remarked, "It simply means allowing boys and girls to sit together during lessons" (Teacher B). Such responses indicate limited professional understanding of gender-responsive instructional principles.

This finding aligns with international and national education reports which emphasize that effective implementation of inclusive education depends heavily on teacher preparedness and professional competence UNESCO, (2021) and that of UNICEF (2022). It also supports earlier observations that teacher education institutions in Northern Nigeria may not adequately prepare teachers for specialized pedagogical approaches such as GRP. Specifically, Ladan and Jabbi (2025) reported pedagogical competence gaps among student-teachers in Sokoto State, particularly in instructional delivery and classroom management.

From the perspective of Gender Socialization Theory, this finding reflects the influence of institutional training and professional exposure in shaping teachers' knowledge systems. Where pre-service and in-service training do not

sufficiently emphasize gender-responsive frameworks, teachers are less likely to develop strong conceptual understanding of such pedagogical practices.

The study also showed that the extent of teachers' implementation of gender-responsive pedagogy is moderate (grand mean = 2.50). This suggests that while some gender-responsive practices such as equitable learner participation and fair classroom interactions are occasionally observed, many key components such as gender-sensitive instructional planning, balanced questioning and inclusive learning materials—are not consistently applied.

The thematic analysis further revealed variability in teachers' classroom practices. Some respondents indicated partial awareness but limited practical application skills. One teacher explained, “Even if I know the meaning, I do not know the exact classroom methods to use” (Teacher C), while another stated, “Nobody has shown us how to prepare lesson plans that are gender-responsive” (Teacher E). These responses suggest that moderate implementation may reflect surface-level practice rather than deep pedagogical integration.

The interviews also revealed that many teachers operate without deliberate frameworks for gender-sensitive instruction. As one respondent stated, “We teach all pupils together, but we do not have specific guidelines for this kind of teaching” (Teacher P). This indicates that implementation is often informal and inconsistent.

This finding is consistent with UNICEF (2022), which reported that gender disparities in classroom participation and learning outcomes persist in Northern Nigeria due to socio-cultural and instructional limitations. It also aligns with UNESCO (2021), which emphasized that policy commitment alone is insufficient without effective classroom-level implementation. Furthermore, it supports Darling-Hammond, Hylar and Gardner's (2017) argument that teacher effectiveness depends strongly on sustained professional development and practical pedagogical competence.

From the perspective of Gender Socialization Theory, teachers' instructional behaviour reflects deeply internalized norms and institutional practices. Since both male and female teachers are socialized within similar educational and cultural environments, their classroom practices tend to reflect shared constraints rather than gender-based differences.

From the foregoing discussion, it can be understood that, quantitative and thematic findings reveal a consistent pattern: limited teacher knowledge contributes to only partial and inconsistent implementation of gender-responsive pedagogy. The qualitative evidence highlights conceptual confusion, inadequate training and lack of practical guidance as central barriers.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that teachers at basic education levels in Sokoto State have a generally low level of knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy, while their classroom implementation of gender-responsive practices is moderate but inconsistent. This indicates a gap between partial awareness and effective pedagogical application, necessitating structured training and sustained professional development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- I. The Ministry of Education, with teacher training institutions, should organize regular training, workshops and seminars to improve teachers' knowledge of gender-responsive pedagogy and strengthen their understanding of gender equality in classroom teaching.
- II. Head-teachers, their assistants and supervisors should provide ongoing support and monitoring, along with clear instructional guidelines and teaching materials, to help teachers apply gender-responsive practices more consistently and effectively.

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