

Gender-Responsive Leadership and Inclusive Educational Management Practices of School Principals in Region XI: Basis for an Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative study examined gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices among school principals in Region XI as a basis for developing an Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP). Findings revealed that both principals and personnel demonstrated high and aligned perceptions of gender-responsive leadership and inclusive practices, although these were not yet fully institutionalized across schools. Most respondents belonged to the middle-income group, with principals reporting moderate to high participation in gender-responsive training, while personnel exhibited lower exposure, particularly in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDA), indicating disparities in access to professional development. Leadership practices were strongly evident across transformational, servant, democratic, instructional, and participative styles, with participative leadership emerging as the most dominant. Inclusive educational management practices, including gender-equitable curricula, inclusive teaching strategies, policies, community collaboration, and monitoring systems, were also rated at moderate to high levels, though implementation inconsistencies were noted. A strong positive correlation ($r = .857$, $p < .01$) was found between gender-responsive leadership and inclusive practices, highlighting leadership as a critical determinant of inclusivity. CHAID analysis identified respondent group, school size, and training exposure as significant predictors, emphasizing the role of organizational context and professional development. No significant differences were observed between principals and personnel, except in transformational leadership. Overall, while practices are well-established, gaps in consistency, training access, and institutionalization persist. These findings informed the development of the ILMP, a structured, data-driven intervention aimed at strengthening leadership competencies, standardizing inclusive practices, and promoting sustainable gender-responsive and inclusive education across diverse school contexts.

Keywords: Gender-responsive leadership, inclusive practices, education, professional development, institutionalization

INTRODUCTION

Leadership in educational institutions is essential to achieving inclusive, equitable, and quality education. In the 21st century, gender equity and inclusive education have become foundational principles aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education and SDG 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Educational leadership plays a critical role in advancing these goals by addressing gender disparities, promoting equal opportunities, and creating school environments where diversity and participation are valued. UNESCO (2020) emphasized that gender equality in education requires not only equal access to schooling but also transformative approaches to school management and leadership. In this context, gender-

responsive leadership involves integrating gender perspectives into policies, decision-making, school governance, and daily management practices. UNESCO (2022) further highlighted that school leaders who demonstrate gender responsiveness are more likely to foster safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environments, challenge gender stereotypes, address gender-based concerns, and provide equitable professional opportunities for school personnel.

In the Philippines, the promotion of gender-responsive leadership is supported by national policies and frameworks. The Department of Education (DepEd), through its Gender and Development (GAD) Policy and Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy under DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017, emphasizes integrating gender perspectives into education planning, policy-making, curriculum implementation, school governance, and learning environments. The Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028 likewise recognizes gender equality and women's empowerment as cross-cutting priorities in national development. These policies underscore the responsibility of school leaders to establish gender-responsive programs, instructional practices, policies, and environments that address the diverse needs of learners and personnel. However, despite these institutional efforts, the implementation of gender-responsive leadership remains inconsistent. Challenges such as inadequate training, limited institutional support, resistance to change, traditional gender norms, and geographical inequalities may hinder school leaders from fully translating gender-responsive policies into practice.

These concerns are particularly relevant in Region XI, or Davao Region, which is characterized by cultural diversity, varying socio-economic conditions, and distinct geographical and institutional contexts. Although some schools have implemented GAD-related programs and initiatives, the knowledge, commitment, and application of gender-responsive leadership practices among school administrators may vary. Gender stereotypes and traditional perceptions of leadership can continue to affect opportunities, decision-making, professional development, and the recognition of the diverse needs of learners and personnel. Moreover, the intersection of gender with socio-economic status, cultural background, and geographic location creates additional considerations for educational leaders. Thus, gender-responsive leadership should extend beyond achieving gender representation in leadership positions; it should include equitable professional opportunities, gender-sensitive policies and pedagogical practices, safe and inclusive school environments, and meaningful stakeholder participation.

Gender-responsive leadership is also closely associated with inclusive educational management. Effective school leaders influence school culture, policy implementation, instructional practices, teacher development, student engagement, and community participation. A gender-responsive leader demonstrates awareness, sensitivity, and commitment to addressing gender-based discrimination and promoting respect, equity, diversity, and participation within the educational community. Nevertheless, insufficient leadership preparation, limited resources, conventional attitudes, and uneven institutional support may constrain the comprehensive adoption of this leadership approach. These conditions highlight the need to assess the extent to which school principals in Region XI demonstrate gender-responsive leadership and how such practices relate to inclusive educational management. Understanding this relationship can provide evidence for strengthening leadership capacity and identifying areas that require targeted intervention.

Given these circumstances, the present study, entitled “Gender-Responsive Leadership and Inclusive Educational Management Practices of School Principals in Region XI: Basis for an Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program,” seeks to examine the relationship between

gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices among school principals in the region. The study aims to provide context-specific evidence on existing leadership practices and identify areas for improvement that may guide professional development and institutional interventions. Its findings may serve as a basis for an Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP) designed to strengthen school principals' knowledge, skills, and capacities in gender-responsive and inclusive leadership. Ultimately, strengthening gender-responsive leadership through continuous training, mentorship, supportive policies, and stakeholder collaboration can contribute to more equitable school governance and help advance inclusive, high-quality education in Region XI.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the influence of gender-responsive leadership on the inclusive educational management practices of school principals in Region XI. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of manifestation of the gender-responsive leadership styles of school principals, as perceived by themselves and teachers, in terms of:
 - a. Transformational Leadership;
 - b. Servant Leadership;
 - c. Democratic Leadership;
 - d. Instructional Leadership; and
 - e. Participative Leadership?
2. What is the level of utilization of inclusive educational management practices of school principals as perceived by themselves and teachers in terms of:
 - a. Gender-equitable curriculum;
 - b. Inclusive teaching strategies;
 - c. Gender-sensitive policies;
 - d. Community collaboration; and
 - e. Monitoring of inclusivity outcomes?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the level of manifestation of the gender-responsive leadership styles and the level of utilization of inclusive educational management practices of school principals?
4. Based on the results of the study, what Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP) may be proposed to strengthen gender-responsive and inclusive leadership among school principals in Region XI?

Scope and Delimitations

This study examined the gender-responsive leadership practices of school principals and their relationship with inclusive educational management practices in public elementary and secondary schools in Region XI during School Year 2025–2026. The study focused on the extent to which school principals integrated gender sensitivity, equity, diversity, and inclusion into their leadership approaches, school policies, decision-making processes, and management practices. It also examined how these practices were manifested in areas such as instructional management, teacher and student engagement, organizational decision-making, and stakeholder collaboration in fostering an equitable, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. The SY 2025–2026 period was selected to capture the current implementation and prevailing practices of school principals within the educational, organizational, and policy context of that academic year. Data were gathered using a quantitative research approach through structured questionnaires and surveys administered to school principals and school personnel who were directly involved in or

knowledgeable about school leadership and management practices during the specified period. The findings were intended to provide an empirical basis for developing an Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program responsive to the leadership needs and gender- and inclusion-related challenges observed during SY 2025–2026.

The study was delimited to public elementary and secondary schools in Region XI and excluded private schools and non-formal educational institutions because of differences in governance structures, administrative systems, and organizational policies. It concentrated specifically on gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management, excluding leadership dimensions that were not directly related to gender sensitivity, equity, diversity, or inclusion. The study considered the perceptions of school principals and school personnel but did not include comprehensive perspectives from students, parents, or other external stakeholders. Furthermore, the study was limited to the conditions and experiences documented during SY 2025–2026 and therefore did not seek to determine the long-term or longitudinal effects of gender-responsive leadership practices beyond the stated academic year. The research also employed an exclusively quantitative design; hence, qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and case studies were not included. These delimitations were established to maintain a focused assessment of gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management as practiced and perceived within public schools in Region XI during SY 2025–2026.

Review of Related Literatures

The reviewed literature establishes that gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management are interconnected approaches to achieving equity, participation, respect, and equal opportunities in schools. FBA (2026) characterized gender-responsive leadership as the intentional integration of gender equality and equity into leadership decisions, policies, and institutional practices, while Smet et al. (2021) emphasized that inclusive leadership involves systematic practices that foster fairness, belonging, collaboration, and participation. The leadership perspectives discussed by Marymount (2024)—including transformational, instructional, constructivist, democratic or participative, emotional, and transactional leadership—further demonstrate that effective school leadership requires both organizational direction and responsiveness to the diverse needs of stakeholders. Similarly, Deignan (2026) emphasized that inclusive educational management seeks to eliminate barriers and provide equitable opportunities regardless of gender, background, ability, or learning needs. Collectively, these literatures suggest that school principals are not merely administrators but important agents of equity and inclusion whose leadership behaviors, policies, relationships, and decision-making processes influence the development of supportive and fair school environments.

The related studies reinforce the importance of leadership in addressing gender inequality, diversity, and barriers to inclusion. Amatullah (2024) and Jung (2024) revealed that gender, culture, race, religion, systemic discrimination, microaggressions, tokenism, and limited mentorship can constrain women's participation and advancement in educational leadership. In the Philippine context, Barairo, Ramos, and Torregoza (2024) highlighted the importance of gender-sensitive policies, Gender and Development programs, curriculum integration, and professional development, while identifying stereotypes, limited resources, and weak monitoring as continuing challenges. Damri et al. (2023), Kamran, Bano, and Siddiqui (2024), and Massouti, Al-Rashaida, and Alhosani (2024) similarly demonstrated that inclusive leadership requires collaboration, professional development, equitable resource allocation, effective policy implementation, and sustained institutional support. Khololo (2024) further identified traditional

gender norms, structural barriers, and resource limitations as challenges to gender-responsive leadership, emphasizing capacity building, collaborative networks, equitable resource allocation, and mentoring. The importance of mentorship is particularly supported by Carroz (2024) and Jung (2024), who found that appropriate mentors can strengthen women's leadership skills, confidence, professional networks, career development, and access to leadership opportunities. Hartshorn (2024), Lemieux (2022), McCann (2024), Snow (2024), and Strouse (2024) extended these findings by emphasizing collaborative leadership, cultural competence, empathy, stakeholder participation, professional development, and intersectional approaches in addressing the needs of diverse and marginalized groups. Meanwhile, Weinberg (2023) demonstrated the importance of challenging systemic barriers and developing anti-discrimination practices, while White (2023) identified gender bias, cultural expectations, and unequal responsibilities as barriers to women's movement from teaching into leadership.

Taken together, the literature and studies indicate that gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management require more than the existence of formal policies; they depend on principals' capacity to translate principles of equity, diversity, participation, and respect into everyday school practices. Across the works of FBA (2026), Smet et al. (2021), Marymount (2024), Deignan (2026), Amatullah (2024), Jung (2024), Barairo, Ramos, and Torregoza (2024), Damri et al. (2023), Kamran, Bano, and Siddiqui (2024), Massouti, Al-Rashaida, and Alhosani (2024), Khololo (2024), Carroz (2024), Hartshorn (2024), Lemieux (2022), McCann (2024), Snow (2024), Strouse (2024), Weinberg (2023), and White (2023), common themes emerge: leadership commitment, gender-sensitive policies, inclusive decision-making, cultural competence, professional development, stakeholder participation, equitable resource allocation, mentorship, and institutional support are essential to sustaining inclusive schools. However, while these studies provide substantial evidence on gender equity, inclusive leadership, and leadership development in various educational contexts, there remains a need to examine how these dimensions are manifested specifically among school principals in Region XI. This contextual gap provides the rationale for the present study, which seeks to determine the relationship between gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices of school principals in Region XI and use the findings as a basis for developing an Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program. Such a program can address identified leadership needs by providing principals and aspiring educational leaders with structured opportunities for mentoring, capacity building, reflective practice, and the development of sustainable gender-responsive and inclusive leadership competencies.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in *Sandra Bem's Gender Schema Theory* (1981), which explains how societal norms, cultural values, and learned expectations shape individuals' perceptions of gender roles and influence their behaviors and decision-making. In educational leadership, gender schemas may contribute to unconscious biases, unequal opportunities, and the marginalization of certain gender groups. The theory is relevant to this study because recognizing and challenging gender-based assumptions can help school principals develop leadership and management practices that are more responsive, equitable, and inclusive of diverse gender needs.

The study is also supported by *Transformational Leadership Theory* developed by Burns (1978) and expanded by Bass (1985). The theory emphasizes the leader's capacity to inspire, motivate, and empower individuals toward shared goals while promoting positive organizational change. Its principles of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual

stimulation, and individualized consideration are consistent with gender-responsive leadership. In the context of schools in Region XI, transformational leadership can help principals recognize diversity, address gender disparities, provide equitable opportunities, and establish an environment where teachers and learners feel valued and included.

Another theoretical foundation is *Feminist Leadership Theory*, associated with scholars such as bell hooks (1984) and Sara Ahmed (2017), which challenges traditional hierarchies and power structures that contribute to gender inequality. It advocates participative, collaborative, and empowering leadership that gives voice to marginalized and underrepresented groups. Complementing this perspective is Schein's (1985) Organizational Culture Theory, which explains how shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices influence behavior within an organization. Together, these theories provide a basis for examining how school principals can transform organizational practices and cultures that reinforce gender stereotypes and promote participation, equity, and inclusivity in educational decision-making.

The study further draws from *Social Justice Leadership Theory* of Theoharis (2007), which emphasizes the responsibility of educational leaders to confront discrimination, address systemic inequalities, and ensure equitable access to opportunities and resources. This theory directly supports the study's focus on inclusive educational management by encouraging school principals to develop policies and practices that remove gender-based barriers, strengthen professional development on gender equity, and promote inclusive learning environments. It emphasizes that effective educational leadership extends beyond administrative functions to actively advancing fairness, participation, and social equity.

Taken collectively, Gender Schema Theory, Transformational Leadership Theory, Feminist Leadership Theory, Organizational Culture Theory, and Social Justice Leadership Theory provide a comprehensive foundation for examining the relationship between gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices. Gender Schema Theory explains the influence of gender-based perceptions and biases; Transformational Leadership Theory highlights leadership behaviors that inspire and empower; Feminist Leadership Theory addresses power and participation; Organizational Culture Theory explains the role of institutional values and practices; and Social Justice Leadership Theory emphasizes equity and the elimination of systemic barriers. The integration of these perspectives provides a strong theoretical basis for understanding how school principals in Region XI can strengthen gender-responsive leadership and promote more inclusive educational management, ultimately supporting the development of an Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is anchored on the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model, which systematically examines the relationship between gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices among school principals in Region XI.

The *Input* component includes the principals' perceived level of gender-responsive leadership in terms of gender sensitivity in leadership and decision-making, promotion of gender equality in school policies and programs, gender-fair resource allocation, and integration of gender-responsive initiatives into school culture. The input component further covers the level of inclusive educational management practices, particularly support services for diverse learners, implementation of policies responsive to varying learner needs, equitable professional development opportunities for teachers and staff, and participatory stakeholder engagement. It

also includes determining significant differences in gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices when respondents are grouped according to their demographic and professional characteristics, as well as the relationship between the two major study variables. The challenges encountered by school principals and the strategies they employ in implementing gender-responsive and inclusive practices are likewise considered to provide contextual insights for the development of the proposed intervention.

The **Process** component involves the quantitative research procedures used to gather, organize, analyze, and interpret the data. Structured survey instruments are administered to school principals in Region XI using appropriate sampling procedures. The collected data are tabulated and analyzed using the mean to determine the levels of gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices, and the standard deviation to assess the variability of responses. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r) is used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices. The results are subsequently interpreted based on the research questions and appropriate statistical criteria.

The **Output** of the study is the Proposed Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP), which is developed from the empirical findings of the study. The program is intended to address identified strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement in the leadership and management practices of school principals, particularly in gender equality, inclusivity, equity, participatory decision-making, stakeholder engagement, and responsive educational management. The findings regarding demographic characteristics, levels of gender-responsive leadership and inclusive management practices, significant differences or associations, and relationships between variables will serve as the evidence base for designing the program.

Finally, the Proposed Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP) is envisioned as a practical and sustainable leadership development intervention for school principals in Region XI. It may include mentoring, capacity-building activities, collaborative learning, and professional support focused on gender-responsive leadership, inclusive educational management, equitable decision-making, gender-sensitive policies, diversity and inclusion, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring and evaluation. Through these components, the ILMP seeks to translate the study's empirical findings into actionable strategies that strengthen the competencies and practices of school leaders and promote equitable, inclusive, and supportive learning environments for learners, teachers, and other stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design, specifically a descriptive-comparative and correlational approach, to determine the extent of gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices among school principals in Region XI. The quantitative approach enabled the objective measurement and statistical analysis of the study variables, while the descriptive-comparative component described the respondents' profiles and examined differences across groups. The correlational component determined the strength and direction of the relationship between gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices without manipulating the variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

The respondents consisted of school principals and teachers from public elementary and secondary schools in Region XI, selected through simple random sampling. Principals provided information regarding their demographic and professional characteristics, including income, qualifications, training attended, and school classification such as urban, rural, or Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA). Teachers' demographic and school-context information was likewise gathered to provide complementary perceptions of principals' leadership and management practices. Their participation allowed the study to examine both self-assessments of school principals and teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding leadership and inclusivity within their schools.

A structured survey questionnaire was used as the primary data-gathering instrument and was organized according to the objectives and Statement of the Problem. The instrument included sections on respondents' demographic profiles, gender-responsive leadership styles, and inclusive educational management practices. A 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree was used to assess the manifestation of five leadership dimensions—transformational, servant, democratic, instructional, and participative leadership—and the utilization of inclusive management practices, including gender-equitable curriculum, inclusive teaching strategies, gender-sensitive policies, community collaboration, and monitoring of inclusivity outcomes. Additional sections examined differences according to respondents' demographic characteristics and the relationship between gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices.

Data collection was conducted after securing the necessary authorization from the appropriate Department of Education (DepEd) authorities. The respondents were informed of the purpose of the study and participated voluntarily. The questionnaires were administered either personally or electronically, depending on the respondents' accessibility and convenience, over a period of four weeks. After retrieval, the responses were organized, coded, analyzed, and interpreted using appropriate statistical procedures to determine the levels of gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices, differences across respondent profiles, and relationships between the major study variables.

The statistical treatment was aligned with the specific research problems. For SOP 1, the weighted mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of manifestation of gender-responsive leadership styles as perceived by principals and teachers and to assess the consistency of their responses. For SOP 2, the same statistical tools were used to determine the level of utilization of inclusive educational management practices. For SOP 3, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was employed to determine the strength, direction, and significance of the relationship between gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices. These statistical procedures provided an objective basis for interpreting the findings and developing the proposed Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1
Summary of Level of Manifestation of School Principals as Perceived by
Themselves and their Personnel

Level of Manifestation of Gender-Responsive Leadership Styles Along:	Principal		Personnel	
	Weighted Mean	Description	Weighted Mean	Description
Transformational	3.94	High	4.15	High
Servant	4.04	High	4.12	High
Democratic	4.06	High	4.12	High
Instructional	4.05	High	4.12	High
Participative	4.09	High	4.17	High
Overall	4.04	High	4.14	High

Table 1 indicates that school principals in Region XI demonstrate high levels of gender-responsive leadership across the five dimensions: transformational, servant, democratic, instructional, and participative leadership. Principals reported an overall mean of 4.04, while personnel gave a slightly higher mean of 4.14, indicating strong agreement between principals' self-perceptions and personnel's assessments. Participative leadership received the highest ratings from both principals (4.09) and personnel (4.17), highlighting the emphasis on shared decision-making, collaboration, and inclusion. The consistently high ratings across all dimensions suggest that principals actively practice inclusive, equitable, and participatory leadership in their schools.

These findings demonstrate that gender-responsive leadership is evident and actively practiced among school principals in Region XI, providing a strong foundation for the development of the proposed Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program. The findings are supported by Amatullah (2024), who emphasized that effective educational leadership is strengthened through inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive practices that promote participation, collaboration, and respect for diversity. Similarly, the high ratings across the five leadership dimensions suggest that principals' leadership behaviors contribute to inclusive school environments and provide best practices that can be strengthened and replicated through the proposed mentorship program..

Table 2
Summary of Level of Utilization of Inclusive Educational Management Practices of School Principal

Level of Utilization of Inclusive Educational Management Practices	Principals		Teachers	
	Weighted Mean	Description	Weighted Mean	Description
Gender-equitable curriculum	4.15	Moderately Utilized	4.17	Moderately Utilized
Inclusive teaching strategies	4.17	Moderately Utilized	4.14	Moderately Utilized
Gender-sensitive policies	4.18	Moderately Utilized	4.14	Moderately Utilized
Community collaboration	4.22	Moderately Utilized	4.17	Moderately Utilized
Monitoring of exclusivity outcomes	4.26	Moderately Utilized	4.13	Moderately Utilized
Grand Mean	4.20	Moderately Utilized	4.15	Moderately Utilized

According to the results in Table 2, inclusive educational management practices in Region XI were utilized at a moderate level, as reflected in the grand means of 4.20 among principals and 4.15 among teachers. The nearly similar ratings indicate a shared perception that inclusive practices are already integrated into school management, although they have not yet been fully institutionalized or consistently implemented at a high level. Among the indicators, principals rated community collaboration highly (4.22), while teachers also gave a relatively high rating (4.17), suggesting active engagement with stakeholders in promoting inclusive education. Principals likewise rated monitoring outcomes of exclusion highest (4.26), compared with teachers' rating of 4.13, indicating a slight difference in perceptions regarding the extent of participation in monitoring inclusion-related outcomes. Meanwhile, inclusive teaching strategies and gender-sensitive policies received comparatively lower ratings, particularly from teachers, suggesting the need for continued training, support, and stronger implementation mechanisms.

These findings indicate that inclusive educational management in Region XI is developing but requires further capacity-building, formalized programs, and stronger alignment between leadership perspectives and school-level practices. The results are supported by Damri et al. (2023), who emphasized that effective inclusive educational management depends on school leaders' capacity to implement inclusive learning practices, collaborate with stakeholders, and continuously monitor educational outcomes to promote equitable participation. Their study further highlighted the importance of sustained professional development and systematic monitoring in strengthening inclusive school management. Consistent with the present findings, the moderate level of utilization suggests that although inclusive initiatives are already

established, further institutional support and capacity-building are necessary to ensure more consistent and sustainable implementation across schools.

The significant relationship between the level of manifestation of the gender-responsive leadership styles and the level of utilization of inclusive educational management practices of school principals

Table 3
Significant Relationship between Level of Manifestation of Gender Responsive Leadership Styles and Level of Utilization of Inclusive Educational Management Practices

Level of Manifestation of Gender Responsive Leadership Styles		Level of Utilization of Inclusive Educational Management Practices					Overall
		Gender-equitable curriculum	Inclusive teaching strategies	Gender-sensitive policies	Community collaboration	Monitoring of exclusivity outcomes	
Transformational Leadership	r	.812**	.765**	.754**	.736**	.699**	.793*
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	r	.814**	.781**	.769**	.765**	.735**	.813*
Servant Leadership	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	r	.817**	.785**	.776**	.781**	.743**	.822*
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Democratic Leadership	r	.807**	.803**	.790**	.775**	.740**	.824*
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	r	.802**	.782**	.785**	.773**	.734**	.816*
Inclusive Leadership	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	r	.853**	.825**	.816**	.807**	.769**	.857*
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Collaborative Leadership	r	.853**	.825**	.816**	.807**	.769**	.857*
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	r	.853**	.825**	.816**	.807**	.769**	.857*
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Overall	r	.853**	.825**	.816**	.807**	.769**	.857*
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	r	.853**	.825**	.816**	.807**	.769**	.857*
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between gender-responsive leadership styles and the utilization of inclusive educational management practices among school principals. The results revealed consistently strong and positive correlations across all leadership styles and dimensions, with all relationships statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p < .01$). Among the leadership styles, Inclusive Leadership ($r = .824^{**}$) and Democratic Leadership ($r = .822^{**}$) showed the strongest correlations, followed by Collaborative Leadership ($r = .816^{**}$), Servant Leadership ($r = .813^{**}$), and Transformational Leadership ($r = .793^{**}$). Overall, gender-responsive leadership styles demonstrated a strong positive correlation with inclusive educational management practices ($r = .857^{**}$, $p < .01$).

These findings indicate that principals who demonstrate higher levels of gender-responsive leadership are more likely to utilize inclusive curriculum design, inclusive teaching

strategies, gender-sensitive policies, community collaboration, and mechanisms for monitoring exclusivity outcomes. The significant relationships suggest that gender-responsive leadership is an important factor associated with the effective implementation of inclusive educational management practices. Thus, strengthening principals' competencies in gender-responsive and inclusive leadership may contribute to more equitable and participatory school environments and provides empirical support for the proposed Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP).

The findings are consistent with Amatullah (2024), who reported that educational leaders practicing inclusive, culturally responsive, and gender-aware leadership were more effective in promoting equitable and inclusive learning environments. The study emphasized that inclusive and responsive leadership strengthens institutional practices that encourage participation, equity, and collaboration among stakeholders. Similarly, the present findings reinforce the importance of developing gender-responsive leadership competencies among school principals as a means of strengthening inclusive educational management and promoting equitable educational outcomes.

Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP) may be proposed to strengthen gender-responsive and inclusive leadership among school principals in Region XI

PROPOSED INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP MENTORSHIP PROGRAM (ILMP)

The Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP) is proposed to strengthen the gender-responsive and inclusive leadership competencies of school principals in Region XI. The program responds to the study's findings that, although principals generally demonstrate strong gender-responsive leadership, transformational leadership remains an area for improvement, while inclusive educational management practices are only moderately and inconsistently utilized. The significant positive relationship between gender-responsive leadership and inclusive practices further supports the need for a structured intervention that combines professional development, mentoring, coaching, and school-based application.

The ILMP aims to enhance principals' transformational leadership, improve the consistent implementation of inclusive practices, strengthen monitoring and feedback systems, address perception gaps between principals and personnel, and provide leadership strategies suited to rural, urban, and GIDA schools. Its major components include five core modules: Transformational Gender-Responsive Leadership; Inclusive Instructional Leadership; Participative and Democratic Leadership; Policy Development and Community Collaboration; and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback Mechanisms. These are supported by mentor-mentee matching, needs assessment, monthly coaching, peer-learning sessions, capacity-building workshops, and individualized leadership development plans.

A major feature of the program is the implementation of school-based Inclusive Leadership Projects, through which mentees apply their learning to concrete initiatives such as gender-sensitive curriculum enhancement, inclusive policy development, community engagement, inclusive school governance, and gender-responsive student support. The program will be monitored through pre- and post-assessments, leadership performance indicators, implementation reviews, and feedback from teachers, learners, and community stakeholders. These mechanisms will determine improvements in leadership competencies, the utilization of inclusive practices, and the alignment between principals' leadership intentions and actual school-level implementation.

For sustainability, the ILMP will be integrated into existing DepEd, Regional, Division, and school-based professional development and leadership mechanisms. Experienced and high-performing principals may serve as continuing mentors, creating a peer-mentoring network for succeeding school leaders. The program's modules, coaching sessions, peer-learning activities, monitoring tools, and school-based projects may likewise be incorporated into existing school improvement and stakeholder-engagement initiatives. Ultimately, the ILMP seeks to elevate transformational leadership from moderate to high or very high levels, promote consistently utilized inclusive practices, strengthen gender equity, and establish a sustainable culture of inclusive and gender-responsive leadership across schools in Region XI.

SUMMARY

The study found that school principals and personnel in Region XI generally demonstrated high levels of gender-responsive leadership and support for inclusive educational management practices. Both groups recognized the importance of gender-responsive and inclusive approaches, particularly in promoting collaboration, shared decision-making, and inclusiveness. Participative leadership emerged as one of the strongest practices, although the findings indicated that leadership practices still require refinement and stronger institutionalization across schools.

Inclusive educational management practices were also moderately to highly utilized, with grand means of 4.20 among principals and 4.15 among personnel. Strong practices included gender-equitable curricula, inclusive teaching strategies, gender-sensitive policies, community collaboration, and monitoring of inclusivity outcomes. However, lower ratings from personnel on some indicators suggested inconsistencies between the awareness of inclusive practices and their actual implementation in schools.

A strong and positive relationship was found between gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices ($r = .857$, $p < .01$). This indicates that stronger gender-responsive leadership is associated with more effective implementation of inclusive curricula, teaching strategies, policies, collaboration, and monitoring systems. Inclusive, democratic, and collaborative leadership approaches showed particularly strong relationships with inclusive educational management.

Based on these findings, the study proposed the Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP) as a data-driven intervention to address gaps in leadership competencies, inconsistent implementation of inclusive practices, and differences in training and perceptions between principals and personnel. The program emphasizes structured mentorship, capacity-building workshops, coaching, peer learning, and school-based projects, organized around five core areas: transformational leadership, instructional leadership, participative leadership, policy development, and monitoring.

Overall, the study concludes that gender-responsive leadership is an important foundation for strengthening inclusive educational management in schools. While significant progress has been achieved, greater consistency, institutionalization, capacity building, and collaboration between principals and personnel are needed. The proposed ILMP seeks to address these needs and promote a sustainable culture of gender equity, inclusive leadership, and responsive educational management across schools in Region XI.

CONCLUSIONS

- The principals demonstrated gender-responsive leadership across the transformational, servant, democratic, instructional, and participative dimensions, with participative leadership being the most evident while transformational leadership required further enhancement.
- Inclusive educational management practices were generally highly utilized across curriculum, instruction, school policies, community collaboration, and monitoring, although further institutional support is needed to achieve consistent implementation among schools.
- A significant and strong positive relationship existed between gender-responsive leadership styles and inclusive educational management practices, indicating that stronger gender-responsive leadership contributes to more effective inclusive school management.
- Based on the findings, an Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program is recommended to strengthen gender-responsive leadership competencies, expand equitable access to professional development, and institutionalize inclusive educational management practices across schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, it is recommended to:

1. School principals and educational leaders may continue strengthening their gender-responsive leadership competencies through continuous professional development and participation in an Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program, while encouraging regular monitoring and evaluation of inclusive policies and practices to promote equitable implementation across schools.
2. Teachers are encouraged to participate in gender-responsive education and inclusive instructional strategy training while encouraging collaboration with school leaders to strengthen inclusive classroom practices, provide constructive feedback, and support shared decision-making.
3. Schools may initiate participation of students in gender related programs, fostering an inclusive school environment through student councils, forums, and peer-led initiatives that promote equitable treatment and meaningful engagement.
4. Educational policymakers may strengthen long-term support for gender-responsive leadership by encouraging investments in training, mentoring, GIDA-focused initiatives, and the development of standards and monitoring systems for inclusive educational management.
5. Parents and community stakeholders are encouraged to collaborate with schools by participating in awareness programs, inclusive decision-making, and community partnerships that encourage gender-sensitive and inclusive educational practices.
6. Future researchers may examine additional factors influencing gender-responsive leadership and inclusive educational management practices, employ longitudinal and mixed-method approaches, and evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program.
7. The proposed Inclusive Leadership Mentorship Program (ILMP) may be implemented to further enhance the gender-responsive and inclusive leadership competencies of school principals by encouraging continuous professional development, strengthened transformational leadership, context-responsive interventions, stakeholder engagement, and ongoing evaluation to promote equitable and inclusive educational environments.

8. School heads and education supervisors may provide context-responsive leadership interventions based on respondent group and school type, particularly for schools with limited resources and those located in Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA). Targeted mentoring, coaching, peer-learning activities, and differentiated capacity-building programs may be provided to address variations in the manifestation of gender-responsive leadership and the utilization of inclusive educational management practices across school contexts.
9. School principals, teachers, and education supervisors may strengthen transformational leadership and principal–teacher alignment through collaborative leadership activities, reflective leadership sessions, feedback mechanisms, and shared decision-making processes. Particular attention may be given to enhancing principals’ capacity to communicate a clear inclusive vision, inspire stakeholders, empower personnel, and translate gender-responsive principles into sustainable school-wide practices.

AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools were employed only to enhance language quality and formatting. The conceptualization, data analysis, interpretation of results, and formulation of conclusions were carried out independently by the researcher.

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