

# Unearthing Campus Culture in Philippine Private Higher Education: A Case Study on Gender Mainstreaming and Policy

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## **ABSTRACT**

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and the release of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED)'s Memorandum Order No. 1 (CMO-1) on gender mainstreaming sparked an assessment of gender mainstreaming's effectiveness in education. Conducted from October to December 2015, the paper is a case study on the gender culture of a school that is in the process of complying with CMO-1. This school is a private, co-educational institution of higher education (IHE) in the Philippines' National Capital Region (NCR). Key informant interviews (KIIs) with two administrators, focus group discussions (FGDs), and in-depth interviews (IDIs) of 17 student leaders and volunteers revealed the students' experiences in the campus that are related to issues of security (microaggression and sexual harassment) and equity (gender-fair language and gender stereotyping). Participants described the gender issues they faced in the absence of an explicit and overarching gender policy on campus. Notable themes include a culture that normalizes gender-based violence, the invisibilization of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community,

and the privileging of men in the IHE. The results of this paper were used to generate concrete policy and program recommendations in light of gender mainstreaming.

Key Words: Gender mainstreaming, gender policy, campus culture, security, equity

## INTRODUCTION

The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) in 2020 spurs an assessment of the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming initiatives. Established as a global strategy during the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, gender mainstreaming promotes the implementation of policies that address barriers women face in accessing resources and services. It is relevant to the Philippine context as it is the mechanism adopted for incorporating gender into various structures and processes (Magna Carta of Women). Education is a critical area of concern for gender mainstreaming both internationally (United Nations [UN] Women, 2015; United Nations [UN], 2018) and locally (Dayo & Illo, 2015), with access to and non-discrimination in education as a priority concern in the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710). The celebration of the BPfA's 20<sup>th</sup> year coincides with the release of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED)'s Memorandum Order No. 1, Series of 2015 (CMO-1): Establishing the Policies and Guidelines on Gender and Development in the Commission on Higher Education and Higher Education Institutions. Both documents call for an assessment of gender and education issues in institutions of higher education (IHEs).

Educational institutions normalize gender standards that are often transferred to one's home and work culture (McCowan, 2012), making the assessment of cultures fostered in IHEs imperative to the study of gender equality. A study on campus cultures conducted by the National Union of Students (NUS, 2012) of the United Kingdom entitled *That's What She Said* found that the crisis of masculinity comes with underpinnings of discrimination: racism, sexism and misogyny, and homophobia. Issues arising from campus culture have yet to be tackled

in Philippine studies on gender mainstreaming. This study hopes to address this gap.

This research assesses gender campus culture through a case study of one private co-educational IHE in the National Capital Region (NCR) using key informant interviews (KIIs) with administrators, as well as in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with student leaders and volunteer student participants. The conceptual framework on gender-inclusive culture by Endeley and Ngaling (2007) surfaces gender issues and analyzes these issues in light of gender mainstreaming (Walby, 2005). Based on a research conducted from October to December 2015, the paper studies the culture of a school that is in the process of complying with CMO-1.

The students' vulnerability due to their subordinate position within the IHE necessitate that the study focuses on the IHE student experience (Kintanar, 1995). The paper focuses on the students' experiences relating to issues of security (microaggression and sexual harassment) and equity (gender-fair language and gender stereotyping). The study highlights student-to-student, student-to-teacher, student-to-non-teaching-professional, and student-to-staff interactions.

Despite being stakeholders, students are not consulted when it comes to crafting gender-sensitive policies. The researcher presented the results of this study to the administration of the IHE where this study took place and proposed concrete policy recommendations that address current student gender needs in the IHE.

The study assesses the gender-responsiveness of the IHE in terms of their compliance with national and international laws and policies such as the CMO-1's and the BPfA + 20 NGO Report's call for monitoring and evaluating gender mainstreaming processes in education (Dayo & Illo, 2015; Philippine Commission on Women [PCW], 2015).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The following section outlines international and national gender mainstreaming texts that serve as a background for gender mainstreaming in education. Studies on campus culture and gender mainstreaming in

the Philippines will be discussed to show the remaining gaps in discussions about gender mainstreaming.

International instruments provide a context for gender mainstreaming initiatives in the Philippines and serve as a basis for the assessment of these initiatives (PCW, n.d.). The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), the government agency that promotes gender equality and women's empowerment, identifies three international instruments for gender mainstreaming: the BPfA, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The Magna Carta of Women is the overarching law that protects women from discrimination. It is adapted from the BPfA and "establishes the Philippine government's pledge of commitment to the CEDAW" (PCW, n.d.). Alongside other gender-related laws (Women in Development and Nation Building Act, Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995, Anti-Rape Law of 1997, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003, Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004, Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012), the Magna Carta of Women rationalizes the Philippines' international commitments. It is enhanced by the Women's Development and Gender Equality (EDGE) Plan 2013-2016. The Women's EDGE plan is the successor of the Philippine Development Plan for Women for 1989-1992 and the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development 1995-2025, all serve to mainstream gender in all aspects of society. The CMO-1 is a guideline for gender mainstreaming in IHEs.

Gender gaps to be addressed include the access to education for marginalized groups or sectors, gender parity in enrollment statistics, non-sexist career tracking, the quality of education given to women, stereotyping in educational materials and curricula, and sexual harassment on campus (Dayo & Illo, 2015; PCW, 2015; UN Women, 2015).

Local Philippine research on gender culture in education include the practitioners' experience of institutional gender mainstreaming through non-academic programs (Enriquez, 2011) as well as the curricula (Ilagan, 1996). Other studies focused on the perception of students of gender sensitivity sessions (Jorolan-Quintero, Loquias, & De Castro, 2011) and students' experience of sex education (Manalastas & Macapagal, 2005).

These local studies do not tackle the IHE's campus culture in-depth. Only one study calls for an assessment of concerns on sexuality and sexual orientation (Kintanar, 2013).

The researcher turns to foreign literature to inform this paper's analysis of campus culture and gender issues, specifically, the NUS's (2012) research on "lad culture." Culture is defined as "shared characteristics and norms of particular nationalities or sub- or cross-national groups" (NUS, 2012, p. 13). The culture of individuals within an IHE determines campus culture through their interactions at a given time. Policies within the university, values upheld by the administration, and organizations and activities within campus all impact campus culture. Outside factors such as globalization and corporate competition also inform campus culture (NUS, 2012).

Walby's (2005) critique and the gender priorities above show the gaps in research, one gap being identifying the culture that fosters and perpetuates gender issues. The study of campus culture then is imperative as the marker of the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming.

## **FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY**

This paper is a case study that details the campus culture of one IHEs in light of the themes mentioned in the review of related literature and based on students' experiences in their IHE. The modified conceptual framework on gender-inclusive culture by Endeley and Ngaling (2007) structure this paper to surface gender themes culled through feminist KIIs, IDIs, and FGDs.

Endeley and Ngaling's (2007) modified conceptual framework on gender-inclusive culture details five overarching principles for a gender-responsive culture in a university: empowerment, co-operation, equity, sustainability, and security. The paper uses the principles of equity and security due to their close relation to the gaps found in the literature on gender mainstreaming in education. These principles mirror the issues Kintanar (2013) raises in her information kit for college administrators. Kintanar (2013) cites sexual harassment, sexism and sexual language, violence on campus, and issues on sexuality and sexual orientation as concerns.

The principle of security covers rules and regulations governing the rights of women and men in relation to sexual harassment (Endeley & Ngaling, 2007, pp. 66-67). Philippine law defines sexual harassment as the demand, request, or requirement of a sexual act or favor by someone of “authority, influence or moral ascendancy” over his or her subordinate (Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995). Sexual harassment creates a hostile environment that affects the students’ experience of education.

Currently, there is no system to consolidate the number of sexual harassment cases in IHEs, both public and private. Multiple factors influenced reporting, such as the stigma surrounding harassment and the lack of coverage for peer-to-peer harassment on campus (PCW, 2014).

Another issue related to security involves subtle behavior such as microaggressions that, while not explicitly sexist or sexual, fosters an unsafe environment that perpetuates gender-based violence (NUS, 2012). Microaggressions are everyday acts that are subtle in nature, intentional or unintentional, that negatively impact a target group or person due to their hostile or derogatory nature (Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007). Some effects of microaggression include internalized emotions such as guilt, resentment, anger, as well as a negative implication on relationships (Nadal, 2013).

This study recognizes that gender equity is a method to attain gender equality. Gender equity in the Endeley and Ngaling (2007) framework involves access to higher education. It also covers the use of gender-sensitive language in all oral and written communication, and the focus on “gender-disaggregated statistics and data to deal with admission, enrolment, performance, staff, scholarship and other areas of interest” (pp. 78-79).

Another aspect related to the issue of equity is gender stereotyping, which involves the reduction of a person’s characteristics based on his or her sex. These characteristics may be physical, mental, and emotional (Ateneo Human Rights Center [AHRC], 2007). Gender stereotyping becomes an issue when it prevents students from accessing resources due to their gender role, such as in course selection and career choices for women (Dayo & Illo, 2015).

The issues surfaced through the framework are presented through a case study. Using the case study method, this paper chronicles units of social life such as persons, groups, processes, communities, or institutions (Reinharz, 1992), and the nuanced gender interactions given an IHE's policies (if any) on security and equity. The study of women's needs, gender issues, and women's presence in institutions make this inquiry feminist (Reinharz, 1992).

Feminist methodologies for KIIs, IDIs, and FGDs are used in data collection. FGDs allow for rapid reviews of gender-responsive policies (Gastardo-Conaco, 1999), and for gathering students' feedback on their needs concerning security and equity. The discussions prioritize student's knowledge, noting their awareness of the presence or absence of gender policies given the existing campus culture. The IDIs draw from themes that arise from the FGDs. Select student leaders from the FGDs are interviewed to better understand how vulnerable groups—in this case, the students—lead their daily lives, exposing their views of reality and allowing the researcher to generate theory (Reinharz, 1992).

A pre-test was conducted to refine the research instruments used in this study with five students from one private IHE and one administrator in one private IHE.

The participants in this research have validated the transcripts of their IDIs and FGDs. Once the elapsed period for validation passed (specifically, two weeks), the researcher held a feedback session for interested participants. The researcher left her contact details with the students in case they are required for feedback questions, clarifications, and questions. The research also given them a copy of the analysis.

### **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

A key concern for feminist methods, particularly for IDIs, is the position of the researcher (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007). Given the difference in roles, age, university affiliation, and background, the researcher's authority had the potential to inhibit the participants from sharing their knowledge and experience. The FGDs were then conducted by a non-employee of the university, while the IDIs were conducted by the researcher.

The researcher's valuation of the participants' knowledge and the rapport built with the participants mitigated the students' hesitation to share during the IDIs.

Because this paper is not a gender audit, the identifying markers for the IHE was removed to assure the IHE that the research was in no way a reflection of the school's standing or performance.

### THE PARTICIPANTS

The KII participants were administrators who were often approached for gender concerns as there was no official gender point person in the IHE. The KIIs were conducted before the FGDs and IDIs. The KII results enhanced the FGD questions.

The student participants were recruited through professors and the student council of the IHE. The screening for IDI participants took place during the FGDs. Participants of the IDIs had experienced gender issues on campus.

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Participants' Code and Profile</b>
Key Informant Interview with Administrators	1 Straight Cisgender Male Administrator	KII 1 - Administrator for Student Concerns
	1 Straight Cisgender Female Administrator	KII 2 - Administrator for Student Discipline
Focus Group Discussions with Student Leaders	2 Straight Cisgender Male Student Leaders	SM 1.1 - Senior, Management, Officer in Organization SM 1.2 - Senior, Communications, Officer in Organization
	5 Straight Cisgender Female Student Leaders	SF 1 - Senior, Mathematics, Student Council Member SF 2 - Senior, Political Science, Leader in Organization SF 3 - Senior, Literature, Leader in Organization



	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Participants' Code and Profile</b>
		SF 4 - Senior, International Relations, Student Council Member SF 5 - Senior, Creative Writing, Officer in Organization
	4 Straight Cisgender Male Student Leaders Officer in Organization	SM 2.1 - Senior, Philosophy SM 2.2 - Senior, Pre-Medicine,  SM 2.3 - Senior, Philosophy, Officer in Organization SM 2.4 - Senior, Engineering, Student Council Member
	3 Cisgender Males LGBT Student Leaders	LGBT 1.1 - Senior, Social Sciences, Officer in Organization LGBT 1.2 - Communications, Officer in Organization LGBT 1.3 - Senior, Management, Officer in Organization
	2 Cisgender Female LGBT Student Leaders	LGBT 2.1 - Senior, Creative Writing, Officer in Organization LGBT 2.2 - Senior, Graphic Design, Officer in Organization
In-depth Interviews with Student Leaders	1 Straight Cisgender Male Student Leader from FGD 1	SM2.3
	1 Straight Cisgender Female Student Leader from FGD 2	SF 3
	1 Gay Cisgender Male Student Leader from FGD 4	LGBT 1.3
	1 Trans Woman Student Leader who was unable to participate in the FGDs	LGBT 3 - 5 <sup>th</sup> Year Student, Management, Former Student Council Leader

The researcher conducted five FGDs and four IDIs. Of the four IDIs, there were two lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) participants (one gay and one transgender), one cisgender straight male participant, and one cisgender straight female participant. Three of the four IDI participants were also part of the FGDs. A transgender female came forward as a volunteer participant for the IDI, given her interest in the research. All the respondents signed an informed consent form which covered their rights as participants and the handling of the data gathered.

## FINDINGS

Data from the IDIs and FGDs are presented below. These include the gender-related policies of the university as stated by the KIIs, and gaps identified by the student participants.

The CMO-1 mandates that the IHE have gender-responsive teaching, academic, research, and extension programs, as well as sex-disaggregated data to be considered a gender-responsive IHE. During the time of the study, the IHE had no explicit gender mainstreaming policy that addressed the CMO-1's mandate. While gender as a topic of study is present in select electives, no mandatory course tackles gender. The KIIs with the HEI administrators reveal that no mandatory gender sensitivity training for employees of the IHE exists. These KII participants state that there is no explicit rule on non-sexist career counseling in the IHE. Moreover, the IHE does not have a gender and development (GAD) database for gender-responsive research and extension programs. While sex-disaggregated data per year and course can be culled through the school's admissions office, the disaggregation of sex by enrollment status is not a practice. The administrators note that the IHE complies with laws concerning gender, particularly mentioning the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 (RA 7877). An example of this is shown through the presence of a committee on decorum and investigation (CODI) for sexual harassment cases in the IHE. However, there is no known research on campus sexual harassment in the IHE.

Behavior that reinforces gender bias (Kintanar, 2014) or gender bias in teaching (PCW, 2014) such as microaggression (Nadal, Whitman, Davis,

Erazo, & Davidoff, 2016) is not concretely addressed. It is identified as a need, as stated by KII 2.

Despite the school's adherence to the CODI, certain gender issues are present. The table below shows the gender issues the students mentioned during the FGDs. Issues raised by students are placed in the left-most column. The second, third, and fourth columns are labeled Female, Male, and LGBT, representing the FGD groups. If a cell has a **x** mark, then the issue is not mentioned in that FGD. If the gender need has a **✓** mark, then the issue is mentioned at least once in that FGD group. Some issues are mentioned by multiple persons in multiple FGDs. There are notes in certain cells if a gender issue is mentioned in that FGD as a concern for another gender. The gender issues mentioned have yet to be addressed fully by the administration.

Table 2: Gender Issues of Students from the IHE

<b>Student's Gender Needs</b>	<b>Straight Female FGD (FGD 2)</b>	<b>Straight Male FGDs (FGD 1 and 3)</b>	<b>LGBT FGD (FGD 3 and 5)</b>
Student Representation for Gender Concerns	<b>x</b>	✓ (for the LGBT)	<b>x</b>
Organizing/Safe Space	<b>x</b>	✓ (for the LGBT)	✓
Gender-Responsive Counseling	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	✓
Gender in Curriculum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender in Freshman Formation Class</li> <li>• Subject on Gender</li> <li>• Minor in Gender Studies</li> <li>• Professor's Acceptance of Gender Equality and Feminist Movement in the Classroom Setting</li> <li>• Incorporating Gender Issues in All Subjects</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓
Method for Communicating Concerns to Administration/ Consultation	✓	✓ (for the LGBT and Women)	✓

<b>Student's Gender Needs</b>	<b>Straight Female FGD (FGD 2)</b>	<b>Straight Male FGDs (FGD 1 and 3)</b>	<b>LGBT FGD (FGD 3 and 5)</b>
Memorandum for Anti-Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity	x	x	✓
Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights	✓	✓	✓
Sanitation and Health	✓	✓ (for the LGBT and Women)	✓ (for the LGBT and Women)
Gender-Responsive Language	✓	✓	✓
Policies and Mechanisms for Sexual Harassment	✓	x	✓
Gender-Diverse Faculty	x	x	✓
Gender Sensitivity Training for Employees Gender Office	✓	x	✓
Student's Awareness of Gender Policies and Issues	x	✓	✓
Gender Analysis of Institution	x	x	✓
Inclusion of Gender in Student Constitution	x	x	✓
Celebration of Women	✓	x	x
Acceptance by Family of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity	x	x	✓
Consultation to Address Gender Needs	x	✓	✓
Culture of Feminism	✓	x	✓
Gender-Responsive Administration	✓	✓	✓
Organization's Gender Sensitivity	x	✓	x
Gender Point Person	✓	✓	✓
Clarify School's Stance on LGBT Issues	x	✓	x

The students of the IHE are not aware of the CMO-1, but their gender issues coincide with the gender issues stated there. The students of all the FGDs call for the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming mechanisms to attain gender equality—a gender office, a gender-responsive administration, a gender point person, gender-responsive language, gender sensitivity training for faculty and staff, and an avenue for relaying one’s gender concerns to the administration. Sexual and reproductive health and rights must also be a focus. Addressing sexual harassment on campus is an identified need, as stated in the straight female FGD. There is no recognition of the LGBT community’s presence in the IHE, shares LGBT 1.3. The participants believe that the presence of gender mechanisms can cultivate a culture of feminism and gender equality on campus.

Male-specific issues are not mentioned in any FGD. SM 1.2 states that his needs were “addressed on the practical and even on the strategic side. Because I never really felt like something was missing... because I identified as male.” However, there are two gender needs unique to the Straight Male FGD. The first need includes the heightening of students’ awareness of gender issues. SM 2.4 specifically mentions that he wants to “learn the LGBTQ letters” (author’s translation). The second need includes a clarification of the school’s stance on LGBT issues, rather than staying silent about the issue. Both these needs are mentioned in solidarity with the LGBT community of the IHE.

The gender needs of the students showed that the non-explicit policies gender policies created a culture that condones sexual harassment and microaggressions against women. These are reinforced by gender-biased language and gender-based stereotypes. Incidents that detail these issues are discussed in the next section.

## DISCUSSION

Students can identify gaps in the school’s gender-responsiveness, despite there being no explicit method to educate the students on gender issues. Given the student’s first-hand knowledge, one can say that they are also aware of their school’s campus culture. The table below presents the students’ experience of the two principles for a gender-responsive campus (Endeley & Ngaling, 2007).

Table 3: Themes of Gender Culture in the IHE

	Security		Equity	
Persons Involved	Sexual Harassment	Microaggression	Stereotypes	Gender-Fair Language
Student-to-Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Harassment on Campus</li> <li>- Administration's Response to Harassment</li> <li>- Student's Reception to Harassment</li> <li>- Unwanted Attention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assumption of Universal LGBT Experience</li> <li>- Male Gaze</li> <li>- Backlash Against Feminism</li> <li>- Assumption of Traditional Gender Roles in Leadership</li> <li>- Entitlement in Romantic Relationships</li> <li>- Objectification of Women</li> <li>- Policing Women's Attire</li> <li>- Pressure to Conform to a Beauty Standard</li> <li>- Sexualization of Body Parts</li> <li>- Assumptions Based on Looks</li> <li>- Pressure to be Seen as Sexual or Desirable</li> <li>- Assumed Invisibility of LGBT</li> <li>- Gender-Based Harassment</li> <li>- Relationship Violence</li> <li>- Victim Blaming</li> <li>- Slut Shaming</li> <li>- Toxic Masculinity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Invisibilization of LGBT Struggle</li> <li>- Stereotypes and Roles of Particular Gender</li> <li>- SRHR (HIV/AIDS)</li> <li>- Leadership</li> <li>- Roles in Romantic Relationships</li> <li>- Angry Feminist Trope</li> <li>- Gendered Courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Derogatory Language</li> <li>- Watering Down of Feminist Concepts</li> <li>- Sexist Jokes</li> <li>- Assumed Heteronormativity in Language</li> <li>- Victim-Blaming Language</li> <li>- Selective Sexism</li> <li>- Homophobic Slurs</li> <li>- Undermining Women's Authority</li> <li>- Lack of Awareness of LGBT Terminology</li> <li>- Male as Dominant Pronoun</li> <li>- Pronoun Reversal for LGBT/Transgender Students</li> <li>- Male Job Titles</li> <li>- Use of Language that Objectifies Women or Likens Them to Objects</li> <li>- Gender-Neutral Language</li> <li>- Policing Language</li> <li>- Assumed Gender Based on Work</li> </ul>

	Security		Equity	
Persons Involved	Sexual Harassment	Microaggression	Stereotypes	Gender-Fair Language
Student-to-Teacher and Vice Versa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dismissal of Gender-Based Violence</li> <li>- Harassment on Campus</li> <li>- Unwanted Attention</li> <li>- Shaming Women Because of Attire</li> <li>- Inappropriate Sexual Language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Backlash Against Feminism</li> <li>- Assumption of Traditional Gender Roles in Leadership</li> <li>- Sexual Objectification of Women</li> <li>- Professor's Gender Preference</li> <li>- Policing/Shaming Women Because of Attire</li> <li>- Assumptions Based on Looks</li> <li>- Assumed Invisibility of LGBT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gender Roles in Religion</li> <li>- Stereotypes/Roles of Particular Gender in Leadership</li> <li>- Roles in Romantic Relationships</li> <li>- Gendered Courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Derogatory Language</li> <li>- Sexist Jokes</li> <li>- Assumed Heteronormativity in Language</li> <li>- Inappropriate Sexual Language</li> <li>- Commodification of LGBT/Women</li> <li>- Male as a Dominant Pronoun</li> <li>- Reversal of Ingrained Gendered Language</li> <li>- Women as Fairer Sex/Comparative to Object</li> </ul>
Student-to-Staff and Vice Versa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Harassment on Campus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policing Women's Attire</li> <li>- Using Sexuality for Favors</li> <li>- Assumptions Based on Looks</li> <li>- Assumed Invisibility of LGBT</li> <li>- LGBT as a Joke</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stereotypes and Roles of Particular Gender</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gender-Neutral Language</li> </ul>
Student-to-Non Teaching Professional and Vice Versa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unwanted Attention</li> <li>- Filing of Unwarranted Sexual Harassment Case for Personal Vendetta.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assumptions Based on Looks</li> <li>- Assumed Invisibility of LGBT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preference for Male Gender in Leadership Roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness of LGBT Terminology</li> </ul>
Persons Outside of the IHE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Street Harassment</li> <li>- Online Harassment</li> <li>- Rumored Sexual Violence (Social Media)</li> </ul>			

## Sexual Harassment and Violence

The following section presents the unsafe gender culture created from incidents of sexual harassment to issues of consent and rape. These are made possible through the culture microaggressions create and perpetuate.

Clear incidents of sexual harassment involve male employees. SM 2.1 shares that one male employee was caught “masturbating while watching [a female student take an] exam.” One male professor touches female students’ buttocks when they pass him during their lab class (SM 1.2). A transgender student shares that she felt violated when her male religion professor said he would “rape” her in class, to prove a point on interconnectivity (LGBT 3). Construction workers on campus catcall students.

Male students are perpetrators of harassment, despite peer-to-peer harassment being absent in Philippine law (Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995). Male students leer at girls and rate their appearance as they walk by (LGBT 2.2). LGBT 3’s male friends joke about her as a transgender student, stating she likes “cock.” There are also peer-to-peer incidents of harassment and rape in school events held off-campus (SF 2).

There is a contradiction between the data culled from the KIIs with the administrators and the IDIs with the students. A law-compliant CODI against sexual harassment exists within the IHE. Yet the participants feel this is insufficient. Students’ call for a stronger sexual harassment policy is brushed aside by the administration (SF 4). In cases of student-to-student harassment, SF 2 shares that her friend was made to confront her assailant who was a student, and the assailant was given a lesser punishment. This attitude signals condoning of violent behavior and undermines the fact that sexual harassment is a violation of one’s human rights (UN, n.d.).

While there is an anti-sexual harassment policy in place, certain biases affect how the issue is treated. When feminist students report harassment, their complaints are seen as “conflicts” because the female victims are seen as strong (SF 2). This as the reason why some students do not pursue their case (SF 2) or do not report the incident at all (SF 4). The students of the IHE may have to fit a certain stereotype before their case is taken seriously. Had the victims been less “strong,” would their case be taken more seriously? This makes one wonder if maintaining



peace and order is more important to the school than the attainment of gender justice.

All but one of the cases of sexual harassment in the IHE have straight, cisgender men as the perpetrator and women or LGBT individuals as their victims. What does this say about the male culture in the IHE? Educated, middle to upper-class young men can become assailants and aggressors. Older, educated, supposedly mature men can be perpetrators. Even professors of religious studies contribute to uncomfortable environments for women and LGBT individuals. No straight male participant claimed to be harassed showing that there is a bias against the treatment of women and LGBT individuals.

There are no mainstreamed preventive measures in the IHE to educate employees and students on sexual harassment. The lack of explicit mechanism creates a culture where students do not know they have been sexually harassed, are tolerant of harassment, or do not report incidents due to their dissatisfaction with the administration. Unresponsiveness to sexual harassment creates an unsafe environment for all students, especially those who have already been victimized.

The lack of awareness carries over into personal relationships. These involve intimate partner violence, issues of consent, and powerplay in relationships. Male students may force their girlfriend into having sex despite realizing that it is wrong to do so, while women consent to sex even if they are not ready because they do not want to disappoint their boyfriends (SM 1.2). SM 2.1 mentions that he may have at one point raped his girlfriend, as he had sex with her even if she was “not okay” about it. SF 4’s friend was in an abusive relationship where she was forced to have sex with her then-boyfriend even if she did not want to.

Issues of consent impact school culture and show that current policies are not enough to tackle gender issues. The Anti-Rape Law of 1997 (RA 8353) defines rape as an act committed by a man, who has carnal knowledge of a woman using threat, intimidation, or abuse of authority. Rape is also committed if one of the parties is below 12 years of age, unconscious, or deprived of reason. The incidents above do not fall under the law’s definition of rape. While there was explicit no threat, intimidation, or abuse of authority used, the girls did not give explicit consent to engage

in sexual relations, or they may have agreed to engage in sexual relations to please their partners without being completely willing. The lack of understanding of sexual consent is symptomatic of a lack of understanding about respect in gender relations, which contribute to the unsafe gender environment fostered on campus

### **Microaggressions**

While explicit harassment and issues of consent influence campus culture, microaggressions contribute to a culture that normalizes harassment and gender-based violence. Microaggressions serve as ways to normalize acts of violence. Other forms of microaggression involve the policing of women and the LGBTs' appearance and attitude.

Insensitive comments on rape create a culture that entitles men to women's affections and undermines sexual violence. A female religion professor sees male rape as a "funny scenario" and considers swearing in class as more reprehensible than rape (SF 3). Participants of the Straight Female FGD share that women who reject male romantic advances are shamed. "Slut shaming" or shaming of females based on how they act or dress (SM 2.3) is present, with men and women as perpetrators. Yet, there is a positive response regarding this issue as someone wrote a thesis against slut-shaming and that thesis gained positive attention (SM 2.3).

Contradicting attitudes towards sexuality such as shaming "sluts" or condemning women's rejection of romantic advances show a lack of self-awareness on gender issues and a lapse between students' professed values and their everyday actions. This lack of self-awareness, coupled with the dismissal of rape by persons in power, adds to a culture that is accepting of acts of gender-based violence.

Microaggressive acts affect one's self-perception as they police women's roles and equate their abilities to their appearance. Women in leadership positions are often undermined, as their abilities are equated to their looks and gender. Women in the IHE occupied leadership positions that they felt were representative of their stereotyped gender role, or what the members of the straight female FGD considered "caring positions." Women in leadership positions feel the need to be more "bihis" or dressed

up to garner respect (SF 1 and SF 4). When women claimed power, they were considered too “aggressive” (SF 4), and when they enacted stereotypically male traits such as assertiveness, they were put down through insults such as “bitch” (SF 4). Women who held higher leadership positions than their partner were made to feel guilty for excelling (SF 1 and SF 4). “It’s normal for a girl to back down,” shared SF 4.

Microaggressions reinforce the high value placed on women’s appearance and often equate women’s appearance to their abilities. While there is no explicit dress code in the IHE, subtle comments still police what women wear and how they look. SM 2.3’s professor stated that women did not need to get a job if they were pretty. SF 4 would often hear that she is too pretty to be a math major, prompting her to often question her abilities. SF 1 shares that his professor said ugly women “aren’t meant to be looked at and should not wear shorts.” A male professor is known for embarrassing women in his class if he found their clothing indecent (SF 4). LGBT 3, who is a part of the Constitutional Convention Committee, highlights the IHE student handbook’s low regard for women: “You never tell a guy to dress appropriately... [like] don’t show your skin. For women it’s different... double standard.”

## **Stereotypes**

Society’s culture and norms still play a large part in determining what women can and cannot do or be. When microaggressions reinforce stereotypes, students may internalize the roles they are told to play, affecting their perception of their abilities, and this internalized roles and beliefs may spill over to their home and future work environment. Stereotypes and their roots must also be assessed when discussing gender equality and campus culture.

The lack of gender stereotypes and the presence of gender-fair language serve as markers for gender-responsive campus culture. Gender stereotypes are rooted in assumptions about gender roles and characteristics of women, men, and LGBTs. Stereotypes are negative when those who do not adhere to these roles are discriminated against.

Many members of the IHE do not make distinctions between different members of the LGBT community. Transgender women are

seen as “gay,” girly men (LGBT 3). Participants from the LGBT FGD shared that “girly” lesbians are teased, as they are expected to act masculine. LGBT male participants are teased about becoming straight when they show affection towards their straight girl friends (LGBT 1.3). LGBT students sexualize themselves to fit the stereotype of the LGBTs in the IHE: LGBT 3 “[feels] the need to... be nude or sexy” during her election campaign photoshoot. She recognizes that this portrayal of her sexuality was not for her fellow LGBT members as they would not be attracted to her. The participants from both LGBT FGDs share that their relationships are called into question, with their peers asking who is the “male” or “female” in the relationship.

People in power influence the perception of the students on matters concerning LGBTs. Professors assume heteronormativity in relationships. LGBTs in religion class are either made invisible by their professors, sexualized (LGBT 3), or seen as promiscuous (LGBT 1.3). LGBT students separate their own beliefs from the ones the school promotes (LGBT 1.3) showing that they are tolerant of their discrimination in the IHE.

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual students are more tolerated in both IHEs precisely because these genders that fall under the category of man or woman. Transgender students in the IHE are maligned or invisibilized. LGBT 3, a transgender woman, did not know whom to approach about her gender concerns and just learned to ignore slurs against her gender.

Gender stereotypes affect LGBT participants’ self-perception. The strong culture of heteronormativity molds the LGBT participants to act a certain way, lest they are considered straight. The expectations of the culture surrounding these students force them into performing their sexualities so they “fit in,” otherwise, there will be a backlash against their identities. This attitude of quiet acceptance may carry on to the work lives of LGBTs, and make them more vulnerable to future discrimination.

The IHE’s heteronormative culture make it unable to fully respond to LGBT issues. The IHE has no policy against discrimination specific to LGBTs. Students in the IHE cannot correct the professors regarding their sexual orientation due to possible repercussions, causing confusion among the students. The lack of institutionalization creates discord between LGBT students and the administration.

## Gender-Fair Language

Derogatory and gender-biased language can be a form of harassment or microaggression and reinforces stereotypes. Incidents of microaggressive language involve men calling women “chicks,” the term placing heightened value on women’s looks. “Girly,” “womanly,” or “bakla” were adjectives used to connote something negative (LGBT 1.3). Sexist jokes were made at the expense of women, LGBTs, and non-masculine men. These were told by both students and professors. And while male students were more careful as not to offend LGBTs (SM 2.1), the older generations of male professors had the most violations concerning microaggression and sexism through the use of gender-biased language (SF 2).

Women in the IHE who demand gender equality and equal rights are perceived as “angry feminists,” (SF 2 and SF 4), a stereotype that is reinforced by microaggressive comments. Two of the five straight female FGD participants were officers of a now-defunct gender organization. They said that they received rude comments on their organization’s social media page because of their feminism. Female students would tell them that their organization was not necessary because women themselves did not need feminism, that feminism was a joke (SF 1 and SF 3). This culture was promoted by some professors of the IHE, with some teachers seeing feminism as “useless” or “radical” (SF 3).

This perception of feminism is due largely to what the students called “Tumblr Feminism.” Tumblr feminism as a form of feminism found on the social medial platform Tumblr, where members reblog other Tumblr members’ sexist posts to shame the original poster (LGBT 2.1). Students from the IHE consider women as “Tumblr feminists” when they shame people who are sexist (SM 1.2). Because of this phenomenon, students have a difficult time being receptive to feminism (LGBT 2.1). The students of the straight female FGD feel the need to act “nicer” to dispel this image of feminism; they felt that they must win the other students over to feminism (SF 2).

The dominance of Tumblr feminism in the school is a result of two things: its students’ socio-economic status and the lack of students’ access to formal gender education in the IHE. The students are from middle

to upper-class families because of the school's status as a private institution. All the students have access to the World Wide Web and social media. Social media feminism such as Tumblr feminism then becomes the main medium where students learn about feminism and gender equality, be they correct or incorrect notions. However, a straight male participant shares that he did not receive the same amount of criticism for his feminism (SM 2.3), showing that the stereotype of the docile female is reinforced in the IHE.

The incidents above serve as markers for an assessment of the school's campus culture. The issues above can serve as markers for what specific issues the IHE can address through gender mainstreaming policy, and what methods will best mitigate these concerns.

## **GENDER MAINSTREAMING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The gender campus culture in this paper highlights the privileged position of men and the discrimination of women and LGBTs fostered by the lack of gender policy. Below are specific policy and program recommendations based on the students' needs and experiences that can foster a gender-responsive culture within the IHE.

The IHE must create an overall gender policy. The policy should include a memorandum for anti-discrimination based on one's SOGIE and address peer-to-peer harassment.

The identification of a gender point person can guide the gender-responsiveness of the IHE. The creation of a gender office is necessary so that that students know who they can approach for their gender needs. The office can also create awareness about sexual harassment such that students are encouraged to report sexual harassment and address students' dissatisfaction in current reporting mechanisms. Hopefully, this office can assist students who wish to work at the grassroots level on gender issues, changing culture alongside the enforcement of gender-responsive policies that can make the IHE gender-responsive.

Gender sensitivity training for all employees must be held within the IHE to create gender consciousness among the employees, the religion professors included. The talks should cover an orientation on the laws

concerning gender, gender-fair language, gender stereotyping, sexual harassment, and microaggression in the IHE setting.

Gender-responsive services should be made available, such as gender-neutral bathrooms for transgender students and gender-responsive counseling for students undergoing confusion regarding their sexuality. A special counseling service should be open and made known to students who are or were victims of all forms of abuse, not just gender-based abuse.

Gender can be integrated into the curriculum through the inclusion of gender topics in the general education classes, having a minor in Gender Studies, along with gender or feminist frameworks in classes.

Students should be made aware of their rights, and be trained and empowered to correct sexism whenever and wherever they encounter it. This can mitigate unequal gender relations. This is achievable through orientations on policies and mechanisms for sexual harassment and awareness-raising on gender issues. This study hopes these orientations can foster a culture receptive of feminism and gender equality. These serve as the student counterpart to the employee gender sensitivity training.

The celebration of Women's Month and Pride Month can build solidarity among the students and help highlight positive notions of gender equality such that the students see its value, not just for them, but for all vulnerable or marginalized groups. Through this, a truly gender-responsive culture may be fostered. This feminist culture involves everyone working together towards gender equality.

Without integrating gender equality in the mission and vision of the IHE, there may be little chance of the IHE becoming a transformative institution. Without a gender center, this IHE may remain directionless in terms of its initiatives for gender equality. The IHE may support the status quo and patriarchal values. However, there is hope as the students themselves are already advocating for their gender rights. Despite the lack of gender-responsiveness, the institution has formed students capable of assessing their gender needs. This ability is not universal to all students, but it is a start in solidarity-building and ally-building for a gender equality movement within the IHE. Effective gender mainstreaming requires the participation of all.

## CONCLUSION

This paper explores gender and campus culture in one private, co-educational IHE in the Philippines. Security and equity are used as markers to identify a gender-inclusive campus culture (Endeley & Ngaling, 2007) while using critiques of gender mainstreaming to further analyze the data. The school's gender culture as informed by the experiences of student stakeholders is culled through FGDs and IDIs with student leaders. These are informed by the KIIs with identified administrators.

The IHE has no explicit gender policy. This created a campus culture where men hold a position of privilege. And while the male participants are aware of gender issues, they overlook issues of gender-based violence and consent and perpetuate gender bias and discrimination through gender-biased language, sexist jokes, stereotyping, and microaggression.

Women and members of the LGBT community are targets of microaggression, gender-biased language, and gender stereotyping. Women are victims of gender-based violence, with students and teachers as violators. Microaggressions that promote gender stereotypes influence how they perceive their abilities and serve as mechanisms to police their roles. Rendering the LGBT community invisible makes society tolerant of discrimination, an attitude that may continue to be accepted in work and home lives.

The school's top-down approach to gender mainstreaming is a result of their status as a religious and private IHE. While they wish to protect the school's name, students' gender needs may be overlooked.

This study can serve as a baseline for the school to assess how far they have come since the study's results were first released to them, and assess how what work needs to be done to further their agenda as a gender-responsive IHE.

The BPfA will soon celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, while the CMO-1 will soon celebrate its fifth. That being said, there is a continuous need to critically assess gender mainstreaming initiatives, while lobbying for the implementation of gender-responsive projects in IHEs as well as other educational institutions



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