



Gender Responsive Pedagogical Interventions for Addressing Gender Stereotypes in Public Secondary Schools: A case of Meru District Council

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ABSTRACT: This study examined the administrative measure against gender stereotypes towards gender responsive pedagogy in public secondary schools in Meru District Council. Basing on the existence of gender inequality in provision of education, it is important to examine how to address the problem as it has impact to an individual and the society in general. The study aimed to assess gender responsive pedagogical interventions measures adopted to address gender stereotypes in Meru district council public secondary schools. A case study design was used for deep understanding of the phenomenon under qualitative research approach. The study utilised inclusive leadership theory which emphasizes on inviting the followers' contributions for the benefit of an organisation. The study involved 32 participants sampled purposively from four ordinary level public secondary schools. The study used questionnaire, interview, observation, and document analysis as tools for data collection, which was analysed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The study revealed that; different gender responsive pedagogical interventions were being adopted against gender stereotypes. The study found that measures against gender stereotypes continue to be embraced in Meru District Council regardless of the challenges encountered. The study concludes that; gender responsive pedagogy approaches are vital for discouraging gender stereotypes and encourage equality in provision of education. Thus, the study recommends that, there should be increased strategies to address gender stereotypes in schools and organise continuous awareness campaign on gender responsive pedagogy approaches to ensure both boys and girls enjoy their right to education as emphasized in sustainable development goal four.

KEY WORDS: Interventions, Gender stereotypes, Gender responsive pedagogical interventions, Public Secondary Schools.

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the problem

Education transforms lives and is a vital investment to break down social and economic differences between people. Gender disparities in education remain a persistent issue globally, affecting access, participation as well as learning outcomes. Due to the persistence of these inequalities there is a need to apply gender responsive pedagogy interventions so as to bridge the gap in provision of education (UN, 2019). Again, sustainable development goals (SDG4) insist on education for all children, where education is a fundamental human right that influence the rest of human rights (UNESCO, 2023).

Studies over the past decade indicate that these disparities are influenced by various socio-cultural, economic, and structural factors that disproportionately affect female students, particularly in developing countries (Damanik, 2025). For education to fulfil its potential, both girls and boys must equally benefit from it (UN, 2019). Despite progress towards the achievement of gender parity globally, the most vulnerable girls continue to be excluded from education (UNESCO, 2023). The main focus on gender equality is to ensure that specific needs and vulnerabilities as well as strengths and opportunities of both boys and girls are recognized and addressed.

Those needs can be identified by examining measures needed to obtain skills and knowledge by both genders. For example, boys may need extra support to develop writing skills or emotional intelligence while girls may need extra support to speak up in class or in subjects of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Gender responsive pedagogy insists that teachers should apply gender responsive approach in the processes of lesson planning, classroom interaction and management as well as performance

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evaluation in order to reduce gender gap in education. It involves planning and carrying out programmes, policies and all educational activities in ways that consider the different needs of boys and girls (FAWE, 2018).

In Italy gender equality is a current topic, however, the integration of gender issues into subjects is not common and is not supported by the curriculum in Italy. Most teachers think gender equality exists and gender stereotypes are not an urgent problem today. Research confirms that textbooks, language and curricula reproduce gender stereotypes like representation of the workplace and in the allocation of roles and tasks, with women relegated to the traditional positions of busy housewives (Tsouroufli & Rédei, 2021). The contrary is in England where subject leads are encouraged to audit topics and resources to ensure gender-responsive approaches, for example, identifying opportunities in traditionally male-dominated subjects to encourage female scientists, mathematicians and composers (Tsouroufli & Rédei, 2021).

Also, in United States, gender discrimination in education has been a pervasive issue throughout history. Before the 19th century, educational opportunities for women in the United States were extremely limited. In the 1800s, women's rights movement gained momentum, where pioneers like Emma Willard, Catharine Beecher, and Mary Lyon began advocating for improved educational access for women. They established some of the earliest female seminaries and women's colleges, such as Troy Female Seminary (1821), Hartford Female Seminary (1823), and Mount Holyoke Female Seminary (1837) (Kumari, 2024).

On the other hand, records have shown how boys from disadvantaged families in Denmark and in Florida, United States, had lower achievement scores and were less likely to complete secondary school than girls from similar backgrounds (UNESCO, 2020). This indicates that gender disparity in learning outcomes is affected by different factors. Studies shows girls' education increased dramatically around the world between 1960 and 2010, although the gender gap in educational attainment still persists in most countries.

However, governments and development partners have made great progress towards reducing gender gaps in access to education, there is more work to be done to reach the most marginalised children and to build gender equality into education plans and systems more broadly (UN, 2019). UNESCO data shows that in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, or Senegal, no more than two out of ten girls can expect to attend upper education. Women still account for more than two-thirds of the world's 763 million non-literates. In certain contexts, social structures and poverty lead families to keep girls at home to do household and care work. Early marriage or early pregnancy are another cause of girls dropping out of school (UNESCO, 2023).

A study conducted in East Africa (Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, and Ethiopia), revealed that gender norms and poverty are deeply interdependent. Boys are often prioritised over girls as a better investment in education due to the belief that boys will have more earning potential for the household while girls are required to support domestic responsibilities. However, many of the countries in the region being signatories to regional and national policies banning early marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), the prevalence rates remain high with weak systems to enforce this legislation. Despite gender being included in education policies or as stand-alone policy in these countries (Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, and Ethiopia), consistent political effort and engagement is required to translate them into quality delivery of girls' education (Booth, 2022).

Again, in Tanzania gender inequality persists in most of the societies. More boys are enrolled in pre-primary schools than girls, while more girls are enrolled at secondary schools than boys (MOEST, 2025b). A study in Morogoro municipality revealed that factors such as cultural practices, norms and customs, traditional beliefs, religious beliefs as well as social economic status of parents influences inequality in attendance to schools between boys and girls (Maro & Omer, 2024). Further, a study in Meru indicates that early pregnancies affect girl's attendance, and boy's dropout of school after being circumcised and engage in small business hence affect their academic performance. Additionally, there is a lack of community involvement on academic issues of their children as a result of poor school leadership (Lauwo & Mkulu, 2021). Furthermore, boys with disabilities access more educational opportunities than girls with disabilities. On the other hand, more boys drop out of primary and secondary school than girls (MOEST, 2025b). However, SDG 4 insist on inclusive and equitable education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Despite the world's commitment to ensure every child completes 12 years of quality education, in low-income countries only 4% of the poorest finish upper secondary school, falling to 2% amongst marginalised girls. Thus, as per sustainable Development Goal 4, inclusive and equitable quality education for all, is about much more than education access. It calls for education policies to look beyond gender parity in school enrolment in order to put gender equality at the heart of education through gender-responsive pedagogical interventions that address gender related stereotypes is vital, moreover to have gender-responsive pedagogy sector planning (GRES-P) as a measure for advancing gender equality in and through education (UN, 2019). Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning (GRES-P) is the vehicle for achieving this by identifying gender barriers within education systems and ensuring that strategies and policies are in place to address the problem (UN, 2019).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theories Used in the Study

The study was underpinned by the Inclusive Leadership Theory, where Amy C. Edmondson and Frances X. Nembhard are the founder of this theory in 2006 (Veli-Korkmaz et al., 2022). The Inclusive leadership theory emphasizes that leaders have to invite

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their followers and appreciate their contributions for the benefit of an organisation. Inclusive leaders are those who exhibit visibility, accessibility, and availability in their interactions with followers. Again, inclusive leadership encourage justice and equity while focusing on all levels which are employee, the team, and the organization (Veli-Korkmaz et al., 2022). The theory was later expanded by Edwin P. Hollander (2009), who argued that inclusive leadership influences leader-follower relationships and team dynamics, focusing on interdependence and fairness. Leaders have to allow the followers to contribute their ideas and view for the benefit of an organisation, as this makes employees feel the sense of belongingness.

In implementing gender responsive pedagogical interventions, the school administrators are supposed to apply inclusive leadership by encouraging the subordinates as well as community to contribute their ideas while focusing on equality in provision of education. This will make them develop a sense of belongingness and change their beliefs and attitudes, and focusing on justice and equity when serving students and achieve organisational goals and objectives. The sense of belongingness encourages subordinates (teaching and non teaching staff) to perform their responsibilities comfortably while focusing on making all student (boys and girls) enjoy their rights to education and achieve their goals without being discriminated.

Applying Gender Sensitive Lens to Sexual Maturation

Sexual maturation is the process of growing up, which include physical and emotional changes based on gender. In England, several subjects are integrated with gender issues e.g. personal, social and health education as well as relationship and sex education (RSE) (Tsouroufli & Rédai, 2021). Again, most young girls miss school during FGM (Booth, 2022). Further, some young girls experience physical pain (such as cramps) and discomfort during their monthly menstrual period, so they be out of school for some days, however, such girls are still expected to sit for the same exams as their classmates. The school administrators and teachers, are expected to take corrective interventions to support girls to catch up with their classmates and succeed in their education. Similarly, boys also go through a maturation process that affects their level of concentration and makes them develop aggressive behaviours as a result of pressure from their peers and the society.

Equal Representation in Leadership Positions

Female educational leaders are the closest to serve as role models for female students, as they are able to show them that leadership positions are within their ability. Although the number of female teachers in schools is rising in most countries, educational leadership positions in schools, are still highly dominated by men (UNESCO, 2020). The study in Indonesia reveals that lack of female role models in educational leadership contribute to persistent disparities (Damanik, 2025). Thus, to ensure gender equality in education there should be gender-responsive leadership, both in terms of the representation of women in decision-making positions and in ensuring gender issues are their prime concern (UNESCO, 2020).

Applying Gender Responsive Teaching Practices

School administrators should encourage teachers to use gender responsive teaching methods to reinforce equality in learning. Books, textbooks, teachers' guides, and other materials that teachers and students use in the teaching and learning process can either serve as agents of change, or reproduce the values and assumptions students and teachers may have about gender relations and gender equality (UNESCO, 2020). Teachers need to review the gender-responsiveness of materials, content, stories, illustrations, and pictures they use in their lesson planning (UNESCO, 2020; Damanik, 2025). A study in Indonesia emphasizes the use of gender-neutral language and avoiding stereotypes in classroom discussions (Damanik, 2025). For example, some teachers use the words "chairman", "mankind", "policeman", "manmade", and other related words or phrases to refer to different positions, jobs, and professions. It is necessary that such terms are replaced by gender-neutral nouns such as "chairperson", "humankind", "police officer", etc. Again, educational experts in Indonesia emphasize that integrating a gender perspective into the curriculum can create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment (Damanik, 2025).

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the process that is used to achieve gender equality in education system. This includes consistent use of a gender perspective in all activities in all educational institutions and by all those working in the education sector. Gender mainstreaming requires education practitioners to examine and change those attitudes and practices that contribute to gender inequality in education (UNESCO, 2020). This includes encouraging equal participation of boys and girls in all school activities including leadership roles (Damanik, 2025). Thus, school administrators should ensure equal involvement for both genders so as to bring equality in provision of education.

Raising Awareness to the Students on Gender Stereotypes Issues

Across countries and education systems there are several programmes in place to equip students with the knowledge and tools to challenge gender stereotypes through integration or extra curriculum activities. This helps students to understand the concept and impact of gender discrimination, guide them to realise the importance of gender equality, and cultivate their awareness of equality (Yang, 2024). Again, the study by Brussino and McBrien (2022) shows that, In the French Community of Belgium, the "Girls day, Boys day" project by the "Direction of the Equality of Chances" of the Ministry of the French Community of Belgium aims to

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introduce primary and secondary school students to educational and professional pathways that do not comply with traditional gender stereotypes. Moreover, in 2022 and 2023 UNESCO encouraged journalists to write stories that are gender-sensitive and to challenge and counter stereotypes about girls (UNESCO, 2023). Therefore, the school administrators have a role to plan, organize and supervise different ways which can instil knowledge to the students so as to eradicate inequalities.

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Research Design

The study used qualitative research approach, which aimed to gather and analyse non-numerical (descriptive) data in order to gain an understanding of individuals' social reality, including understanding their attitudes and beliefs (White & Coope, 2022). This approach helped to obtain enough information and in-depth understanding on the interventions against gender stereotypes in public secondary schools in Meru District Council. The study used a case study design taking a selected sample schools of in Meru District Council. A case study helped the researcher to study precise case to obtain deep exploration.

Study Area and sample

This study took place in Meru District Council, one of the seven Districts in Arusha region of Tanzania. The District is bordered to the north by Longido District, to the east by Siha and Hai Districts of Kilimanjaro Region, to the south by Simanjiro District of Manyara Region, and to the west by Arusha Rural District and Arusha Urban District. It covers an area of 1,266 km² (489 sq m). Despite the presence of many schools in this district only four sample schools from different four wards were involved to represent the others schools found in Meru District Council. According to MOESTb (2025), Meru District Council consists of 1,241 total number of teachers where males are 702 and females are 539). The target population included all 48 public secondary schools from 27 wards found in Meru DC. Again, Meru district council consists of 192 school administrators, who are among the total population of teachers in the district.

Sampling Techniques, Procedures and Sample size

The study employed various sampling techniques basing on the characteristics of the sampled groups. Purposive sampling was used by the researcher to obtain key informants who were the heads of schools, deputy head of schools, academic masters/ mistress and discipline masters/ mistress (school administrators) as well as teachers. This is because these people were considered to be relevant informants concerning the interventions measures against gender stereotypes so as to promote equality in provision of education in public secondary schools in the study area. Specifically, homogenous purposive sampling was used to obtain school administrators who included heads of schools, deputy head of schools, academic master/mistress, discipline masters/mistresses and teachers. In total sample size was 32 consisting of four school administrators (Heads of schools, deputy heads of schools, academic masters/mistresses and discipline master/mistresses).

Data Collection Tools and Procedures

The study used a questionnaire to obtain the data from teachers. An interview guide was used for the heads of schools, deputy heads of schools, academic masters/mistresses as well as discipline masters/ mistress. The researcher used open ended interview guide as it gives a chance for both researcher and respondents to discuss, also it ensures a researcher with insight information and can be changed or adopted to meet the respondents' intelligence, understand or beliefs. The study used observation guide to observe different phenomena and behaviours that were displayed by the participants as well as the school environment. The study used parents' meetings minutes, staff meeting minutes as well as lesson plans so as to get insight information and making triangulation for deeper understanding.

Data Analysis

Data analysis means changing the collected raw data into meaningful facts and ideas to be understood either quantitatively or qualitatively (Dibekulu, 2020). The study used questionnaire, interview, observation checklist and document analysis to collect qualitative data. Data from the questionnaire were analysed descriptively and data from interview were analysed thematically by identifying themes after careful reading and re-reading of data and then transcribing it.

Research Ethics

Research ethics describe the guidelines followed by a researcher while working on a study. The researcher highlighted the terms of the research participants contract and sought their consent and agreement before proceeding with data collection. The study avoided any form of harm to the participants, and be sensitive to the right of the others and wellbeing and minimize the risk to them (Mirza et al., 2023). The study employed paraphrasing and acknowledged the sources which were used throughout the study. All data collected were well handed, store, protected and the principle of anonymity was maintained.

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RESULTS

The study examined gender responsive pedagogical interventions adopted by the school administrators to address gender stereotypes that persist in public secondary schools; Data was collected from 32 participants in four secondary schools coded A, B, C and D, using questionnaire, interview guide and documentary review guide. The collected data is presented in this section starting with background of the participants.

Background Data of the Participants

The participants' background information comprised gender, education qualifications as well as working experience. The study involved 32 participants from whom data were obtained. Participants in this study included 16 school administrators who were 4 heads of schools, 4 deputy heads of schools, 4 academic masters/ mistresses and 4 discipline masters/mistresses, as well as 16 teachers from four secondary schools from four different wards in Meru District Council. Background data of the participants is presented in table 1.1

Table 1.1. Background Characteristics of Participants

Demographic Category	Interval	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Gender	Male	19	60
	Female	13	40
	Total	32	100
Education Qualification	Diploma	6	19
	Degree	24	75
	Master	2	6
	Total	32	100
Working Experience	Less than 1 year	1	3
	1-5 years	2	6
	6-10 years	17	53
	11 years and above	12	38
	Total	32	100

Source: (Field Data, 2026)

The data in table 1.1 indicate that; the study used a total 32 participants where by in term of gender majority were males (60%) and minority were females (40%). This indicate that most of teachers are males, may be this is due to the geographical location of the studied schools. Two schools involved in the study were found in remote areas where teachers tend to relocate weekly from Monday to Friday where they had to go back to their families, as this is somehow difficult to be adapted by female teachers because they are responsible to take care of their families. Also, in the category of education qualifications, (19%) of the participants were holding a diploma, (75%) were holding a bachelor's degree and (6%) were holding a master degree. This means that majority of secondary schools' teachers are skilled due to their high level of education they posses.

Further, the data demonstrate that (3%) of the participants had less than 1 year of working experience, (6%) had 1-5 years of working experience, (53%) had 6-10 years of working experience and (38%) had 11 years and above of the working experience. This indicates that most of participants involved in the study were highly experienced teachers who can differentiate the previous mode which was gender blind pedagogy and gender responsive pedagogy. Generally, described demographic information of the participants involved in this study in terms of gender, education qualifications, working experience in terms of years as well as the instruments returned rate enrich trustworthiness of the studied phenomenon.

Participants Gender and Position

This section shows the distribution of participants by gender and position. The participants were classified based on their gender and position as shown in table 1.2

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Table 1.2. Distribution of Participants by Gender and Position

Position of participants	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
	Frequency (n)	Frequency (n)	Total (n)
School Adm. Heads of schools	4	-	4
Deputy heads of schools	-	4	4
Academic masters/mistresses	4	-	4
Discipline masters/mistresses	2	2	4
Teachers	8	8	16
Total	18	14	32

Source: (Field Data, 2026)

Data in table 1.2 show that, the study consisted of the sample size of 32 participants where 18 of them were males and 14 were females. The participants were categorised into two groups. The first category comprised of school administrators who were 6 females and 10 were males. The second category comprised teachers where 8 were female and 8 were males. The data from the findings shows that the majority of the participants selected from the all four secondary schools were males. This is because of the nature of the study as it involved the school administrators where most of them were males than females. Though the number of female administrators is small in some selected schools but they play a vital role in promoting gender responsive pedagogy.

Gender Responsive Pedagogical Interventions

The study examined the interventions adopted by school administrators to address gender stereotypes in public secondary schools. The study used a questionnaire to obtain related data from teachers. The questionnaire had closed ended items with four points Likert scale rating and interpretation of means was based on Akharusi (2022) scale of mean ranges where; 1.00-1.75 poor, 1.76-2.50 fair, 2.51-3.25 good and 3.26-4.00 very good.

Data regarding gender responsive pedagogical interventions adopted by administrators to address gender stereotypes is presented in table 1.3

Table 1.3. Interventions Adopted by School Administrators to Address Gender Stereotypes

Measures Against Gender Stereotypes	Responses								
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Teachers' awareness on GRP	-	-	1	6	9	56	6	38	3.31
Provision of gender awareness education	-	-	-	-	10	62	6	38	3.37
Equal representation on school government	-	-	1	6	6	38	9	59	3.5
Involving parents and students on gender issues	-	-	-	-	11	69	5	31	3.31
Application of gender responsive approaches	-	-	1	6	9	56	6	38	3.31
Use of gender responsive T/L materials	-	-	3	19	11	69	2	12	2.93
Promote equal opportunities for all	-	-	-	-	3	19	13	81	3.81
Equal treatment in the classrooms	-	-	-	-	3	19	13	81	3.81
Gender guidance and counselling	-	-	-	-	8	50	8	50	3.5
Encouraging students to pursue subjects of their choice	6	38	1	6	9	56	-	-	3.31
Overall mean									3.4

Source: (Field Data, 2026)

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Data in table 1.3 shows data corresponding with respondents' views on measures against gender stereotypes that persist in public secondary schools. The overall mean of 3.4, shows that the respondents agreed on different gender responsive pedagogical interventions which are taken against gender stereotypes in their schools, as among of the ways utilized to create conducive environment for gender responsive pedagogy.

Involvement of Both Parents and Students

One of the measures adopted by the school administrators against gender stereotypes was involvement of different stakeholders who are parents and students themselves. Data in table 1.3 shows that, 69% of respondents agreed that parents are involved basing on their positions in discouraging gender stereotypes and promoting gender responsive pedagogy. Again, students are also involved in discouraging gender stereotypes and promote equality in provision of education. *"All students were involved in all school activities in and outside the class, although sometimes some students segregate themselves in some activities because of their perceptions that traditionally those activities do not belong to their gender category"* (Interview with Head of School D, on 10th April 2026). Again, deputy head of school from school C added that;

We are getting a challenge sometimes when we are trying to involve all students in non academic activities like cleanliness as some of boys are refusing to participate because of their tradition that after a boy being circumcised, he is supposed to do domestic activities or being directed by a woman. This is something very bad as life skills are important for every individual. (Interview with Deputy Head of School C, on 24th March 2026)

This shows that, still people have the perception that different activities are supposed to be performed basing on gender which is a stereotype to be discouraged and encourage equality, so as provide equal chance for all students to learn in and outside the class, and that is called gender responsive pedagogy.

Motivation and encouragement

The study investigated intervention measures taken by the school administrators to discourage gender stereotypes in schools. Data in table 1.3 shows that, 56% of respondents agreed that students were being encouraged to pursue subjects of their choice regardless of their gender identity. This revealed that, there were no stereotypes on subject choice as both boys and girls were allowed to make their own choices basing on their interest. On top of that, one head of school argued that, *"always girls are motivated when they perform better in STEM subjects as most of people have negative perceptions on girls' ability in STEM subjects believing that they are not able to manage them and boys are encouraged too"* (Interview with Academic Master School A, on 19th March 2026). Another head of school added that;

It happens sometimes when people see a girl is studying science subjects or mathematics and even in professionals like engineering, Medicine, or mechanics you can see people are saying that this girl is bold/tough; is studying PCM a male combination, so most of them develop inferiority that they are not supposed to study science subjects, something which is not true. (Interview with Head of School D, on 10th April 2026)

This implies that, still gender stereotypes in subject choice exist which make most of the girls feel inferior, so when they are encouraged and motivated, they remove inferiority and study hard towards achieving their goals as boys do.

Again, in the school government students are provided with equal opportunities in different positions. Data in table 1.3 shows that 59 % of respondents agreed that there was equal representation in school government, this revealed that both boys and girls were given a chance to contest for different leadership positions in a school government. Further, head of school D, added that;

We are giving the chance for all boys and girls in their school government. This is done to ensure they are all provided with the chance to practice leadership and discouraging the notion that females are not capable to lead. But it happens sometimes for example there is something to announce in a parade a head girl most of time escape and send such a responsibility to a head boy, as they are not confident enough, that's why we trying to encourage them. (Interview with the Head of School D, on 10th April 2026)

This shows that, still there is a need to motivate and encourage all students regardless their gender identity to participate in different school activities in and outside so that both boys and girls can learn class content as well as other life skills. Additionally, through observation the study revealed composition of students' government as shown in table 1.4.

Table 1.4. Distribution of Students' Government Leadership by Gender

Positions	Gender		Total
	Males	Female governments	
Heads of school government	1	1	2
Academic Leader	1	1	2
Discipline Leader	1	1	2

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Food Leaders	1	1	2
Environment and Cleanliness Leaders	1	1	2
Sports Leader	1	1	2
Scout Leaders	1	1	2
Health leader	1	1	2
Total	8	8	16

Source: (Field Data, 2026)

Data in table 1.4 shows that there were no stereotypes in leadership positions as in school C as both boys and girls were given a chance to practice leadership. This implies that, both boys and girls were given equal chance to practice leadership regardless their gender differences as they both have an ability to perform various activities in the school.

Developing Awareness

There is a need to make people aware on gender stereotypes and their impacts in the learning environment and even the society, this can help them change their negative perceptions towards a particular gender. Data in table 1.4 shows that, 62% of the respondents agreed that gender awareness education was provided to the students, this revealed that school administrators played a vital role to raise awareness so as create a conducive environment that support gender responsive pedagogy. Further, this was done through various ways such as integration of gender issues in different subjects like civics as one of the participants reported;

Through studying civics students learn a lot of gender issues including gender stereotypes like how it affects an individual person, learning environment and even the society, so at least students become in a position to minimise some gender stereotypes and promote gender responsive pedagogy where boys can share and discuss together with girls in different subjects. (Interview with the Discipline Master A, on 18th March 2026)

Additionally, Deputy Head of School C reported that; *“We are much encouraging parents to visit the school compounds, once they meet different posters, they are encouraged to be gender sensitive to their children”* (Interview with the Deputy Head of School C, on 24th March 2026).

This shows that to some extent lack of awareness on gender issue is a source some of stereotypes that exist in our societies. Thus, education should be provided to the people so they can change their negative perceptions on a particular gender and adopt gender responsive pedagogy. Furthermore, through observation the researcher revealed that students and teacher are reminded regularly on gender responsive pedagogy through different posters which are available at the school environment.

This reveals that, promoting gender-transformative education and awareness campaigns is inevitable in order to address ingrained gender biases that persist and encourage equality in provision of education so as to ensure both boys and girls harvest the same in learning.

Provision of Guidance and Counselling

Guidance and counselling are essential for students as it helps them to develop self awareness. Data in table 1.4 shows that, 50% strongly agreed that students are provided with guidance and counselling so as prepare them to accept themselves regardless of their gender identity. This helps to make the develop their unique interest and talents. Deputy Head of School A reported that;

We are providing guidance and counselling for both boys and girls, this helps to make them comfortable and accept themselves regardless of their gender. Also, this assist students from each gender to perceive the other gender positively and making them free from fear and or shy in any learning circumstances. (Interview with the Deputy Head of School A, on 18th March 2026)

Another participant added that; *“guidance and counselling is done regularly especial for girls who develop fear to pursue STEM subject, in reality it happens sometimes to meet with girls with ability in STEM subjects than boys”* (Interview with Academic Master A, on 19th March 2026).

This revealed that, teachers are aware that the students’ ability is not determined by gender, that is why they take a responsibility to counsel them so as both boys and girls can be able to make their own subject choice basing on their interest.

DISCUSSIONS

This section discusses the findings obtained from the field and link results with the relevant literature to provide a deep understanding of gender responsive pedagogical interventions for addressing gender stereotypes in public secondary schools.

Involvement of Both Parents and Students

The findings show that, parents and students are involved as they have a part to play in discouraging gender stereotypes and create

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a conducive environment for both boys and girls to lean comfortably and achieve their goals. This corroborates with the study done in OECD countries by Brussino and McBrien (2022) revealed that, there is a need to engage the whole school community including parents and caregivers to discourage stereotypes as what happens in the school has a great influence on the extent to which students are socialised regarding gender stereotypes. Further, gender stereotypes reflect on professions and career pathways. On the other hand, the study by Lauwo & Mkulu (2024) in Tanzania revealed that; parents are less involved in academic affairs of the students as this decreased parents' commitment on their children's education and failure to promote gender responsive pedagogy.

Motivation and encouragement

The study found that, both students are encouraged and motivated as an intervention to discourage stereotypes and encourage equality in provision of education. Girls are encouraged to perform science subjects, to engage in different leadership positions and boys when they perform better, they are motivated too. The findings corroborate with the study by Damanik, (2025) in Indonesia which revealed that, teachers applied equal distribution of leadership roles to encourage girl's engagement, participation and confidence. This was done so as to empower the whole students and prevent stereotypes. This relates with the study by Yang (2024) in Bhutan in China which revealed that, groups for classroom activities were dominated by one gender either boys or girls, and those groups were created by teachers basing on the ability of the students so as they can assist one another.

Developing Awareness

The findings of the study reveals that, different stakeholders are provided with education to make them aware on how to address stereotypes in schools and encouraging equality in leaning to ensure both boys and girls enjoy their right to education. This relates with the study conducted in East Africa (Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, and Ethiopia) by Booth (2021), which shows that intervention on gender stereotypes can be done through teaching children about gender stereotypes and discrimination and challenging those stereotypes and exploring similarity between gender. This encouraged acceptance of those similarities and differences. On the other hand, the study by Maro & Omer (2024) in Tanzania revealed that; constrains like cultural resistances hinder the effort for implementing of gender responsive pedagogy in secondary schools.

Provision of Guidance and Counselling

The findings shows that guidance and counselling services are provided to the students on different gender issues so as to prepare their psychological readiness to encourage equality and discourage stereotypes in learning. This is supported by the study conducted by Tsouroufli & Rédei (2021) in England which revealed that; teachers and the school administrators play a big role in addressing gender stereotypes and changing students' perceptions toward gender through integration of gender issues in classroom content as well as guidance and counselling. The study by Yang (2024) in China revealed that; guidance and counselling is vital to the students so they can accept each other and building confidence to girls as most of time they have inferiority when performing various activities at school.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS CONCLUSION

The study concludes that; gender responsive pedagogical interventions are vital for discouraging gender stereotypes and encouraging equality in provision of education. The study found that, there are various intervention measures adopted by the school administrators to address gender stereotypes such as motivation and encouragement, developing awareness, and involving of parents and students. However, there were some challenges encountered like lack of awareness, cultural beliefs as well as conservatism, which brought difficulties to some extent to address gender stereotypes that persist in studied schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Education stakeholders should cooperate to address gender stereotypes that persist in public secondary schools so as to change people's perceptions and creating conducive environment that promote gender responsive pedagogy as emphasized in SDG4.

There should be continuous awareness campaign to the society on gender stereotypes so as to change people's perceptions and ensure both boys and girls enjoy their right to education. This can be done through seminars and workshops, community meetings as well as the use of mass media.

Further, the school administrators have to ensure that developing awareness on gender stereotypes is continuously conducted through regular parents meeting, establishing gender clubs, posters and flyers as well as in-service teacher training. Finally, discouraging harmful gender norms should start in early childhood education as a measure to addressing gender stereotypes and promote gender equality.

Further research should be carried on the same topic but different geographical areas as this problem is a global disaster.

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