

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

GENDER-RELATED VIOLENCE IN PHILIPPINE SCHOOLS: ISSUES, CHALLENGES, AND TRAJECTORIES

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Marilou C. Pantaleon, Glenn M. Ison. Gender-Related Violence in Philippine Schools: Issues, Challenges, and Trajectories. – PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology 17(2), 528-538. ISSN 1567-214X

Keywords: Gender equality, Human rights, Gender-related violence.

ABSTRACT

Violence associated with gender is against human rights and can occur anywhere in the world. The purpose of this study was to raise awareness and to identify gender-related violence, GRV in Philippine Schools, and to suggest mechanisms in the academy to reduce, if not eradicate, such violence. A survey questionnaire and unstructured interviews involving three hundred and seventy teachers (370) from the three (3) key regions of the Philippines, namely Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, were used to collect the data. To confirm the results and derive more personal perspectives, unstructured interviews were conducted with selected subject-participants. Gender-related violence, GRV, occurs and is not limited to sexual or physical assaults in schools and/or workplaces; it can occur in many ways. Men/boys, women/girls, and homosexuals may be the victims: gays and lesbians. Due to some causes or factors which deserve attention, gender-related violence against teachers has become a silent national crisis. Efforts should resolve the grounds that through increased knowledge and education, foster violence between both sexes. Data revealed that educators need their rights as students, as women, or as solo parents to be mentored, counseled, and coached. Finally, school-based, school-wide violence reduction interventions for teachers and students need to be enforced appropriately, which would serve as an effective strategy for equitable, compassionate, and peaceful resolution of gender-related violence and abuses.

INTRODUCTION

Gender-based violence has been identified as a key driver of extreme poverty and international public health and human rights issues (Giovetti, 2019). It undermines the protection, integrity, overall health status, and human rights of millions of citizens experiencing it and nations' public health, economic stability, and security.

Gender-based violence, regardless of ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, or religion, is a global pandemic that cuts through all boundaries and affects all peoples and communities. To illustrate the gender disparity in which much violence is embedded, gender-related violence or harassment is commonly used as a synonym for violence against women. An approximate 35% of women have witnessed physical or sexual harassment worldwide (Giovetti, 2019).

The 1987 Constitution states two prominent provisions. The first in the **Declaration of Principles Article II Section 14** asserted that

"The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men."

Additionally, **Article XIII - Labor: Section 14** provided that

"The state shall protect working women by providing safe and healthful working conditions taking into account their maternal functions, and such facilities and opportunities that will enhance their welfare and enable them to realize their full potential in the service of the nation."

One of the Philippine Government's efforts to resolve the problem of violence against women is the Republic Act No. 9262 or the "Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004." Violence against women is listed as a public crime under this Act and penalizes all types of violence and harassment within the family and intimate relationships.

Domestic violence cases against women remain large, despite laws protecting women, and many people complain that local governments do not adequately safeguard battered women as mandated by law. Many civil society organizations, educational organizations, and government agencies call on public opinion to stop and protect women's abuse and their rights and dignity (Dugal, 2018).

Abuse against women. Violence against women is not a recent phenomenon. It has existed for many years (Ezazi, 2004). VAW is considered to be closely related to the unequal power relationship between women and men, otherwise known as gender-based abuse, as one of the world's pervasive social problems (Philippine Commission on Women, 2009).

The factors associated with gender-based violence among 3000 men and women in selected states in Nigeria were determined in this study by Oladepo, Yusuf, & Arulogun (2011). 806 (26.9 percent), comprising 353 (11.8 percent) males and 453 (15.1 percent) females, were respondents who had witnessed physical abuse. 364 (12.1 percent) were respondents who had witnessed sexual harassment, of which 221 (7.4 percent) were men and 143 (4.8 percent) were women. Married female respondents were more likely than single respondents to experience physical assault. Moreover, for those who do not drink alcohol, there has been a decreased incidence of sexual harassment among males. The study showed that in Nigeria, gender-based violence still poses a problem, affecting women more than men.

3, 687 cases were registered on the local scene by the National Statistical Coordination Board, NSCB (2015) in 1997; 5, 534 in 2005 and 23, 865 in 2013. The 2017 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) also revealed that one in four (26 percent) ever-married women aged 15-49 have ever witnessed their husbands' or partners' physical, sexual,

or emotional abuse. One in five (20%) women have experienced emotional abuse, 14% have experienced physical violence, and 5% have experienced sexual violence from their current or most recent husband or girlfriend.

In the same vein, by evaluating the state of violence taking into account the contributing factors, its perpetrators, number of cases and types of harassment, the research of Bernarte, Acedegbega & Yopyop (2018) consolidated and drew a strong state of violence against women in the Philippines. The results have shown that there are already family, economic, and social factors in the Filipino community that causes violence against women in different environments. Socio-cultural and socio-political variables have also been found to contribute to the phenomenon's nature. Also, Crisostomo (2019) revealed that 8 out of 10 kids still encounter abuse in the Philippines.

It is important to note that foreign studies, despite the news, indicate that the Philippines has recently obtained outstanding results in the pursuit of gender equality. In fact, since 2006, the Philippines has been among the world's most gender fair-countries, ranked ninth worldwide and top all of Asia in terms of women's involvement in economics, education, health, and political empowerment (Rodriguez, 2015) and ranked 10th in gender equality according to the 2017 Global Gender Gap Study drawn up by the World Economic Forum, Wef (Digal, 2018). The Wef study predicts that it will take another 200 years before gender equality is reached internationally, but the goal may be accomplished more rapidly in the Philippines. Among the first to exercise their right to vote were Filipino women. The data indicate that while more and more women than men receive a university degree, less of them are part of the workforce. The report also revealed that many women continue to face physical and sexual violence (Digal, 2018). And while the world celebrates the woman-friendly Philippines, over the past 16 years, the number of VAW cases registered to the Philippine National Police (PNP) has risen by more than 500 percent (Rodriguez, 2015). The fact that boys and men also encounter sexual violence is crucial to highlight, although most research on sexual violence against girls and women is available. In many contexts, including households, offices, classrooms, streets, the military, and prisons, rape and other types of sexual coercion towards men and boys occur. However, as most cultures are patriarchal, sexual harassment against men is a very vulnerable and ignored research field or even at its infancy stage.

Violence towards teachers is a national issue in a context. Still, the problem is commonly overlooked or at least underreported by the media and given insufficient consideration by academics. This failure has widespread repercussions for school safety, the teaching profession, and student learning (Walker, 2013).

Given the above, it can be concluded that more research on related violence in schools and workplaces is required. This represents a void in the conduct of this current undertaking.

In this analysis, the definition of GRV highlights the representation of power faced by women and men, and it must be recognized that violence related to gender implies violence against women and men or vice versa. This research's findings could serve as a critical data point in creating initiatives and projects that promote respect for human rights and eliminate gender-based violence while reducing its adverse effects on individuals and communities.

Statement of the study

In Philippine school settings, this paper aims to define and explain gender-related violence (GRV) and raise awareness of the phenomena under investigation.

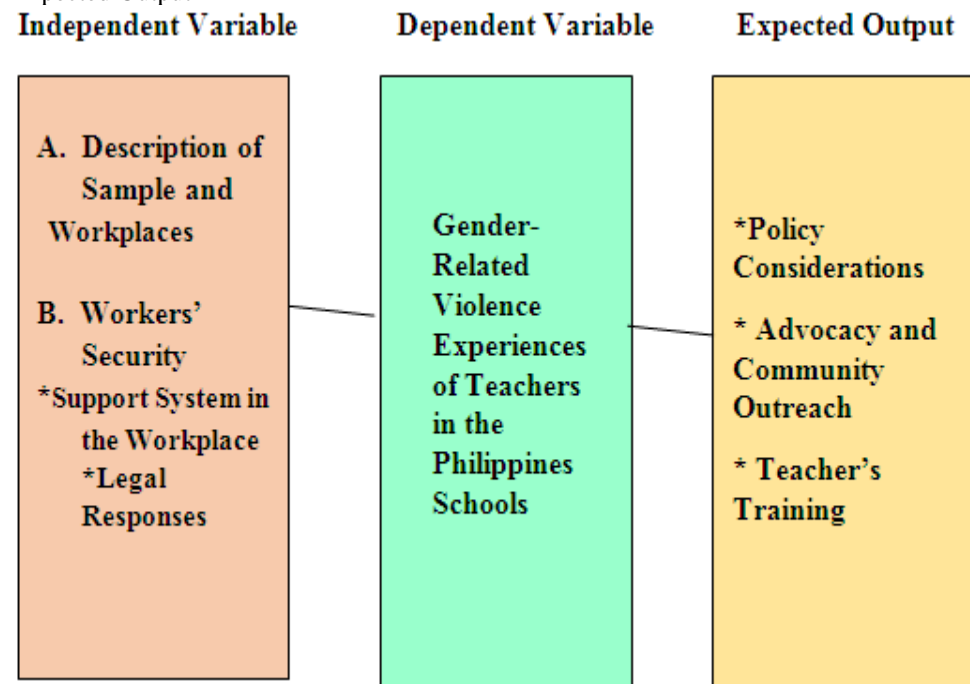
This was primarily targeted at:

1. Describe the samples' profile in terms of age, location, sex, and employment status.

2. Classifying the type of gender-related violence witnessed in and around schools by teacher-respondents.
3. Explore the factors leading to the existence of gender-related violence witnessed by respondent teachers.
4. Propose appropriate programs/projects promoting respect for human rights and eliminating academic violence related to gender.

Conceptual framework

Figure 1: Conceptual Model Showing the Dependent Variables, Independent Variables, and Expected Output



Related literature and studies

In the poorer countries of the world, recognizing gender-based violence in schools as a barrier to increased education participation, particularly for girls, is recent. Our understanding of its causes and consequences is not well-founded. It is also vital to locate its study within its history, systems, and processes to understand gender violence in schools.

Gender-based violence can be narrowly clustered into two overlapping categories using a gender-sensitive frame of reference: overt gender (sexual violence, including sexual harassment, coercion, abuse, assault, and rape, and implicit gender violence, which allows for corporal punishment, bullying, verbal and psychological abuse, the unofficial use of pupils for free labor by teachers and o These latter are classified as 'implicit' because they are physical, verbal, or psychological manifestations of violence but have a gender dimension; this may be openly sexual in the case of verbal assault, e.g., an offensive language that seeks to humiliate women, or it may have no sexual content.

In institutions believed to be healthy, such as colleges, where perpetrators include peers and teachers, sexual abuse, including sexual assault, often occurs. Primary school girls reported experiencing different forms of sexual harassment and violence at school in a study of primary schools in the Michigan district of Malawi, including sexual remarks

(7.8 percent), sexual contact (13.5 percent), rape (2.3 percent), and forced or unwanted sex (1.3 percent). In the same survey, 32 out of 40 schools indicated that teachers knew a male teacher at their school who had suggested sexual intercourse to a student: while teachers at 26 out of 40 schools claimed that a male teacher at their school had a student pregnant (World Health Organization).

Violence toward Teachers Research: Prevalence and Implications, conducted by Catherine M. Wilson, Kevin S. Douglas of Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada, and David R. Lyon of Kwantlen University, Surrey, British Columbia, Canada, investigated the effect of violence on teachers at work. The analysis found that most participants (n= 585, 80.0 percent) had witnessed, narrowly specified, school-related violence at one stage in their careers. Severe violence (actual, attempted, or threatened physical violence) was less frequent but still sufficiently prevalent (n = 202, 27.6%) to be of concern. Physical and emotional implications, as well as teaching-related functioning, were predicted by aggression. Implications of teacher violence about personal effects and mental health workers' effect are employed in an educational environment. The APA Task Force on Violence against Teachers survey 2011 is among the latest to document the issue. The anonymous Web-based survey of 2,998 K-12 educators found that 80% of educators reported at least one victimization experience in the current or past year. Ninety-four (94) percent of those who witnessed an offense reported being abused by students (McMahon et al., press). The survey also found that 72.5 percent of teachers were threatened at least once, and more than 50 percent had property offenses such as theft or injury. Forty-four percent said they were assaulted violently (McMahon et al., in press). This article aims to raise awareness of the issue and recommend methods and tools to avoid violence against teachers that psychologists can use and discuss with educators.

According to a new report released by the American Psychological Association, APA, eighty (80) percent of the teachers studied were victimized at least once in the current school year or previous year. Teacher violence is a "national crisis," says Dr. Dorothy Espelage of the Urbana-Champaign University of Illinois, who served as chair of the APA Task Force on Teacher-Directed Classroom Violence. And yet, the topic is usually neglected or underreported by the press and given insufficient consideration by scholars. This shortcoming has widespread consequences for school safety, the teaching profession, and learning for students.

The study of school violence in 37 mostly developed nations by Akiba et al. (2002) found that it is widespread, while the six case studies presented by Ohsako (1997) (all but one in the category of developing countries) recorded sharp rises in what were already very high rates in some cases.

It is possible to categorize and track gender-based violence in educational institutions differently and without regard to gender. In addition to sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and rape, unchecked and unnecessary corporal punishment, intimidation, and physical assault should be included since they are all forms of gender violence. Explicit gender violence, which involves sexual harassment, coercion, brutality, assault and rape, and implicit violence, are the two overlapping categories, allowing for corporal punishment, bullying, verbal and psychological abuse, the unofficial use of pupils by teachers for free labor, and other types of gender-specific violent or unauthorized conduct. Students on other students, teachers on students, and students, usually male on teachers typically female, can perpetuate these forms of gender violence. More specifically, in heterosexual gender relations, these types of gender abuse are recognized and documented overwhelmingly.

"Homosexuality," which is considered an under-reported region of GRV, is another gender-based violence in schools, as in many countries, the presence of individuals

outside the heterosexual "norm" is denied or criminalized. Almost all gay and lesbian interviewees in Namibia have encountered some form of discrimination based on gender. While gay students were more fearful of physical or verbal assault, lesbian students feared sexual abuse. (Civil Rights Watch and the Committee on Universal Gay and Lesbian Human Rights (HRW & IGLHRC 2003, pp. 107-109).

More broadly, high rates of gender-based abuse, including murder, have been recorded in Brazil against lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender individuals in society. Similar press coverage of attacks recorded in other countries in Latin America and Asia simultaneously points to a global societal phenomenon. In school, this is probably as much a concern as it is out of school and is an aspect of gender-based abuse that needs to be explored and tackled more. (Reports from the US, UK, France, Australia, and New Zealand by Human Rights Watch (HRW, 2002, www.ilga.org)

It would be surprising, given the school's role in generating and reproducing forms of social relations and social power, that gender violence was not widespread in all countries in the education sector but in more explicit and exacerbated conditions in individual school locations. It would not be shocking that increased poverty and unemployment, family disintegration, migration, AIDS, divorce, etc., lead to increased school violence because schools are not free from social influences in the outside world.

METHODOLOGY

The study used quantitative-qualitative research models to explain patterns when investigating and understanding a central phenomenon, including a systemic, valid, reliable, and objective situation, problem, or phenomenon (Garcia, 2003; Creswell, 2002). Three hundred and seventy teachers (370) from the three (3) regions in the Philippines, namely Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, were the subject participants. The information was compiled using a survey questionnaire. A semi-structured interview was performed for the qualitative review. Data were analyzed based on the concerns focusing on variables on gender violence in classrooms, the implications of what they encountered, and perspectives on how the problem could be mitigated/eliminated/read. Data were analyzed by explaining the information and creating recurring themes.

Similarly, based on their willingness to share their personal experiences and findings in the schools and districts where they serve, FGD was conducted with at least ten (10) respondents as a focus group discussion. To verify the quantitative data gathered via the survey questionnaire, records of interviews were checked. The interviewees, randomly chosen, are members of the Education International (EI) Teacher Unions' affiliates.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of sample

Table 1 indicates that three hundred and seventy (370) primary respondents took part in the current survey. Of the three hundred and seventy (370) respondents, 67.84% were from Luzon, 23.51% and 8.65% were from the regions of Visayas and Mindanao, respectively. The majority of respondents (57.03 percent) are young adults, while 44.54 percent are in the middle of their lives.

Sample information indicates that 80.81% of respondents are female; 13.78% are male, while 5.41% have not stated their sex.

The table also indicates that 73.78 percent of respondents are in permanent job status concerning employment status, while 26.21 percent are in conditional, temporary, casual, or substitution work status.

Most of them (62.70%) work in schools with one hundred to five hundred (100-500) co-workers, 31.08% work with at least twenty (20) but not more than ninety-nine (99) co-workers, while 6.22% work with more than five hundred (500) co-workers from the sample work.

Table 1: Information descriptive of the sample

Criteria		Total	%
Location / Region	Luzon	251	67.84
	Visayas	87	23.51
	Mindanao	32	8.65
Age	20 to 30	0	0
	30 to 40	211	57.03
	40 to 50	159	42.97
Sex	Male	51	13.78
	Female	299	80.81
	Did not specified	20	5.41
Employment Status	Regular / permanent	273	73.78
	Contractual	97	26.22
Number of workers in the Workplace	More than 500		6.22%
	100-500		62.70%
	20- 99		31.08%

Gender-Related violence experiences in the workplace

Table 2: Type of gender-related violence experiences of the respondents in the workplace

Type of gender-related violence	Frequency	Percentage
Abusive phone calls, text messages, e-mails, and use of social media	62	17.43
Harassment and physical abuse	48	13.24
Abuse through their employers	38	8.68
Did not experience any abuse	222	60.27
Total	370	100

The current study found that 17.43 percent of the three hundred and seventy (370) respondents experienced gender-related violence or GRV by abusive phone calls or text messages, abusive email messages, or offensive social media messages. In comparison, 3.24 percent experienced certain instances of harassment and physical assault. Also, 8.68 percent said that violent people had contacted co-workers/employers about them. A plurality of 60.27% of respondents did not have any personal experience relevant to gender, GRV experience, or did not answer the question.

It is important to remember that a significant number of respondents have no work experience related to gender.

Research on sexual assault in the workplace is in its infancy, according to the World Health Organisation. Still, initial studies suggest that it is prevalent, particularly as more women join the workforce.

Police reports and surveys from clinical settings and non-governmental organizations provide data sources on sexual violence, but, since only a small proportion of incidents are

documented in these settings, they create underestimates of prevalence in the present study (school).

There are some plausible explanations for women not disclosing sexual abuse, including insufficient support networks, embarrassment, fear or risk of retaliation, fear or threat of being blamed, fear or danger of not being believed, and fear or risk of being mistreated and/or socially ostracized.

Factors on the existence of gender violence in schools

The contributing factors extracted during the semi-structured interview on gender violence in schools shed light on the nuanced nature of how such violence happens in the academic world.

Research has developed ways of recognizing the real causes of gender abuse in and out of classrooms (Bernarte, Acedegbega, Fadera, & Yopyop 2018; Oladepo, Yusuf, & Orlogun, 2011).

One faculty participant from the Visayas disclosed a personal knowledge of a full-time faculty's actions in the interviews, which is very outspoken about his dislike of their woman-supervisor.

Men are better supervisors, and men are more experienced and better command over women (T1, Interview).

Also, the teacher complains that "she (his boss) prioritizes part-time teachers." In the presence of part-time teachers, he demonstrates the ease of speaking maliciously and harming their supervisor's person. In addition, he says publicly to full-time teachers and persuades them to report to the boss.

Meanwhile, a teacher-respondent from Mindanao said that recruiting and promoting teachers in their region takes a different type. The recruiting strategy is mostly in favor of males.

"Marami raw po ang kakayahan ng mga lalaki kaysa sa mga babae." (Men are more capable than women). Promotion for school heads is only given to men because men are part of the Philippines' culture or because of the patriarchal society's leadership. *Gays, too, are left behind kasi Hindi malinaw ang pagkalahati nila (T10, Interview).* (Gays, too, are left behind because there is no simple recognition of their sexual identity as males.)

The informant emphasized that their school practices the exclusivity of promotion, and men have the luxury of being promoted. Due to the question of their gender, gays are not included in the promotion.

The above results showed that more women experience violence related to gender than men do. This confirms Tjaden and Thoennes' (2000) and Ngonga's (2016) studies, both of which found that women are more likely than men to experience violence.

Another is the teacher's case in the Visayas region, who, because of his gay identity, feels discriminated against and felt judged by his department head.

I know that my boss doesn't like me because I'm gay. Because of that, I cannot feel his trust in me, and I feel trauma whenever he is around (T3, Interview).

He retained this sense of anxiety and was often stressed by his department head's presence with a thought in mind that his head would reprimand him for something and not allow him the opportunity to justify himself and "will not believe me." He is also distracted by what is

going to happen the next day. He feels anxiety when the department manager is around and assumes that he is all eyes on him. Consequently, he undoubtedly thinks and feels that his job as a teacher has already been influenced by this, which causes and brings him a lot of stress.

A similar story happened with a teacher assigned to teach at the same region's basic education level. When he did not earn the promotion of Master Teacher rank for the sole reason that he is gay, he faced prejudice.

I am sure that I did not get the promotion because of my being gay, and it is frustrating on my part (T5, Interview).

It was later noticed that there was also a confrontation in DepEd's division office with a high-ranking official on the matter, revealing the reason for refusing the promotion as "ayaw naming ng bading" (we do not want gays). The teacher wanted to move to a different school. Luckily, he was admitted to teaching in the neighboring province at a state university.

The Department of Education's informant said that officials do not involve teachers in such practices.

We have limited roles in school, such as lesson planning, making portfolios, and reflection writing. Important laws like Magna Carta for Women, Solo Parent Law, or Child Protection Policy are not clearly taken up to us by school officials whom they are directly connected with.

It was also revealed that teachers who were caught in a situation of "not knowing the laws" and "not receiving any form of assistance and support from school officials" were told, "*aminin mo na lang* (just admit it because it is the easier way to settle friendly cases filed against teachers (often by parents))."

Harassment by a teacher by private individuals such as a pupil's grandparents is also faced. This is one classic instance of a teacher's threat to one school in the Mindanao region. A lawsuit brought against a teacher is now a three-year (3) old civil case where no help from school authorities has been obtained by the teacher concerned. Her pupil's relatives have threatened/harassed the teacher who is retiring in a few years.

Sabi po nila sa akin na sila na lang ang kukuha ng benefits ko kapag nag retire (T9, Interview). (I was told they'd be the one to get my retirement benefits.)

The Department of Education, DepEd, argues that the investigation was completed, but the teacher was not given any protection, psychological assistance, among others.

The results showed social variables and socio-cultural and socio-political variables as the most prevalent variables for the study participants. The findings support the study by Bernarte, Acedegbega, Fadera, & Yopyop (2018), which indicated that these are causes of violence against women in the Philippines. The research further shows that gender inequality is perceived to be abuse against women. Today, because of gender discrimination, several women are not considered a priority.

Giovetti's research (2009) also confirmed that gender roles are frequently used to justify violence against women, one of the critical causes of violence related to gender. Cultural norms also dictate that while women are docile, subservient, and rely on men as providers, men are violent, commanding, and powerful.

In this study, gender-based violence is described as the actions or threats of sexual, physical, or psychological violence in and around schools.

Regarding the consequences, most of the respondents said they were irritated and were unable to focus at work.

CONCLUSIONS

Gender-related violence, GRV, occurs and is not limited to sexual or physical assaults in schools and/or workplaces; it can occur in many ways. Studies indicate that both males and females suffer harassment (Oladebo, Yusuf, & Arulogun, 2011; Ngonga, 2016). Especially in schools, gender-related violence remains a silent crisis despite its presence, due to several factors depending on social and cultural identity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper aims to raise awareness of gender-related violence, GRV specifically in Philippine school settings and suggests psychologists, academics, among others, should use and share strategies and tools with educators at all levels, including stakeholders such as parents, community leaders, government officials, to help avoid, if not reduce violence against teachers.

School leaders, psychologists, and researchers are always in a unique position to help shape school academic policy mainly by not specifically discussing violence directed at teachers by the guidelines mentioned above and related programs; nevertheless, if properly designed, considered, and enforced, such recommendations are considered to be of great help in solving, if not reducing, or preventing.

The proper implementation of classroom-based, school-wide teacher, and student violence prevention services serves as an effective method to peacefully address gender-related violence and abuses.

However, efforts should be directed at resolving the causes that facilitate conflict between both sexes through increased knowledge and education. Data revealed that educators need their rights as students, as women, or as solo parents to be mentored, counseled, and coached.

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