

# Teaching in a Male-Dominated Space: A Phenomenological Study on the Experiences of Single Female Teachers in Technical-Vocational Classrooms

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## ABSTRACT

This qualitative phenomenological study explores the lived experiences of single female teachers handling all-male technical-vocational classrooms at Kiburiao National High School during the 2025-2026 school year. It aims to understand the unique challenges these educators face, their coping strategies, and their recommendations for improving teaching conditions in male-dominated environments. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with five purposively selected participants who met specific criteria, including teaching in predominantly male classes, and having at least one semester of experience. Thematic analysis revealed four major themes: establishing respect and authority through competence and nurturing relationships; overcoming gender-based stereotypes and managing classroom behavior; building confidence and clear boundaries through professionalism and support; and institutionalizing gender sensitivity alongside strong administrative and peer support. Participants described initial struggles with stereotypes and authority, which they overcame by demonstrating technical expertise, fostering positive student relationships, and maintaining professionalism. They coped with challenges by setting clear rules, seeking mentorship, and continuously improving their skills. Recommendations emphasized the need for gender-sensitivity training for the entire school community, administrative backing, mentorship programs, and policies promoting gender equity. The study highlights the complex interplay of gender dynamics in technical-vocational education and underscores the importance of targeted institutional support to empower female educators. Findings contribute to the discourse on gender inclusivity in education and provide practical implications for policy and practice aimed at creating more equitable and supportive learning environments in male-dominated fields.

**Keywords:** Gender Sensitivity, Classroom Management, Professional Development, Mentorship, Authority

## INTRODUCTION

The increasing participation of women in technical-vocational education has brought to light the unique experiences and challenges faced by female educators, particularly those teaching in male-dominated environments. Women teaching in these environments often navigate complex gender dynamics that influence their professional roles, interactions, and overall teaching effectiveness. Understanding their lived experiences provides valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities that arise from working within traditionally male-centric fields. Exploring the personal and professional journeys of single female teachers managing all-male technical-vocational classes reveals how gender influences classroom dynamics, authority, and teaching practices. Through a phenomenological approach, the research aims to capture the authentic voices of these educators to better appreciate their contributions and the barriers they face.

Despite efforts to promote gender equality in education, technical-vocational fields remain largely male-dominated, both in student enrollment and teaching staff. Female teachers in these settings often encounter stereotypes, authority challenges, and heightened scrutiny, which can impact their professional growth and

classroom management. While previous research has examined gender gaps in technical-vocational education, there is a notable lack of qualitative studies that center on the voices and lived experiences of single female teachers in all-male classrooms, especially within the Philippine context. This research addresses this gap by providing in-depth insights into their daily realities and the systemic issues they face. The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform policy, practice, and future research. By documenting the challenges and strategies of single female teachers in male dominated TVL classrooms, the study contributes to the ongoing discourse on gender inclusivity in education. It also highlights the need for targeted support mechanisms and institutional reforms to foster a more equitable and supportive environment for female educators. The findings can serve as a basis for developing gender-responsive policies and professional development programs that address the specific needs of women in technical-vocational education.

Recent literature underscores the persistent gender disparities in technical-vocational education and the importance of female representation in these fields. Alinea and Reyes (2023) identified significant gender and industry-practice gaps in technical-vocational teacher education, emphasizing the need for gender-responsive curriculum models. Sevilla et al. (2023) found that the presence of female teachers in vocational-technical high schools positively influences female students' motivation and identity in STEM-related fields. In the context of vocational education, Naelgas and Maloniso (2022) identified competency gaps among TVE teachers, including challenges related to pedagogy and technical skills, which can be exacerbated by gendered expectations and stereotypes. Furthermore, Ganea and Bodrug-Lungu (2018) emphasized the importance of gender-sensitive competencies and lifelong learning for vocational teachers to address gender inequalities and occupational segregation in vocational education. These studies collectively underscore the need to understand and support female teachers' experiences in male-dominated technical-vocational classrooms to foster equitable and effective teaching environments (Strickland, 2023; Richardson-Spears, 2018; Naelgas & Maloniso, 2022; Ganea & Bodrug-Lungu, 2018).

The primary objective of this study is to explore and describe the experiences of single female teachers in all-male TVL classrooms, focusing on the challenges they face, their coping strategies, and their recommendations for improvement. The research seeks to answer the following questions: (1) How do single female teachers describe their journey in male-dominated technical-vocational classrooms? (2) What challenges do they encounter? (3) How do they manage or cope with these difficulties? (4) What changes or support mechanisms do they recommend? By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of gender dynamics in technical-vocational education and to advocate for more inclusive and supportive teaching environments.

This study was conducted at Kiburiao National High School during the first quarter of the school year 2025-2026. The setting provided a relevant context for examining the experiences of single female teachers in a rural public high school offering technical-vocational tracks. The chosen time frame allowed for the collection of rich, contemporary data reflecting current educational practices and gender dynamics within the institution.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study investigates the lived experiences of single female teachers working in all-male technical-vocational classrooms, focusing on the unique challenges they face and the strategies they employ to navigate a male-dominated educational environment.

Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. How do single female teachers describe their journey and experiences in all-male technical-vocational classrooms?
2. What challenges do they encounter in teaching within a male-dominated classroom environment?
3. How do they manage or cope with the difficulties associated with their teaching situation?
4. What changes or support mechanisms do they recommend to improve the teaching experience of female educators in similar contexts?

## Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses on the experiences of single female teachers assigned to all-male technical-vocational classrooms, specifically exploring their personal and professional journeys, challenges encountered, coping mechanisms, and recommendations for improving their teaching environment. The research is limited to teachers currently teaching in technical-vocational tracks and does not include female teachers in co-educational or female-majority classrooms. The study is qualitative in nature, employing a phenomenological approach to capture the lived experiences of the participants. Data collection is confined to a specific school setting, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or regions. Additionally, the study focuses solely on single female teachers, excluding married or partnered educators, to understand the unique perspectives related to their status.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study employed a phenomenological qualitative research design to explore and understand the lived experiences of single female teachers working in all-male technical-vocational classrooms. Phenomenology is a research approach that seeks to uncover the essence and meaning of a particular phenomenon by examining how individuals perceive and make sense of their experiences (Delve, 2023). It focuses on describing the subjective realities of participants while bracketing the researcher's own biases and assumptions to ensure an authentic representation of the participants' perspectives (PMC, 2022; Dovetail, 2023).

The phenomenological approach is particularly suited for this study because it allows for an in-depth exploration of complex gender dynamics and professional challenges faced by female educators in male-dominated environments. Through detailed interviews and reflective analysis, the study aims to identify common themes and patterns that reveal the essence of their experiences (Crotty, 1998; Creswell, 2007). This approach prioritizes the participants' voices, enabling a rich, nuanced understanding of how these teachers navigate authority, stereotyping, emotional labor, and coping strategies in their classrooms.

Data collection primarily involved in-depth, semi-structured interviews that encouraged participants to share comprehensive descriptions of their personal and professional journeys. This method facilitates a flexible yet focused dialogue, allowing participants to express their thoughts, feelings, and reflections on their teaching experiences (PMC, 2022; Frontiers in Psychology, 2022). The researcher applied phenomenological reduction by consciously setting aside preconceived notions and focusing solely on the participants' narratives to maintain objectivity and rigor.

The analysis followed systematic steps of coding, thematic identification, and synthesis to distill the essence of the phenomenon under study. This process involved iterative engagement with the data to ensure that the findings accurately reflected the shared experiences of the participants while acknowledging individual variations (Giorgi, 2006; Bryman, 2008). The study's findings aim to contribute trustworthy knowledge that can inform policies and practices supporting female teachers in technical-vocational education.

### Locale of the Study

This study was conducted at Kiburiao National High School, located in Purok 1, Quezon, Bukidnon, Northern Mindanao, Philippines. The school is a public secondary institution under the Quezon III District of the Bukidnon Schools Division, offering various academic and technical-vocational programs. Kiburiao National High School serves a diverse student population in a predominantly rural area, providing an appropriate setting to explore the experiences of single female teachers in all-male technical-vocational classrooms. The study took place during the first quarter of the school year 2025-2026, allowing for the collection of current and relevant data within this educational context.

### Research Participants

The participants of this study were single female teachers currently assigned to all-male technical-vocational classrooms at Kiburiao National High School during the school year 2025-2026. Participants were selected based

on specific criteria: they must be single females teaching technical-vocational subjects in predominantly male classes, employed full-time at the school, and willing to participate voluntarily in the study. Additionally, they were required to have at least one semester of teaching experience in this setting to ensure they could provide meaningful insights into the challenges and experiences unique to their roles in a male-dominated environment.

## Research Instruments

The primary research instrument used in this study was a semi-structured interview guide designed to elicit detailed and personal accounts from single female teachers about their experiences in all-male technical-vocational classrooms. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions aligned with the study's objectives, focusing on participants' journeys, challenges encountered, coping strategies, and recommendations for improving the teaching environment. This format allowed for flexibility in probing deeper into participants' responses while ensuring that key topics were consistently addressed across interviews. The interviews were conducted face-to-face in a confidential setting to encourage openness and honesty. Additionally, the researcher took field notes to capture non-verbal cues and contextual information that enriched the data. The use of this qualitative instrument facilitated a comprehensive exploration of the participants' lived experiences, providing rich, nuanced data for analysis.

## Data Gathering

Data for this study were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with single female teachers assigned to all-male technical-vocational classrooms at Kiburiao National High School. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the school administration and informed consent was secured from each participant to ensure ethical compliance. Interviews were scheduled at times convenient for the participants to minimize disruption to their teaching responsibilities. Each interview was conducted in a private and comfortable setting to promote openness and confidentiality. The researcher used an interview guide with open-ended questions to encourage detailed sharing of experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and recommendations. Interviews were audio-recorded with participants' permission and supplemented by field notes to capture non-verbal cues and contextual details. After data collection, the recordings were transcribed verbatim for thorough analysis. The entire process was conducted during the first quarter of the school year 2025-2026, allowing for timely and relevant data reflective of the participants' current teaching experiences.

## Data Analysis

The data collected from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed using a phenomenological approach to identify and interpret the core themes reflecting the lived experiences of single female teachers in all-male technical-vocational classrooms. The analysis began with verbatim transcription of the audio-recorded interviews, followed by repeated reading to gain a deep understanding of the participants' narratives. Significant statements were extracted and coded to capture meaningful units related to their journeys, challenges, coping strategies, and recommendations. These codes were then clustered into categories and broader themes that revealed patterns and shared experiences across participants. Throughout the process, the researcher maintained a reflective stance to bracket personal biases and ensure the authenticity of the findings. The thematic synthesis aimed to provide a rich, nuanced description of the phenomenon, contributing valuable insights into gender dynamics and teaching experiences in male-dominated educational settings.

## Ethical Consideration

This study adhered to strict ethical standards to ensure the rights, dignity, and well-being of all participants were protected throughout the research process. Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from each participant after providing a clear explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, allowing them to voluntarily decide whether to participate. Participants were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity were rigorously maintained by using pseudonyms and securely storing all data to prevent unauthorized access. The researcher also practiced reflexivity and bracketing to minimize personal biases and ensure an authentic representation of the participants' experiences. Furthermore, care was taken to conduct interviews in a respectful and non-intrusive

manner, creating a safe environment for open and honest sharing. These ethical measures align with established guidelines for qualitative research and uphold the integrity of the study (Chasokela, 2023; InnovateMR, 2024; Scribbr, 2024).

## DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

### Overall Experience as a Single Female Teacher in an All-Male Technical-Vocational Classroom

#### Theme: Establishing Respect and Authority through Competence and Nurturing Relationships

This theme reveals how single female teachers in all-male technical-vocational classrooms overcome initial gender biases by demonstrating professional competence and fostering supportive relationships with their students. Participants described their experiences as both challenging and rewarding, emphasizing the importance of patience, skill, and genuine care in earning students' respect and establishing authority. This theme is supported by the following responses:

Participant 1 expressed this journey clearly: *"At first, there was a sense of hesitation from both the students and me due to the deeply rooted perception that Industrial Arts is a male-dominated field. However, over time, I gained their respect by consistently demonstrating competence, patience, and genuine concern for their growth."*

Participant 2 echoed this sentiment, stating, *"Through consistency, competence, and respect, I earned their trust. Over time, we built a positive learning environment where they learned to value both the subject and mutual respect, regardless of gender."*

Participant 3 shared, *"I find teaching an all-male technical-vocational class both challenging and fulfilling. I teach them based on our topics or subject matter and I work hard to earn respect and connect with my students despite being the only woman in our class."*

Participant 4 highlighted the additional challenges but also the effort to build authority: *"As a single female teacher teaching in a male-dominated classroom, I encountered variety of challenges such as challenges in establishing authority, different treatment, stereotyping and bias... Most of all it is a struggle in putting decency in wearing daily attire."* Despite these challenges, she emphasized the importance of competence and professionalism in gaining respect.

Participant 5 reflected on the close age gap and her background, noting, *"The close age gap between me and my students... required me to exert effort in establishing authority. Me being a Psychology graduate rather than an education graduate served as both an advantage and disadvantage... I understand human behavior even with complex ones."*

The participants' accounts reveal that respect is not automatically granted in these environments; instead, it is earned through perseverance, expertise, and a nurturing approach. Participant 1's experience of initial hesitation, both from herself and her students, underscores the impact of entrenched gender stereotypes in technical fields. However, her journey toward gaining respect through competence and care illustrates that these biases can be overcome with time and consistent effort. Participant 2's emphasis on trust and mutual respect further supports the idea that relational strategies such as showing respect and maintaining consistency are as important as technical skill in building a positive classroom climate. Participant 3's reflection on the dual challenge and fulfillment of her role highlights the emotional labor involved in bridging gender divides, while Participant 4's mention of authority, stereotyping, and even concerns about attire points to the broader social pressures female teachers face in such settings. Finally, Participant 5's perspective on the influence of age and educational background illustrates that establishing authority is a multifaceted process, requiring both self-awareness and adaptability.

Collectively, these findings indicate that single female teachers in male-dominated technical-vocational classrooms must navigate a complex interplay of gender expectations, professional competence, and interpersonal dynamics. Their ability to earn respect and assert authority is closely tied to their resilience, relational skills, and commitment to student growth. This analysis aligns with research showing that female

educators who combine expertise with nurturing relationships are more effective in overcoming stereotypes and fostering inclusive learning environments. The findings also highlight the need for institutional support, such as gender-sensitivity training and mentorship, to help female teachers thrive in these challenging contexts.

The implication of this theme is that educational institutions should prioritize continuous professional development and mentorship programs that enhance female teachers' technical skills and relational competencies. Creating an environment that values and supports female educators' expertise fosters respect and authority, which in turn promotes a positive and inclusive learning atmosphere. This approach not only benefits female teachers but also contributes to reducing gender biases and improving student outcomes in technical-vocational education.

These findings align with existing literature emphasizing that female teachers' professional competence and relational skills are critical to overcoming gender barriers in technical-vocational education. Alinea and Reyes (2023) stressed the importance of gender-responsive curricula and teacher preparation that empower female educators to bridge gender gaps effectively. Sevilla et al. (2023) found that female teachers positively influence students' motivation and identity by building trust and respect. Chasokela (2021) highlighted competence and resilience as key to women's success in technical education, while Bordón et al. (2023) noted the role-model effect of female teachers in male-dominated STEM fields. Richardson-Spears (2018) further supported that nurturing relationships combined with technical mastery are vital to gaining authority and overcoming stereotypes.

## **Challenges Encountered in a Male-Dominated Classroom Environment**

### **Theme: Overcoming Gender-Based Stereotypes and Managing Classroom Behavior**

This theme captures the significant challenges single female teachers face in male-dominated technical-vocational classrooms, particularly confronting gender-based stereotypes about their technical abilities, maintaining authority without being undermined, and managing typical behavioral issues of male students. Additionally, concerns about professional appearance and heightened scrutiny emerged as part of the complex dynamics female teachers navigate.

This theme is supported by the following participant responses:

Participant 1: *"Students initially questioned my technical skills and there were discipline issues."*

Participant 2: *"I had to be mindful of dressing professionally to avoid distractions."*

Participant 3: *"I felt self-conscious because of how the boys stared at me."*

Participant 4: *"I always choose decent attire since students observe my appearance."*

Participant 5: *"Establishing authority and managing absenteeism and hostility were major challenges."*

The participants' responses reveal a consistent pattern of challenges centered on gender-based stereotypes and classroom management in a male-dominated environment. Their experiences highlight how female teachers often face doubts about their technical competence, as seen in Participant 1's account of students questioning her skills. This reflects the pervasive stereotype that technical-vocational fields are male domains, which undermines female teachers' authority from the outset. Participants 2 and 4 emphasize the pressure to maintain a professional appearance, indicating that female teachers are subject to heightened scrutiny not only for their teaching but also for their personal presentation, which adds an additional layer of challenge unique to their gender.

Participant 3's feeling of self-consciousness due to students' stares illustrates the emotional impact of working in a gender-imbalanced setting, where female teachers may feel constantly observed and judged. Meanwhile, Participant 5's description of difficulties in establishing authority and managing absenteeism and hostility points to the complex behavioral challenges that intersect with gender dynamics, requiring female teachers to exert

extra effort to maintain control and respect.

The persistence of gender-based stereotypes and behavioral challenges calls for comprehensive gender-sensitivity training for both educators and students to foster a more inclusive and respectful learning environment. Female teachers need support systems that address the dual pressures of proving technical competence and managing classroom behavior under heightened scrutiny. Schools should also consider policies that reduce gender bias, provide mentorship, and promote professional development focused on classroom management and gender equity. Addressing these challenges can improve female teachers' confidence, authority, and effectiveness, ultimately benefiting student learning and gender equality in technical-vocational education.

These findings align with broader research on gender stereotypes and challenges faced by female educators in vocational and STEM fields. Gender stereotypes remain pervasive in vocational education worldwide, often steering women away from technical careers and influencing classroom dynamics (RCF-WB6, 2024). The OECD (2022) highlights how stereotypes affect both teachers' expectations and students' academic self-concept, with female teachers sometimes doubting their own abilities in male-dominated subjects, which can reinforce stereotypes and affect classroom authority. The socialization process and early exposure to gendered expectations further entrench these biases, making it difficult for women to break traditional roles in education and vocational training (Gouvernement du Québec, 2024). Ganea and Bodrug-Lungu (2018) emphasize the need for gender-sensitive competencies among vocational teachers to address these biases and promote equality in technical education. Additionally, Zhou et al. (2023) identify strategies such as integrating role models and promoting inclusive classroom discourse to challenge gender stereotypes in STEM education, which are relevant to improving female teachers' experiences in male-dominated classrooms.

## Coping Strategies and Management of Difficulties

### Theme: Building Confidence and Establishing Clear Boundaries through Professionalism and Support

This theme highlights how single female teachers in male-dominated technical-vocational classrooms cope with challenges by actively enhancing their skills, setting firm classroom rules, fostering mutual respect, and maintaining professionalism both in behavior and appearance. Additionally, seeking guidance and emotional support from mentors and colleagues plays a crucial role in managing the complex demands of their teaching roles. This is supported by the following participant responses:

Participant 1 stated, *"I coped by continuously honing my technical skills and staying updated with industry standards... I fostered open communication and showed genuine interest in their individual progress... Seeking guidance from mentors and maintaining a strong support system among colleagues also helped me navigate the emotional and professional demands of the role."*

Participant 2 shared, *"I managed the difficulties by setting clear rules and boundaries from the start, maintaining professionalism in both words and actions, and building mutual respect with my students."*

Participant 3 noted, *"I stay confident by showing my knowledge, communicate clearly, build trust with my students, and get help and support from other teachers."*

Participant 4 explained, *"I managed or coped... through boosting my self-confidence, maximizing my capability and skills... Most of all, I made a good choice of decent and modest attire in the class to avoid scrutiny."*

Participant 5 described, *"I established clear rules and expectations, utilized positive reinforcement, and maintained consistent communication and boundaries with my students."*

The theme reveals that coping strategies for female teachers involve a combination of professional development, clear behavioral expectations, and relational management. Maintaining professionalism in conduct and appearance helps mitigate gender-based scrutiny, while clear rules and consistent enforcement establish authority and classroom order. Emotional support from colleagues and mentors provides resilience against the

unique pressures faced in male-dominated settings. These strategies collectively empower female teachers to navigate both the technical and social complexities of their roles.

Schools should prioritize providing ongoing professional development opportunities tailored to female educators in male-dominated fields, including training on classroom management and gender sensitivity. Establishing mentorship programs and peer support networks can strengthen teachers' confidence and emotional well-being. Encouraging a culture of professionalism and respect benefits not only female teachers but also the broader school community by promoting positive classroom environments.

The coping strategies identified by the participants continuous skill improvement, clear rule-setting, professionalism, and seeking support are strongly supported by recent research emphasizing the critical role of female teachers in male-dominated technical-vocational education. Evidence from Chile shows that female teachers in STEM-TVET programs serve as vital role models, helping to reduce gender gaps and increase female students' persistence in STEM pathways by demonstrating competence and professional authority (CEPR, 2022). This role-model effect underscores the importance of female teachers maintaining confidence and professionalism to inspire students and establish respect. Studies on vocational education in India emphasize the need for qualified female teachers with strong technical backgrounds and adequate training to improve the quality of instruction and create supportive learning environments for women (Meel, 2025). This aligns with participants' emphasis on honing skills and maintaining professionalism as vital coping mechanisms.

## RECOMMENDED CHANGES OR SUPPORT MECHANISMS

### Theme: Institutionalizing Gender Sensitivity and Providing Strong Administrative and Peer Support

This theme emphasizes the critical need for gender-sensitivity training across the entire school community, peer mentoring programs for female teachers, strong administrative support in discipline and professional development, and the creation of networks to empower female educators working in male-dominated technical-vocational settings. This is supported by the following participant responses:

Participant 1 recommended, *“Gender-sensitivity training should be institutionalized not just for students, but for the entire school community to promote a culture of respect and inclusivity.”*

Participant 2 emphasized, *“Strong administrative support to address gender-based issues promptly and fairly, and gender-sensitivity training for both students and teachers.”*

Participant 3 suggested, *“Female teachers need mentors, students and staff should learn about respecting women, and schools should have policies that help women teachers grow and feel supported.”*

Participant 4 highlighted the importance of understanding learners, *“Female teachers' sensitivity to the nature of learners is a must... to create harmonious relationships.”*

Participant 5 called for, *“Active involvement of the school disciplinarian and counselors... provide training specially on rare cases like this... Networks for female teachers to connect and support each other.”*

The participants' responses collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of support needed to improve the teaching experience of female educators in male-dominated classrooms. Institutionalizing gender-sensitivity training is seen as foundational to transforming school culture by addressing stereotypes and fostering respect. Peer mentoring and networking offer emotional and professional support, helping female teachers navigate challenges and build confidence. Strong administrative backing is crucial for enforcing discipline fairly and providing opportunities for professional growth. Additionally, understanding the unique characteristics of male learners helps female teachers tailor their approaches, promoting more effective classroom management and positive relationships.

For schools and policymakers, these findings imply that isolated efforts are insufficient; rather, comprehensive, institutionalized gender-sensitivity programs are necessary to shift attitudes and practices. Administrative



leadership must actively support female teachers through clear policies, mentorship programs, and professional development opportunities. Establishing peer networks can reduce isolation and empower female educators. Tailoring training to address both gender issues and learner characteristics can improve classroom dynamics and teacher effectiveness. Ultimately, these measures contribute to a more equitable and supportive environment that benefits educators and students alike.

These insights align with global research emphasizing the importance of systemic gender-responsive interventions in technical and vocational education. The Asian Development Bank (2020) highlights that despite reforms, stereotypes continue to affect participation in TVET, making gender-sensitivity training essential to create inclusive environments. Similarly, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) stresses integrative strategies including training of trainers and curriculum revision to address gender needs institutionally. The International Labour Organization (ILO) advocates for gender mainstreaming in curriculum development and teacher training to foster equity. Mapping gender gaps in TVET literature further supports the need for policies and community support systems that promote inclusivity and equal access (Alinea, 2022).

## CONCLUSION

This study explored the lived experiences of single female teachers managing all-male technical-vocational classrooms, revealing the complex gender dynamics that shape their professional journeys. The findings show that these teachers earn respect and establish authority primarily through demonstrating competence and nurturing positive relationships with their students. They face persistent challenges, including gender-based stereotypes, doubts about their technical abilities, heightened scrutiny of their appearance, and behavioral management issues typical of male classrooms. To cope, they rely on continuous professional development, clear classroom boundaries, professionalism in conduct and appearance, and seek support from mentors and colleagues. The participants strongly recommended institutionalizing gender-sensitivity training for the entire school community, strengthening administrative support, and creating peer mentoring networks to empower female educators. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of gender dynamics in technical-vocational education and highlight the urgent need for targeted policies and support systems that foster equitable and inclusive teaching environments.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that educational institutions implement comprehensive gender-sensitivity training programs for all members of the school community, including students, teachers, and administrators. Such training is essential to challenge existing stereotypes and foster a culture of respect and inclusivity in male-dominated technical-vocational classrooms.

Schools should also develop mentorship and peer support programs tailored specifically for female teachers to help build their confidence, share effective coping strategies, and reduce feelings of professional isolation. Continuous professional development focusing on technical skills, classroom management, and gender-responsive teaching methods should be prioritized to strengthen female teachers' competence and authority. School administrators must provide strong and consistent support by enforcing discipline fairly, addressing gender-based issues promptly, and recognizing the additional emotional labor female teachers often undertake. Offering counseling and support services can help address these unique challenges.

Furthermore, policies should encourage leadership opportunities for female educators in technical-vocational fields to increase their visibility and influence within the school community. At the policy level, gender-responsive frameworks should be developed to dismantle systemic barriers affecting female teachers' recruitment, retention, and career advancement. Teacher education programs must integrate gender-sensitive curricula and training to prepare educators for diverse classroom dynamics effectively.

Future research should broaden its scope to include married or partnered female teachers and explore the perspectives of male students and administrators to provide a more comprehensive understanding of gender dynamics in technical-vocational education. These combined efforts will contribute to creating a more equitable, supportive, and effective educational environment for female teachers and their students.

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