

## State of Gender Equality in the Municipality of Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines

Margarita A. Galang<sup>1</sup>, Marciana T. Torillos, EDD<sup>2</sup>, Myra F. Ruin<sup>3</sup>,  
Narcisa M. Paz<sup>4</sup>, Criselda A. Gonzales<sup>5</sup>, Cristina E. Malabayabas<sup>6</sup>  
College of Teacher Education<sup>1,2,3,4,5,&6</sup>

Laguna State Polytechnic University, Los Banos, Laguna, Philippines

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### Abstract

Gender equality is the absence of discrimination based on a person's sex in opportunities, allocation of resources and benefits, or access to services. This descriptive-comparative research study aimed to determine the state of gender equality in the municipality of Los Baños, province of Laguna, Philippines, in terms of education, employment, and income. It was participated in by 385 respondents coming from the 14 barangays of the municipality. Statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentage, and weighted mean were utilized to describe the profile of respondents as well as their level of agreement on gender equality. Hypotheses were tested and analyzed with the aid of Kruskal-Wallis H test with post hoc analysis, t-test, and Mann-Whitney U test for independent samples. The study found out that the municipality of Los Baños advocates gender equality in terms of education, employment, and income as reflected in their level of agreement on gender equality with a grand mean of 3.08. A significant difference was observed on the respondents' monthly income when grouped according to their profile such as, residency, age, educational attainment, and employment status. However, there is no significant difference observed when grouped according to sex. Hence, the hypothesis is partly upheld. Moreover, a significant difference was observed on the respondents' level of agreement on gender equality when grouped according to residency, educational attainment, and employment status. But there is no significant difference observed when grouped according to age and sex. Thus, the hypothesis is partly upheld. With these results, the residents of Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines are hereby encourage to remain vigilant in advocating gender equality in all aspects of their lives.

*Keywords: state gender equality municipality of Los Baños*

### Introduction

Gender, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), is used to describe the characteristics of women and men that are socially constructed, while sex refers to those that are biologically determined. An article published by John Hopkins University (2020) cited that, gender refers to the economic, social, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being a women or men. The social definitions of what it means to be a woman or man vary among cultures and change over time. Gender is a sociocultural expression of characteristics and roles that are associated with certain groups of people regarding their sex and sexuality.

WHO, meanwhile, defined gender equality as the absence of discrimination based on a person's sex in opportunities, the allocation of resources and benefits, or access to services. Philippines' Republic Act

No. 9710 (RA 9710), also known as the Magna Carta for Women, stipulated that “gender equality refers to the principle asserting the equality of men and women and their right to enjoy equal conditions realizing their full human potentials to contribute to and benefit from the results of development, and with the State recognizing that all human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights”.

Ensuring gender equality has been one of the concerns of many organizations, whether local or international. The World Economic Forum (WEF), for instance, introduced the Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR) in 2006, to measure gender equality based on four key areas namely, (1) economic participation and opportunity; (2) educational attainment; (3) health and survival; and (4) political empowerment.

The WEF 2020 GGGR showed that the Philippines ranked 16<sup>th</sup> out of 153 countries with the narrowest gap between men and women after it tallied a score of 0.781. This means that the country closed at 78% of its overall gender gap (Rola, A., 2019). However, in the 2021 report of the same organization, the country slipped to 17<sup>th</sup> among the 156 participating countries, with a 78.4% index. Nevertheless, the WEF organization commends the Philippines as it yields an impressive index of 99.9% and 97.9% in terms of educational attainment and health and survival, respectively. The report further revealed that the Philippines is still the top Asian country in closing the gender gap (Yumol, DT., 2021).

Listed at number 5 in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), gender equality has been one of the most argued matters. With the aim of leaving no one behind, the 2030 agenda seeks to benefit all people and commits to reaching out to all people in need and deprivation, wherever they are, in a manner that targets their specific challenges and vulnerabilities. United Nation (UN) Women report in 2018 lays the basis for strong, gender-responsive monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for SDGs which includes setting an agenda for strengthening accountability for gender equality commitments at global, regional and national levels. As a recognized member of UN, Philippines’ goals are anchored on the realization of these SDGs or the global call to action to end poverty, protect the earth’s environment and climate, and ensure that people everywhere can enjoy peace and prosperity. The United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also prioritize gender equality as one of its worldwide concerns where Philippines is also a member. The Philippine government’s budget allocations, from the national down to the local government unit (LGU), for gender and development is always one of the priorities to ensure that gender equality is being manifested in all sectors of society. And with these, the municipality of Los Baños is not an exemption.

Los Baños (LB) is a first-class municipality in the province of Laguna consisting of 14 barangays. According to the 2020 census, it has a population of 115, 353 people. The municipality lies on the northern slopes of the long-dormant volcano Mount Makiling and is known among tourists for its hot spring resorts (PhilAtlas, n.d.). One of the offices in the municipality of LB is the Gender and Development (GAD) or the GAD Focal Point System as stipulated in Memorandum Circular No. 2011-01, whose functions include ensuring gender equality among its residents in terms of services provided such as education, employment, and monthly income, to name a few. Corollary to this, researchers desire to examine the current state of gender equality in the municipality of Los Baños, Laguna relative to the identified areas, thus this study was conducted.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The study primarily aimed to describe the state of gender equality in the municipality of Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines

Specifically, the following objectives were attained.

1. To describe the respondents’ profile in terms of residency, age, sex, highest educational attainment, and employment status.
2. To determine the respondents’, mean level of agreement on gender equality in terms of education, employment, and monthly income.
3. To analyze the significant difference in the respondents’ monthly income according to their profiles.
4. To examine the significant difference in the respondents’ level of agreement on gender equality when grouped according to their profile.

## Methodology

This research adopted a descriptive-comparative design as it aims to describe the state of gender equality in the municipality of Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines. The researchers employed cluster sampling as participation of residents (22 years old and above) from every barangay was encouraged. With the aid of Slovin’s formula, the researchers targeted 383 respondents, which is divided proportionally into 14 barangays as shown in the table below.

**Table 1**  
*Distribution of respondents*

*Barangay	Population	%	Target Respondents	Actual Respondents
Anos	8 815	7.6	29	30
Bagong Silang	707	0.6	3	3
Bambang	7 638	6.6	25	25
Batong Malake	12 578	10.9	42	43
Baybayin	1 466	1.3	5	5
Bayog	11 613	10.1	39	39
Lalakay	4 234	3.7	14	15
Maahas	8 785	7.6	29	29
Malinta	6 531	5.7	22	22
Mayondon	17 817	15.4	59	59
PuthoTuntungin	9 300	8.1	31	31
San Antonio	15 978	13.9	52	51
Tadlac	4 043	3.5	13	13
Timugan	5 848	5.1	20	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>115 353</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>385</b>

Source: LB Municipality 2020 Census

\* 14 barangays of LB municipality

A questionnaire found online was adopted and modified to fit in with the research locale. Data on the respondent’s profile were found in its first part while the second part obtained the respondents’ level of agreement on gender equality which was measured using a 4-point Likert scale. The modified questionnaire underwent validation and passed the Cronbach Alpha reliability test.

Data gathering was done, both online (via google form) and onsite (using printed questionnaires) to meet the required number of participants for the study. Frequency counts, percentage, and weighted mean were utilized to describe the respondents’ profile while the tests of significant difference were performed using t-test, Kruskal-Wallis H test with post hoc analysis, and Mann-Whitney U test of independence.

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Respondent’s Profile

#### 1.1. In terms of residency

**Table 2**  
*In terms of residency*

*Barangay	f	%
Anos	30	7.8
Bagong Silang	3	0.8
Bambang	25	6.5
Batong Malake	43	11.2
Baybayin	5	1.3
Bayog	39	10.1
Lalakay	15	3.9
Maahas	29	7.5
Malinta	22	5.7
Mayondon	59	15.3
Putho-Tuntingin	31	8.1
San Antonio	51	13.2
Tadlac	13	3.4
Timugan	20	5.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100</b>

\* 14 barangays of LB municipality

The distribution of respondents in terms of residency is shown in Table 2. Furthermore, the target number of respondents based on Slovin’s formula, which was 383, was met and even exceeded as a total of 385 respondents from the 14 barangays of the LB municipality participated thru online or onsite questionnaires.

#### 1.2. In terms of age

**Table 3**  
*In terms of age*

Age	f	%
22 – 26	103	26.8
27 – 31	52	13.5
32 – 36	53	13.8
37 – 41	42	10.9
42 – 46	45	11.7
47 & above	87	22.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>99.2</b>

As for the age distribution, Table 3 showed that most of the respondents, that is 103 (26.8%) and 87 (22.6%) belonged to the extremes age group of 22-26 and 47 & above years old, respectively. However, there were 3 (0.8%) respondents who does not reveal their age.

### 1.3. In terms of sex

**Table 4**  
*In terms of sex*

Sex	f	%
Male	127	33
Female	256	66.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>99.5</b>

In Table 4, the respondents' sex distribution was summarized. It revealed that participants of this study are mostly female, which is 256 (66.5%). This is even though 2 (0.5%) respondents opted not to reveal their sex.

### 1.4. In terms of educational attainment

**Table 5**  
*Educational Attainment*

Educational Attainment	f	%
Elementary	10	2.6
High School	123	31.9
College	197	51.2
Masters/Doctoral	53	13.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>99.5</b>

The respondents' educational attainment was summarized in Table 5. It is reflected that college graduates dominated the participants, as there were 197 (51.2%) who responded to the prepared questionnaire. Likewise, the table revealed that there were still residents who are just high school graduates (123, 31.9%) and even elementary graduates (10, 2.6%).

### 1.5 In terms of employment status

**Table 6**  
*Employment Status*

Employment Status	f	%
Government Employed	148	38.4
Privately Employed	70	18.2
Self-employed	52	13.5
Unemployed	113	29.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>99.5</b>

Government-employed individuals dominated the participants of this study (148, 38.4%), in terms of employment status, as shown in Table 6. These individuals include employees in Local Government Unit (LGU) and DepEd employees. Meanwhile, the majority of the 113 (29.4%) unemployed participants were new graduates and still seeking jobs during the data gathering procedure.

## 2. Level of agreement on gender equality

Table 7 summarized the respondents’ level of agreement on gender equality in terms of education, employment, and income, respectively.

### 2.1. In terms of education

**Table 7**  
*In terms of Education*

Indicative Statement	$\bar{X}$	Verbal Interpretation
1. During enrolment, the school authority treated me with respect	3.50	Strongly Agree
2. The school admits students, regardless of their gender preference	3.51	Strongly Agree
3. Equal opportunities were given to students in terms of scholarship grants and school incentives	3.39	Agree
4. School administrators ensure that men and women have access to school facilities	3.57	Strongly Agree
5. Teachers give grades without bias or partiality	3.40	Agree
6. Students have freedom to join in their chosen school organization(s)	3.55	Strongly Agree
7. Students have freedom to join in their chosen school activities	3.58	Strongly Agree
8. Early marriage and pregnancy are not hindrances in continuing education	3.24	Agree
9. The school prohibits gender-based violence	3.43	Agree
10. The school protects the rights and privileges of students regardless of their gender preference	3.52	Strongly Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.47</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Among the indicative statements in Table 7, they strongly agree that students were given freedom to join their chosen school activities and school administrators ensure that men and women have access to school facilities, with a mean rating of 3.58 and 3.57, respectively. In addition, they agreed that early marriage and pregnancy are not hindrances to continuing education, with a mean rating of 3.24. Furthermore, with a grand mean of 3.47, the study found that gender equality exists in the municipality of Los Baños in terms of education. This only proves that the municipality adheres to gender equality and believed that gender equality is the right for girls and women, boys and men to equally access, participate in, deliver, and receive the benefits of education.

### 2.2. In terms of employment

**Table 8**  
*In terms of employment*

Indicative Statement	$\bar{X}$	Verbal Interpretation
1. My employer treated me with respect despite my work position/designation	3.51	Strongly Agree
2. Employees/Workers are given equal opportunity for promotion or raised in salary	3.39	Agree
3. Gender preference is not a requirement when applying for a promotion or looking for a job	3.41	Agree
4. My employer thinks that, “ <i>what can be done by men can also be done by women</i> ”	3.47	Agree
5. Men and women employees receives the same benefits	3.56	Strongly Agree
6. Having a child, out of wedlock, is not a hindrance when looking for jobs	3.23	Agree
7. My employer believes that, “ <i>only men can do odd jobs</i> ”	2.18	Disagree
8. My workplace prohibits gender-based violence	3.21	Agree
9. Employees have equal access to facilities in the workplace	3.45	Agree
10. Women gets special treatment in my workplace	2.50	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>Agree</b>

In terms of employment, as shown in Table 8, the respondents strongly agreed that men and women receive the same benefits with a mean rating of 3.56. But they do not agree that their employer believes that “only men can do odd jobs” as supported by the computed mean rating of 2.18. With a grand mean of 3.19, the study found that there is gender equality in the workplace as experienced by the respondents.

### 2.3. In terms of monthly income

**Table 9**  
*In terms of monthly income*

Indicative Statement	$\bar{X}$	Verbal Interpretation
1. Men and women have equal rights to be well-compensated.	3.56	Strongly Agree
2. High paid jobs are usually offered to men than women.	2.27	Disagree
3. Salary increase is provided to employees regardless of their gender preference.	3.08	Agree
4. Equal pay for equal work is being adopted in my workplace.	3.33	Agree
5. Men are being paid more because of their gender.	1.90	Disagree
6. Pregnancy prohibits women for getting salary increase.	2.04	Disagree
7. Women were paid less than men because they have a longer leave privilege upon giving birth.	2.02	Disagree
8. Men and women were paid less as they age.	2.00	Disagree
9. There is no difference between the earnings of men and women doing the same amount of work.	3.31	Agree
10. Men are expected to earn more since they are the head of the family.	2.36	Disagree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.59</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 9 showed that in terms of monthly income, the respondents strongly agree that men and women have equal rights to be well-compensated with a mean rating of 3.56. However, statements such as: *Men are being paid more because of their gender* as well as *Men and women were paid less as they age* obtained the lowest mean of 1.90 and 2.00 respectively which means that they do not agree on such. These data imply that the residents of LB municipality observed gender equality as evidenced by the computed grand mean of 2.59.

In the Philippines during ancient times, it had been observed and practiced that boys were given priority in education more than girls. They were prohibited from going to school and expected to rather stay at home and do household chores. They were not given the freedom to express themselves even in decision-making. But nowadays, it is evident and this can be traced to women's empowerment. The evidence suggests that greater equity and increasing female economic participation as well, are associated with higher growth, more favorable development outcomes, and lower income inequality. Marceira, H. (2017) asserted in her study that improved gender equality would have largely positive effects on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita and the employment of women. Thus, if gender equality in terms of employment be vividly practiced in any country, this will trigger and greatly boost its economic growth and stability.

### 3. Test of significant difference on monthly income according to profile

**Table 10**  
 Test of significant difference on monthly income according to profile

Variables	Test	df	Kruskal-Wallis H – Value	P - value
Residency	Independent Samples	13	28.415	0.008*
Age	Kruskal-Wallis H Test	5	14.361	0.013*
Educational Attainment	Monthly Income	3	49.675	0.000*
Employment Status		3	102.857	0.000*

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Table 10 showed the results of a test of significant differences on monthly income when grouped according to respondents' profiles, such as residency, age, educational attainment, and employment status. With the aid of Kruskal-Wallis H test of independence, the study found a significant difference between and among the identified variables as evidenced by the P-values of 0.008, 0.013, 0.000, and 0.000 respectively, which are significantly lower than the 0.05 level of significance.

#### 4. Summary of post hoc analysis

**Table 11**  
 Summary of post hoc analysis

Variables	Post-Hoc Analysis	P – value
Residency	Timugan – Putho	0.014*
	San Antonio – Putho	0.014*
Age	22-26 - 27-31	0.042*
Educational Attainment	Elem – Post Graduate	0.003*
	HS – College	0.000*
	HS – Post Graduate	0.000*
	College – Post Graduate	0.020*
Employment Status	Unemployed – Self-employed	0.000*
	Unemployed – Private	0.000*
	Unemployed - Government	0.000*

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

With the observed significant differences on the identified variables, shown in table 11.1 is the result of post hoc analysis using Dunn test.

#### 5. Test of significant difference on monthly income according to sex

**Table 12**  
 Significant difference on monthly income according to sex

Variables	Test	df	value	value
Sex	Monthly Income	339	0.493	0.622

Reflected in Table 12 is the result of the test of significant difference according to sex. The t-test for independent samples revealed a P-value of 0.622 which is higher than the 0.05 level. This data indicate that the monthly income of the respondents is not dependent on their sex. Furthermore, it supported their claim that men and women have equal rights to be well-compensated.



According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) 2015, Human Development Report, only 51.1% of women have work, compared to the 79.7% of men. It was also reported that women at work have an uphill battle to become a boss. Furthermore, in the ability of women to rise to position of leadership, Philippines scored only 5.6 out of 7 and companies have just 33% women in management.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) reported in 2013 that the female unemployment rate was relatively lower at 5.9% or 927 thousand as compared to males at 6.8% or 1.7 million. Likewise, the percentage gap between women’s and men’s basic pay remains low when looking at all occupations, but varies considerably between occupational groups.

## 6. Test of significant difference on the respondents’ level of agreement on gender equality

### 6.1. In terms of residency

**Table 13**  
*In terms of Residency*

Variables	Test	df	Kruskal-Wallis H – Value	P - value
Education	Independent Samples Kruskal-Wallis H Test	13	32.586	0.002*
Employment		13	19.354	0.113
Income		13	29.152	0.006*

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Table 13 summarized the results of a test of significant differences in the respondents’ level of agreement on gender equality when grouped according to residency. A significant difference was observed in terms of education and income with P-values of 0.002 and 0.006, respectively which are lower than 0.05 level of significance. With these, the results of the post hoc analysis were shown in Table 13.

**Table 14**  
*Summary of post hoc analysis*

Variables	Post-Hoc Analysis	P – value
Education	Dunn’s Test	0.001*
Income		0.003*
		0.018*

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

### 6.2. In terms of to age

**Table 15**  
*In terms of Age*

Variables	Test	df	Kruskal-Wallis H – Value	P - value
Education	Independent Samples Kruskal-Wallis H Test	5	2.34	0.800
Employment		5	6.016	0.305
Income		5	7.645	0.177

### 6.3. According to sex

**Table 16**  
*In terms of Sex*

Variables	Test	Mann-Whitney U – Value	P - value
Education	Independent Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	1.047	0.295
Employment		1.215	0.224
Income		0.060	0.952

The table 15 and 16 showed that there is no significant difference observed between and among the variables when grouped according to age and sex, respectively. The P-values reflected in the tables were greater than the significant level of 0.05. These data imply that the respondents’ age and sex do not influence their level of agreement on gender equality.

### 6.4. According to educational attainment

**Table 17**  
*In terms of Educational Attainment*

Variables	Test	df	Kruskal-Wallis H – Value	P - value
Education	Independent Samples Kruskal-Wallis H Test	3	40.582	0.000*
Employment		3	22.258	0.000*
Income		3	2.044	0.563

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

**Table 18**  
*Summary of post hoc analysis*

Variables	Post-Hoc Analysis	P – value	
Education	Dunn’s Test	Elem – College	0.002*
		Elem – Post Graduate	0.000*
		HS - College	0.001*
		HS – Post Graduate	0.000*
Employment	Dunn’s Test	Elem – Post Graduate	0.034*
		HS - College	0.002*
		HS – Post Graduate	0.002*

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Reflected in Table 17 is the respondents’ level of agreement when grouped according to educational attainment. A significant difference was observed in terms of education and employment with P-values less than 0.05 level of significance. The results of the post hoc analysis for this are shown in Table 18. These results imply that the respondents’ educational attainment affects their level of agreement on gender equality in terms of education and employment.

Orante, B. (2016) reported that data from UNESCO show that Philippines is performing well in terms of gender equality in education. The 2015 WEF’s Gender Gap Index showed that the country did well in education and gender ratio in workplaces, however, it did not achieve full equality in labor force participation and wage equality.

### 6.5. In terms of employment status

**Table 19**  
*In terms of Employment Status*

Variables	Test	df	Kruskal-Wallis H – Value	P - value
Education	Independent Samples Kruskal-Wallis H Test	3	14.469	0.002*
Employment		3	30.553	0.000*
Income		3	1.429	0.699

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

**Table 20**  
*Summary of post hoc analysis*

Variables	Post-Hoc Analysis	P – value
Education	Unemployed-Gov’t	0.001*
Employment	Unemployed-Gov’t	0.000*
	Self-employed-Gov’t	0.020*

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

When grouped according to employment status, a significant difference was observed in terms of education and employment, as shown in Table 19 with P-values of 0.002 and 0.000, respectively. The results of the post hoc analysis are shown in Table 20

### Conclusion

The relevant findings of this study include the significant difference observed in the respondents’ monthly income when grouped according to their profile such as residency, age, educational attainment, and employment status. However, no significant difference was observed in terms of sex. These led to the partial acceptance of the hypothesis. In addition, there was a significant difference observed in the respondents’ level of agreement on gender equality in terms of residency, educational attainment, and employment status. However, there is no significant difference observed in terms of age and sex. Thus, the hypothesis is partly upheld.

### Recommendation

The findings and conclusions from this study led the researchers to the following recommendations: (1) The Gender and Development (GAD) office of the municipality of Los Baños may enhance their service to the community by conducting clients’ satisfaction survey in terms of education, employment, and income; providing gender equality orientation seminar regularly; and promoting the rights and privileges

of women under RA 9710. (2) The leaders of education and industry sector may keep an eye on preserving their good working relationship with the residents of the municipality of Los Baños. (3) Encourage more participants in GAD related activities through proper information dissemination. (4) The residents of Los Baños may be encourage to remain vigilant in advocating gender equality in all aspects of their lives.

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