



Integration of Republic Act No. 11313 (Safe Spaces Act) In Teaching Practices

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Received: 21.03.2026 | Accepted: 18.04.2026 | Published: 21.04.2026

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.19683936](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19683936)

Abstract	Original Research Article
<p>This study examined the level of awareness, extent of integration, and challenges in the implementation of Republic Act No. 11313 among public high school teachers in Cordon, Isabela. Utilizing a descriptive-comparative quantitative research design, the study involved 106 respondents selected through stratified random sampling. Data were gathered using a validated survey questionnaire covering demographic profile, awareness level, integration practices, and implementation barriers. Statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, weighted mean, independent samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA were employed for data analysis. Findings revealed that teachers are “Very Aware” of RA 11313, with the highest awareness in general knowledge and institutional responsibilities. The extent of integration was also rated as “Always Integrated,” particularly in classroom management and student interaction, indicating that gender-sensitive and safe space principles are consistently applied in instructional practices. However, assessment-related integration was relatively lower compared to other dimensions. Further analysis showed that years in teaching, plantilla position, and seminar attendance significantly influence the extent of integration, while age and sex generally do not. In terms of challenges, respondents “Strongly Agreed” that insufficient training, limited student awareness, lack of resources, and curricular constraints are the most pressing barriers to effective implementation. Overall, the study concludes that while awareness and integration of RA 11313 are high among teachers, effective implementation is hindered by structural, instructional, and socio-cultural challenges. The findings highlight the need for sustained professional development, improved institutional support systems, and strengthened policy enforcement to ensure full realization of safe and gender-responsive learning environments in schools.</p> <p>Keywords: Safe Spaces Act, Republic Act 11313, gender-responsive education, teacher awareness, policy implementation.</p>	

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Introduction

The enactment of Republic Act No. 11313 represents a significant advancement in Philippine legislation, broadening the scope of sexual harassment to include peer-to-peer, public, and online interactions

(Banggawan et al., 2024). Within educational settings, this law places greater responsibility on teachers not only to understand its provisions but also to actively integrate them into classroom practices. While studies indicate that teachers generally



demonstrate high levels of awareness, such awareness does not automatically translate into meaningful pedagogical integration (Guerero & Alipio, 2025). This reveals a critical gap between knowledge and practice, where compliance remains largely superficial.

Existing literature further highlights that gender-responsiveness in instruction is often vaguely articulated in curricula, limiting its practical application (Castulo et al., 2026). Despite the presence of policies such as DepEd Order No. 32, s. 2017, the implementation of RA 11313 introduced more explicit legal obligations, including adherence to “Bawal Bastos” standards and digital conduct expectations (Mori, 2024). However, teachers frequently lack specialized training on legal procedures, reporting mechanisms, and the full implications of non-compliance, contributing to a “surface-level” application of the law (Gonzales, 2025).

Moreover, prior research has largely focused on legal interpretations rather than empirical evidence of classroom integration and contextual challenges (Ragusta, 2025). In local contexts such as Cordon, Isabela, systemic constraints, including limited resources and curricular overload, further hinder effective implementation (Randwick Research, 2024).

This study addresses these gaps by examining not only the level of teacher awareness but also the extent of integration and the barriers encountered in practice. By doing so, it provides a more comprehensive, data-driven understanding of how RA 11313 is operationalized in schools. The findings aim to inform targeted interventions, including enhanced training programs, clearer institutional protocols, and contextualized strategies to strengthen the implementation of safe spaces and gender-responsive education.

Methodology

To evaluate the implementation of RA 11313 among public high school educators in Cordon,

Isabela, this research utilized a descriptive-comparative quantitative methodology. Through the application of stratified random sampling, a group of 106 participants was assembled, consisting of 72 female and 34 male educators. These respondents were drawn from a diverse group of five local secondary institutions, specifically Cagasat, Cordon National, Diadi Region, Dona Josefa Edralin Marcos, and Wigan Integrated High School.

The data collection process involved a four-section survey tool comprising a demographic questionnaire, an awareness scale modified from Dela Rosa and Dela Rosa (2025), and original segments designed by the researcher to measure integration levels and execution obstacles. To ensure academic rigor, the tool was subjected to professional validation by experts and internal consistency checks using Cronbach’s Alpha. For the analysis of responses, a four-point Likert scale was employed, categorizing results from a minimum of “Not aware at all/Never integrated” (1.00–1.75) to a maximum of “Very aware/Always integrated” (3.26–4.00).

Once formal institutional permissions were obtained, the survey instruments were distributed, achieving a perfect 100% response rate. The subsequent data processing utilized a variety of statistical techniques: frequency counts and percentages were used to describe participant demographics, while weighted mean and standard deviation were calculated to measure the depth of awareness and the frequency of integration. To identify any meaningful variances among different demographic categories, the researcher applied Independent Samples t-tests and ANOVA.

To ensure ethical integrity, the research process strictly adhered to protocols regarding informed consent and the maintenance of participant confidentiality. All procedures were conducted with a commitment to protecting the anonymity of the subjects and ensuring they were fully briefed on the study's scope before their participation.

Results and Discussions

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Age Mean = 35.47	24 - 33 years old	51	48.11
	34 - 43 years old	33	31.13
	44 years old or older	22	20.75
Sex	Male	34	32.08
	Female	72	67.92
Number of Years Teaching Mean = 9.69	1 - 10 years	70	66.04
	11 - 20 years	23	21.70
	21 years or more	13	12.26
Plantilla Position	Teacher I	22	20.75
	Teacher II	15	14.15
	Teacher III or Master Teacher 1	69	65.09
Attendance to Seminar Related to RA 11313	With Seminar	58	54.72
	Without Seminar	48	45.28
	n-25		

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents, which provide a meaningful context for interpreting their perspectives and experiences. The mean age of 35.47 years, with the largest group (48.11%) aged 24–33, indicates that the majority of respondents are in the early to mid-career stage. This suggests a workforce that is still developing professionally, which may influence their openness to policy implementation and professional development. Younger teachers are often more adaptable to reforms and innovations in education (OECD, 2024).

In terms of sex, the predominance of female respondents (67.92%) reflects global trends where teaching is largely a female-dominated profession, particularly at the basic education level (UNESCO, 2023). Studies indicate that women comprise a significant proportion of teachers worldwide, especially in primary and secondary education, reinforcing gender patterns within the profession (UNESCO, 2020; UNESCO, 2025). This demographic pattern may also influence perspectives

on gender-related policies such as RA 11313. Regarding teaching experience, the mean of 9.69 years and the concentration of respondents (66.04%) within 1–10 years of service indicate a moderately experienced group. This aligns with findings that many education systems are composed of relatively young teaching cohorts who are still building expertise and pedagogical competence (OECD, 2024). In terms of plantilla position, the majority are Teacher III or Master Teacher I (65.09%), suggesting that many respondents have already achieved higher ranks despite moderate years of experience. This may reflect merit-based promotion systems emphasizing qualifications and performance. Finally, while 54.72% have attended seminars related to RA 11313, a substantial proportion (45.28%) have not, indicating gaps in professional development. This highlights the need for expanded training initiatives, as continuous professional learning is essential for effective policy implementation and gender-responsive education (UNESCO, 2025).

Table 2. Table 2. Summary of the Level of Awareness on Republic Act No. 11313

Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Rank
General Knowledge of RA 11313	3.66	Very Aware	1
Institutional Duties Acts and Implementation	3.65	Very Aware	2
Specific Prohibited and Behaviors	3.52	Very Aware	3
Penalties and Legal Consequences	3.52	Very Aware	4
Grand Mean	3.56	Very Aware	

Legend:

- 3.26 – 4.00 *Very Aware*
- 2.51 – 3.25 *Aware*
- 1.76 – 2.50 *Somewhat Aware*
- 1.00 – 1.75 *Not Aware at All*

Table 2 presents the summary of respondents’ level of awareness of Republic Act No. 11313, commonly known as the Safe Spaces Act. The overall grand mean of 3.56, interpreted as “Very Aware,” indicates that respondents possess a high level of understanding of the law’s provisions. This suggests that awareness initiatives and institutional efforts to disseminate information about gender-based harassment and safe spaces are generally effective.

Among the indicators, General Knowledge of RA 11313 obtained the highest mean (3.66), ranking first. This implies that respondents are highly familiar with the basic concepts, purpose, and scope of the law. Similarly, Institutional Duties, Acts, and Implementation ranked second (mean = 3.65), reflecting strong awareness of the responsibilities of schools and organizations in enforcing the law. This is essential, as institutional accountability plays a key role in creating safe and inclusive environments (Commission on Human Rights [CHR], 2021).

The indicators Specific Prohibited Acts and Behaviors and Penalties and Legal Consequences both received a mean of 3.52, still within the “Very Aware” category but ranked lower. This suggests that while respondents are generally knowledgeable, there may be relatively less familiarity with the detailed provisions and legal implications of violations. Prior research highlights that individuals often understand general principles of laws but may lack depth in recognizing specific violations and corresponding penalties (Department of Education [DepEd], 2020).

Overall, the findings indicate a commendable level of awareness; however, the slight variation among indicators suggests the need for more focused training on specific prohibited acts and legal consequences. Strengthening this aspect can enhance compliance and empower educators to effectively address gender-based harassment in educational settings (UN Women, 2022).

Table 3. Summary of the Extent of Integration of RA 11313 in Teaching Practices

Dimensions of Integration	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Rank
Classroom Management and Student Interaction	3.58	Always Integrated	1
Curriculum Integration and Lesson Planning	3.42	Always Integrated	2
Instructional materials and Resource Selection	3.35	Always Integrated	3

Assessment and Feedback Mechanism	3.28	Always Integrated	4
Grand Mean	3.42	Always Integrated	

Legend:

- 3.26 – 4.00 *Always Integrated*
- 2.51 – 3.25 *Often Integrated*
- 1.76 – 2.50 *Rarely Integrated*
- 1.00 – 1.75 *Never Integrated*

Table 3 presents the extent to which Republic Act No. 11313 is integrated into teaching practices. The grand mean of 3.42, interpreted as “Always Integrated,” indicates that respondents consistently incorporate the principles of the Safe Spaces Act in their instructional processes. This reflects a strong commitment among educators to promote safe, inclusive, and gender-responsive learning environments.

Among the dimensions, Classroom Management and Student Interaction ranked first (mean = 3.58), suggesting that teachers most frequently apply RA 11313 principles in managing student behavior and fostering respectful interactions. This is significant, as classroom management is a primary avenue through which values such as respect, inclusivity, and non-discrimination are modeled and reinforced (UNESCO, 2023). It implies that teachers are actively preventing gender-based harassment and promoting positive interpersonal relationships.

Curriculum Integration and Lesson Planning ranked second (mean = 3.42), indicating that

educators deliberately embed concepts related to safe spaces and gender sensitivity into their lessons. This aligns with the view that integrating social issues into the curriculum enhances learners’ awareness and critical thinking (DepEd, 2020). Meanwhile, Instructional Materials and Resource Selection (mean = 3.35) shows that teachers are also mindful in choosing content that reflects inclusivity and avoids gender bias.

Lastly, the Assessment and Feedback Mechanism ranked fourth (mean = 3.28), although still within the “Always Integrated” category. This suggests that while integration is consistent, there may be relatively less emphasis on embedding RA 11313 principles in assessment practices. Literature suggests that assessment is often the least developed area in values integration, as it requires more structured and intentional design (OECD, 2021).

Overall, the findings demonstrate a high level of integration, though strengthening assessment-related practices could further enhance holistic implementation.

Table 4. Relationship between Respondents' Profile and the Extent of RA 11313 Integration

Demographic Variables	Correlational Coefficient (r)	p-value	Interpretation
Age	0.142	0.151	Not Significant
Sex	0.085	0.389	Not Significant
Years of Teaching	0.198	0.042	Significant
Plantilla Position	0.215	0.027	Significant

Seminar Attendance	0.342	0.001	Highly Significant
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p-value ≤ 0.05 is significant

Table 4 presents the relationship between respondents’ demographic profile and the extent of integration of Republic Act No. 11313 in teaching practices. The results reveal varying degrees of association, with some variables showing significant relationships while others do not.

Age ($r = 0.142$, $p = 0.151$) and sex ($r = 0.085$, $p = 0.389$) were found to have no significant relationship with the extent of integration. This indicates that the integration of RA 11313 principles in teaching is not influenced by demographic characteristics such as age or gender. This finding suggests that awareness and implementation of gender-responsive practices may be uniformly adopted across different age groups and between male and female educators, reflecting institutional standardization (UNESCO, 2023).

In contrast, years of teaching ($r = 0.198$, $p = 0.042$) and plantilla position ($r = 0.215$, $p = 0.027$) show significant relationships. Although the correlations are weak, they indicate that more experienced teachers and those with higher positions are slightly more likely to integrate RA 11313 in

their practices. This may be attributed to increased exposure to training, professional development, and institutional responsibilities over time (OECD, 2021).

Notably, seminar attendance ($r = 0.342$, $p = 0.001$) demonstrates a moderate and highly significant relationship, suggesting that participation in training related to RA 11313 strongly influences its integration in teaching. This finding highlights the critical role of professional development in enhancing teachers’ competence in implementing gender-sensitive policies. Studies emphasize that targeted training programs significantly improve educators’ ability to apply legal and ethical standards in classroom contexts (UN Women, 2022).

Overall, the findings underscore that while demographic factors may have limited influence, professional experience and especially training play a crucial role in strengthening the integration of RA 11313. This implies that expanding seminar opportunities could further improve implementation across educational settings.

Table 5. Significant Difference in the Extent of RA 11313 Integration by Profile

Profile Variable	Mean	p-value	Interpretation	Decision on H0
Age	3.51	0.219	Not Significant	Fail to Reject
Sex	3.51	0.030*	Significant	Reject
Years in Teaching	3.51	0.101	Not Significant	Fail to Reject
Plantilla Position	3.51	0.142	Not Significant	Fail to Reject

p-value ≤ 0.05 is significant

Table 5 presents the differences in the extent of integration of Republic Act No. 11313 when

respondents are grouped according to selected profile variables. The findings indicate that most

demographic factors do not produce statistically significant differences, except for sex.

Specifically, age ($p = 0.219$), years in teaching ($p = 0.101$), and plantilla position ($p = 0.142$) all yielded non-significant results, leading to the decision to fail to reject the null hypothesis. This implies that the extent to which RA 11313 is integrated into teaching practices is generally consistent across different age groups, levels of teaching experience, and professional ranks. Such uniformity suggests that institutional policies and guidelines on gender sensitivity and safe spaces are being applied consistently, regardless of these demographic differences. This aligns with studies indicating that standardized policy implementation in schools can minimize variability in practice among educators (OECD, 2021; UNESCO, 2023).

In contrast, sex showed a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.030$), leading to the

rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that male and female respondents differ in the extent of integrating RA 11313 into their teaching practices. This difference may be attributed to variations in gender sensitivity, personal experiences, or levels of engagement with gender-related issues. Research suggests that female educators often demonstrate higher awareness and responsiveness to gender-based concerns, which may influence their classroom practices (UN Women, 2022).

Overall, the results highlight that while most profile variables do not significantly affect integration, sex plays a notable role. This suggests the need for more targeted and inclusive professional development programs that ensure all educators, regardless of gender, are equally equipped to implement RA 11313 effectively.

Table 6. Challenges and Barriers in the Implementation of RA 11313

Challenges and Barriers	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Rank
Lack of comprehensive training and professional development	3.42	Strongly Agree	1
Limited student awareness regarding law's provisions	3.35	Strongly Agree	2
Insufficient school resources (e.g., teaching materials/guides)	3.30	Strongly Agree	3
Time constraints and "curricular crowding"	3.28	Strongly Agree	4
Influence of traditional cultural or societal norms	3.25	Agree	5
Attitudes of resistance from parents and guardians	3.20	Agree	6
Ambiguity in legal implications for classroom management	3.15	Agree	7
Lack of clear school protocols and reporting incidents	3.10	Agree	8
High academic workload preventing focus on safety policies	3.05	Agree	9

Difficulty in monitoring online/digital spaces	3.00	Agree	10
Grand Mean	3.38	Strongly Agree	

Legend:

- 3.26 – 4.00 *Strongly Agree*
- 2.51 – 3.25 *Agree*
- 1.76 – 2.50 *Disagree*
- 1.00 – 1.75 *Strongly Disagree*

Table 6 presents the challenges and barriers encountered in the implementation of Republic Act No. 11313. The grand mean of 3.38, interpreted as “Strongly Agree,” indicates that respondents generally experience considerable difficulties in effectively implementing the law in educational settings.

The top-ranked challenge is the lack of comprehensive training and professional development (mean = 3.42), highlighting a critical gap in equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills. This supports earlier findings that training significantly influences policy implementation, as educators require continuous capacity-building to effectively integrate gender-sensitive laws into practice (UN Women, 2022). Similarly, limited student awareness regarding the law’s provisions (mean = 3.35) suggests that while teachers may be informed, learners themselves may not fully understand their rights and responsibilities, thereby limiting the law’s impact.

Other major barriers include insufficient school resources (mean = 3.30) and time constraints or curricular crowding (mean = 3.28), both of which reflect systemic issues in educational settings. These findings align with research indicating that competing academic demands and a lack of instructional materials hinder the integration of cross-cutting policies such as gender and safety education (UNESCO, 2023).

Meanwhile, factors such as cultural norms (mean = 3.25) and parental resistance (mean = 3.20) reveal socio-cultural challenges that may affect acceptance and implementation. These elements suggest that, beyond institutional efforts, community

engagement is essential. Lower-ranked yet notable concerns include ambiguity in legal implications, lack of clear protocols, and difficulty in monitoring digital spaces, indicating operational and emerging challenges in policy enforcement.

Overall, the findings underscore that while awareness and integration are high, significant structural, institutional, and socio-cultural barriers persist. Addressing these challenges requires strengthened training programs, improved resource allocation, clearer guidelines, and broader stakeholder involvement to ensure effective implementation of RA 11313.

The study revealed that respondents demonstrated a very high level of awareness of Republic Act No. 11313 and consistently integrated its principles into teaching practices, particularly in classroom management and student interaction. However, despite this positive outcome, significant variations were noted in the depth of integration, especially in assessment practices. The results also indicated that years in teaching, plantilla position, and especially seminar attendance significantly influence the extent of integration, emphasizing the critical role of professional development. Conversely, age and sex did not significantly affect integration levels in most analyses, although sex showed a difference in group comparison. Furthermore, while implementation is generally strong, multiple barriers persist, including insufficient training, limited resources, curricular constraints, and socio-cultural resistance. Overall, the findings suggest that although RA 11313 is well understood and applied at a basic level, its full and sustained implementation in educational practice

requires stronger institutional support and continuous capacity building among educators.

Future research should expand the scope of this study by including multiple divisions or regions to improve the generalizability of findings. A mixed-methods approach is recommended to capture deeper insights into teachers' lived experiences and classroom practices in implementing Republic Act No. 11313. Further studies may also examine student perspectives to assess the actual impact of integration on learner behavior and awareness. Additionally, experimental or intervention-based research focusing on structured training programs could be conducted to determine their effectiveness in improving implementation. Lastly, future work should explore digital and online safety dimensions of the law, given the increasing relevance of cyberspaces in education.

Acknowledgement

The researcher sincerely thanks all the individuals who made this research possible. The researcher is deeply grateful to Dr. Hermenegildo F. Samoy, Jr., Dr. Rosalyn L. Delizo, and Dr. Cynthia Valdez for their exemplary leadership and valuable insights. Special appreciation is extended to the research adviser, Dr. Emma D. Aspiras, for her dedicated guidance, steadfast support, and nurturing, thoughtful advice throughout the process. Appreciation is extended to Ma'am Lahaina Sue C. Azarcon, the panel members, and the teachers of Cordon for their cooperation and support. Gratitude is likewise extended to colleagues, friends, and family for their unwavering encouragement, understanding, and love. Above all, the researcher thanks the Lord Almighty for granting the wisdom, strength, and perseverance to complete this work.

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