

Impact Evaluation of a Unity-focused Forum in Enhancing Female Civil Servants' Knowledge and Understanding

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Abstract: *National unity remains a cornerstone of Malaysia's socio-political agenda, and civil servants play an instrumental role in implementing unity-related policies. However, significant gaps persist in understanding how gender influences civic literacy and engagement in unity discourses. This study addresses that gap by evaluating the impact of a unity-focused forum designed to enhance female civil servants' knowledge and understanding of national unity, particularly their roles in fostering social cohesion. Guided by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) and the Theory of Change (1995), the study adopts a pre-experimental design utilizing a one-group pre-test and post-test method. 36 participants were involved, with data analysed using descriptive statistics and paired-samples t-test. The results indicate statistically significant improvement in post-forum knowledge ($t(35) = -7.882, p < 0.001$), affirming the forum's effectiveness in enhancing unity-related understanding. The findings emphasize the potential of structured civic interventions in enhancing female civil servants' agency in national integration. Implications point to the need for gender-responsive civic education and policy training. The study recommends institutionalizing similar programs across public sector training modules to sustain inclusive nation-building and empower women as unity advocates in Malaysia's evolving civil landscape.*

Keywords: Civic Literacy, Civil Servants, Impact Evaluation, National Unity, Unity-Focused Intervention

1. Introduction

As societies confront complex challenges relating to polarization, ethnic division and political fragmentation, women have emerged as critical actors in shaping inclusive national narratives (Antonelli & Ruspini, 2018; Carr, 2020; Matfess et al., 2023). In Malaysia, the nation's multi-ethnic, multi-religious composition necessitates continuous efforts in cultivating unity. The role of women within the given society, particularly as civil servants, educators and community leaders, hold critical potential in advancing this agenda. Numerous international studies have affirmed the transformative capacity of women in peace-building, conflict mediation, and civic participation (O'Reilly, 2015; Elsen & Seth, 2019; Tripp et al., 2025). However, within the Malaysian context, empirical evaluations focusing specifically on targeted unity-based interventions for women remain limited.

National unity is not merely an abstract aspiration but a strategic pillar of socio-political sustainability. In Malaysia, these are reflected in policy instruments such as the National Unity Policy (Ministry of National Unity, 2021) and the Malaysia MADANI framework, a governance framework emphasizing on sustainability, inclusivity and values-based nation building (Prime Minister's Office of Malaysia, 2024). The Federal Constitution and Rukun Negara, national philosophy aimed at fostering unity through five guiding principles, are instrumental tools in strengthening national cohesion (Department of Community Communication, 2021). In addition, Keluarga Malaysia (Malaysian Family) concept, the National Blueprint for Inter-Ethnic Unity 2021-2030, and the Sekretariat Rukun Negara (SRN) in schools and higher education institutions have been critical in embedding the principles of national unity and patriotism among Malaysians (Ministry of National Unity, 2021).

Despite the profound tone and emphasis on unity, knowledge gap persists especially among the government servants whose roles are vital in implementing unity-related policies. While efforts have been made to strengthen civic literacy across the civil service, less emphasis has been placed on evaluating the impact across gender (Lee, 2023; Poon & Leeves, 2022). This creates a critical gap in assessing whether such initiatives translate into measurable knowledge gains and deeper conceptual understanding. Consequentially, the perspectives of government civil servants, particular the female civil servants, remain underexplored in unity-focused research and discourse (Poon & Leeves, 2022).

This study addresses that gap by evaluating a forum-based intervention focused on enhancing female civil servants' knowledge and understanding of national unity. Specifically, the study aims to measure the extent to which the forum improved the participants' knowledge about the role of women in unity. Framed by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) and the Theory of Change (1995), the study explores how targeted learning experiences within structured civic dialogues can foster increased awareness and engagement among women at matters pertaining to social cohesion and national identity. In doing so, the study contributes to the body of literature on women and nation-building, as well as offers practical insights for policy planning and capacity-building initiatives within Malaysia's public sector.

2. Literature Review

The role of women in fostering unity has gained increasing scholarly attention, particularly in relation to social cohesion, national integration, and peace-building. Across various socio-political contexts, women have played critical roles in promoting stability (Bein-Meir, 2025; Jekayinoluwa & Adeowu, 2024; Sababa et al., 2017), mediating conflicts (Atela et al., 2021; Rigual et al., 2022), and fostering inclusive national narratives (Carr, 2020; Kirby & Shepherd, 2016; Matfess et al., 2023; O'Reilly, 2015). The review of literature has revealed the inclination for traditional discourse to position women as passive beneficiaries of unity policies. However, more recent studies have emphasized women's active agency in shaping social, political, and economic structures that contribute to national cohesion (Dubey, 2021; Garg, 2018).

Women as Catalysts for National Integration

A number of studies have showcased the role of women in national integration and social cohesion, highlighting their ability to bridge ethnic, religious, and political divides. A study by (Nnaemeka et al., 2019) investigates how women's participation in social movements and political leadership fosters intergroup harmony. The authors stress the significant role of women within these contexts as they often champion inclusive policies and grassroots reconciliation efforts. They note that despite women's substantial population in Nigeria, there

exists a significant gender gap in developmental engagements. The authors are assertive that woman empowerment and inclusivity in development policies can be leveraged into bridging the gap. This is echoed in the work of Olagbende (2023) which emphasizes women's involvement in civic engagement in strengthening the social fabric, achieved through gender equality in education. The author advocates the significance of education in serving as a catalyst for women's inclusivity in aspects pertaining to nation building and cohesion.

The involvement of women-led organizations in promoting and fostering national integration has also received scholarly attention, particularly their crucial engagement in mitigating ethnic and religious conflicts. The findings suggest that women-led initiatives focusing on dialogue (Antonelli & Ruspini, 2018; Ben-Meir, 2025; Butler, 2019; Casavecchia et al., 2023), community engagement (Bein-Meir, 2025; Tripp et al., 2025); and policy advocacy (Antonelli & Ruspini, 2018; Goetz & Jenkins, 2016) have been effective in diffusing tensions in divided societies (Kirby & Shepherd, 2016; Matfess et al., 2023). These studies collectively emphasize the strategic importance of women in national integration efforts.

Women in Education as Agents of Social Cohesion

Another significant avenue through which women foster unity is education, particularly in their roles as teachers, administrators, and policymakers. Studies by Akhter (2023), Jekayinoluwa and Adeowu (2024) as well as Sakalh et al. (2021), to cite a few, have highlighted that women educator serve as key agents in shaping inclusive national identities. This is observed in various facets of national stability and cohesion particularly by instilling values of tolerance, respect, and cultural appreciation in students (Sakalh et al., 2021; Turken et al., 2024). In nations where ethnic tensions or historical divisions persist, female educators have been instrumental in promoting narratives that emphasize shared national identity over factionalism (Clarke et al., 2023; Nakaya, 2018).

Gender equality in education and women's access to education have been found as significant contributors to long term national stability. Sababa et al. (2017) whose study included the survey responses of 200 women, for example, found that girl-child access to education play a significant role in improving the health and education of children. Gender inequal treatment, cultural and religion are mainly found to be the main hindrance for access to female education. The gap in gender equality is also cited as one of the major challenges to female education in Olagbende's (2023) study.

Growing research findings have also attested those nations with higher female literacy rates demonstrate lower levels of political instability and conflict (Atela et al., 2021; Rigual et al., 2022). Well-educated female citizens are more likely to contribute to economic development, civic engagement, and engage in intergenerational knowledge transmission that reinforces unity (Elsen & Seth, 2019; Ezeamaka & Nnamdi, 2024; Olagbende, 2023). These findings align with global policy recommendations advocating for gender-inclusive education systems as a strategy to enhance national cohesion (Dugarova, 2018; Elsen & Seth, 2019).

Women in National Security and Peace-Building

One of the most compelling areas of scholarly work involves women's roles in national security and peace-building. Women's participation in peacekeeping missions, police forces, and military operations leads to lower rates of misconduct, increased trust in security institutions, and improved conflict resolution strategies (Carr, 2020; O'Reilly, 2015). Carr (2020) asserts that the integration of women into national security forces enhances operational effectiveness. She argued nations that promote woman integration into their national security forces are more

likely to produce more cohesive and capable teams than those without such policies. O'Reilly (2015) who examines women's involvement in peace, security and counterterrorism efforts reveals that nations that incorporate women into peace negotiations are more likely to achieve lasting peace agreements. She also stresses the instrumental role of women in preventing conflict and creating peace. However, many nations still hold to traditional view on the passive role of women in national peace and security (O'Reilly, 2015), and the potential of female citizens in prospering national unity and development remain underexplored (Ezeamaka & Nnamdi, 2024).

3. Method

Theoretical Framework

The study is framed by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (EST) (1979) and the Theory of Change (ToC) (1995). Bronfenbrenner's EST emphasizes the interaction between individuals and their environments across multiple levels: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The theory posits that development is not isolated to individual characteristics, and it is deeply influenced by interactions across multiple environmental systems (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The microsystem represents the immediate environment where individuals directly interact, such as family, school, peers, or workplaces. The connection between microsystems, such as the relationship between family and school, is described as mesosystem. The exosystem involves external environments with indirect influence on their development (e.g., parents' workplaces, school policies). The macrosystem includes cultural values, societal norms, laws, and ideologies that shape all other systems. Finally, the chronosystem captures the dimension of time, both in terms of the individual's lifespan and broader historical or societal changes (Antony, 2022; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Nolan & Owen, 2024). For example, a child growing up during a period of economic recession may face challenges that affect their educational opportunities and long-term outcomes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; El Zaatari & Maalouf, 2022).

EST enriches the study by contextualizing the forum within a multi-layered socio-political environment. The theory strengthens the study's emphasis on the role of systemic interactions in shaping unity. Additionally, it provides a holistic lens in evaluating how individual, organizational, and societal factors interact to influence participants' learning outcomes.

The ToC is a framework that outlines the process by which an intervention or program leads to its intended outcomes and impacts. It articulates the causal pathways, assumptions, and conditions necessary for achieving desired change (Weiss, 1995). The change is often illustrated through a logical sequence of inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. The use of the theory enables clear planning, execution, and evaluation of programs by establishing how activities and interventions lead to desired changes. It operates by linking short-term actions to long-term impacts ensuring accountability and alignment with program goals (Gready & Robins, 2020; Reinholz & Andrews, 2021; Weiss, 1995).

In relation to the integration of ToC in framing the study, it complements EST by providing a structured framework that further defines the interconnected layers of environmental contexts of the EST. The impact of intervention (forum) on participants' knowledge could be more effectively mapped to the systems within the EST. Specifically, ToC adds a structured framework for designing, implementing, and evaluating the forum's contribution to change across these systems.

Research Design

The study adopts a quantitative methodology utilizing evaluation research design. The evaluation research design accommodates studies typically carried out in the real world within the context of organizations. The focus primarily involved measuring the outcomes of a process and not just on the process itself, with the goal in determining whether the process yields the desired result. In relation to this study, output measurement is adopted and the study is guided towards evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention in bringing about the shift in participants' knowledge and understanding.

Data was gathered through one-group pretest-posttest mechanism. The pretest provided baseline data of the participants' knowledge and understanding of unity and unity-related concepts, whereas the post-test enabled for results to be compared with the pretest in ascertaining the shift in knowledge and understanding.

The design is of lesser complexity in comparison to other forms of experimental design with the absence of comparison group. Rather than random selection of research sample and random assignment of participants to groups (such as the case of true experimental design), the study saw data collection process involving all the participants in the research population.

Research Context and Participants

The context of the study is a forum aiming at enhancing participants' knowledge and understanding in relation to the direct and indirect roles of women in enhancing national unity and social integration. Organized only for female participants, participant selection was carried out by their respective agencies. Grounded on national unity, the forum aimed to achieve the following objectives: 1) To enhance participants' understanding of national unity policies and frameworks; 2) To strengthen civic literacy among female civil servants; 3) To increase awareness of gender-specific contributions and challenges; and 4) To foster critical reflection on contemporary unity-related issues. The forum was held for 1 hour and 45 minutes attended by three panelists and one moderator.

The forum's participants consisted of 52 female civil servants from three sub government agencies. Purposive sampling was utilized as the participants were selected by the organizations they worked with. Also known as judgmental or selective sampling, purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where participant selection is based on specific characteristics pertinent to the study's objectives. This method enables the inclusion of individuals who can provide rich, relevant, and diverse data. In doing so enhancing the depth and breadth of the research findings. The only request made by the forum organizer was the emphasis on female participants in aligning to the context of the forum. All participants responded to the pre-test about an hour before the forum commenced. However, only 36 participants completed the post-test that was administered online a day following the forum's conclusion, marking a return rate of 69.2%.

Instrumentation

The pre-test consists of 14 items across two sections: Section A: Demographic Information (4 items), and Section B: Role of Women in Fostering Social Cohesion and Unity (10 items). Demographic information is omitted in the post-test, leaving only the 10 items for Section B. The items aim to measure participants' knowledge of aspects pertaining to national unity, Malaysia Madani, gender issues, digital entrepreneurship and support. Dichotomous scale item format is adopted whereby the participants may select True or False for every statement. Items

in both the pre and post tests are identical with a slight modification to a number of items. Table 1 details the constructs and items in both instruments.

Table 1: Constructs and Items in Pre and Post Tests

Constructs	Item No	Pre-test Items	Post-test Items	Answer
National Unity	1	The National Cohesion Policy is one of the policy documents that serves as the foundational framework and direction for the national unity agenda.	The National Integration Policy is one of the policy documents that serves as the foundational framework and direction for the national unity agenda.	False
	2	The Unity Ecosystem is a core pillar of unity that serves as the agenda for national unity.	The Unity Ecosystem is a Core Pillar of unity that functions as the agenda for national unity.	True
Malaysia Madani	3	Sustainability and Innovation are among the core values in the essence of Malaysia Madani's development.	Sustainability and Innovation are among the core values in the essence of Malaysia Madani's development.	True
	4	The concept of Malaysia Madani is founded on the principle of Unity in Diversity.	The Malaysia Madani concept is grounded in the principle of Unity in Diversity.	True
Gender Issues	5	In the context of unity, gender issues involve disparities in equal rights between men and women.	In the context of unity, gender issues involve disparities in equal rights between men and women.	False
	6	Women need to play a more relevant role in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), as these fields are predominantly male-dominated.	Women need to play a more relevant role in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), as these fields are predominantly male-dominated.	True
Digital Entrepreneurship	7	Digital entrepreneurship is a sector that has seen limited participation from women in initiatives aimed at empowering them through technology and innovation.	Digital entrepreneurship is a sector that has seen limited participation from women in initiatives aimed at empowering them through technology and innovation.	False
	8	Digital skills training programs specifically targeting women do not include Sabah and Sarawak due to issues with devices and internet access.	Digital skills training programs tailored for women do not include Sabah and Sarawak due to issues with devices and internet access.	False
	9	Initiatives aimed at supporting women in digital entrepreneurship need to provide access to microfinance opportunities and tailored training programs in e-commerce.	Initiatives aimed at supporting women in digital entrepreneurship need to provide access to microfinance opportunities and tailored training programs in e-commerce.	True
Support	10	The establishment of support groups, such as single mothers' clubs and women's associations, is an effort to enhance social support networks and social security.	The establishment of support groups, such as single mothers' clubs and women's associations, is an effort to enhance social support networks and social security.	True

A pilot test was conducted involving three female civil servants from a different governmental agency than the participants of the study. This process allowed for the refinement of ambiguous or unclear items, thus improving instrument validity. Reliability was assessed through internal

consistency measures using Cronbach’s Alpha. The Cronbach’s Alpha values for the pre-test and post-test are 0.832 and 0.845 respectively, indicating high reliability for the items within the scales. The data collected were analysed descriptively using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 28.

4. Results

The discussion in this section focuses on the findings involving 36 participants who completed both the pre- and post-tests.

Demographic Information

All 36 participants were female civil servants representing three different sub government agencies related to unity, peace and nation’s harmony. Close to 95 percents of the participants were Malays (n=34, 94.4%), and the remaining 5.6 percents were Indians (n=2). In relation to age, only 1 participant was below 25 years old. 12 participants (33%) were between 26-35 years old; 13 participants (36%) were between 36-45 years old; with the remaining 10 were more than 46 years of age. A majority of the participants were diploma holders (n=17, 47%), followed by 13 participants (36%) with Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM)’s certificate (completed secondary education). Only 1 participant extended her education to Form 6 (with STPM certificate). Additionally, 4 participants (11%) graduated with Bachelor’s Degree, and 1 participant stated other as her highest attained academic qualification.

Forum Impact on Participants’ Knowledge and Understanding

The research objective aims to ascertain the extent to which the forum improved the participants’ knowledge about the role of women in unity. The findings are derived through individual score comparison obtained by the participants in the pre and post-tests, correlation analysis as well as paired samples t-test. These analyses help determine whether the observed knowledge gains were statistically significant and whether prior knowledge influenced post-forum performance.

Individual Score Comparison

Although 52 participants have completed the pre-test, only 36 participants returned a completed post-test. Therefore, the analysis involves the pre-test and post-test’s responses provided by 36 individuals. Table 2 represents participants’ scores in both instruments and the difference in the scores.

Table 2: Participants’ Pre and Post-Test Scores

Participants	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Difference
Participant 1	5	7	+2
Participant 2	5	8	+3
Participant 3	5	6	+1
Participant 4	5	6	+1
Participant 5	5	9	+4
Participant 6	4	6	+2
Participant 7	5	6	+1
Participant 8	5	6	+1
Participant 9	5	6	+1
Participant 10	5	6	+1
Participant 11	5	6	+1

Participant 12	8	6	-2
Participant 13	7	8	+1
Participant 14	5	7	+2
Participant 15	5	6	+1
Participant 16	5	6	+1
Participant 17	5	6	+1
Participant 18	5	6	+1
Participant 19	5	6	+1
Participant 20	7	8	+1
Participant 21	6	7	+1
Participant 22	5	6	+1
Participant 23	5	6	+1
Participant 24	5	6	+1
Participant 25	5	6	+1
Participant 26	5	6	+1
Participant 27	5	6	+1
Participant 28	5	6	+1
Participant 29	5	6	+1
Participant 30	6	6	0
Participant 31	6	8	+2
Participant 32	5	6	+1
Participant 33	5	6	+1
Participant 34	5	6	+1
Participant 35	5	6	+1
Participant 36	5	6	+1
Total	189	230	
Mean Score	5.25	6.39	

The results yielded a total score of 189 for the pre-test and 230 for the post-test, indicating a difference in 41 marks. Higher mean score for post-test was also noted with 6.39 recorded mean for post-test, while the mean score for pre-test was 5.25. This marked an increase of 1.14 points on average for each participant.

At individual level, 33 out of 36 participants demonstrated an increase in knowledge and understanding of women's roles in unity. The highest increase was shown by Participant 5 with an increase of 4 points. Participant 30, however, attained similar scores in both the pre and post instruments, potentially indicating that the forum left no significant impact on her knowledge and understanding. It is also worth noting that 1 participant (Participant 12) demonstrated a decrease in her post-test score by 2 points. The forum, in general, has effectively enhanced the participants' knowledge and understanding of the roles of women in fostering social cohesion and unity.

Paired Samples Statistics and Correlation Analysis

To further evaluate the impact of the forum on participants' knowledge, a paired samples t-test and correlation analysis were conducted. The paired samples descriptive statistics provide insights into overall knowledge improvement, while the correlation analysis examines the relationship between pre-test and post-test scores. Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3: Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	pretest	5.25	36	.732	.122
	posttest	6.39	36	.803	.134

The descriptive statistics showed an increase in participants' knowledge after attending the forum. The mean pre-test score was 5.25 (SD=0.732) while the mean for the post-test score was 6.39 (SD=0.803). The increase in mean scores suggests that participants had experienced improvement in knowledge after attending the forum. The slight increase in SD indicates varied degree of improvement among individual participants, though overall trends show a positive learning effect. The standard error of the mean remains small, confirming that the sample mean is a stable estimate of the population mean.

Table 4: Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	pretest & posttest	36	.365	.029

The paired samples correlation between pre and post-tests was weak to moderate ($r=0.365$, $p=0.029$). This indicates a statistically significant but modest relationship between pre-knowledge level and post-forum performance. Participants who scored higher in the pre-test tended to score higher in the post-test, however the relationship is not particularly strong. The forum also had an independent impact on knowledge acquisition beyond prior understanding.

Paired Samples T-test

A paired-sample t-test was conducted in determining whether the observed increase in participants' knowledge was statistically significant. The analysis enables for mean comparison and assesses whether the knowledge gains can be attributed to the forum rather than random variation. Table 5 presents the paired t-test results.

Table 5: Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
pretest - posttest	-1.139	.867	.144	-1.432	-.846	-7.882	35	.000

The results revealed a significant increase in post-test scores ($M= -1.136$, $SD = 0.867$), $t(35) = -7.882$, $p < 0.001$. The extremely small p value ($p<0.001$) signifies an extremely strong statistical difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. Additionally, the likelihood of obtaining this difference by random chance alone is zero. Hence, this indicate that the forum had a meaningful impact on participants' knowledge related to the role of women in fostering unity. The 95% confidence interval (-1.432, -0.846) suggests that the true mean difference lies within this range, confirming that the observed improvement is statistically reliable.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate an improvement in participants' knowledge and understanding towards the roles of women in fostering social cohesion and national unity. The increase in mean scores ($M=5.25$, $SD=0.732$ in the pre-test; and $M=6.39$, $SD=0.803$ in the post-test); the upward trend observed in 33 out of 36 participants; and the 1.14 point average increase

per participant indicates that the forum provided room for substantive knowledge gain. The knowledge gain is also statistically significant, evidenced by the paired samples t-test ($t(35) = -7.882$, $p < 0.001$). The low p-value of 0.000 shows that the observed improvement is highly unlikely caused by random chance. Additionally, the 95% confidence interval (-1.432, -0.846) further strengthens the reliability of the findings.

The findings also unveiled individual variations in knowledge acquisition. These variations could be attributed to differences in baseline knowledge, learning styles, engagement levels, or prior exposure to unity-related policies. The weak-to-moderate correlation ($r = 0.365$, $p = 0.029$) indicates that pre-existing knowledge did not strongly predict post-test performance. This suggests that the forum had an independent effect on learning, benefiting participants across varying levels of prior understanding.

From a broader perspective, these findings contribute to the discourse on women's roles in fostering national unity. The forum's focus aligns with global efforts to promote inclusive nation-building and gender-responsive policymaking (Antonelli & Ruspini, 2018; Dugarova, 2018; Elsen & Seth, 2019; Goetz & Jenkins, 2016). The observed improvements in knowledge affirm the value of knowledge-based interventions as platforms for fostering civic consciousness and policy literacy (Sakalh et al., 2021; Turken et al., 2024). This is significant particularly when it is involving civil servants who has direct roles in implementing unity-related initiatives.

Overall, the study confirms that targeted knowledge-based interventions can significantly enhance participants' understanding of national unity and related policies. The statistically significant learning gains observed in the forum participants reinforce the value of structured civic education in building informed and engaged citizens. Moving forward, enhancing content delivery through interactive methodologies and sustained engagement strategies will be key to maximizing the effectiveness of similar interventions in fostering national unity and social cohesion.

6. Implications of the Study

The findings of this study hold significant implications for policy, education, and national unity initiatives. The statistically significant improvement in participants' knowledge emphasizes the effectiveness of structured interventions in enhancing understanding of gender roles in fostering unity. This highlights the potential of targeted knowledge-based forums in equipping civil servants with the necessary insights in integrating gender perspectives into national unity policies and initiatives. Given that female civil servants are often at the forefront of policy implementation, their enhanced awareness can contribute to more gender-sensitive and inclusive approaches in community engagement, conflict resolution, and national integration efforts.

Furthermore, the study affirms the critical role of women as educators and social cohesion agents. This aligns with the existing literature that positions women as key drivers of tolerance, cultural appreciation, and national identity formation. The observed knowledge gains suggest that similar initiatives should be institutionalized within civil service training programs, emphasizing women's contributions to unity-building efforts. Furthermore, the findings contribute to the discourse on gender equality in education, as increased awareness among female policymakers and administrators can lead to more informed decision-making, in doing so strengthening national stability.

From a methodological standpoint, this study reinforces the utility of pre-experimental research designs in measuring intervention effectiveness. The significant pre-test to post-test knowledge gains validate the role of data-driven evaluations in assessing the impact of educational forums. This supports the need for continuous assessment of civic education programs to ensure sustained improvements in knowledge retention and application.

7. Directions of Future Research

The study opens a number of avenues for future research. Longitudinal studies would enable for mid to long term retention of knowledge gained from similar interventions to be measured. A follow-up post-test administered after six months or a year would provide more robust data on the impact of the interventions. Alternatively, studies utilizing mixed-methodologies would supply more comprehensive measures into forums' effectiveness. The integration of qualitative methodologies such as interviews and focus groups could provide richer insights into how participants perceive and internalize unity-related knowledge and understanding.

8. Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions the study is subject to several limitations. The limited number of items in the pre and post-test instruments restrict the generalizability of the findings. The low number of items was viewed necessary given the format and the context within which the forum was organized. The forum was carried out in the afternoon during one of the working days. Higher number of items would potentially invite lower completion rate. However, given the generalizability of the findings, more items would lead to a more reliable findings of participants' knowledge and understanding on the women's role in fostering unity. Additionally, the limited sample size (n=36) also limits the findings' generalizability. Even though the results indicate significant knowledge gains, a larger sample would enhance its statistical power and would allow for broader conclusions.

9. Conclusion

The study illustrates the effectiveness of a forum-focused intervention in significantly improving the knowledge of understanding of female civil servants. The forum delved into women's role in fostering national unity. 36 participants from unity-related government agencies and NGOs completed the pre-test and post-test consisting of 10 items in quiz format. Frequency analysis and paired samples t-test were carried out in measuring the impact of the forum. The increase in mean scores in post-test, the upward trend observed; and the 1.14 point average increase per participant indicates that the participants experienced substantive knowledge gain. The gain is also statistically significant, with low p-value indicating that the observed improvement is highly unlikely caused by random chance.

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