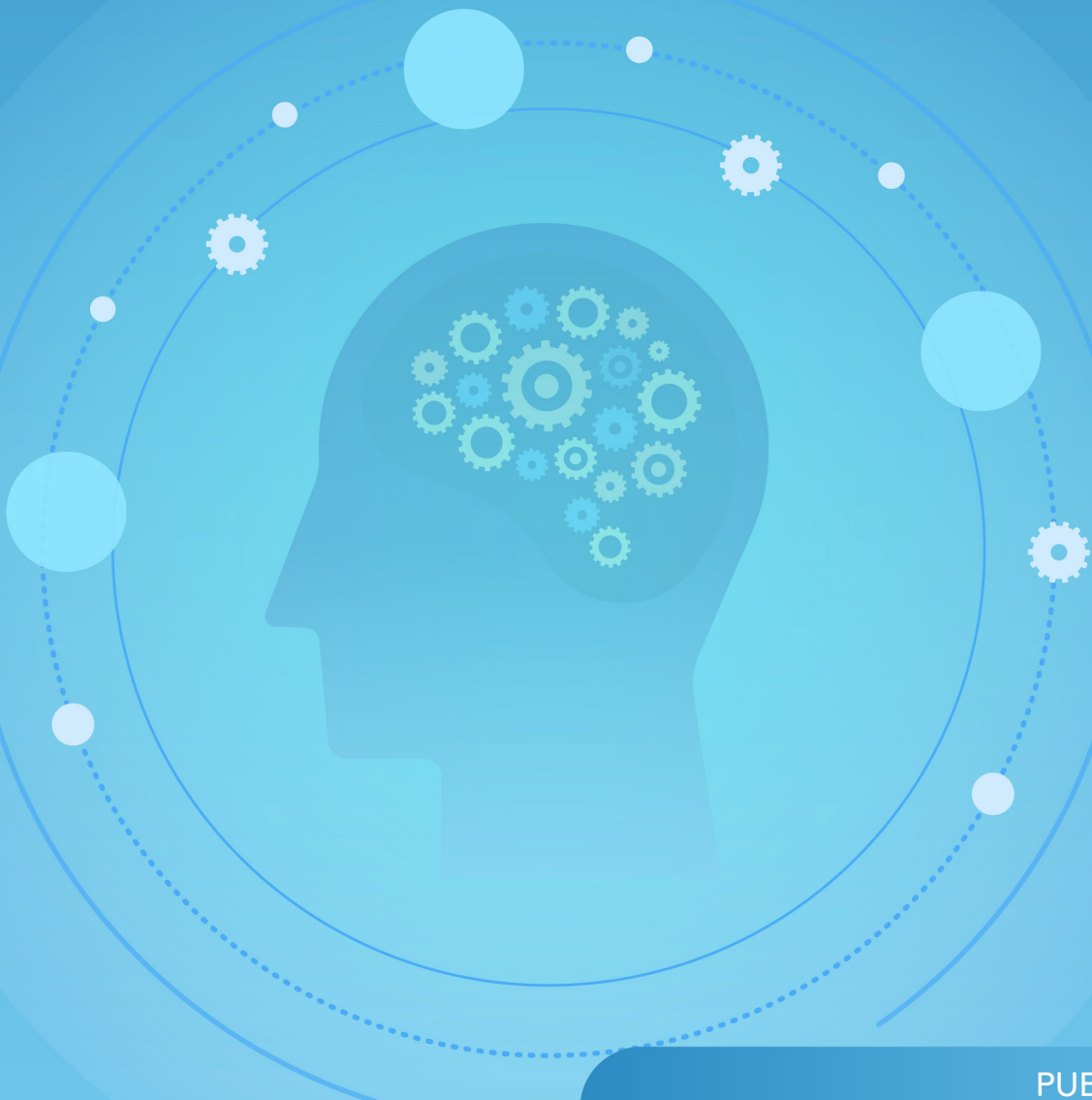




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Assessment of the Correlation Between Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices on Gender Equality in the Sustainable Developmental Goals Among Filipino College Students

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ABSTRACT

Gender equality remains a fundamental principle of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5), which emphasizes the promotion of equal rights, opportunities, and participation regardless of gender. Despite increasing institutional efforts to promote gender awareness in higher education, the extent to which students' knowledge and attitudes toward gender equality translate into actual gender-equal practices remains insufficiently understood, particularly within the Philippine higher education context. This study aimed to determine the levels of knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward gender equality among Filipino college students and to examine whether knowledge and attitudes significantly predict gender equality practices. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed involving 271 college students selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using a validated researcher-administered questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Spearman's rho correlation, and multiple linear regression at the .05 level of significance. The findings revealed that respondents generally demonstrated high levels of knowledge, positive attitudes, and favorable practices toward gender equality. Correlation analysis showed a very weak positive relationship between knowledge and attitudes toward gender equality ($r = .096$), while attitudes demonstrated a weak but statistically significant positive relationship with gender equality practices ($r = .242$). In contrast, knowledge showed a statistically significant negative relationship with practices ($r = -.356$), suggesting that higher levels of knowledge do not necessarily correspond to stronger engagement in gender-equal behaviors. Furthermore, regression analysis indicated that attitudes significantly and positively predicted gender equality practices, whereas knowledge emerged as a significant negative predictor. These findings suggest that attitudes play a more influential role than knowledge in shaping gender-equal practices among college students. Although students may possess adequate awareness and understanding of gender equality concepts, knowledge alone may not be sufficient to promote behavioral application. Rather, the development of positive attitudes toward gender inclusivity, respect, and equality appears to be more critical in encouraging the actual practice of gender-equal behaviors. The study highlights the importance of strengthening values formation, attitude-oriented interventions, and experiential gender education programs within higher education institutions to foster meaningful and sustainable gender equality practices among students.

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality remains a fundamental global concern and a central objective of Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5), which advocates for equal rights, opportunities, and participation regardless of gender. Despite significant international efforts to promote gender inclusivity, persistent inequalities continue to exist across economic, political, educational, and social domains. In the 2022 Global Gender Gap Index, the Philippines ranked 19th worldwide, reflecting notable progress in gender parity while simultaneously revealing continuing disparities in economic participation and political representation (World Economic Forum, 2022). Similarly, the 2024 Equal Measures 2030 SDG Gender Index reported that many gender-related SDG targets remain unmet globally, highlighting the slow progress toward achieving gender equality (Equal Measures 2030, 2024). These findings suggest that while structural and policy-based initiatives have improved gender awareness,

translating these efforts into consistent gender-equitable behavior remains a continuing challenge.

Within higher education, college students represent a critical population in advancing gender equality because emerging adulthood is considered a formative developmental stage for the consolidation of social values, civic attitudes, and behavioral practices. Sánchez-Queija *et al.* (2023) emphasized that the late adolescent and early adult years are particularly significant in shaping gender-related beliefs and social behaviors. The present study may be understood through the Knowledge-Attitude-Practice (KAP) framework, which posits that knowledge influences attitudes, and attitudes subsequently shape behavioral practices. However, existing literature suggests that increased knowledge about gender equality does not always translate into favorable attitudes or gender-equitable behaviors. International studies consistently report a gap between awareness and behavioral application among university students. For instance,

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Jahan (2021) found that although Malaysian university students demonstrated awareness of SDG 5 principles, their attitudes and practices toward gender equality were not equally strong, resulting in only a weak relationship between knowledge and practice. These findings imply that knowledge alone may be insufficient to promote meaningful behavioral engagement with gender equality. In the Philippine context, research concerning gender equality within higher education institutions remains relatively limited despite the implementation of gender-responsive policies and programs. The Philippine Commission on Women (2023) noted that many educational institutions continue to experience challenges in fully integrating gender-responsive approaches into curriculum, instruction, and institutional practices. Existing local studies present generally positive findings but also reveal important limitations and inconsistencies. Bejasa (2024), for example, reported high levels of knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward gender equality among students in Bohol; however, the study's limited sampling restricts the generalizability of the findings. Similarly, Villarin *et al.* (2025) found that both faculty and students in a Mindanao-based institution demonstrated awareness of gender equality principles, although faculty exhibited more favorable perceptions regarding the integration of gender equality into teaching and curriculum compared with students. Moreover, Silor and Silor (2023) reported that gender disparities continue to persist in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics programs at Mindanao State University–Iligan Institute of Technology due to societal expectations and institutional barriers that limit women's participation and representation.

Taken together, these studies underscore the need for further empirical investigation into the relationship among knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward gender equality among Filipino college students. Although previous studies have examined these constructs independently, limited research has simultaneously explored their interrelationships using an SDG-oriented framework within the Philippine higher education context, particularly in Mindanao. Furthermore, inconsistencies between students' awareness of gender equality and their actual behavioral practices remain insufficiently understood. Therefore, this study examines the relationships among knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward gender equality among Filipino college students. Specifically, the study seeks to contribute to the growing discourse on gender-responsive education by determining whether knowledge and attitudes significantly influence gender-equal practices among students. The findings may provide valuable implications for higher education institutions in developing more effective gender education initiatives, values-oriented interventions, and institutional policies that promote inclusive and sustainable gender-equitable practices.

Gender equality in education is influenced by school systems, teaching practices, and cultural beliefs that shape

how students understand and respond to gender issues. Although many educational institutions in the Philippines have introduced gender-responsive policies, studies show that challenges remain in fully applying these policies in actual school settings. These challenges include the persistence of gender stereotypes, unequal participation of learners, and inconsistent implementation of gender-sensitive programs (Fontanos & Ocampo, 2019; Paqueo & Orbeta, 2019). As a result, even with existing policies, gender equality in education is not always fully achieved in practice.

In addition, research suggests that improving gender equality requires more than policy development alone. Schools need to ensure that gender equality principles are integrated into daily classroom activities, teaching materials, and school culture. Some related studies emphasize that the support of teachers, school leaders, and other stakeholders plays an important role in strengthening gender awareness and promoting inclusive learning environments (Bongco & Abenes, 2019). When these factors are present, students are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward gender equality and demonstrate respectful behavior in school settings. Overall, these findings highlight that achieving gender equality in education requires continuous and coordinated effort. It is not only about introducing gender-responsive policies but also about ensuring their proper implementation and sustainability within education institutions. Strengthening institutional commitment and promoting inclusive practices are essential steps in addressing existing gaps and improving gender equality outcomes in education (Bayudan-Dacuycuy, 2019; Paqueo & Orbeta, 2019).

Research Objectives

General Objective

To analyze the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of Filipino college students on gender equality.

Specific Objectives

1. What is the level of knowledge, attitudes, and practices of the gender equality concept of SDG 5?
2. Is there a significant relationship between knowledge and attitudes toward gender equality?
3. Is there a significant relationship between attitudes and practices of gender equality?
4. Is there a significant relationship between knowledge and practices of gender equality?
5. Do knowledge and attitudes significantly predict gender equality practices?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Participants

The participants in this research were college students from various strata, courses, and schools across the Philippines during the school year 2025-2026. A simple random sampling method was employed to select respondents, as this approach allows for statistical inferences about the population while minimizing

potential bias or the influence of confounding variables. A total of 271 college students voluntarily participated in

the study. The sample consisted of 128 males (47.23%), females (47.23%), and 15 LGBTQ+ students (5.5%).

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents (n= 271)

Profile	f	%
Male	128	47.23%
Female	128	47.23%
LGBTQ+	15	5.5%
Total	271	100.0

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument used in this study was a structured survey questionnaire adapted from Jahan (2021), titled Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices toward Gender Equality in Achieving SDG 5. The instrument was previously tested for reliability and validity, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding .70 for all scales, indicating acceptable internal consistency. In addition, content validity was established through expert validation conducted by specialists in gender studies and educational research, ensuring that the instrument accurately measured the constructs of knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to gender equality. No modifications were made to the original instrument in order to preserve its psychometric properties and conceptual validity.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections: knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward gender equality. The knowledge section contained dichotomous Yes/No items designed to assess respondents' understanding of gender equality concepts and Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5). The attitudes section utilized a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to measure respondents' perceptions and beliefs regarding gender equality. Meanwhile, the practices section employed a 5-point frequency scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always) to assess the extent to which respondents engaged in gender-equality-related behaviors in their daily lives.

Research Design and Procedure

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationships among knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward gender equality among Filipino college students. The study utilized simple random sampling to ensure that each respondent had an equal probability of selection, thereby minimizing sampling bias and enhancing the representativeness of the sample. Prior to data collection, the researchers conducted an extensive review of related literature and empirical studies relevant to gender equality and SDG 5.

Data collection was conducted through an online survey questionnaire accompanied by an informed consent form and data privacy statement to ensure confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation. Prior to the administration of the survey, formal letters

requesting permission to conduct the study were secured and endorsed by the research adviser and the Dean of the Professional School. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the participants' right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty, were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the research. After data collection, the responses were encoded, tabulated, and analyzed using IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25.

Statistical Treatment

The data gathered from the survey questionnaires were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. For the knowledge component, responses were coded as 2 for correct answers and 1 for incorrect answers. Frequencies, percentages, and composite mean scores were computed to determine the respondents' level of knowledge regarding gender equality and SDG 5, with higher scores indicating greater knowledge.

Attitudes toward gender equality were analyzed using mean and standard deviation, where higher mean scores reflected more favorable attitudes toward gender equality. Similarly, practices toward gender equality were analyzed using mean and standard deviation, with higher scores indicating more frequent engagement in gender-equality practices. The interpretation of mean scores followed the established qualitative interpretation scales adopted in the study.

To determine the relationships among knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward gender equality, Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient (ρ) was employed due to the ordinal nature of the Likert-scale variables and the nonparametric characteristics of the data. Spearman's rho was used to assess the strength and direction of the relationships among the study variables. Furthermore, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether knowledge and attitudes significantly predicted gender equality practices among the respondents. Prior to regression analysis, the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity were examined to ensure the appropriateness of the regression model. Statistical analyses were conducted at the .05 level of significance.

Ethical Considerations

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary.

Respondents were courteously invited to take part in the research and were informed that they could decline or withdraw at any point without facing any penalties or repercussions. The researchers respected all decisions made by participants regarding their involvement.

Right to Withdraw

Participants were assured that they could discontinue their participation at any stage of the study. Any decision to withdraw was fully respected, and no questions or pressure were imposed on those who chose to leave.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All personal information provided by the respondents was treated with strict confidentiality. The researchers assumed full responsibility for safeguarding the data and ensuring that it would not be disclosed or shared outside the scope of the study.

Permission from Organizing/Location

Prior to data collection, the researchers secured formal authorization through signed letters by the study adviser and the Dean of the Professional School. These endorsements allowed the distribution of survey questionnaires to college students in the Philippines at the identified sites.

Informed Consent

Participants were thoroughly informed about the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits before providing their consent. They were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, as well as their right to withdraw at any time. Institutional approval was obtained, and all ethical guidelines regarding participant information and voluntary involvement were followed.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

The study adheres to principles of academic honesty. All sources, ideas, and findings from previous studies were properly acknowledged and cited to maintain originality and avoid plagiarism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data, findings, interpretation, discussion, and statistical analysis derived from the respondents' answers concerning their knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to gender equality within the framework of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The tables here are classified under the following subsection: The correlation between Attitudes and Practices based on Knowledge of Gender Equality Among Filipino College Students, Levels of Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of Participants regarding Gender Equality and SDG 5, summary of Descriptive Statistics of Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices.

Table 2 presents the level of knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward gender equality among the respondents. The findings revealed that respondents demonstrated

Table 2: Level of Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice toward Gender Equality among respondents (n=271)

Indicators	M	SD
Knowledge	1.07	0.10
Attitude	3.78	0.40
Practice	4.00	0.62

a high level of knowledge regarding gender equality, as reflected by the composite mean score ($M = 1.07$, $SD = 0.10$). The low standard deviation indicates relatively consistent responses among participants, suggesting that most respondents possessed awareness and understanding of gender equality concepts and Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5). This finding implies that the respondents generally recognize the importance of gender equality principles and are aware of issues related to equal rights, opportunities, and gender inclusivity. The result is consistent with the Knowledge-Attitude-Practice (KAP) framework, which explains that knowledge significantly influences attitudes and behavioral tendencies (Jahan, 2021). Studies further emphasize that awareness of gender equality and SDG 5 contributes to improved perspectives regarding inclusivity and women's empowerment (Merma-Molina *et al.*, 2024; Medina-Hernández & Fernández-Gómez, 2024). However, previous research also suggests that knowledge alone may not always lead to behavioral change because social norms, environmental influences, and cultural contexts continue to shape individual practices and actions toward gender equality (Lima & Guedes, 2024).

In terms of attitudes toward gender equality, respondents obtained a composite mean score of 3.78 ($*SD = 0.40$), which indicates generally favorable attitudes toward gender equality. The findings suggest that respondents tend to support principles related to fairness, equal opportunities, and nondiscrimination regardless of gender. The relatively low standard deviation further indicates consistency in respondents' perceptions and beliefs regarding gender equality. This finding aligns with previous studies showing that college students and young adults commonly exhibit positive attitudes toward gender equality when exposed to educational initiatives, gender awareness programs, and inclusive learning environments (Bejasa, 2024). Moreover, Muñoz-Mazón *et al.* (2024) emphasized that attitudes play a critical role within the KAP framework because they influence how individuals translate knowledge into behavioral practices. Nevertheless, favorable attitudes do not always guarantee consistent gender-equal behavior, as individual actions may still be shaped by broader sociocultural norms, peer influence, institutional environments, and personal experiences.

Regarding practices toward gender equality, respondents obtained a composite mean score of 4.00 ($SD = 0.62$), indicating a generally good level of gender-equality practices. This finding suggests that respondents frequently engage in behaviors that support gender equality in their daily interactions and social experiences. Compared with

knowledge and attitudes, the higher standard deviation indicates greater variability in respondents' behavioral practices, implying that the consistency of gender-equal behavior differs across individuals. Such variation may be influenced by contextual factors such as cultural expectations, family background, institutional climate, and societal norms that either facilitate or constrain the practice of gender equality. This finding is consistent with Jahan (2021), who argued that practices are often the most variable component of the KAP framework because behaviors are highly influenced by external and environmental conditions. Similarly, Muñoz-Mazón *et al.*

(2024) reported that although educational exposure may improve knowledge and attitudes toward gender equality, behavioral practices may still vary depending on social context, lived experiences, and institutional support systems. Collectively, the findings suggest that while respondents generally possess adequate knowledge and favorable attitudes toward gender equality, the translation of these into consistent practices remains influenced by multiple social and contextual factors.

Spearman's rank-order correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward gender equality. The results revealed

Table 3: Correlation between Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices towards Gender Equality (n=271)

	Knowledge	Attitude	Practices
Knowledge	-	.096	-.356**
Attitude	.096	-	.242**
Practices	-.356**	.242**	-

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

a very weak positive and non-significant relationship between knowledge and attitudes ($\rho = .096$, $p > .05$), indicating that higher knowledge of gender equality does not necessarily correspond to more favorable attitudes. This suggests that knowledge alone is not sufficient to shape attitudes, as other factors such as values and social context may be more influential.

Meanwhile, knowledge demonstrated a moderate negative and significant relationship with practices ($\rho = -.356$, $p < .01$), indicating that higher knowledge levels are associated with lower engagement in gender-equal practices. This reflects a knowledge–practice gap, where awareness of gender equality does not automatically translate into behavioral application. Similar findings were reported by Saleh *et al.* (2022), who emphasized that knowledge alone is insufficient to predict behavior, as attitudes play a stronger role in influencing practice. Jahan (2021) also found that higher knowledge does not consistently lead

to improved attitudes or practices, further supporting this gap between awareness and behavior.

In contrast, attitudes showed a weak but significant positive relationship with practices ($\rho = .242$, $p < .01$), indicating that more favorable attitudes toward gender equality are associated with higher engagement in gender-equal behaviors. This highlights that attitudes play a more direct role in shaping practice compared to knowledge. Consistent with the Knowledge–Attitude–Practice framework, attitudes function as the immediate driver of behavior, while knowledge serves as a foundational component. Muñoz-Mazón *et al.* (2023) further support this, noting that positive attitudes significantly increase the likelihood of gender-equal practices even when knowledge is limited.

The linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether knowledge and attitude significantly predict practices toward gender equality. The overall regression

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Knowledge and Attitude Predicting Practices towards Gender Equality

Indicators	β	SE	t	p
Knowledge	-.363	.355	-6.607	<.001
Attitude	.289	.086	5.268	<.001
R ²		.197		
F		32.98		

model was statistically significant, indicating that the predictors collectively explained a significant portion of the variance in gender equality practices ($F = 32.98$, $p < .001$). The model yielded an R^2 value of .197, suggesting that approximately 19.7% of the variance in practices toward gender equality can be explained by knowledge and attitude. Although statistically significant, this also implies that a substantial proportion of the variance may be attributed to other factors not included in the study, such as cultural influences, social norms, institutional

support, or personal experiences.

Among the predictors, knowledge showed a significant negative effect on practices toward gender equality ($\beta = -0.363$, $t = -6.607$, $p < .001$). This indicates that higher levels of knowledge were associated with lower levels of actual gender equality practices. While this finding may appear counterintuitive, it suggests that possessing knowledge alone does not automatically lead to behavioral implementation. Individuals may be aware of gender equality concepts and principles yet still fail

to apply them in practice due to social barriers, cultural expectations, resistance to change, or inconsistencies between beliefs and behavior. This finding aligns with Hassan *et al.* (2016), who emphasized that awareness and knowledge do not necessarily guarantee behavioral change unless accompanied by motivation, supportive environments, and opportunities for application.

In contrast, attitude emerged as a significant positive predictor of practices toward gender equality ($\beta = 0.289$, $t = 5.268$, $p < .001$). This indicates that respondents with more favorable attitudes toward gender equality were more likely to engage in behaviors and practices that support gender equality principles. The result highlights the important role of internal dispositions, values, and perceptions in shaping behavior. Individuals who genuinely value equality are more likely to demonstrate inclusive actions and equitable treatment in everyday situations. This finding supports the study of Mentrikoski *et al.* (2019), which found that positive attitudes strongly influence behavioral intentions and actual practices. Similarly, Prapavessis *et al.*, (2015) explained that attitudes serve as a major determinant of behavioral engagement because they influence an individual's willingness and motivation to act.

In synthesis, the findings suggest that attitude is a more meaningful predictor of gender equality practices compared to knowledge. While knowledge provides awareness and understanding of gender-related issues, attitudes appear to exert a stronger influence on whether individuals translate such understanding into concrete actions. The results imply that interventions promoting gender equality should not focus solely on increasing knowledge but should also aim to cultivate positive attitudes, empathy, and value formation to encourage genuine behavioral change.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Filipino college students generally demonstrate adequate knowledge, favorable attitudes, and good practices regarding gender equality. The findings indicate that students are aware of gender equality principles and generally support equal rights, fairness, and opportunities regardless of gender. However, the results also show that knowledge alone does not necessarily lead to more favorable attitudes or consistent gender-equal practices. The very weak and non-significant relationship between knowledge and attitudes suggests that awareness may not automatically shape beliefs. Moreover, the significant negative relationship between knowledge and practices implies that students may understand gender equality conceptually but may not always apply it in daily behavior. In contrast, attitudes showed a significant positive relationship with practices, emphasizing that students with more favorable views toward gender equality are more likely to demonstrate gender-equitable actions.

Based on these findings, higher education institutions should strengthen gender equality initiatives by moving beyond simple information dissemination. Gender

equality education should be integrated into classroom instruction, student activities, seminars, and community-based programs that promote not only awareness but also empathy, inclusivity, and behavioral commitment. Educators should use participatory and reflective strategies that allow students to examine stereotypes, biases, and social norms affecting gender relations. Since attitudes significantly influence practices, schools should create programs that cultivate positive values and encourage students to translate gender-sensitive beliefs into everyday actions. Institutions should also establish gender-responsive policies, safe spaces, anti-discrimination mechanisms, and equal participation opportunities for all students. Future researchers may explore other factors influencing gender equality practices, such as family background, peer influence, culture, religion, media exposure, and institutional climate. Mixed-methods or longitudinal studies are also recommended to provide deeper insights into how gender equality attitudes and behaviors develop over time.

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