Exploring Gender Differences on Personal and Social Values of College Students from Institutional Core Values

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Abstract - *This study explored on how males and females differed on their development needs for personal and social values from the perspective of identified common institutional core values. The study utilized a quantitative descriptive type of research with 141 males or 45.7 percent of the student-respondents while 167 females or 54.3 percent with total sample respondents of 308 students. The most common institutional core values of the HEIs in terms of social aspect includes Service, Compassion, Leadership, Unity, Responsibility, and Respect while for personal values include Excellence, Integrity, God-centeredness, Commitment, Truth, Competence, and Faith. The social values in terms of unity, service, and respect are the top 3 institutional core values they needed to develop further while Excellence, Integrity, and Commitment for personal values. Male students have identified service and compassion with significantly higher needs for further improvement while leadership and responsibility for female respondents in terms of social values. Male respondents have also identified God-Centeredness and commitment with significantly higher needs for further personal development. From this context, educational leaders may provide mechanism on how institutional core values will be given more emphasis and measure on delivering quality instruction, conducting research and facilitating extension services through defining goals and objectives of student development programs where specific core values are addressed.*

Keywords: *commitment, compassion, excellence, faith*, *integrity, God-centeredness, leadership, responsibility, respect, service, truth, unity, competence*

INTRODUCTION

Different institutions have varying core values that build the identity of their students and employees through making decisions, teaching and learning activities and extending services to the community. The view of the world is influenced by the values the people hold in the institution. The core values explain what the institution stands for and the way in which it intends to conduct its activities [1]. These are considered important element in the brand building processes of higher education institutions and other business organizations [2]-[5]. It creates impact to the reputation of the students and employees based on the image of the organization. A values statement clarifies how the organization will conduct its activities to achieve the organization's mission and vision. It is a statement about how the organization will value customers, staff, other stakeholders and the community [1]. It also keeps the students informed on how they should perform their duties and responsibilities as important member of the institution. Academic institutions address the 21st century skills to be developed among students in relation to their respective core values as a framework and basis of curriculum design and school activities. However, these core values are sometimes being neglected to be considered as significant element in strategic planning and operations of the institutions.

On the other hand, the issue on gender equality has been part of the responsibility of Higher Education Institutions to establish activities that will foster awareness and eliminate gender stereotyping. Since 2010, CHED has been pushing for the agenda to mainstream gender and development in higher education. It has issued several landmark policy statements and documents, the most prominent of which is CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 01, series of 2015 or the "Establishing the Policies and Guidelines on Gender and Development in CHED and HEI [6].

Instilling word values through demonstration of national attainments in the world content, respect to colleges' opinions, skills in communication and self-development are the most important features of modern university educational model, in which a teacher

becomes more than a tutor but the prospecting example of a specialist and a person [7]. Various institutions have their own set of core values that help them in promoting the distinctiveness of their degree programs and entire organization. Core values also portray the unique character of the students as graduates of specific institution. HEIs have also different ways on how to promote their core values from curricular and extra-curricular activities. Skills are easily learned from one-time comprehensive training but acquiring the appropriate personal and social values requires significant and meaningful experience for the students which is supposedly a lifetime commitment of HEIs for quality and excellence. Developing these values and measuring them are very subjective in nature. Students from different family backgrounds and orientations have also different needs for personal and social development. Exploring the common core values of institutions for higher learning can somehow describe the qualities they considered important to be developed and nurtured for the students to become future leaders and professionals.

The institutional core values on this study were divided into two categories: personal and social values based on how these values can directly influence their personality, attitude and character. Personal values are important component of individuality which describes their identity through observation from behavior towards self. Meanwhile, social values are being observed from their behavior towards other people within their communities or circle of friends and colleagues. Identifying and measuring the importance of social values is only the first task in using the power of social values [8]. Only when social values are completely imbedded in the decision-making process, and maintain equal stature with other values, will decisions be informed and the citizens realize the true value of wilderness [9]. The judgements of right and wrong about social relationships are 'social values'. Social values are evinced in the form of 'social norms', which are behavior guides popular in the society, and which lie deep within the people's consciousness [10].

Gender role is a broad concept and is defined as a set of behaviors, attitudes, and personality characteristics in a particular culture [11] based on which many of the responsibilities and duties of the family are defined [12]. Gender-role development is of importance in many areas of research and application in the family, school, and community [13]. Human differentiation on the basis of gender is a fundamental phenomenon that affects virtually every aspect of

people's daily lives [14]. Gender gaps need to be addressed to promote broad-based progress [15]. Gender equality promotes similar opportunity for men and women to participate in and contribute to the economic activity and growth of the country. It seeks to develop a social environment like academic institutions which are free from any form of discrimination.

Assessing how difference exists on expressing their needs to develop such core values between male and female students may contribute to the existing body of knowledge on gender studies in terms of what the students from specific setting still wanted to acquire and learn from their respective institutions aside from knowledge and technical skills. Several studies examined gender differences that emphasized values in relation to people's way of life which may somehow influence their duties and responsibilities towards achieving personal, social and professional growth. Beeny et al. [16] examined the approaches and expectations about personal and professional balance among senior student affairs officers. Adams and Funk [17] studied gender differences on the core values and risk attitudes of top executives. An empirical study then tested the effect of ethics training on moral awareness and reasoning between male and female students [18]. Previous work suggests women might possess an advantage over men in experiencing and benefiting from gratitude where Kashdan et al. [19] examined whether women perceive and react to gratitude differently than men. People are motivated to learn based on their needs and how they perceived the importance of this development to answer their current situation and future career. The study would like to assume that they do not differ significantly on how they look at these core values based on their capacity as men and women in the society. If they have a sense of balance and feel that they have acquired equally these core values from their social environment within the academic community, they might have a similar thoughts and ideas on how they look at life. Giving equal importance to these core values as guiding principle in making decisions and responding to the demands of industry creates a notable learning experience for the students. Because students have different levels of understanding and interpretation on the importance of institutional core values to their identity and how they could imbibe these values as part of their culture and practices. The equal opportunity being given to male and female students in higher education institution is one way of practicing gender

equality to develop their full potentials. This study aimed to determine the common institutional core values of higher education institutions in one region in the Philippines. Specifically, it determined the gender differences on the need to develop students' personal and social values from identified common institutional core values. Thus, this study on the gender difference among college students was conducted to shed light on how they express their needs to develop the commonly identified institutional core values. The findings will bring insights to educational leaders on how to formulate and design the content of their student development programs in such a way that they can directly respond to the needs of their students.

METHODS

Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative descriptive type of research using content analysis from institutional websites in gathering the core values of HEIs. These common values among institutions were used as items for survey questionnaire in identifying the needs of the students to improve more of these common values in response to the demands of future employment. Quantitative descriptive type of research is considered appropriate for this study to answer specific objectives in terms of the number of values does an institution have and how do the respondents feel the need for these values to be improved. Describing the present condition of the students and testing the hypothesis on difference makes the quantitative descriptive type appropriate to this study.

Participants

There are 66 HEIs in the region with identified core values available from their websites. Most of them have identified a separate set of core values while some of them have integrated these values in their mission statements. HEIs without available core values on the internet were not included as part of the study. The study is composed of 141 males or 45.7 percent of the student-respondents while 167 females or 54.3 percent. These 308 students were selected from 66 HEIs based on the availability of the name of their school in their social media account. Only students 18 years old and above were considered in the study. The target sample for this study is 385 if the total population is unknown based on the Raosoft sample size calculator with 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level.

Instrument

A short survey questionnaire was used as instrument for this study from the common institutional core values from the 66 HEIs were included. It was pilot tested to 30 students from one institution whose respondents were not included in the actual participants of the study. Test-retest approach of instrument validation was utilized in the questionnaire. The instrument was first administered to the students during the first week of February 2020 and after a week; the same questionnaire was administered to the same set of students. The result of first and second test was correlated to see the consistency of responses of the students using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient which obtained r-value of 0.828 that signifies high correlation.

Procedure

The validated instrument was administered through social media accounts of the respondents. They were invited to participate in the survey with informed consent. They were also ensured of the anonymity of their identity as one of the respondents of the study. No other personal profile of the respondents was recorded except for their sex. The whole month of March 2020 was devoted in the data gathering with more than 385 participants were invited to join in the survey but only 308 or 80 percent response rate was achieved. Due to the online limitation of data gathering and adherence to some ethical considerations and protocols in using human subjects, the number of respondents has been limited to participants who have signified their agreement to become part of the survey.

Data Analysis

The summative content analysis was utilized in the core values which involved counting and comparisons, usually of keywords or content, followed by the interpretation of the underlying context. The study utilized frequency count and percentage to present the core values different HEIs while the weighted mean score was utilized to analyze the result of the survey on the level of development needs on the identified institutional core values. Independent sample t-test was utilized to determine if there is significant difference on the needs of students when they are grouped according to sex. The given scale was used to interpret the result of the data gathered: 3.50-4.00: Very High; 2.50-3.49: High; 1.50-2.49: Low; 1.00-1.49: Very Low.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
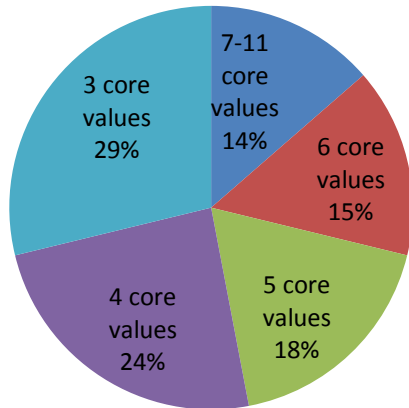
Figure 1. Number of Core Values of HEIs in the Region

Figure 1 illustrates the number of Core Values of HEIs in the region. Result showed that there are 19 or 28.8 percent of the HEIs in the region have identified at least three (3) core values while 16 or 24.2 percent of them have four (4) and 12 or 18.2 percent of them have five (5). There are also 10 or 15.2 of the HEIs in the region have six core values while the rest of the HEIs have 7 to 11 number of core values (9 or 13.6%). The HEIs in the region have an average set of core values of 4 to 5. The Cult Branding Company (2014) argues that, while the number of core values differs for each organization, the range seems to be between five (5) and ten (10). This signifies that most HEIs in the region have limit their core values to specific values they wanted to demonstrate by the students that will make them unique as part of their identity or branding.

Table 1 presents the list of the common Core Values of the HEIs in the region. The core values were grouped into two categories: personal values and social values. The concept of core values in this study was conceptualized on how these values are being utilized to describe the identity or characteristics of the students and graduates. There are certain values which can be useful to describe the personal and social growth within the small and larger communities. Panchyshyn and Hrynkevych [20] have mentioned the assimilation and increase for the purposes of personal and social development has been offered on the basis of competence, process and institutional approaches to the analysis of the essential characteristics of higher education as a system of informal and formal

institutions that provide an insight in the key role of knowledge in self-improvement.

Table 1. List of the Common Core Values of the HEIs in the Region

Common Institutional Core Values	f	%
Social		
Service	28	42.4
Compassion	19	28.8
Leadership	13	19.7
Unity	11	16.7
Responsibility	9	13.6
Respect	8	12.1
Personal		
Excellence	23	34.8
Integrity	20	30.3
God-centeredness	14	21.2
Commitment	9	13.6
Truth	9	13.6
Competence	8	12.1
Faith	7	10.6

One Chinese author mentioned that pursuing the truth and advocating reason is not only the common core value of all the famous higher education in the world, but also the core element or the original element of the spirit of higher education [21]. Based on the finding of the present study, truthfulness as a core value is part of the personal development. Truthfulness is one of the universally acceptable values [22]. Values of honesty are rooted in concepts of truthfulness based on direct and open communications that are crucial to sharing information and maintaining a well-functioning core by the members of the organization [23].

Leadership and ethical decision making are essential for growth of the person and the organization. Leadership development is an important component of education for all segments of the faculty, students, and staff. Succession planning is required to continuously promote excellence [1]. Meanwhile, findings of Oh, Cho and Lim's [24] study revealed a direct and significant influence of authentic leadership on practicing core values.

There are several core values among HEIs in the region that can be categorized as personal values based on the result of the analysis. This include excellence (34.8%), integrity (30.3%) and God-centeredness (21.2%) which are considered the top three (3) most common core values related to personal development. Excellence has been part of institutional core values of most HEIs because it defines holistically the characteristic of being academic organization. It also

demonstrates the journey of the institution towards attaining quality and strengthening its capacity for future growth. It builds an image that shows the power and ability to achieve added value and competitive advantage.

Values express the integrity that individuals and organizations believe in. They serve as a decision-making tool in daily interactions that guide behaviour [1]. From the study of Niemeier [25], the core values of community and integrity were rated by the students as the most important values in the study. The Christian core values showed a general increase among almost all of the students from the freshmen to the senior year. The core values concerning diversity and cultural enrichment programs were rated as the least important values in the study of Niemeier [25]. Aligan [26] believed that one should take a look at how Filipino Christian faith values can strengthen the good in the people's cultural values or correct what is excessive in them and supply their deficiencies.

Furthermore, the top three (3) most common core values related to social development include service (42.4%), compassion (28.8) and leadership (19.7%). Ardashkin [27] noted that social development is more clearly shaped when the process of education is given an appropriate philosophy, which means the presence of a sense-making and goal-setting strategy (paradigm, "religion") of the evolution of society. In social development, understanding the needs of the community through service as volunteers is one of the aspects of core values that most HEIs would like to develop among their students. The sympathy and compassion for the underprivileged and vulnerable members of the society is vital in developing the capacity of the students to extend their help and share whatever resources they have as part of their leadership training in community development. Rhodes and Brundrett [28] emphasized that academic institution has initiative to develop potentials for future leadership and afford teachers the opportunity to grow as school and community leaders. Teachers served as facilitators in guiding the students in enhancing the quality of life of the community members. It has always been part of the social responsibility of the academic institutions to maintain good relationship and working atmosphere with the underprivileged communities. Core values and core principles represent the organization's culture [1]. Social responsibility embeds into the core values and functions of universities' practices at every level [29].

Gaining values effects learner's social development process which comprise of psycho-social development, social skills and social problem-solving skills [30]. Cottrell [31] emphasized in one study the importance of core values which the organizations have established for themselves and all their relationship partners to demonstrate good leadership and support, good planning and hard work to maintain partnership. Furthermore, according to Harris [32], organizations that have cultivated a climate of trust based on a commitment to core values are better positioned for collective success and advancement, as opposed to those where valuable time, energy, and resources are devoted to combating and resolving divisive issues.
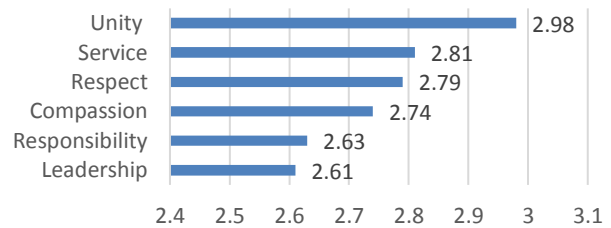

Figure 1. Institutional Core Values in terms of Social Aspect for Development

Academic institutions always wanted their students to excel in whatever undertaking they would like to pursue in life. Excellence has been part of every academic institution's mantra in exploring all possibilities that would develop the potentials of the students in exerting their efforts to stand out in surpassing all academic challenges. The quest for excellence is a self-motivated desire of an individual to become authority in a given area, subject or discipline [1],[33], [34].

On the other hand, HEIs are maintaining such quality to demonstrate excellence in achieving different requirements for education to sustain their integrity and credibility as reputable organization. Al Shobaki et al. [35] believed that the development and implementation of strategies for excellence in education is a vital important prerequisite to achieve sustainable competitive advantage in higher educational institutions. A student demonstrates integrity on having the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles [1], [36]-[38].

Since Catholicism is the major religion of the Philippines, God-centeredness has always been part of the vision, mission and core values of most HEIs in the region. It seeks to develop the character of the students in demonstrating love and kindness for humanity through the teaching of the church from the Holy Bible.

One author noted that God-centeredness is needed to replace whatever man-centeredness exists within our thinking and it is a mindset whereby God is the center of the universe in our thinking rather than man [39]. The faith of the students is being strengthened in the academic community through providing curricular and co-curricular activities that promotes spirituality and religiosity in the objectives of the programs and motivates them to behave and act in relation to the ten (10) commandments. Having a strong faith is an important characteristic of Filipinos that makes them resilient in times of adversities. Some of the protective factors and strengths of Filipino survivors in disasters include spiritual coping, humor, and family support and another common protective factor cited was survivors' strong faith in God [40].

Figure 2. Institutional Core Values in terms of Personal Aspect for Development

The students expressed their thoughts about developing excellence as part of their personal values with the highest mean score of 3.14. Excellence is considered a personal core value in this study to give a sense of ownership for individual learners on how to become worthy of their achievements. From the study of James [41], it was noted that the term excellence is the most frequently used term to indicate self enhancement. Therefore, excellence as a personal value and at the same time as goal in life leads them to the accomplishment of their dreams and aspirations for themselves and family. Every step of their way will be guided by true essence of quality. They will never set for mediocrity. They will always aim for a higher goal along with the moral standards. Meanwhile, integrity leads to better understanding and appreciation of professionalism and ethical standards where they will serve as a guide towards doing what is right. As Tyreman [42] has noted that personal integrity is often seen as a core value for delivering ethical healthcare. Likewise, Kinias and Sim [43] have mentioned that

global self-integrity is comprised of many potential sources of self-worth, including both personal values and social identities. The personal value of commitment is embedded as important characteristic on how the students will deeply accept duties and responsibilities where they will become dedicated in delivering quality. Personal success of students is associated with the level of commitment they possessed to reach their goal.
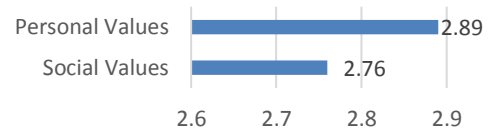

Figure 3. Development Needs of Students on Personal and Social Values

Figure 3 shows that students have higher development needs on personal values (2.89) than social values (2.76). Personal values are considered important building blocks that also describe the attitude and behavior of students and how they view the world on various perspectives that will affect their own quality of life while social values helped them refine the way they relate to people with different personalities and interact with different situations and certain conditions. Personality traits and personal values are important psychological characteristics, serving as important predictors of many outcomes [44]. Thus, HEIs are facilitating career development programs for the students to be guided in achieving their full potential in developing their personal and social values. These values cannot be acquired through training like knowledge and skills but strengthening their character is being done through practicing good habits and emphasizing these values in the curriculum and all co-curricular activities as they participate and engage themselves in the academic community with the same set of values and culture of excellence.

Table 2 shows the gender differences on development needs for institutional Core Values among college students. The college student-respondents acknowledged the need to develop more socially the value of unity (TWM=2.98) where no significant difference exists t(306)= .671, p=.503, between male (WM=3.02, SD=0.74) and female (WM=2.95, SD=.83) students for social development in terms of unity.

Table 2. Gender Differences on Development Needs for Institutional Core Values Among College Students

Institutional Core Values	Male	SD	Female	SD	t-test	p-value
Social						
Service	2.98	0.71	2.66	0.81	2.985**	.003
Compassion	2.97	0.76	2.55	0.82	3.808**	.000
Leadership	2.25	0.79	2.90	0.87	-5.627**	.000
Unity	3.02	0.74	2.95	0.83	.671	.503
Responsibility	2.44	0.83	2.78	0.88	-2.807**	.005
Respect	2.78	0.91	2.80	0.90	-.139	.890
Composite Mean	2.74	0.26	2.77	0.35	-.759	.448
Personal						
Excellence	3.21	0.80	3.10	0.79	.831	.407
Integrity	3.19	0.73	3.01	0.85	1.624	.106
God-centeredness	3.18	0.80	2.56	0.77	5.794**	.000
Commitment	3.02	0.76	2.74	0.74	2.664**	.008
Truthfulness	2.91	0.89	2.68	0.84	1.868	.063
Competence	2.81	0.84	2.60	0.83	1.796	.074
Faith	2.84	0.85	2.81	0.87	.232	.816
Composite Mean	3.02	0.33	2.79	0.29	5.416**	.000

**Significant at p<0.01

In terms of the value of respect (*TWM*=2.79), no significant difference exists $t(306)$= -.139, p=.890 between males and females. Male and female students have closer mean scores for the values of unity and respect.

They have almost similar thoughts and feelings on how to improve these core values in maintaining cooperation [45] and collaboration towards the realization of working in a multidisciplinary environment [46]-[48] with utmost respect for persons in all levels or status in the society. They really value the unity of thoughts, as well as respecting the ideas and opinions of people in order to secure a peaceful workplace as they are still being trained and taught in schools. The kind of learning activities in schools is an important element in the development of social values [49], [50] of students not only focusing on knowledge and technical skills.

Meanwhile, significant difference exists $t(306)$= 2.985, p=.003, between males (*WM*=2.98, *SD*=.71) and females (*WM*=2.66, *SD*=.81) on the needs to develop the value of service (*TWM*=2.81) where male students have significantly higher identified need compared to females with the same result for compassion (2.74). However, significant difference exists for the value of leadership, $t(306)$= -5.627, p<.001, and responsibility, $t(306)$= -2.807, p=.005,where female students have significantly higher identified development needs compared to males. The present finding is in consonant with the study of Ritter [18] who found out that women showed significantly improved moral awareness and

decision-making processes than men. Women assigned greater value priorities to the collectivistic values of benevolence, universalism, security, and subordination of self to others; and they placed greater importance on achievement than men did. Women and men, however, did not differ on the individualistic values [51]. An important question for understanding the effect of increased female participation in corporate leadership is whether such differences in behavior are due to fundamental differences between men and women or due to the fact that women are in the minority [17]. It is therefore not surprising that organizational demand, a dimension that supports objectivity is relatively more important for men while personal qualities which supports practicality are more important for women when leadership excellence is judged [52]. Meanwhile, the results of the study of Kashdan et al. [19] demonstrated that men were less likely to feel and express gratitude, made more critical evaluations of gratitude, and derived fewer benefits where women endorsed higher trait gratitude compared with men.

The students acknowledged their need to improve more of their values on Excellence (*TWM*=3.14), integrity (*TWM*=3.09) and commitment (*TWM*=2.87) as the top three (3) values for personal development. Meanwhile, Male students have identified their needs to develop more on the values of God-centeredness, t (260) =5.794, p<.001) and commitment, $t(260)$=2.664, p=.008 as significantly higher compared to female students. On the other hand, no significant difference exists on the values of excellence, $t(306)$=.831, p=.407;

integrity, *t(306)*=1.624, *p*=.106; truth, *t(306)*=1.868, *p*=.063; competence, *t(306)*=1.796, *p*=.074; and faith, *t(306)*=.232, *p*=.816. When taken as a whole, male students have significantly higher personal development needs on these institutional core values, *t(306)*=5.416, *p*<.001 than females.

Findings of the study of Block et al. [53] suggest that gender differences in core values emerge surprisingly early in development and predict children's expectations well before they make decisions about adopting adult roles in their own families. These students will become future professionals and they can adopt these values sooner or later on their career. That is why, the study of Adams and Funk [17] found out that female directors are more benevolent and universally concerned, but less power-oriented than men. However, they are less traditional and security-oriented than their male counterparts. Furthermore, female directors are slightly more risk-loving than male directors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Results revealed that the average number of institutional core values of higher education institutions in the region is within 4 to 5 with categories between social and personal aspects. The most common institutional core values of the HEIs for social aspect include Service, Compassion, Leadership, Unity, Responsibility, and Respect while for personal aspect includes Excellence, Integrity, God-centeredness, Commitment, Truth, Competence, and Faith. When the students were asked on how they feel about the need for development of these social and personal values, they answered that the social values in terms of unity, service, and respect are the top 3 institutional core values they needed to develop further while Excellence, Integrity, and Commitment for personal values. Male students have identified service and compassion with significantly higher needs for further improvement while leadership and responsibility for female respondents in terms of social development. Male respondents have also identified God-Centeredness and commitment with significantly higher needs for further personal development.

It is therefore recommended that males will be given curricular or extracurricular activities with greater emphasis on developing the value of service and compassion while the value of leadership and responsibility for females. Meanwhile, providing career development programs in nurturing the value of respect and unity are common between genders in terms of social aspect. Furthermore, since Male students have expressed higher needs on developing the value of God-centeredness and commitment, thus, school activities may focus on these values as part of the development program for males in terms of personal aspect. They must understand, appreciate and internalize the importance of personal and social values as they apply them in daily activities at home and in school. Aithal [1] recommended that the higher education institutions must become an experimental studio to test new ideas, free from constraints imposed by rigid organizational structures and encourage innovation that leads to excellence. HEIs may provide activities involving males and females but the program developers of school activities must also understand the specific needs of the students. So that they can appreciate in one way or another the school activities as important part of their growth as a person and future professional based on the institutional core values. The important role that they will play in the society must promote gender equality as they both contribute to the economic growth of the country. They should also both benefit from the co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, thus ensuring inclusiveness of school development programs without any student leaving behind. The appropriateness of the school programs to the holistic development of the students must always be considered in the planning stage and ensure the activity can be participated across gender and disciplines.

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