

**CHALLENGING THE GENDER INEQUITY IN COLLEGIATE SPORTS AT
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION (HEIs) IN ZAMBALES, PHILIPPINES**

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Abstract

Increased and improved athletic opportunities for students may encourage young females to develop their skills and further their interests which are important to success across different settings for both genders and will bring about gender equity in this field. The study investigated gender-based issue on equity on women athletes of Higher Education Institution (HEIs) in the province of Zambales, Philippines during the academic year 2017-2018. The researchers employed quantitative research design and survey checklist as the main instrument in data gathering. It was revealed that the often observed problems by the female athlete-respondents on gender equity in sport in Higher Education Institution (HEIs) were the absence of parental support (as compared to males) and the existence of traditionally held beliefs and label on women in sports. The community awareness on sports and promotion of sport in local areas and primary level are perceived to highly contribute to the advancement of women in collegiate sports. To help bring about gender equity in collegiate sports, it was revealed that the respondents strongly favored having regular training and counseling to help them deal with performance-related issues and existing gender biases and stereotypes. The analysis of variance result revealed a no significant difference regarding the observed perceptions on gender equity in sport, on the suggestions for the improvement of women in collegiate sports and on the strategies to assure gender equity in collegiate sport when attributed to female student-athletes' age and year level. To provide more useful insights to athletic heads/administrators on inequity and gender stereotypes while monitoring their athletic programs and implement strategies for change was highly suggested.

Keywords: Gender Inequity, Gender-Stereotypes, Collegiate Sports, Women Athletes, Higher

I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognized sports and physical activity as a human right in 1978. The endeavor of developing

sports program in the country is rationalized by the mandate of the Philippine Constitution under Article XIV, Sec. 19. Accordingly, the State shall promote physical education and encourage sports program, league competitions and amateur sports, including training for international competitions, to poster self-discipline, teamwork and excellence for the development of a healthy and alert citizenry. Higher Education Institutions in the Philippines, particularly in Zambales uphold and support this provision.

Irina Bokova, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), said in a message marking the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace that “Sport is a passion shared by women and men across the world. It is a force for physical well-being and social empowerment. It is an engine for equality, especially gender equality, for including everyone, especially the most disadvantaged”. This is consistent with the United Nations millennium goals which according to Wamaitha (2007) aims at promoting gender equality and empowering women through sport. Feminist theorists have believed that females can empower themselves through participation in sports by developing the confidence and self-esteem necessary to succeed in daily interactions and activities (Whitson, 1994 as cited in White, 2012). Empowerment is evident if women and girls are fully able to participate in a society and have the equal opportunity. However, according to Wamaitha (2007), although progress has been made through education and enactment to achieve the goals and benefits for athletic participation, there are still many stereotypes, prejudices, and discriminatory practices in existence that prohibit female participants from reaching those ideal goals. Withycombe (2011) stated that, as women and girls continue to participate in sports and physical activities, the issues and trends of gender equity and discrimination also surface to the scene. Women 2000 and Beyond (2007) revealed that women are frequently segregated involuntarily into different types of sports, events and competitions specifically targeted to women.

Sport is one area where gender inequality is strongly evident. Shakti (2005) revealed at the start of a new millennium it is deplorable that men and women are treated differently, especially in sport. Men have an upper hand in all spheres of life like sports. Although women are equal to men under the law, they are not equal in the world of sports. According to Staurowsky, et al. (2009), males have typically been celebrated for their athletic achievements and females have been dissuaded from playing sports.

According to UN Sustainable Goals and Development (2017) gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and

sustainable world. Rayburn, Chen & Phillips (2015) claimed that women demanding gender equity from their male counterparts in sports has been a controversial social challenge in the latter half of 20th century. Due to gender inequity, women are often faced with stereotypes that are imposed on them by the society. Rayburn, Chen & Phillips (2015) stressed that female athletes often have to prove themselves on the court to overcome barriers, stereotypes and notions about their physical appearance and athleticism. The stereotypes related to female athletes' performance on the court were probably the most detrimental factors that hurt female athletes' dignity.

Women can do almost anything that men can do, but the way they are viewed within the athletics world does not match their actual abilities. Unfortunately, this way of thinking about gender and sports still exists. Many people continue to compare women and men in terms of performance differences and then go on to say that differences will never disappear because men are simply physically superior to women. Gender and sport are one of the most important issues in terms of gender inequality. In no other area is the inequity as large as in sport.

Gender inequality is a deep-rooted issue and in order to change the situation, drastic steps/measures need to be taken. This study surveyed the viewpoints of female collegiate student-athletes on the common gender inequities in sport and toward those highlighted indicators towards improvement of women participation in sport and how to bring about gender equity in collegiate sport. It is important to understand that gender equity and equality in sports is a complex issue. On the other hand, the results of this study would provide school policy makers and athletic department of HEIs in Zambales with data and information they can use to encourage and promote more female participation in athletic programs and to bring about gender equity in this field of sports in order to achieve the millennium goal on promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women. The study would be a way for the athletes to break off inaccurate stereotypes and prejudices; focus on building their skills, confidence and self-esteem and empower them to freely express ideas. Foremost, it would also allow change on prevailing beliefs about females and their interest level in sports.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study investigated gender-based issue on equity on women athletes of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the province of Zambales, Philippines. Specifically, the research determined the profile of the athlete-respondents in terms of age, year level and sports participated; the extent in which the problems in gender equity in sports are observed

in HEIs in Zambales; described the suggestions for the improvement of women participation in sport in HEIs; determined the strategies to bring about gender equity in collegiate sport in HEIs; and tested the difference on the perceived problems in gender equity in sports in HEIs, on the perceived suggestions for the improvement of women participation in sport in HEIs, and on the perceived strategies to bring about gender equity in collegiate sport in HEIs when grouped according to profile variables.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology of this research study was descriptive research. According to Driscoll (2011), the major purpose of descriptive research is explanation and narration of the state of affairs as it exists at present. Based on the availability of files, the research is simply applied with this process of gathering information in a more purposive analysis. In this study, problems of gender equity in sport, suggestions for the improvements in women in collegiate sports and strategies to bring about gender equity in collegiate sport were examined and determined. Researchers presented and established empirical results that meets the objectives of the research undertaking. This research provided essential knowledge on the variables being investigated. The study was conducted at Higher Education Institution (HEIs) in Zambales, Philippines. These institutions include state university, private colleges and colleges run by local government. The respondents included all female athletes from the HEIs in Zambales with a total population of sixty-seven (67).

This research study used a survey checklist to measure the abovementioned issues and problems. The researchers conducted reviews of related studies mainly on the works of Shakti (2005) on Gender Issues in Sport and by Rayburn, Chen & Philipps (2015), Perceptions on Gender Stereotypes and Discrimination in Collegiate Athletics in identifying the appropriate indicators of the survey checklist. The survey checklist contains a total of 39 key items/indicators. First part traced the demographic profile of the respondents (age, year level and sports, participated/competed). Second part with 15 items, assessed the problems of gender equity in sport. Respondents were asked to answer from the scale of 5 (always) to 1 (never). Third part with 14 items, determined the suggestions for the improvements in women in collegiate sports. The respondents were asked to answer from a scale of 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). The last part appraised the strategies to bring about gender equity in collegiate sport with 10 items, each with 5 point-scale of 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree).

A set of experts in area of gender and development and sports from the Ramon Magsaysay Technological University (RMTU), Zambales reviewed and checked the indicators/items of the research instrument for clarity and directedness to minimize the occurrences of misinterpretations. The validity of the research instrument could be affected if participants misjudged and misunderstood the items/indicators. A pilot test was conducted, to ensure the reliability of the research instrument. A pilot test also examined whether all the respondents understand the research objectives and its significance.

The approval of the distribution of the survey checklist was secured from the school heads of all colleges and university in Zambales, Philippines. The administration of the instrument was conducted on August 2017 and the retrieval was done three days after. The responses from the instrument were tallied and tabulated in a data matrix using excel spreadsheet in preparation for the statistics. Descriptive statistical techniques were employed to determine the frequency counts, simple percentage and mean. Analysis of variance was computed to test the research hypotheses.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Frequency, Percentage and Mean Distribution of the Women Collegiate Athletes- Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
17 - 18	16	23.88
19 - 20	30	44.78
21 above	21	31.34
Total	67	100.00
Mean	19.65 or 20 years old	
Year Level in College	Frequency	Percent
First Year	6	8.96
Second Year	4	5.97
Third Year	34	50.75
Fourth Year	23	34.33
Total	67	100.00
Sports Participated	Frequency	Percent
Basketball	7	10.45%
Volleyball	11	16.42%
Softball	9	13.43%
Taekwondo	4	5.97%
Badminton	7	10.45%
Lawn Tennis	8	11.94%
Table Tennis	7	10.45%
Chess	4	5.97%
Swimming	4	5.97%
Athletics	6	8.95%
Total	67	100.00

For the result on the age profile variable, almost half (30 or 44.78%) belong to the age group of 19-20 years followed by 16 or 23.88% who belong to the age group of 17-18 years; and 21 or 31.34% whose age group is 21 years and above. The computed mean age was 19.65 or 20 years old. This result signifies that the female collegiate athletes are in their early adulthood.

The respondents' year level in College was also determined. Table 1 reveals that half (34 or 50.75%) of collegiate athletes are third year college followed by athletes from fourth year. As for the result on the sports the respondents participated/competed with, 11 or 16.42% are into volleyball; followed by 9 or 13.43%, softball; 8 or 11.94% in lawn tennis and 7 or 10.45% in basketball, badminton and table tennis respectively. The sports that the athletes' least participated were taekwondo, chess and swimming (4 or 5.97%) respectively

Table 3 shows the observed problems by the female athlete – respondents on gender equity in sport in Higher Education Institution (HEIs).

Table 3. Observed Problems on Gender Equity in Sport

Indicators	WM	DE	Rank
1. Lack of parental support (as compared to males)	3.61	O	1
2. Lack of coaches' support (as compared to males)	3.49	O	5
3. Sponsorship problems	3.46	O	6
4. Old fashioned customs, practices, tradition	3.61	O	1
5. Low social status and Poverty	3.13	SO	15
6. Domestic issues (e.g., marriage)	3.42	O	8
7. Social obligation	3.45	O	7
8. Lack of attention and encouragement	3.51	O	4
9. Backward thinking	3.40	O	10
10. Potential is not realized	3.25	SO	14
11. Studies get neglected	3.42	O	8
12. Adjustment problem in team	3.52	O	3
13. Faulty selection procedure	3.40	O	10
14. Teasing and mocking	3.28	SO	13
15. Diet and body weight issues	3.40	O	10
Overall Weighted Mean	3.42	Often (O)	

In terms of problems on gender equity in sport, the female athlete-respondents often observed indicator 1, "Lack of parental support (as compared to males)" and indicator 4, "Old fashioned customs, practices, tradition" (WM=3.61, ranked 1st respectively). The respondents perceived that they are not well supported by their parents which makes it difficult for them to do well in sports. Own cultural orientations, practices and stereotyped beliefs on women in

sports and issues and concerns (personal adjustment, emotional and social) were also found to affect and contribute to inequity in collegiate sports. The result of the study of Boyle (2005) revealed that males have been socialized differently from females. Relationship, support and encouragement from the family was considered by athletes as probable constraints to sports participation at school (Ganaden, Barrientos & Anaud, 2017). Wamaitha (2007) showed that traditional beliefs that women cannot lead was a social factor influencing women participation in sports.

Indicator 12, "Adjustment problem in team" (WM=3.52, ranked 3rd) and indicator 8, "Lack of attention and encouragement" (WM=3.51, ranked 4th) were often observed by the respondents. Cases of inequality, discrimination and stereotypes on female athletes were documented. More than half of males and females surveyed by Gorely, et al. (2011) as part of the Institute of Youth and Sport's research indicated that males were given more encouragement with regard to sport participation and for Sabo & Veliz (2011) there were more opportunities for males to be successful in athletics than females.

Other often observed problems on gender equity include indicator 2, "Lack of coaches' support (as compared to males)" (WM=3.49, ranked 5th), indicator 3, "Sponsorship problems" (WM=3.46, ranked 6th), indicator 7, "Social obligation" (WM=3.45, ranked 7th), indicator 6, "Domestic issues (e.g., marriage)" and indicator 11, "Studies get neglected" (WM=3.42, ranked 8th respectively), indicator 9, "Backward thinking" and indicator 13, "Faulty selection procedure" and indicator 15, "Diet and body weight issues" (WM=3.40, ranked 10th respectively). The female athlete-respondents considered that coaches' behavior, institutional support (e.g., sponsorship, selection procedure, etc.) irregular attendance to classes were frequently observed issues and concerns by the respondent that also impact gender equity in collegiate sports. Moreover, social and domestic/personal issues (marriage, diet and body weight) were also found to be often seen problem in gender equity in collegiate sports. Females tend to discontinue athletic participation more often than males and barriers to athletic opportunities still exist for females making it more difficult for them to participate in athletic activities (National Coalition for Women and Girls' Education, 2007). In the study of Wamaitha (2007) gender biases in the selection of athletes and sports officials was found. Moreover, women lack support from the school board and lack of policies that support women in sports. Deshpande (2016) proposed a climate in which sports and fitness are for everyone and in which everyone's abilities are tested and respected.

Sometimes observed issues and concerns on gender inequity in sports were indicators Indicators 14, “Teasing and mocking” (WM=3.28, ranked 13th), indicator 10, “Potential is not realized” (WM=3.25, ranked 14th) and indicator 5, “Low social status and Poverty” (WM=3.13, ranked 15th). The experienced teasing and mocking by others within their group/team or probably with male athletes, the perceived unrealized potentials and economic deprivation were sometimes observed by the female athlete respondents that can impact needed equity in collegiate sports. Wamaitha (2007) argued that perceived status of women such as being weaker sex and their roles in the society are to care for the family are barriers that women face.

The computed overall weighted mean of problems on gender equity in sport was 4.33 with a descriptive equivalent of Often. The respondents often encountered and observed different issues, concerns, factors and difficulties that affects the attainment of gender equity in collegiate sports in HEIs.

Table 4 shows the suggestions for the improvement of women in collegiate sports in Higher Education Institution (HEIs).

Table 4. Suggestions for the Improvement of Women in Collegiate Sports

Indicators	WM	DE	Rank
1. Encouragement by senior player	4.33	SA	7
2. Importance of fitness should be made clear	4.33	SA	7
3. Better facilities, equipment and new techniques	4.13	A	13
4. Right environment, safety and security	4.31	SA	9
5. Build psychological and physical strength	4.06	A	14
6. Promotion of sport in local areas and primary level	4.54	SA	2
7. Enough female manager and coaches	4.24	SA	11
8. Attitude and perception change on women in sports	4.45	SA	3
9. Provision of monetary support and scholarships	4.39	SA	6
10. Provision of awards and reward incentives	4.42	SA	4
11. Advantages of sport career and job opportunities	4.42	SA	4
12. Selection/recruitment by sports committees	4.15	A	12
13. Community awareness and mobilization on sports	4.64	SA	1
14. Better sport management, supervision and guidance	4.28	SA	10
Overall Weighted Mean	4.33	Strongly Agree (SA)	

Results from Table 4 reveal that the female athlete-respondents strongly agreed on indicator 13, “Community awareness and mobilization on sports” (WM=4.64, ranked 1st) and items 6, “Promotion of sport in local areas and primary level” (WM=4.54, ranked 2nd), that can highly contribute to the improvement of women in collegiate sports in Higher Education Institution (HEIs). The female athlete-respondents strongly suggest that awareness and mobilization of the community regarding sports and advancement of sport in local areas and primary level are activities which should be conducted to help bring about improvement of women in collegiate sports. This implies that community involvement in sports should be initiated, promoted and supported aimed towards understanding of the positive effect of it on one’s health and well-being and one’s attitude on sports. According to Shakti (2005) increased responsiveness, promotion and participation in sports could be done by having sport activities as early as primary level, sponsorship to women sport by private sector industries and making parents aware of the benefits and facilities available for a girl player.

Other indicators that were also strongly agreed to bring improvement of women in collegiate sports were 8, “Attitude and perception change on women in sports” (WM=4.45, ranked 3rd), 10, “Provision of awards and reward incentives” and 11, “Advantages of sport career and job opportunities” (WM=4.42, ranked 4th respectively) and Items 9, “Provision of monetary support and scholarships” (WM=4.39, ranked 6th). The respondents also highly considered that to advance and improve women in collegiate sports; a shift of attitude and perception on women in sports should be worked out; have a concrete awards and incentives system; and be given the advantage to advance on sport career. The discussion implies that there are ways how individuals are to be encouraged and motivated to pursue goals/targets. For the respondents of the present study, improved attitudes towards women in sports, recognitions and incentives and opportunities in sports career were highly preferred to advance status of women in collegiate sports. Women athletes in the study of Shakti (2005) wanted equal opportunities to play and to be treated at par with men. Rayburn, Chen & Phillips (2015) stressed that recognition be given to the male and female team or individual sports. Chawansky (2005) argued that helping athletes with developing leadership skills can result to active participation in sports. On the other hand, Shakti (2005) claimed that good medical support and related health advice have to be advanced to have equity in sports.

Item 1, “Encouragement by senior player” and 2, “Importance of fitness should be made clear” (WM=4.33, ranked 7th respectively) and item 4, “Right environment, safety and security” (WM=4.31, ranked 8th respectively) were also highly sought by the respondents that

can help improve the status of women in collegiate sports. Results signify that addressing the needs for complete satisfaction of athletes by the institution’s sports/athletics department and by their team members will improve status of women in sports. On the other hand, building of psychological and physical strength (indicator 5, WM=4.06, ranked 14th) was the least perceive indicator that can improve women standing in collegiate sports. The computed overall weighted mean for suggestions for the improvement of women in collegiate sports was 4.33 with a descriptive equivalent of Strongly Agree. The respondents strongly agreed on the presented indicators to improve women in collegiate sports in HEIs.

Table 5 shows the perceived strategies to bring about gender equity in collegiate sports in Higher Education Institution (HEIs).

Table 5. Perceived Strategies to Bring about Gender Equity in Collegiate Sport

Indicators	WM	DE	Rank
1. Become an advocate for women athletes and women coaches and administrators	4.63	SA	2
2. Lead and educate others about the history of discrimination in sports	4.51	SA	5
3. A regular training and counseling should be provided to female athletes	4.67	SA	1
4. Create a supportive climate for women in collegiate sports	4.37	SA	7
5. Female athletes should be provided with opportunity to play in more competitions.	4.45	SA	6
6. Special training to coaches, referees and trainees on the problems of women players/athletes	4.54	SA	3
7. Encourage female athletes to speak out against gender inequity.	4.54	SA	3
8. Insist on fair and open recruitment practices in collegiate sports	4.27	SA	9
9. Establish policies to eliminate sexual harassment	4.27	SA	9
10. Object/react to any policies that would decrease women’s sport participation or opportunities for women.	4.28	SA	8
Overall Weighted Mean	4.45	Strongly Agree (SA)	

Results from Table 5 reveal that the female athlete-respondents strongly agreed on indicator 3, “A regular training and counseling should be provided to female athletes” (WM=4.67, ranked 1st) that can highly contribute to gender equity in collegiate sport in HEIs. Training in regular basis in respective sport was highly approved by the respondents as strategy that can bring gender equity in collegiate sports. These trainings will make them more competitive, enhance their confidence and contribute to an improved performance.

Wrisberg, et al. (2011) revealed that the athletic coaches and administrators can implement informative workshops and counseling support to help student-athletes develop proper perspective to fight against prejudices and stereotypes.

Other indicators that were also strongly agreed to bring about equity in collegiate sports were items 1, “Become an advocate for women athletes and women coaches and administrators” (WM=4.63, ranked 2nd), 6, “Special training to coaches, referees and trainees on the problems of women players/athletes” and 7, “Encourage female athletes to speak out against gender inequity” (WM=4.54, ranked 3rd respectively). The respondents also believe that to bring about equity in collegiate sports, they and the institution should consistently support and advocate women in sports, women coaches and administrators; promote special training to coaches, referees and trainers focused on addressing the problems of women players/athletes; and encourage other female athletes to be vocal against gender inequity. Fisher, et al. (2010) stressed that female athletes’ free will and empowerment are vital. Rayburn, Chen & Phillips (2015) argued that institutions of higher education have the responsibility to educate every student the essence of gender equality. On the other hand, Deshpande (2016) stressed that challenging the myths and speaking out against gender inequity were the strategies for change on women athletes.

Items 2, “Lead and educate others about the history of discrimination in sports” (WM=4.51, ranked 5th), 4, “Create a supportive climate for women in collegiate sports” (WM=4.45, ranked 6th), and 5, “Female athletes should be provided with opportunity to play in more competitions” (WM=4.37, ranked 7th) were also perceived by the respondents as strongly approved indicators to help bring equity in collegiate sports. The respondents also highly considered that others should be made aware on the history of discrimination in sports and learn the lessons from these insights; have a supportive climate for women in collegiate sports; and preferred that they will be given more opportunity to play in more sports competitions and tournaments. Based from the discussion, to have equity in collegiate sports, the respondents are very particular on eliminating discrimination of women in sports, value supportive environment in sports and enough opportunities to play and compete in their respective sports. Wrisberg, et al. (2011) has the obligation to educate female student-athletes about the existing gender biases and stereotypes. Rayburn, Chen & Phillips (2015) female athletes should be given the training and counseling to empower them face and break gender inequality and stereotypes. Windover (2014) revealed that it is the responsibility of each

institution to ensure that student-athletes enjoy the same intercollegiate athletic experience, free from discrimination.

Items 10, “Object/react to any policies that would decrease women’s sport participation or opportunities for women” (WM=4.28, ranked 8th), 8, “Insist on fair and open recruitment practices in collegiate sports” and 9 “Establish policies to eliminate sexual harassment” (WM=4.27, ranked 9th respectively) also obtained a descriptive equivalent of strongly agree. The respondents considered that to bring fairness among female and male in collegiate sports, they also preferred that more sport involvement and prospects for women be prioritized and sustained, assert on fair and open recruitment practices of athletes; and policies on sexual harassment be established to protect female athlete. For Deshpande (2016), a push for gender equity policies and spread general awareness can help bring equity in sports.

The computed overall weighted mean for perceived strategies to bring about gender equity in collegiate sport was 4.45 with a descriptive equivalent of Strongly Agree. The respondents strongly agreed on the presented indicators to improve and maintain equity in collegiate sport in HEIs.

Table 6. Differences on the Observed Problems on Gender Equity in Sport when grouped according to Respondents’ Profile Variable

Source of Variations		df	F	Sig.	Decision/Interpretation
Age	Between Groups	2	0.09	0.92	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	64			
	Total	66			
Year Level	Between Groups	3	0.24	0.87	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	63			
	Total	66			

Table 6 shows that the significant values for age (0.92) and year level (0.87) were higher than (0.05) alpha level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference on the perceptions regarding observed problems on gender equity in sport when attributed to female student-athletes’ age and year level. The respondents who belong to different age groups and year levels in college manifest similarity of perceived problems on gender equity in collegiate sport. There exists no difference on observed problems, issues and concerns of the female student-athletes on gender equity in collegiate sport which focused on support and encouragement from parents, team and coaches; the system within the institution; academic-related problems; social status and obligations; traditional practices and beliefs; domestic and personal issues.

Table 7. Differences on the Suggestions for the Improvement of Women in Collegiate Sports when Grouped According to Respondents' Profile Variable

Source of Variations		df	F	Sig.	Decision/Interpretation
Age	Between Groups	2	3.02	0.06	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	64			
	Total	66			
Year Level	Between Groups	3	1.55	0.21	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	63			
	Total	66			

Table 7 shows that the significant values for age (0.06) and year level (0.21) were higher than (0.05) alpha level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference on the perceptions regarding suggestions for the improvement of women in collegiate sports when attributed to female student-athletes' age and year level. The respondents who belong to different age groups and year levels in college manifest similarity of proposed insights that can help improve women in collegiate sports. There exists no difference on the suggestions that could improve women in collegiate sports such as community awareness, promotion and mobilization on sports; having a system of recognition; better sport management and supervision; and better facilities, equipment and new techniques; and maintaining safe and secure environment for athletes.

Table 8. Differences on the Perceived Strategies to Bring About Gender Equity in Collegiate Sport when grouped according to Respondents' Profile Variable

Source of Variations		df	F	Sig.	Decision/Interpretation
Age	Between Groups	2	1.43	0.25	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	64			
	Total	66			
Year Level	Between Groups	3	0.10	0.96	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	63			
	Total	66			

Table 8 shows that the significant values for age (0.25) and year level (0.96) were higher than (0.05) alpha level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference on the perceptions regarding perceived strategies to bring about gender equity in collegiate sport when attributed to female student-athletes' age and year level. The respondents who belong to different age groups and year levels in college manifest similarity of perceived strategies to help build gender equity in collegiate sport. There exists no difference on the proposed strategies (plans, policies and approaches) that may contribute to gender equity in collegiate sport such as creation of environment and activities to advocate women in sports; more training opportunities and sports competitions to female athletes; orientation on non-discrimination of women in sports; and a privilege to express one's mind against gender inequity.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The female athlete-respondents who are in their early adulthood are third year college students and mostly play volleyball and softball. The often observed problems by the female athlete on gender equity in sport in Higher Education Institution (HEIs) were the absence of parental support (as compared to males) and the existence of traditionally held customs, practices, beliefs and label on women in sports. The community awareness and mobilization and promotion of sport in local areas and primary level, ways to encourage other women and girls in sports were strongly agreed indicators that can highly contribute to the improvement and advancement of women in collegiate sports. To help bring about gender equity in sports in HEIs, it was revealed that the respondents strongly favored having regular training and counseling to help them deal with performance-related issues and existing gender biases and stereotypes. The analysis of variance result revealed a no significant difference on the perceptions regarding observed problems on gender equity in sport, on the suggestions for the improvement of women in collegiate sports and on the strategies to bring about gender equity in collegiate sport when attributed to female student-athletes' age and year level.

The researchers in the present study intend to provide more useful insights to athletic administrators, to avoid and reduce further biases, discriminations and gender stereotypes while monitoring their athletic programs and implement strategies for change. It is suggested that the implementation of educational workshops and counseling on student-athletes should be towards developing proper perspective to fight against prejudices and stereotypes.

On the other hand, a follow-up study may be conducted on the impact of strategies implemented to improve status of women in sport and how to bring about gender equity in collegiate sport in HEIs in Zambales. Moreover, studies which focus on expanding sports opportunities for women and girls that will help achieve the feminization of power in all realms. An increased and equitable athletic opportunities for students at all levels of education may encourage young females to develop traits, skills and positive self-concepts that traditionally have been socially valued for males but are clearly important to success across environments for both genders.

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