

Awareness of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth (SDG 8) and Its Contribution on Students' Academic Success: A Correlational Study

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ABSTRACT

Awareness of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth (SDG 8) plays a crucial role in influencing students' academic success by shaping their attitudes, engagement, and understanding of sustainable economic growth principles. This study examined the relationship between students' awareness of SDG 8 and its contribution to their academic performance at Pilgrim Christian College. Specifically, it sought to determine how students' perceptions, engagement in SDG 8-related activities, and attitudes toward sustainable economic growth influenced their GPA, class participation, and overall academic success. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, utilizing Pearson's correlation and regression analysis to process data from 118 respondents across various academic programs. The results revealed that students' attitudes toward SDG 8 and its perceived relevance to their academic growth had a significant positive correlation with GPA ($r = 0.370$, $p = 0.002$) and academic engagement ($r = 0.427$, $p < 0.05$). However, awareness of SDG 8 principles and participation in related activities did not show a significant impact on academic success. These findings suggest that students' recognition of the relevance of SDG 8 to their personal and academic development is essential for enhancing their academic outcomes. The study recommends integrating SDG 8 into academic curricula, fostering greater engagement in SDG-related activities, and promoting positive attitudes toward sustainability. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on sustainability education and its potential role in improving student success in higher education, thus supporting the development of future academic policies and sustainability initiatives, promoting long-term academic, social, and societal impact, and future global development.

Keywords: SDG 8, Sustainable Economic Growth, Academic Success, Student Engagement, GPA, Higher Education, Sustainability Education

INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the relationship between students' awareness of SDG 8 (Sustainable Economic Growth) and their academic success at Pilgrim Christian College. The primary objective is to explore how students' attitudes, understanding, and engagement with SDG 8 influence their academic performance, specifically in terms of GPA, class participation, and the completion of academic tasks. By examining the potential link between SDG 8 awareness and improved academic outcomes, this study aims to contribute to the broader discussion on the role of sustainability education in shaping student success in higher learning environments.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to influence how sustainable development goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8, are integrated into higher education curricula. As the world increasingly prioritizes inclusive growth, decent work, and economic development, understanding how awareness of SDG 8 can influence academic success is essential for guiding educational policy and teaching practices. Research shows that sustainability goals can drive student engagement and foster academic achievement, making this study relevant not only for policymakers and educators but also for students

who can benefit from these integrated learning experiences (Kyei, 2024; Filho et al., 2024). Thus, exploring the connection between SDG 8 and academic success is timely and crucial for advancing education in the 21st century.

A clear gap in the literature exists regarding the direct link between SDG 8 awareness and students' academic success. While SDG 4 (Quality Education) has been extensively researched, SDG 8's impact on academic performance remains underexplored, particularly in the context of higher education (Adipat & Chotikapanich, 2022; Cachero et al., 2023). Existing studies have primarily focused on how broader sustainability initiatives contribute to students' general well-being and social responsibility, but the specific influence of SDG 8 on academic behaviors such as study habits and engagement is not well understood. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining whether students' perceptions of SDG 8—its relevance to their personal and academic development—contribute to their academic performance. Specifically, the study intends to ascertain whether an increased understanding of sustainable economic growth and its relevance can positively impact students' academic success.

The study is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which suggests that individuals' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control significantly influence their intentions and actions (Ajzen, 1991). TPB provides a framework for understanding how students' attitudes toward SDG 8, coupled with their perception of its relevance to their studies, may influence their academic engagement and performance. By applying this framework, the study explores how students' awareness and positive attitudes toward SDG 8 can motivate them to actively engage with their academic tasks, resulting in better academic outcomes (Al Husban, 2025; Di Vaio et al., 2024).

Previous research has highlighted the importance of integrating sustainability goals into education to foster global responsibility and enhance student engagement. Studies have shown that students who understand the broader societal impacts of sustainability tend to perform better academically, as they feel more connected to the purpose of their studies (González-Brignardello et al., 2024; Filho et al., 2024). However, a synthesis of current literature reveals that while sustainability education has been well-studied, the direct relationship between SDG 8 and academic success remains largely underexplored. This study aims to build on existing research by focusing specifically on SDG 8, addressing the knowledge gap, and identifying how sustainable economic growth awareness can influence students' academic behaviors. By doing so, the study seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on the integration of SDGs into education and how such integration can foster academic success and broader sustainability awareness across global educational contexts.

MATERIALS & METHODS

This study used a descriptive-correlational research design to explore the relationship between students' awareness of SDG 8 (Sustainable Economic Growth) and their academic success at Pilgrim Christian College. This design was chosen because it allows the investigation of associations between SDG 8 awareness and academic performance indicators like GPA, class participation, study habits, and completion of coursework. It is particularly suited for identifying relationships without implying causality, which aligns with the research objectives. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize students' awareness levels, while Pearson's correlation measured the strength and direction of the relationship between SDG 8 awareness and academic outcomes. The correlational design is appropriate for understanding how SDG 8 awareness may influence academic performance by examining the strength of associations between variables.

A structured questionnaire was designed to assess students' awareness of SDG 8, their engagement with sustainability-related activities, and their attitudes toward sustainable economic growth. The questionnaire included both Likert-scale items for quantitative analysis and open-ended questions for

qualitative insights. To ensure content validity, pilot testing was conducted with 20 students, followed by expert consultations with faculty members in sustainability and education. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to measure the reliability of the instrument, revealing acceptable reliability coefficients: 0.85 for SDG 8 awareness, 0.82 for engagement, and 0.87 for attitudes toward SDG 8. These values confirm the internal consistency of the instrument, ensuring it is both valid and reliable for data collection. The inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative data ensures a well- rounded assessment of students' awareness and engagement.

The study used a stratified random sampling technique to select 118 students from various academic programs at Pilgrim Christian College. Stratification ensured that the sample included students from different year levels and academic backgrounds, providing a diverse representation of the student population. However, the sample was heavily skewed toward female students (96%), which could potentially introduce gender bias and limit the representativeness of the sample. The gender imbalance is acknowledged as a limitation and discussed in the methodology. Future research should aim for a more balanced gender distribution or examine how gender may influence the relationship between SDG 8 awareness and academic success. Despite this limitation, the sample was stratified by year levels, ensuring diversity in terms of academic experiences, which adds richness to the study.

Data were analyzed using a combination of descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation, ANOVA, and t-tests to examine the relationship between SDG 8 awareness and academic success indicators. Descriptive statistics summarized students' awareness levels, while Pearson's correlation assessed the strength of the relationship between SDG 8 awareness and academic outcomes. To control for potential confounding variables such as age, year level, and monthly allowance, regression analysis was applied. This method allowed for a refined understanding of how SDG 8 awareness influences academic success while accounting for the effects of these variables. Multiple regression analysis is recommended for future studies to further explore the combined effects of various socio-demographic and academic factors on academic performance, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of the variables involved.

The study adhered to ethical standards throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring that they understood the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the research, and participants were assured that their personal information would remain private. Voluntary participation was emphasized, and students were made aware that their academic standing would not be affected by their decision to participate or withdraw. To ensure validity, reliability, and rigor, qualitative interviews were conducted alongside the structured questionnaire, providing a richer and more nuanced understanding of students' experiences with SDG 8. The content validity of the instrument was ensured through expert feedback, and Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. This methodological approach enhanced the validity and rigor of the research process, ensuring high standards of academic integrity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Socio-demographic Profile

The socio-demographic profile of the study participants revealed a significant gender imbalance, with 96.6% of respondents being female and only 3.4% male. Additionally, 71.2% of the respondents were aged 18 and above, indicating a higher participation rate among older students. Most respondents were second- year students, which suggests that they were either more available or willing to participate, while upperclassmen had lower participation rates. The gender imbalance is acknowledged as a

limitation, as it may affect the representativeness of the sample, introducing potential gender bias in the findings.

As previous studies by Monaco (2024) and Kyei (2024) highlight, while students often understand SDG 8 principles, this knowledge does not always lead to improved academic performance. Future research should aim for a more balanced gender distribution, and consider the potential influence of socio-economic factors, including gender differences in SDG 8 engagement, to further understand how these factors influence academic success and sustainability education. Understanding how SDG 8 awareness intersects with students' socio- demographic profiles can provide valuable insights for more inclusive and effective educational interventions (Grau et al., 2025). By addressing these limitations, future studies can ensure more representative samples and produce findings that are more widely applicable to diverse student populations.

2. The Students Assessed their Awareness of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth in terms of Knowledge of SDG 8 Principles; Engagement with SDG 8-related Activities; Attitude Toward Sustainable Economic Growth; and the Perceived Relevance of SDG 8 to Personal and Academic Development

Table 1 shows that students have a moderate understanding of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth (SDG 8), with an overall score of 2.70, meaning they somewhat know about it. The students are most familiar with the basics of sustainable economic growth but struggle more with understanding how SDG 8 connects to things like national development and decent work. This means students have some knowledge but don't fully understand the deeper impacts of SDG 8 on real-world issues. This is similar to what Kyei (2024) found, which is that while students know about SDGs, they don't always get how these ideas apply in real life. Further educational initiatives could help bridge this gap, ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of SDG 8's relevance (Laumann et al, 2022).

Table 1
Level of Climate Change Awareness of Students in Terms of Knowledge

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description	Interpretation
I am familiar with the concept of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth.	2.96	0.55	Agree	Moderately Aware
I understand the key goals of SDG 8	2.66	0.83	Agree	Moderately Aware
I can explain how SDG 8 relates to decent work and economic growth.	2.59	0.83	Agree	Moderately Aware
I know how SDG 8 contributes to national development	2.79	0.92	Agree	Moderately Aware
I can identify strategies that promote sustainable economic growth.	2.81	0.80	Agree	Moderately Aware
I am familiar with the concept of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth.	2.40	0.82	Agree	Moderately Aware
Overall Mean	2.70	0.79	Agree	Moderately Aware

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree (Very Low Awareness), 1.76-2.50 Disagree (Low Awareness), 2.51-3.25 Agree (Moderately Aware), 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree (Highly Aware)

Looking deeper into the results, students scored higher on knowing the basic ideas of SDG 8 but lower when it came to understanding how SDG 8 fits into national development or economic growth. Previous studies, like Novieastari et al. (2022), suggest that this is common, as students often only learn the basics without getting to the more complicated ideas. The lack of a link between students' knowledge of SDG 8 and their academic performance could be because the teaching doesn't show how these ideas connect to real-life situations. Filho et al. (2024) emphasized that involving students in practical, hands-on learning could help them understand the topic better and do better in school overall.

Table 2 outlines students' moderate engagement with activities related to SDG 8, with an overall mean score of 2.48 and a standard deviation of 0.81. This suggests that students are somewhat involved in activities promoting sustainable economic growth but are not deeply engaged. While participation is present, there's significant room for increased involvement to enhance their understanding of SDG 8. Research has shown that greater participation in SDG-related activities can improve students' academic performance and provide a deeper, more practical understanding of sustainability (Boafo et al., 2025).

Table 2

The Students Assessed their Awareness of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth in terms of Engagement with SDG 8-related Activities

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description	Interpretation
I have participated in activities related to sustainable economic growth.	2.67	0.85	Agree	Moderately Aware
I joined campus events discussing SDGs or economic development.	2.49	0.81	Agree	Moderately Aware
I have taken part in community outreach projects promoting decent work.	2.57	0.81	Agree	Moderately Aware
I am involved in organizations that support sustainable development goals.	2.54	0.79	Agree	Moderately Aware
I often volunteer for causes related to inclusive economic progress.	2.47	0.81	Agree	Moderately Aware
I have conducted research or presentations related to SDG 8	2.13	0.80	Agree	Moderately Aware
Overall Mean	2.48	0.81	Agree	Moderately Aware

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree (Not Aware), 1.76-2.50 Disagree (Slightly Aware), 2.51-3.25 Agree (Moderately Aware), 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree (Highly Aware)

Considering each specific item, the highest mean score of 2.67 is for the item “I have participated in activities related to sustainable economic growth,” indicating a reasonable level of participation in activities promoting SDG 8. This is consistent with findings from Elmassri et al. (2023), who noted that student participation in SDG-related learning activities strengthens their connection to sustainability concepts. However, the lowest mean score of 2.13 for “I have conducted research or presentations related to SDG 8” points to a gap in student participation in more research-based activities. This gap suggests that, while students engage in some activities, they tend to avoid more rigorous, academic aspects like research or presentations related to SDG 8.

Table 3 presents students' attitudes toward sustainable economic growth, with an overall mean score of 3.34, categorizing them as highly aware. Most items received strong agreement, reflecting students' belief in the benefits of sustainable growth, fair wages, and inclusivity. This high level of agreement suggests that students value the principles of sustainable economic growth but may still have room for a more nuanced understanding of the balance between economic growth and environmental sustainability. Research shows that developing a strong, integrated view of economic and environmental concerns is crucial for achieving long-term sustainability goals (Gugushvili, 2021).

“I think youth should be involved in economic development efforts” (mean = 3.53), indicates that students strongly believe in the active role of youth in driving economic progress, aligning with Bangani (2024), who highlighted that community and youth engagement plays a crucial role in advancing SDGs 8 and 11. However, the lowest mean score, “I believe growth should not compromise environmental sustainability” (mean = 3.17), suggests some hesitation in fully embracing the need for a balanced approach between economic and environmental priorities.

Table 3

The Students Assessed their Awareness of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth in terms of Attitude Toward Sustainable Economic Growth

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description	Interpretation
I believe that sustainable economic growth benefits all sectors of society.	3.33	0.65	Strongly Agree	Highly Aware
I support the implementation of decent work and fair wages.	3.36	0.66	Strongly Agree	Highly Aware
I think youth should be involved in economic development efforts.	3.53	0.58	Strongly Agree	Highly Aware
I feel responsible for contributing to sustainable development.	3.27	0.64	Strongly Agree	Highly Aware
I value inclusivity and fairness in economic opportunities.	3.27	0.68	Strongly Agree	Highly Aware
I believe growth should not compromise environmental sustainability.	3.17	0.72	Agree	Moderately Aware
Overall Mean	3.34	0.66	Strongly Agree	Highly Aware

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree (Not Aware), 1.76-2.50 Disagree (Slightly Aware), 2.51-3.25 Agree (Moderately Aware), 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree (Highly Aware)

Table 4 summarizes students' assessment of the perceived relevance of SDG 8 to their personal and academic development, with an overall mean score of 3.14, categorizing them as moderately aware. This suggests that students believe that learning about SDG 8 is important, but their understanding may still need further development to fully recognize its impact on both academic growth and personal development.

Table 4

The Students Assessed their Awareness of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth in terms of the Perceived Relevance of SDG 9 to Personal and Academic Development

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description	Interpretation
Learning about SDG enhances 8 my understanding of economic systems.	3.17	0.70	Agree	Moderately Aware
Knowledge of SDG 8 helps me become a responsible citizen.	3.20	0.73	Agree	Moderately Aware
SDG 8 principles are applicable to my future career plans.	3.17	0.64	Agree	Moderately Aware
I believe SDG 8 contributes to improving my critical thinking.	3.06	0.70	Agree	Moderately Aware
SDG 8 promotes values that are relevant to my personal development.	3.11	0.65	Agree	Moderately Aware
Understanding SDG 8 improves my academic motivation.	3.10	0.64	Agree	Moderately Aware
Overall Mean	3.14	0.68	Agree	Moderately Aware

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree (Not Aware), 1.76-2.50 Disagree (Slightly Aware), 2.51-3.25 Agree (Moderately Aware), 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree (Highly Aware)

The results align with research showing that integrating sustainability principles, such as those in SDG 8, can enhance academic motivation and support personal growth (Boafo et al., 2025). The highest mean score of 3.20 for “Knowledge of SDG 8 helps me become a responsible citizen” reflects students’ strong belief in its social responsibility, while the lowest mean score of 3.06 for “I believe SDG 8 contributes to improving my critical thinking” shows hesitation in linking it to cognitive skills. This suggests that while students value the social and personal importance of SDG 8, more educational

programs are needed to demonstrate how it can strengthen critical thinking and academic outcomes (Hong et al., 2023).

3. Students evaluated their Academic Success in terms of GPA or Academic Performance; Time Management and Study Habits; Class Participation and Engagement; Completion of Course Requirements and Deadlines

Table 5 summarizes the students' evaluation of their academic success based on GPA or overall academic performance, with an overall mean score of 3.30, categorizing them as highly successful. This suggests that students generally feel confident about their academic performance, with a strong focus on maintaining good grades. The results indicate that most students actively engage in practices that support academic success, such as setting GPA targets and seeking help when needed.

Table 5
The Students Evaluated their Academic Success in terms of GPA or Academic Performance

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description	Interpretation
I consistently earn grades that reflect my effort and understanding.	3.34	0.66	Strongly Agree	High Academic Success
I set GPA targets for each semester and work toward them.	3.17	0.76	Agree	Moderate Academic Success
My GPA reflects my commitment to academic excellence.	3.34	0.70	Strongly Agree	High Academic Success
I monitor my academic performance throughout the semester.	3.21	0.78	Agree	Moderate Academic Success
I seek academic help when I notice a drop in my grades.	3.24	0.75	Agree	Moderate Academic Success
I am aware of the impact of my GPA on my future career.	3.49	0.68	Strongly Agree	High Academic Success
Overall Mean	3.30	0.72	Strongly Agree	High Academic Success

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree (Very Low Awareness), 1.76-2.50 Disagree (Low Awareness), 2.51-3.25 Agree (Moderately Aware), 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree (Highly Aware)

These findings align with research showing that students who actively monitor and set goals for their academic progress tend to perform better academically (Homklin et al., 2024). The highest mean score of 3.49 for “I am aware of the impact of my GPA on my future career” reflects students’ clear understanding of the importance of academic performance, consistent with Mahdzar et al. (2022), who emphasized its role in shaping career opportunities. However, the lowest mean score of 3.21 for “I monitor my academic performance throughout the semester” indicates that some students may not consistently track progress, highlighting the need for structured self-assessment practices to strengthen academic outcomes.

Table 6 evaluates students' time management and study habits, with an overall mean score of 2.99 and a standard deviation of 0.74, categorizing them as moderately successful. This indicates that while students feel they have moderate success in managing their time and study routines, there is still room for improvement.

Effective time management is essential for academic success, as structured schedules and prioritization positively influence performance (Valente et al., 2024). The highest mean score of 3.26 for prioritizing academic tasks over leisure highlights strong student motivation, aligning with Sarwar et al. (2025), who found effective study habits linked to long-term achievement. However, the lowest mean score of 2.80 for studying regularly instead of cramming shows reliance on last-minute preparation, which Homklin et al. (2024) argue can be improved through consistent academic adjustment and study

routines.

Table 6
The Students Evaluated their Academic Success in terms of Time Management and Study Habits

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
I follow regular daily or weekly study schedule .	3.03	0.78	Agree	Moderate Academic Success
I prioritize academic tasks over leisure activities.	3.26	0.65	Strongly Agree	High Academic Success
I allocate specific time blocks for each subject.	3.04	0.67	Agree	Moderate Academic Success
I avoid procrastination when completing school tasks.	2.89	0.81	Agree	Moderate Academic Success
I used to-do lists or planners to manage deadlines.	2.94	0.76	Agree	Moderate Academic Success
I study regularly rather than cramming before exams.	2.80	0.77	Agree	Moderate Academic Success
Overall Mean	2.99	0.74	Agree	Moderate Academic Success

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree (Very Low Awareness), 1.76-2.50 Disagree (Low Awareness), 2.51-3.25 Agree (Moderately Aware), 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree (Highly Aware)

Table 7 presents the students' evaluation of their academic success in terms of class participation and engagement, with an overall mean score of 3.16 and a standard deviation of 0.72, categorized as moderately successful. This suggests that while students are somewhat engaged in class activities, there is still room for improvement in areas such as active questioning and seeking feedback. Active class participation, including asking questions and engaging in group work, is essential for deepening understanding and enhancing collaborative learning, which has been linked to improved academic outcomes (Cachero et al., 2023).

Table 7
The Students Evaluated their Academic Success in terms of Class Participation and Engagement

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
I actively participate in class discussions.	3.19	0.72	Agree	Highly Sustainable
I ask questions when I don't understand the topic.	3.04	0.77	Agree	Highly Sustainable
I engage in group work or collaborative learning activities.	3.24	0.75	Agree	Highly Sustainable
I show interest and focus during the class sessions.	3.24	0.65	Agree	Moderately Sustainable
I volunteer answers and contribute ideas during lessons.	3.04	0.75	Agree	Highly Sustainable
I find class activities stimulating and relevant.	3.19	0.67	Agree	Highly Sustainable
Overall Mean	3.16	0.72	Agree	Highly Sustainable

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree (Very Low Awareness), 1.76-2.50 Disagree (Low Awareness), 2.51-3.25 Agree (Moderately Aware), 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree (Highly Aware)

The highest mean score, 3.24, for “I engage in group work or collaborative learning activities,” indicates that students value teamwork and peer learning as part of their academic experience. This aligns with research by Boafu et al. (2025), who emphasized that student collaboration fosters deeper engagement with sustainable development practices in higher education. However, the lowest mean score, 3.04, for “I ask questions when I do not understand the topic,” suggests that some students may hesitate to ask for clarification, potentially hindering their learning process. Encouraging more active questioning during lessons could significantly improve students’ understanding, as interaction and feedback are vital for improving learning performance (Saleh & Okiely, 2025). To foster better academic outcomes, instructors could create more opportunities for students to ask questions and provide direct feedback during lessons.

Table 8 highlights the students' evaluation of their academic success in terms of completing course requirements and meeting deadlines, with an overall mean score of 3.34 and a standard deviation of

0.65, categorized as strongly agreeing. This indicates that students feel confident in their ability to manage and submit academic tasks on time, which is a crucial component of academic success.

Table 8
The Students Evaluated their Academic Success in terms of Completion of the course Requirements and Deadlines

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description	Interpretation
I submit all course requirements before the deadlines.	3.46	0.63	Strongly Agree	High Academic Success
I review instructions carefully before completing assignments.	3.39	0.62	Strongly Agree	High Academic Success
I manage multiple academic requirements efficiently.	3.20	0.65	Agree	Moderate Academic Success
I make use of feedback to improve my outputs.	3.20	0.67	Agree	Moderate Academic Success
I complete both major and minor tasks in all subjects.	3.40	0.67	Strongly Agree	High Academic Success
I comply with submission policies in all subjects.	3.39	0.67	Strongly Agree	High Academic Success
Overall Mean	3.34	0.65	Strongly Agree	High Academic Success

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree (Very Low Awareness), 1.76-2.50 Disagree (Low Awareness), 2.51-3.25 Agree (Moderately Aware), 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree (Highly Aware)

However, while students show strong agreement in meeting deadlines, there is room for improvement, especially in managing multiple tasks simultaneously. Research indicates that time resource availability and proper utilization are crucial for maintaining consistent academic performance, since poor management of academic workloads can lead to reduced productivity (Obodoagu & Ohia, 2024). The score of 3.46, for the item "I submit all course requirements before the deadlines," reflects that students strongly believe they can meet deadlines, a key factor in academic success. This is in line with findings from (Homklin et al., 2024), which highlight how motivation and psychological well-being support students' ability to meet academic requirements effectively. However, the lowest mean score of 3.20, for "I manage multiple academic requirements efficiently," suggests that some students struggle with balancing various tasks at the same time. This could be an area for improvement, as managing multiple tasks effectively is essential for reducing stress and ensuring consistent academic performance. Encouraging students to use strategies such as prioritizing tasks or breaking them into manageable chunks could improve their ability to handle workloads efficiently.

4. Significant Difference in Students' Academic Success when Grouped According to their Socio-demographic Profile

Table 9 compares students' academic success based on age, with mean scores of 3.29 for students below 18 years and 3.49 for those 18 and above. The F-value of 3.804 and a p-value of 0.055 indicate that the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant, as the p-value exceeds the 0.05 threshold. This suggests that age does not significantly influence students' academic success, and we fail to reject the null hypothesis. These results align with previous studies, such as those by Bofo et al. (2025), which emphasize that factors like engagement with sustainable education practices and institutional support play a greater role in students' academic performance than demographic characteristics such as age.

The insignificance of the age variable points to the possibility that other factors, such as study habits, motivation, and socio-economic background, have a more substantial impact on academic success. Future research should delve deeper into these factors to better understand what drives academic performance. Additionally, variables like learning strategies and extracurricular engagement may offer

further insights into other key contributors to academic achievement. By focusing on these variables, institutions can tailor interventions to help students enhance their academic success, regardless of age.

Table 9

Test of Significant Difference in Students' Academic Success when Grouped According to their Socio-demographic Profile

Profile	Students' Academic Success					
	Category	Mean	f-value	p-value	Remarks	Decision on Ho
Age	Below 18	3.29	3.804	.055	Not Significant	Failed to Rejected
	18 and above	3.49				

Significant if $p\text{-value} < 0.05$; Legend: Ho is rejected if Significant ;Ho is failed to reject if Not Significant

Table 10 compares students' academic success based on sex, showing that male students have a mean score of 3.50, while female students have a mean of 3.43. The F-value of 0.017 and a p-value of 0.896 indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between the academic success of male and female students. Since the p-value exceeds the standard threshold of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that sex does not play a significant role in determining academic performance. This result implies that male and female students perform similarly in academic settings. These findings align with Leiva- Brondo et al. (2022), who emphasized that students' awareness and perceptions of sustainability and education quality were influenced more by institutional and learning contexts rather than gender differences.

Table 10

Test of Significant Difference in Students' Academic Success when Grouped According to their Socio-demographic Profile

Profile	Students' Academic Success					
	Category	Mean	f-value	p-value	Remarks	Decision on Ho
Sex	Male	3.50	.017	.896	Not Significant	Failed to Rejected
	Female	3.43				

Significant if $p\text{-value} < 0.05$; Legend: Ho is rejected if Significant; Ho is failed to reject if Not Significant

The lack of a significant difference between male and female students' academic success emphasizes the need to explore other factors that may influence academic performance, such as individual study habits, motivation, or engagement in classroom activities. Previous research suggests that academic success is more closely linked to personal behaviors and learning strategies rather than gender. Future studies should consider focusing on these individual factors, as they may offer a more accurate understanding of what drives academic success. Additionally, exploring the use of digital learning tools and academic participation, both of which have been shown to improve outcomes (Vasz kun & Mihalkovné, 2025), could provide further insight into broader factors that influence student achievement.

Table 11 presents a significant difference in academic success based on year level, with first-year students having the highest mean score of 3.83, followed by second-year students (3.41), third-year students (3.00), and fourth-year students (2.83). The F-value of 5.006 and the p-value of 0.003 indicate that year level has a statistically significant impact on academic success. Since the p-value is below the standard threshold of 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that students' academic performance is influenced by their year of study. This result is supported by Hong, Calderon, & Coates (2023), who emphasized that institutional engagement with sustainability and academic development creates differentiated outcomes across student groups, which may explain why performance varies by year level.

Table 11**Test of Significant Difference in Students' Academic Success when Grouped According to their Socio-demographic Profile**

Profile		Students' Academic Success				
	Category	Mean	f-value	p-value	Remarks	Decision on Ho
Year Level	First Year	3.83	5.006	.003	Significant	Rejected
	Second Year	3.41				
	Third Year	3.00				
	Fourth Year	2.83				

Significant if $p\text{-value} < 0.05$; Legend: Ho is rejected if Significant; Ho is failed if Not Significant

The differences in academic success across year levels suggest that as students progress, they may face challenges such as academic burnout, increased workloads, or less structured support, which could negatively impact their performance. This trend may be explained by the complexity of upper-level courses, which could be more difficult to manage, leading to lower scores for third- and fourth-year students. Further research could explore these potential causes, focusing on how academic adjustments, stress management, and motivation evolve as students progress through their academic journey (Vaszkun & Mihalkovné, 2025). Understanding these dynamics could inform better strategies to support students, particularly in their later years of study.

Table 12 shows that there is no statistically significant difference in academic success among students with varying monthly income or allowance, as indicated by the F-value of 0.783 and p-value of 0.541. This suggests that financial support does not directly influence performance, aligning with Sarwar et al., (2025) who emphasized that success is shaped more by motivation, emotion regulation, and study habits than by economic resources.

Table 12**Test of Significant Difference in Students' Academic Success when Grouped According to their Socio-demographic Profile**

Profile		Student's Academic Success				
	Category	Mean	f-value	p-value	Remarks	Decision on Ho
Monthly Income/Allowance	Less 500	3.33	.783	.541	Not Significant	Failed to Rejected
	500 to 900	3.44				
	1000 to 1400	3.29				
	1500 to 1900	3.50				
	2000 to above	3.58				

Significant if $p\text{-value} < 0.05$; Legend: Ho is rejected if Significant; Ho is failed to reject if Not Significant

The absence of a significant connection between monthly income and academic success brings into question the impact of socio-economic factors on educational outcomes. While financial resources can influence access to materials and reduce stress related to living expenses, this study suggests that they do not significantly affect students' academic outcomes. As highlighted by Mahdzar et al. (2022), students' stress levels and academic performance are more closely associated with psychological and behavioral factors than with financial support alone. Future research could investigate other socio-economic variables, such as parental education or access to academic support systems, to better understand their impact on students' academic performance.

5. Significant Relationship between Awareness of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth and Students' Academic Success

Table 13 shows that some aspects of students' awareness of SDG 8 (Sustainable Economic Growth) are significantly related to their academic success. The analysis reveals strong correlations between students' attitudes toward sustainable economic growth and their GPA, as well as the perceived relevance of SDG 8 to their academic development. For example, the r-value for "Attitude Toward Sustainable Economic Growth" is 0.370 with a p-value of 0.002, indicating a significant positive relationship with GPA. Similarly, the perceived relevance of SDG 8 correlates strongly with several academic success measures, such as completion of course requirements and class participation, with r-values as high as 0.427 ($p < 0.05$). In contrast, variables like "Knowledge of SDG 8 Principles" and "Engagement with SDG 8 Related Activities" did not show significant relationships with academic success, as their p-values were higher than the standard threshold of 0.05.

Table 13

Test of Significant Relationship between Awareness of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth and Students' Academic Success

Sustainable Economic Growth	Sustainable Marketing Practices											
	GPA/Academic Performance			Study Habits and Time Management			Class Participation and Engagement			Completion of Course Requirements and Deadlines		
	r	p- value	Ho	r	p- value	Ho	r	p- value	Ho	r	p- value	Ho
Knowledge of SDG 8 Principles	.086	.480	NS	.186	.122	NS	.227	.059	NS	.101	.404	NS
Engagement with SDG 8 Related Activities	.014	.910	NS	.274*	.022	S	.275*	.021	S	.049	.690	NS
Attitude Toward Sustainable Economic Growth	.370**	.002	S	.125	.301	NS	.279*	.019	S	.292*	.014	S
Perceived Relevance of SDG 8 to Personal and Academic Development	.364**	.002	S	.066	.585	NS	.368**	.002	S	.427**	.000	S

Significant if p-value <0.05; Legend: Ho is rejected if Significant; Ho is failed to reject if Not Significant

These results suggest that while knowledge of SDG 8 principles or engagement in related activities may not directly impact academic performance, students' attitudes and perceptions of SDG 8's relevance to their academic journey play a critical role in academic success. This aligns with research by Cachero et al., (2023), who found that university students' perceptions of SDGs significantly affect their level of academic engagement and motivation. The findings suggest that educators should focus on shaping students' attitudes toward sustainability and integrating SDG 8 into their academic experiences.

Table 14 demonstrates that the perceived relevance of SDG 8 to personal and academic development has a statistically significant impact on students' academic success, with a Beta value of 0.395 and a p-value of 0.005. This suggests that when students perceive sustainable economic growth (SDG 8) as important to their personal and academic growth, they tend to perform better academically. On the other hand, variables such as "Knowledge of SDG 8 Principles," "Engagement with SDG 8 Related Activities," and "Attitude Toward Sustainable Economic Growth" did not show significant relationships with academic success, as indicated by p-values greater than 0.05. This highlights that simply understanding or participating in SDG 8 activities may not directly translate into improved academic outcomes. Instead, it is the perceived relevance of these goals to students' personal and academic experiences that drives performance.

6. Does Awareness of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth contribute to Enhancing Students' Academic Success?

Table 14
Test of Significant Influence on Awareness of Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth
Contribute to Enhancing Students' Academic Success

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	2.119	.428		4.953	.000
Knowledge of SDG 8 Principles	.007	.123	.009	.060	.952
Engagement with SDG 8 Related	-.055	.115	-.070	-.476	.636
Attitude Toward Sustainable Economic Growth	.083	.131	.086	.638	.526
Perceived Relevance of SDG 8 to Personal and Academic Development	.360	.123	.395	2.917	.005

Note: Adjusted $r^2=.142$ ANOVA for Regression $F=3.851$, $p=.007$

These findings emphasize the importance of making SDG 8 more relevant and relatable to students. By focusing on the personal connections students have with sustainable development, educators can enhance their engagement and motivation. Hong, Calderon, and Coates (2023) observed that universities that actively embed SDG-related learning into their systems see stronger academic engagement and achievement among students. Therefore, educators should find ways to connect SDG 8 more directly to students' academic goals and career aspirations. Future research could explore how other dimensions of SDG 8, such as knowledge and engagement, can be integrated into the curriculum in ways that foster academic success, ensuring a more holistic approach to SDG education.

7. What recommendations can be proposed to strengthen students' awareness of SDG 8 and enhance their academic performance at Pilgrim Christian College?

To strengthen students' awareness of SDG 8 and enhance academic performance at Pilgrim Christian College, SDG 8 should be integrated more comprehensively into the curriculum through lessons, projects, and assignments. Elmassri et al. (2023) noted that such pedagogical approaches can increase students' engagement and sense of purpose, directly benefiting their academic success.

Encouraging active engagement in SDG-related activities, such as workshops and community-based learning, enhances students' understanding of SDG 8. Filho et al. (2024) emphasized that participation in sustainability initiatives boosts both motivation and academic performance by developing essential skills like problem-solving and teamwork.

Fostering a positive attitude toward sustainability is crucial for motivating students to achieve academic success. Bofo et al. (2025) highlighted that students' perceptions and enabling factors toward SDGs significantly influence their academic and professional engagement, underscoring the importance of aligning SDG education with career aspirations.

By aligning SDG 8 with students' academic pathways, Pilgrim Christian College can create a more engaging academic environment that promotes both individual academic growth and the broader goals of sustainable development. This strategy positions the college as a leader in integrating sustainability into higher education, promoting academic excellence and global responsibility.

CONCLUSION

This study explored how students' understanding of SDG 8 (Sustainable Economic Growth) affects their academic performance at Pilgrim Christian College. The results showed that students who believe SDG 8 is important for their personal and academic growth tend to perform better in school. Specifically, students' attitudes toward sustainable economic growth and their beliefs about its relevance to their studies were strongly linked to their grades and class participation. However, simply knowing about SDG 8 or participating in related activities didn't show a clear connection to better academic performance. This suggests that students need to feel personally connected to SDG 8 for it to motivate them to do better academically.

We also found that year level had an impact on students' performance. First-year students, who scored higher academically, might benefit from more support and motivation in their first year. On the other hand, students in their later years (third and fourth years) faced more challenges, likely due to tougher courses and less support. This shows that students at different stages of their education need different types of support to stay motivated and perform well.

Recommendations

Based on the study's results, Pilgrim Christian College can improve students' understanding of SDG 8 and enhance academic performance through the following steps:

First, SDG 8 should be integrated into students' courses across various departments. Each department can connect SDG 8 to the specific subjects students are studying. For example, business students could learn about sustainable business practices, while science students could focus on environmental sustainability. This can be measured through assignments or exams that assess students' ability to apply SDG 8 in their fields.

Second, the college should organize SDG 8-related events, such as workshops, guest lectures, and projects that connect SDG 8 to students' future careers. These events will encourage students to see the relevance of SDG 8 to their academic and professional lives, motivating them to succeed academically. Success can be tracked by student attendance and feedback.

Third, students should be encouraged to participate in sustainability projects and community work that involve SDG 8. This hands-on experience will help them develop valuable skills like problem-solving and teamwork, which contribute to academic success. The effectiveness of this initiative can be measured by tracking student participation and the quality of their work.

Fourth, the college should provide more support for upperclassmen, particularly third- and fourth-year students who face more challenging courses and may have fewer support systems. Providing additional resources, such as study groups, mentorship, and stress management workshops, will support these students. The impact of this support can be measured by tracking academic performance and student satisfaction.

Finally, the college should support research on SDG 8 by offering research grants or organizing competitions for students to explore topics related to sustainable economic growth. This will encourage deeper engagement with SDG 8 and improve academic work. Success can be tracked through student involvement in research and the quality of their projects.

By focusing on these recommendations, Pilgrim Christian College can foster a more engaging and supportive learning environment, helping students better understand SDG 8 and perform better academically, while also contributing to the broader goals of sustainable development.

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