



Practice of Core Values of the Department of Education among Grade 12 Students in a Philippine Public School

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aims: This paper determined the extent of practice of core values of the Department of Education (DepEd) among senior high school students in a Philippine public school in the areas of *maka-Diyos* (Godly), *makatao* (person-oriented), *makakalikasan* (environmental), and *makabansa* (nationalistic) relative to sex, religion, family structure, and strand.

Study Design: Quantitative particularly descriptive-comparative approach.

Place and Duration of Study: Public School in Central Philippines during 2023-2024.

Methodology: This paper was responded by 293 stratified randomly sampled Grade 12 students employing an adopted questionnaire. In data analysis, it employed mean, standard deviation, Mann Whitney U Test, and Kruskal Wallis.

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Results: Generally, their extent of practice of the DepEd core values was very great. The areas of *makabansa* and *makatao* were rated very great while *makakalikasan* and *maka-Diyos* were rated great. In sex, male rated great while female, very great. In religion, both Catholic, and non-Catholic rated very great. In family structure, those from nuclear, single parent, and extended rated very great. In strand, STEM, HUMSS, and TVL were rated very great extent while ABM, Sports, and AD, were great. Meanwhile, in terms of the demographics, sex was found with a significant difference.

Conclusion: To ensure the core value practice, maintaining the implementation of DepEd core values through school activities and programs in the locale and consistent values integration in the lesson plan. The implementation of DepEd core values should be designed and framed to meet the needs of all students, irrespective of gender. Consequently, the results suggest the importance of consistently implementing, monitoring, and empowering teachers through their leaders to develop students' practice of core values, ensuring sustained quality education.

Keywords: Department of education core values; practice; descriptive-comparative; Philippine Public Senior High School.

1. INTRODUCTION

Core values are fundamental beliefs that guide the behavior and decision-making of the person [1]. These values play a crucial role in human fulfillment, dedication, and inspiration [2]. Likewise, these are essential for individuals and groups of people in providing a reason for being and guiding correct decision-making [3]. Moreover, these values play a vital role in shaping the students' character and personality development [4]. Hence, instructional integration of these values is essential to enhance learners' quality of life and grow with principles and ideals [5].

The practice of core values is a crucial aspect, especially among learners. In fact, the practice of these values is considered essential for high school students to develop tenacity and positive thinking about education and life [6]. Barni et al. [7] underscore the role of high school teachers in practicing and promoting core values among their students. Further, Rog [8] explored the practical application of core values highlighting the importance of infusing them into day-to-day activities. The core value practice is emphasized and encouraged among the students to imbibe these in their day-to-day living [9].

In Philippines, the Department of Education [10] mandates the practice of core values namely *maka-Diyos*, *makatao*, *makakalikasan*, and *makabansa* among students in public schools. Hence, this envisions that Filipino students would love their country, and enable them to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the nation [11]. However, due to so much focus on the content in classroom instructions,

achieving the learning competencies, numerous workloads of teachers, and major changes in the curriculum, this mandate to practice the core values in school is compromised [12]. Likewise, Lim [13] stressed the importance of advocating the practice of DepEd core values among the students that should be considered by secondary school heads in decision-making. Furthermore, these values are crucial for maintaining the quality of the school and for the teachers to be competent and nation-responsive [14,15].

In Central Philippines, Garcia and Bual [16] studied the awareness and practice of DepEd core values among junior high school students. This study highlighted sustaining the continuous integration of DepEd core values in the school's programs and instructions. However, many senior high school students struggle to fully internalize these values due to the competing demands of academic requirements and complex subject matter [17]. Also, the pervasive influence of worldly perspectives and self-focus attitude further diminishes their practice of these values [18]. It means that senior high school students prioritize what is the trend in society rather than focus their attention on practicing the core values [19]. Additionally, the shift to online learning due to the infamous effect of the pandemic has weakened the sustainability of the practice of the core values as the limited interaction between teachers and students to consistently reinforce them. Not to mention, the increased reliance of high school students on gadgets has also contributed to not practicing these core values [20].

Several studies were conducted relative to the practice of the DepEd core values. Midzid [21] assessed the influence of the performance of the

school administration on the student’s value orientations in the public secondary schools in Region XII. Likewise, Lorbis and Iporac [22] anchored in their study the DepEd core values in strengthening the leadership performance of supreme student government. Additionally, Nqabeni and Matiso [23] focused on the level of integration and practice of the DepEd core values and morals among students. Lastly, Garcia and Bual [16] pursued a study on the practice and awareness of DepEd core values among Junior high school students. In fact, this study recommends further research on public senior high school students. Given all these available studies, there is still a dearth in the literature hence this is the gap that this study would like to fill in.

Thus, this study assessed the practice of DepEd core values among Grade 12 students in a public high school in Central Philippines during 2023-2024 in terms of *maka-Diyos*, *makatao*, *makakalikasan*, and *makabansa* relative to sex, religion, family structure, and strand. Likewise, it investigated the significant difference in their practice of DepEd core values when grouped according to demographics. Significantly, the findings may serve as a basis for formulating the values formation activities for the continuous improvement of the students’ practice of DepEd core values.

The study theorized that the practice of core values varies in terms of students’ demographics. Thus, this study was anchored on

the theory of practice by Bourdieu [24] which posits that a person’s practice is shaped by their personal, social, cultural, and economic background. Hence, this theory emphasizes the importance of considering the various backgrounds of the person that greatly influence their practice. In the context of the study, this theory pertains to the practice of DepEd core values among senior high school students. However, their practice of these values differed from their personal, social, cultural, and economic background as manifested in their sex, religion, family structure, and strand. Hence, exploring the practice of core values using this theory could offer additional lenses for analyzing the issue.

2. METHODS

This paper utilized a quantitative design, particularly the descriptive-comparative approach. This design statistically described and compared the variables to answer the hypothesis and theory-guided questions [25]. On one hand, the descriptive approach measured the students’ extent of the practice of the DepEd core values. On the other hand, the comparative approach investigated the significant difference in their core value practice when grouped according to the demographics. The respondents were 293 Grade 12 students in a public high school in Central Philippines during 2022-2023. They were determined using stratified random sampling and the fishbowl technique.

Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents

Variables	f	%
Sex		
Male	113	38.6
Female	180	61.4
Religion		
Catholic	229	78.2
Non-Catholic	64	21.8
Family Structure		
Nuclear	194	66.2
Single Parent	46	15.7
Extended	53	18.1
Strand		
ABM (Accountancy, Business, Management)	29	9.9
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)	54	18.4
TVL (Technical Vocational Livelihood)	67	22.9
HUMSS (Humanities and Social Sciences)	133	45.4
AD	3	1.0
Sports	7	2.4
Total	293	100.0

In assessing the study, this paper employed the adopted questionnaire developed by Garcia and Bual [16] based on DepEd guidelines [10]. This instrument contained 25 items spread across areas namely: *maka-Diyos*, *makatao*, *makakalikasan*, and *makabansa*. It was validated by the authors and yielded a valid score of 0.96. In terms of reliability, it yielded a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.781. It was responded using the scale from very poor to very great extent ratings.

In data analysis, descriptive and comparative analyses were utilized. Specifically, frequency count and percentage distribution were used to profile the respondents according to the demographics. Mean and standard deviation were employed to determine their extent of practice of core values. Meanwhile, the comparative analysis checked their core value practice relative to the demographics. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test determined the normality of the data. The test revealed that their practice of core values [KS=0.078, p=0.000] were not normally distributed. Hence, the use of nonparametric statistics. Mann Whitney U Test investigated the difference in their core value practice in terms of sex and religion. Kruskal Wallis checked the difference relative to family structure and strand.

In terms of Ethical considerations, the paper adhered to the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB) ethical guidelines and addressed the general principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice to ensure the ethical soundness of the study. Specifically, it ensured the respondents' vulnerability, anonymity of their identity, and the confidentiality of the data gathered.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Extent of Students' Practice of DepEd Core Values in a Public High School

Table 2 presents the extent of the practice of DepEd core values among Grade 12 students in a public high school in Central Philippines during 2022-2023. Generally, the extent of practice (M=4.26, SD=0.47) is very great. The core values of *makabansa* (M=4.26, SD=0.52), and *makatao* (M=4.28, SD=0.56) were rated very great extent while *makakalikasan* (M=4.20, SD=0.59) and *maka-Diyos* (M=4.09, SD=0.50) were rated great extent. In sex, male (M=4.16, SD=0.53) rated great while female (M=4.32, SD=0.42), very great. In religion, Catholic (M=4.27, SD=0.47),

and non-Catholic (M=4.22, SD=0.49) rated very great. In family structure, nuclear (M=4.26, SD=0.47), single parent (M=4.22, SD=0.45), and extended (M=4.3, SD=0.5) were rated very great. In strand, STEM (M=4.40, SD=0.39), HUMSS (M=4.25, SD=0.49), and TVL (M=4.23, SD=0.52) were rated very great while ABM (M=4.18, SD=0.42), Sports (M=4.06, SD=0.34), and AD (M=3.99, SD=0.49), great.

The overall result of the very great extent practice of DepEd core values exhibits that senior high school students practice the core values of *maka-Diyos*, *makatao*, *makakalikasan*, and *makabansa*. This means that the students at this public school actualize through practicing the public school's core values. This result could be attributed to the school programs and activities encouraging students to practice these values. In fact, the study by Mugambi [26] and Garcia and Bual [16] mentioned that school programs and activities are crucial in implementing and developing values among students. Also, the acquisition of these values increases the possibility because of a favorable environment [27]. Sudiami et al. [28] highlighted that school activities and programs enhance moral judgment and values in students. Meanwhile, the result could be influenced by the students' high core value awareness, as supported by Kwol et al. [29]. Also, Garcia and Bual [16] consider that the students have a high awareness of core values; and can remarkably practice them. This implies sustaining the incorporation of DepEd core values into programs that involve practicing the said values like outreach, civic involvement, tree planting, gift-giving, and coastal clean-ups of the school.

The *makakalikasan* as great extent indicates that senior high school students practice caring for and preserving the environment. This means they practice their environment's cleanliness [10]. This could be the school incorporating environmental education into the curriculum, particularly the subjects of earth and life science and introduction to the philosophy of the human person. This claim is consistent with the study of Ilmiyannor and Mi'rajatinnor [30] and Ramli et al. [31] that subjects in schools can be used as an avenue to instill care for the environment among the students. This is also reinforced by programs promoting environmental well-being such as seminars and activities like clean-up drives, tree planting, and proper waste management as supported by Gauld [32] and Kalungwizi et al. [33]. Likewise, Trihantoyo and Rahma [34] emphasized the role of green school programs in

shaping students' environmental attitudes and behaviors. This is supported by Buana et al. [35] school programs relative to care for the environment formed students' character. This result implies the enhancement of students' involvement and practice in activities that promote care for the environment.

This great extent entails that senior high school students practice the core value of *maka-Diyos*. This means that senior high school students are involved in religious activities and practice them in their day-to-day living. This great extent result can be attributed to the school celebrates mass once a month and other religious activities like recollections and retreats that helped to build this value as supported by Hidayah et al. [36] and Vide and Wroblewski [37]. Also, Nasikhah [38] and Komariah and Nihayah [39] underscore the role of educational institutions in instilling religious morals and character among the students. Meanwhile, this result could be attributed to the initiative of the catechists in the local church to conduct catechesis classes in the school. This initiative helped the students build the core value of *maka-Diyos* as supported by Macaraan [40]. Moreover, with a large number of Catholic students in the study, their religious

upbringing strongly impacted their practicing of faith which probably influenced the assessment [41,16]. This result implies optimizing student engagement in upholding their practice of *maka-Diyos* through active participation in faith-based activities.

In terms of religion, the very great extent result pertains that regardless of religious practices students emphasized practicing the DepEd core values. This means that all students regardless of religious affiliation practice the public school's core values. This could be because religious teachings also promote the practice of *maka-Diyos*, *makatao*, *makakalikasan*, and *makabansa*. In fact, religious education in churches teaches moral virtues, ethical conduct, and social justice as supported by Ives and Kidwell [42], King [43], and Fernando and Cabardo [44]. Hence, students who receive religious instructions may develop an awareness of ethical principles that translate to the practice of these core values [45]. This great extent result could be attributed to the universality of core values across all religions as supported by Seo [46] and Naz et al. [47]. This result signifies the fostering of students' involvement in church activities.

Table 2. Extent of students' practice of DepEd Core Values in a Public High School

Variables	Maka-Diyos			Makatao			Makakalikasan		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex									
Male	3.99	0.55	GE	4.15	0.62	GE	4.10	0.65	GE
Female	4.16	0.45	GE	4.35	0.51	VGE	4.26	0.54	VGE
Religion									
Catholic	4.10	0.49	GE	4.29	0.56	VGE	4.20	0.58	GE
Non-Catholic	4.06	0.52	GE	4.22	0.57	VGE	4.20	0.61	GE
Family Structure									
Nuclear	4.10	0.49	GE	4.29	0.56	VGE	4.18	0.60	GE
Single Parent	4.04	0.52	GE	4.20	0.55	GE	4.17	0.58	GE
Extended	4.12	0.52	GE	4.31	0.57	VGE	4.29	0.56	VGE
Strand									
ABM	3.95	0.35	GE	4.17	0.54	GE	4.20	0.52	GE
STEM	4.21	0.46	VGE	4.46	0.44	VGE	4.28	0.52	VGE
TVL	4.08	0.54	GE	4.18	0.63	GE	4.26	0.63	VGE
HUMSS	4.08	0.52	GE	4.29	0.57	VGE	4.16	0.62	GE
AD	3.89	0.63	GE	3.96	0.19	GE	3.93	0.70	GE
Sports	4.05	0.34	GE	4.02	0.47	GE	4.00	0.33	GE
Whole	4.09	0.50	GE	4.28	0.56	VGE	4.20	0.59	GE

Note: Great Extent (GE), Very Great Extent (VGE)

Table 3. Extent of students' practice of DepEd Core values in a public high school

Variables	Makabansa			Practice		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex						
Male	4.40	0.57	VGE	4.16	0.53	GE
Female	4.50	0.47	VGE	4.32	0.42	VGE
Religion						
Catholic	4.47	0.50	VGE	4.27	0.47	VGE
Non-Catholic	4.41	0.56	VGE	4.22	0.49	VGE
Family Structure						
Nuclear	4.46	0.51	VGE	4.26	0.47	VGE
Single Parent	4.46	0.48	VGE	4.22	0.45	VGE
Extended	4.45	0.56	VGE	4.30	0.50	VGE
Strand						
ABM	4.40	0.48	VGE	4.18	0.42	GE
STEM	4.63	0.40	VGE	4.40	0.39	VGE
TVL	4.43	0.54	VGE	4.23	0.52	VGE
HUMSS	4.44	0.55	VGE	4.25	0.49	VGE
AD	4.17	0.60	GE	3.99	0.49	GE
Sports	4.17	0.35	GE	4.06	0.34	GE
Whole	4.46	0.52	VGE	4.26	0.47	VGE

Note: Great Extent (GE), Very Great Extent (VGE)

3.2 Difference in the Students' Practice of DepEd Core Values in a Public High School

Table 4 presents the significant difference in the students' practice of DepEd core values when they were grouped according to the demographics. Mann Whitney U-Test and Kruskal Wallis were used to analyze the significant difference in their core value practice. There were no significant differences in the extent of the practice of DepEd core values when grouped according to religion [U=6955.5, p=0.534], family structure [$\chi^2(2)=1.009$, p=0.604], and strand [$\chi^2(5)=8.55$, p=0.128]. Hence, the hypotheses are accepted. Meanwhile, there was a significant difference in sex [U=8442, p=0.014]. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected. Post hoc analysis showed that in sex, females rated significantly higher than males.

The absence of differences in religion, family structure, and strand indicates that the students share an equal demonstration of the DepEd core values regardless of these mentioned demographic profiles. Meaning to say, whether they are Catholic or non-Catholic, they come from nuclear, single-parent, or extended, and whether they come from ABM, STEM, TVL, HUMSS, AD, or Sports they demonstrate the core values of *maka-Diyos*, *makatao*, *makakalikasan*, and *makabansa*.

In religion, the result defies the common thinking that those who are Catholic are more values-oriented given the Catholic church's emphasis on Catholic values [48,49]. The result also does not conform to the common perception that those who have intact families such as nuclear and extended have greater demonstration of values than those who are reared by single parents [50,51]. This also defies the common understanding that those who come from HUMSS strand are performing of values than their counterparts given the emphasis on the concepts of God, environment, human development, and nationalism [17,52].

The no significant difference result also indicates that the practice of DepEd core values does not depend on the religion either Catholic or Non-Catholic. This means that whatever religion the student has, they can practice DepEd core values. The no significant difference can be attributed to the common core beliefs principles and similar worship structures in every religion [53,46,47]. Likewise, it is observed that Catholics or Non-Catholics have the same ethical principles as love, charity, and compassion. This claim is supported by the study of Raza and Khalid [54] and Seo [46]. This result is congruent with the result of the study of Garcia and Bual [16] and Moodley [55] that regardless of religion, students share the same perceptions of the core value practice. This defies the common thinking that one religion is better than its counterparts. In

fact, the educational system in the Philippines is not religion-centric [56,57]. Hence, the result has no significant difference. In fact, the public schools in the Philippines are non-sectarian [58]. This result also implies that the practice of core values has been integrated with religious moral teachings.

In terms of family structure, the no significant difference result in the practice of DepEd core values indicates that the students practice the core values regardless of whether they belong to nuclear, extended, or single-parent families. This means that whatever family structure the student has, they exhibit the importance of practicing DepEd core values. The practice of core values such as *maka-Diyos*, *makatao*, *makakalikasan*, and *makabansa* between nuclear, extended, and single-parent family structures can be attributed to the universal nature of these values. These core values are widely endorsed and promoted across various social and cultural institutions, ensuring that individuals learn and practice these values regardless of their family structure. This is validated by the studies of Chambers and Gracia [59], Garcia and Bual [16], and Kokorelias et al. [60]. This result is consistent with the results of the studies of Moodley [55] and Garcia and Bual [16] that regardless of family structures, students share the same perceptions of the core value practice. This result indicates that the acquisition and practice of core values do not usually happen in respective homes but rather in schools [16,61]. This implies maintaining and fostering the practice of core values in the family and the involvement of the parents in school activities.

In terms of strands, this result of no significant differences indicates that all students across strands value practicing the DepEd core values of *maka-Diyos*, *makatao*, *makakalikasan*, and *makabansa*. This means that all strands in the locale are practicing the said values. This could

be attributed to the design of DepEd core values to be implemented across all strands [62,63]. In addition, DepEd aims to integrate core values into the curriculum across all subjects regardless of strands [10,16]. In fact, there are core subjects that are being taught in all strands which serve as an avenue for the practice of DepEd core values [64,16]. Meanwhile, the school activities and programs that elicit the practice of DepEd core values were given across all strands. Thus, all students regardless of strands practice the said values. This implies maintaining the implementation of DepEd core values through school activities and programs in the locale and consistent values integration in the lesson plan. Likewise, continuous values integration in all subjects regardless of strands.

In terms of sex, the result of there being significant differences in the practice of DepEd core values indicates that the practice varies concerning the student's sex identity. This means that the practice of public school core values differs if the student is male or female. This could be because female students actively participate in programs and activities related to DepEd core values often leading to a great extent of practice of these values. These claims are supported by the studies of Bretzin et al. [65] and Froiland and Worrell [66]. Lietaert et al. [67] and Al-Ansari et al. [68] mentioned that male students are less participative in school activities, unlike women. Also, this could be because female students especially at the secondary level tend to mature earlier than boys both emotionally and cognitively. This earlier maturation can lead to the practice of core values [69,70]. This implies the introduction and implementation of DepEd core values should be designed and framed to meet the needs of all students, irrespective of gender. Also, initiate activities for the male students that encourage them to practice the core values.

Table 4. Difference in the Students' Practice of DepED Core Values

Variable	U	z	p
Sex	8442.000*	-2.449	0.014
Religion	6955.500	-0.622	0.534
Variable	χ^2	df	p
Family Structure	1.009	2	0.604
Strand	8.550	5	0.128

Note: *difference is significant when $p < 0.05$

According to the study's theory, students' demographics affect the practice of public school core values. This study denied the used theory that the practice of DepEd core values differs by students' personal, social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. The theory's validity is denied by the inferential comparative result. It follows that the public schools should supply their grade 12 students with school programs and activities that will elicit their practice of DepEd core values. This means that to engage their students in demonstrating them, they need to sustainably provide activities that evoke students' practice of the said values. As a result, it shows that public schools must use all available resources to develop and reinforce grade 12 students' practice of *maka-Diyos*, *makatao*, *makakalikasan*, and *makabansa*. Further studies are encouraged employing the same theory to validate the claim of this paper.

4. CONCLUSION

This study implies sustaining the incorporation of DepEd core values into programs that involve practicing the said values like outreach, civic involvement, tree planting, gift-giving, and coastal clean-ups of the school. Also, the enhancement of students' involvement and practice in activities that promote care for the environment. Likewise, optimizing student engagement in upholding their practice of *maka-Diyos* through active participation in faith-based activities. Similarly, the practice of core values has been integrated with religious moral teachings. In addition, maintaining and fostering the practice of core values in the family and the involvement of the parents in school activities.

Moreover, maintaining the implementation of DepEd core values through school activities and programs in the locale and consistent values integration in the lesson plan. Furthermore, the introduction and implementation of DepEd core values should be designed and framed to meet the needs of all students, irrespective of gender. Additionally, the research locale should give importance to maintaining the students' awareness of DepEd core values to expect a high practice of these values. Consequently, the results suggest the importance of consistently implementing, monitoring, and empowering teachers through their leaders to develop students' practice of core values, ensuring sustained quality education. This study also highlights leveraging educational policies to elicit the practice of core values among the students.

Also, this study recommends that the locale may allocate resources for the success of this program. Meanwhile, the study recognizes teachers' training on how to practice the core values since they are considered models to the students.

Meanwhile, this paper recognizes various limitations. This was conducted in a public school on the six strands employed. Also, this was limited to the demographics used and utilized the quantitative research design. Given these limitations and the validation of the frameworks anchored, further studies are encouraged employing similar or other designs, additional demographics, strands, and frameworks to validate the claims of this study.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Authors hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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