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RVM PEDAGOGY: DOES IT MATTER ON STUDENTS' PRACTICE of SCHOOL'S CORE VALUES?

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ABSTRACT

The schools administered by the Religious of the Virgin Mary (RVM) Congregation in the Philippines used the RVM Pedagogy in their instructional processes. This study determined if the effects of the Pedagogy predict the students' practice of the school's core values of faith, service, and excellence. Involving 216 upper-class students in the tertiary level of two RVM schools in Northern Mindanao, Philippines, this investigation employed a concurrent, mixed-method research design. The instrument used was the scale in a previous study conducted by the researchers in 2018, and the items on values practices were based on the RVM Graduate Attributes. Qualitative data were taken from the focus group discussions. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression were employed to organize the data. Findings reveal that the effects of the pedagogy generally predict the participants' practice of the school's core values. Specifically, Participation in Social Transformation is a significant predictor of the three (3) core values; Active Engagement predicts the practice of Faith and Excellence; Values Formation is a predictor of Faith, and Deep Understanding and Interrelatedness to Life's Realities is a predictor of the practice of service. In a nutshell, the study concludes that the participants' perceived effects of the RVM pedagogy can make a difference in their practice of the school's core values of faith, service, and excellence. The findings of this study point to the need for institutions to examine their goal in developing graduates imbued with the school's core values according to their philosophy and avowed vision and mission.

Keywords: RVM pedagogy, Core values, Active engagement and collaboration, Values formation, Social transformation

Introduction

The search for teaching pedagogy that makes a difference in students' learning and their life, in general, has been an unending quest among educators. A teacher's pedagogy is crucial in addressing student's learning needs (Klotz, 2006; Stender, 2010; Buendia, Gitlin, & Doumbia, 2003). The critical importance of pedagogy on students' learning is highlighted in the empirical investigation of Chavez and Napiere (2017) on the effects of the pedagogy on their learning. The study revealed the factors of *Participation in Social Transformation, Values Formation, Active Engagement and Collaboration, and Deep Understanding of the Concept and its Interrelatedness with Life's Realities* as emerging themes of the effects of the pedagogy using exploratory factor analysis. It can be inferred from the study, then, that the pedagogy has farreaching effects on the students' practices of the core values.

Further, Livingston (2010) espoused that pedagogy influences an individual's learning ability to align with the school's goal by enlightening the students and helping them excel. Students can excel when pedagogy is effectively disseminated. Kemp, Blake, Shaw, and Preston (2009) confirmed that when students absorb and apply knowledge, instructors disseminated pedagogy successfully. Moreover, Tannebaum and Hughes (2015) asserted that the aims of education were seen as larger than simply having students remember information for summative assessments. Instead, it prepares students to become citizens who participate in society, is open to new ideas, and are capable of voicing their opinion through a variety of mediums.

Barton (2012) likewise asserted that discussion in the classroom can assist educators in achieving the aims of developing students into rational, autonomous, and open-minded citizens capable of entering into a pluralist society. In addition, Gay (2000) explained that "Teachers must understand, facilitate, and appreciate pedagogy that is culturally responsive and responsible by creating educational environments that offer safe, welcoming, and caring communities of learners" (as cited by Gallavan, 2005).

In its effort to contribute to transformative quality education, the education ministry of the Religious of the Virgin Mary conceptualized an educational approach to guide the instructional processes of RVM Catholic schools throughout the country. This approach known as the RVM Pedagogy comprises four components namely: "1) constructivism (Piaget, 1970); 2) elements of understanding by design (Wiggins and McTighe, 2011); 3) differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 2000); and 4) the 4-pronged approach which covers the integration of a) Ignacian core and related values, b) contemporary social realities, c) concepts across subject boundaries / other disciplines and d) Biblical texts reflection concerning the concepts taught" (Guillano, 2018).

Constructivism is exemplified in its approach of activating students' prior knowledge as well as encouraging the students to engage in meaning-making out of their learning experiences. The need to integrate social realities in instruction is upheld by Hahn (2010) who emphasized that "when students perceive that several sides of issues are presented and discussed, and when they

feel comfortable expressing their views, they are more likely to develop attitudes that foster later civic participation." The inclusion of biblical texts in the instructional process is supported by the postulation of Bowman & Small (2010) that the religious affiliation of the institution plays a key role in the spiritual development of the individual, which may be manifested through classroom learning and out-of-class events. This implies that student activities provided by the institution may be the conduit for this faith development and the enhancement of values which Oyserman (2015) described as "internalized cognitive structure that guides decision making by establishing basic principles of right and wrong, a sense of priorities, meaning, and patterns."

This pedagogy intends to lead learners to practice the school's core values of FAITH, SERVICE, and EXCELLENCE. The practice of these core values includes the following indicators:

FAITH. Indicators that the students practice this value include demonstrating faithful obedience to God's commandments through a life of witnessing; practicing discernment of God's will before making decisions; actively participating in activities that promote the health of mind, body, and spirit; and helping settle misunderstanding by clarifying various points of view. Related to this value is the work of Parks (2000), who proposes that faith development is a process of meaning-making, which connects to an individual desire for action that may result in social change.

SERVICE. The students practice this value as indicated by their active participation in church, civic, government programs for the poor; showing kindness in words and actions despite the negative experiences with others; serving without counting the cost; sharing resources to people in need, and preserving and protecting the environment.

EXCELLENCE. The practice of this core value includes demonstrating ethical behavior in dealing with others; expressing ideas tactfully and truthfully; producing quality work despite difficulties; managing time and responsibilities appropriate to effectively accomplish tasks, and demonstrating adequate knowledge and skills following high standards.

This empirical investigation argues that students' practice of the core values is influenced by their perceived effects of the RVM Pedagogy in their instructional experiences in the classroom. As cited earlier, the study of Chavez and Napiere identified the following factors that emerge as effects of the pedagogy as *Participation in Social Transformation, Values Formation, Active Engagement and Collaboration, and Deep Understanding of the Concept and its Interrelatedness with Life's Realities.*

Participation in Social Transformation. The participants believe that the effects of the pedagogy inspire them to become good stewards of God's creation; train them to be service-oriented individuals; make them reflect on current issues and do something about them; remind them to become responsible members of the society and to volunteer and contribute to social and economic development, and keep them vigilant with social issues. As noted by Levisohn (2012), a primary purpose of service-learning is to "effect some change in the world."

Values Formation. Indicators of the effects of values formation include inspiring them to do more for God's greater glory through biblical text reflections; helping them to be upright and God-loving persons; enabling them to become more compassionate, humble, faithful, persevering, resourceful, flexible, and open; encouraging them to be better persons and leaders; teaching them to face challenges and difficult situations courageously, and enabling them to think critically and analytically. Concerning this factor, Feenstra (2001) argues that service-learning activities may lead to a more defined sense of vocation, which is a key focal point in higher education.

Active Engagement and Collaboration. The effects of active engagement and collaboration comprise helping them to be disciplined/focused; making their class alive and active; encouraging them to do their part in doing projects; providing them the opportunity to generate ideas through group sharing; and enabling them to understand the lessons.

Deep Understanding of the Concept and its Interrelatedness with Life's Realities. The perceived effect of this factor includes the following dimensions: allowing them to acquire new knowledge that they could apply in their lives; enabling them to discover new things / see the bigger picture; helping them to understand by relating the lesson with the social realities; providing a concrete image of reality by reflecting the social world in the lesson; using relevant concepts to make me effective in my chosen career; broadening their knowledge through the construction of new concepts; helping them see the interrelatedness of the lesson to other disciplines, and expanding their knowledge with the integration of other subjects in the lesson, and making them relate the learned concepts to life's realities/ experiences.

In a nutshell, Figure 1 features the schema showing the interrelationship of the variables in the study, particularly the themes under the Effects of the RVM Pedagogy and the participants' practice of the core values of faith, service, and excellence.

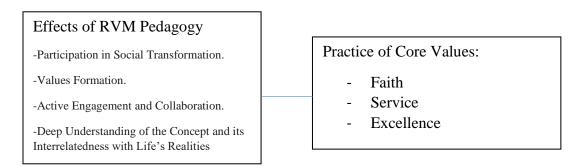


Figure 1. Schema Showing the Interrelationship of the Variables in the Study

To date, there is a dearth of study which attempts to determine the link between the RVM pedagogy and the extent of students' practice on the school's core values of faith, service, and excellence. This is an area of research that needs to be explored for the RVM schools throughout the country and abroad to enrich the implementation of the pedagogy to effectively respond to

its thrust for *Transformative Ignacian Marian Education* among its graduates. The study hopes to get a glimpse of the quality of graduates that the school commits to producing year-end and year out.

Statement of the Problem

This empirical study aimed to ascertain the link between the effect of the RVM Pedagogy on the students' practice of the school's core values of faith, service, and excellence. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions: 1) How do the participants assess the effects of the RVM Pedagogy in terms of their active engagement and collaboration, deep understanding and interrelatedness to life's realities, values formation, and participation in social transformation; 2) To what extent do they practice the values of faith, service, and excellence? and 3) Does the participants' assessment of the effects of the pedagogy significantly predict their practice of the school's core values?

Research Method

The study employed the concurrent mixed-method research design (Creswell, 2011) which utilized both quantitative and qualitative data. The instrument used to ascertain the effect of the implementation of the RVM Pedagogy was based on the scale developed by Chavez and Napiere (2018), and items on the practices of core values were from the RVM Graduate Attributes by the RVM Education Ministry Commission (2013). The items were internally consistent based on the Cronbach's alpha which ranged from .880 to .919. A total of 216 upper-class college students from two (2) RVM tertiary schools in Northern Mindanao, Philippines, participated in the study. There are five (5) RVM schools in Northern Mindanao, and the other 3 schools are situated far from Cagayan de Oro City, and the choice of the 2 schools considered the proximity of such schools in the city, considering the similarity of the participants' cultural backgrounds. The participants come from various courses such as teacher-education, nutrition and dietetics, hotel and restaurant management, information technology, accounting, business administration, library science, and social work. Focus group discussions were conducted to generate qualitative data that supported the quantitative data. Descriptive statistics were used to organize the effects of the implementation of the RVM Pedagogy and the extent of the student's practice of the core values. To ascertain whether the effects of the implementation of the pedagogy predict the students' practice of the core values, multiple regression was employed.

Results

Data on the effect of the RVM Pedagogy are shown in Table 1. Having experienced the RVM Pedagogy in their classes, the participants responded that the effect of the pedagogy was generally high and with relatively less dispersion (M=3.59, SD =0.35). Among the factors, *Values Formation* got the highest mean (M=3.72) implying that the pedagogy has facilitated the

enhancement of their values. Sample items under this factor include their claim that the pedagogy enabled them to put God and His will first and they were able to act accordingly, and it helped them to be upright and God-loving persons (both with M=3.80).

Table 1. Mean Distribution of the Effects of the Implementation of the RVM Pedagogy

Effects	M	Interpretation	SD
Active Engagement and Collaboration	3.50	Moderate	0.46
Deep Understanding and Interrelatedness to Life's Realities	3.53	High	0.59
Values Formation	3.72	High	0.35
Participation in Social Transformation	3.61	High	0.40
Overall Mean	3.59	High	0.35

Legend:

3.51 - 4.0 = High 2.51 - 3.50 = Moderate 1.51 - 2.50 = Low 1.0 - 1.50 = Very Low

Concerning these findings, a participant shared during the focus group discussion that she appreciated more deeply the importance of their profession as a nutritionist and that of professionalism, specifically in observing food ethics, as well as the way they appropriately handle patients.

This is followed by their *Participation in Social Transformation* which they also rated as high (M=3.61, SD=0.40). Under this factor, participants acknowledged that the pedagogy inspired them to be good stewards of God's creation (M=3.71, SD = 0.49); it developed their sense of respect towards other peoples' beliefs (M=3.69, SD=0.51); and it trained them to be service-oriented toward the less fortunate in the community (M=3.61, SD=0.54).

Such findings were supported by the qualitative responses of the participants. One of them said that the atmosphere in the classroom enabled him to internalize the value of respect. Another participant said that because the teacher led the class to see the broader picture of what is to be done with public health nutrition, she was prepared to use such a routine in the actual clinical practice during their internship. The participants likewise recognized that the RVM Pedagogy has helped them gain a deep understanding of the concepts and the interrelatedness of such concepts to reality to a high extent (M=3.53, SD=0.59).

However, while they recognized that the pedagogy enabled them to get *Actively Engaged and to Collaborate* in class, this factor was only rated as moderate (M=3.50, SD=0.46). The items that were rated as low are on making the class alive and active (M=3.50, SD=-0.62) although it can also be seen that the responses were more dispersed which may imply that there are students who may have assessed the pedagogy to be more engaging. This finding may be helpful to teachers for them to examine how they could improve the way they facilitate learning for more student participation.

Table 2. Mean Distribution of the Practice of Core Values

Core Values	M	Interpretation	SD
Faith	3.63	High	0.53
Service	3.56	Moderate	0.52
Excellence	3.48	High	0.42
Overall Mean	3.55	High	0.38

Legend: 3.51 - 4.0 = High

1.51 - 2.50 = Low

2.51 - 3.50 = Moderate1.0 - 1.50 = Verv Low

The participants' responses on the practice of their core values are presented in Table 2. Data reveal a generally high rating (M=3.55, SD=0.38) implying that students endeavor to put into practice the school's core values. The highest rating was made on faith (M=3.63, SD=0.53); followed by excellence (M=3.48, SD= 0.42), and the practice of service was rated as moderate. The qualitative responses complemented these findings. Around three (3) students shared that the integration of reflections from the Biblical texts concerning their lessons enabled them to see the spiritual aspects of such lessons. One of them also pointed out that spiritual activities are given to both Catholics and non-Catholics alike in and outside the four walls of the classroom.

Concerning excellence, one participant shared that the quality of discussion and examinations given by the teachers challenged them to study and do their best so they could wholeheartedly and efficiently give service, especially when they were in their internship.

As regards their practice of service, although this was generally rated as moderate, one student shared that because the teachers enabled them to see the outside world in their discussion in class, they were able to see the peoples' lives and perspectives and they were able to practice setting limits or practice discipline.

Table 3. Regression Analysis of the Effects of the RVM Pedagogy as Predictors of the Practice of the Value of Faith

Effects of the Implementation of the RVM Pedagogy	Std.Err B	Beta	t	P
Active Engagement and Collaboration	.065	.155	2.03*	.044
Deep Understanding and Interrelatedness to Life's Realities	.069	.073	.926	.356
Values Formation	.071	.272	4.14**	.000
Participation in Social Transformation	.065	.329	4.77**	.000

Model Summary

 $R^2 = .493$ Adjusted $R^2 = .484$ R = .702F = 51.37p = .000

Regression Analysis was made on the effects of the RVM Pedagogy as predictors of the participants' practice of faith (Table 3). Findings reveal that the whole model is significant (F=51.37, p=.000) and 48.4 percent of the variability in the participants' practice of faith is explained by a combination of the four (4) factors (Adjusted R^2 =.484). Data also show that the

highest predictor is *Participation in Social Transformation* (t=4.77, p= .000), followed by *Values Formation* (t=4.14, p=.000) and *Active Engagement and Collaboration* (t=2.03, p=.044).

Furthermore, for every unit increase in the perceived effect of the pedagogy on the participants' *Participation in Social Transformation*, there is a corresponding .329 increase in their practice of faith. Thus the hypothesis is supported by the findings. Evidence from the study shows that students who assess the pedagogy as highly beneficial to them in terms of *Participation in Social Transformation, Values Formation* and *Active Engagement, and Collaboration* also tend to practice faith to a high extent. This must be attributed to the fact that serving as advocates of change built on a strong values formation and active collaboration enables them to demonstrate their faith in God by doing His will. This finding is supported by the sharing of the students in the focus group discussion. One student from the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy said:

"In this environment, it is easy to drift away, but with the pedagogy used by our teachers, we can uphold the values and see meaning in what we do in life; and we owe it to God."

Such finding aligns with the postulation of Parks (2000) that espoused that faith development is a process of meaning-making, which connects to an individual desire for action that may result in social change. Further, Feenstra (2001) argues that service-learning activities may lead to a more defined sense of vocation, which is a key focal point in higher education.

Table 4 presents the regression analysis made on the effects of the RVM pedagogy as predictors of the participants' practice of the value of service (Table 4). Results show that the whole model is significant (F=40.55, p=.000) and 42.4 percent of the variations in the practice of service can be accounted for by a combination of the effects of the RVM Pedagogy in the four (4) factors, but most importantly, its effect on *Participation in Social Transformation* (t=5.26, p= .000), followed by *Deep Understanding and Interrelatedness to Life's Realities* (t=3.07, p=.002). Furthermore, for every unit increase in the perceived effect of the pedagogy on the participants' *Participation in Social Transformation*, there is a corresponding .383 increase in their practice of service.

Findings show that students who were helped to participate in social transformation, and who gained a deep understanding of life's realities tend to practice service to a high extent. One of the prongs of the pedagogy is relating the concept to societal realities and this is reinforced by the concept of generalization, part of the instructional process, which promotes essential understanding of the topic at hand. It is most likely to happen, then, that the participants would likely be moved into action and be propelled to be sensitive to the needs of others.

Table 4. Regression Analysis of the Effects of the RVM Pedagogy as Predictors of the Practice of the Value of Service

Effects of the Implementation of the RVM Pedagogy	Std.Err B	Beta	t	p
Active Engagement and Collaboration	.076	.000	.006	.995
Deep Understanding and Interrelatedness to Life's Realities	.081	.254	3.07**	.002
Values Formation	.084	.119	1.72	.087
Participation in Social Transformation	.076	.383	5.26**	.000
Model Sur	nmary			
$R = .659$ $R^2 = .435$ Adjusted R^2	= .424	F= 40.	55 p	=.000

This finding resonated with the disclosures of Tannebaum and Hughes (2015) which asserted that the aims of education were seen as larger than simply having students remember information for summative assessments. Instead, emphasis should be to prepare students to become citizens who participate in society, are open to new ideas, and are capable of voicing their opinion through a variety of mediums. As noted by Levisohn (2012), a primary purpose of service-learning is to "affect some change in the world."

This finding is supported by some responses from students in the focus group discussion such as the following:

"Because we have been trained to attend to the needs of others, like preparing menus for the sick, I have been inspired not to think only of my benefit but that of others" (BSND student)

"Knowing that my companion in my On-the-Job training needs to rest, I need to come on time to replace her/him. Managing time effectively is my way of serving" (BSBA student).

Table 5. Regression Analysis of the Effects of the RVM Pedagogy as Predictors of the Practice of the Value of Excellence

value of Exce	Hence			
Effects of the Implementation of the RVM Pedagogy	Std.Err of B	Beta	ı t	p
Active Engagement and Collaboration	.101	.298	3.35**	.00
Deep Understanding and Interrelatedness to Life's Realities	.108	032	353	.72
Values Formation	.112	126	-1.64	.10
Participation in Social Transformation	.102	.441	5.49**	.00
Model Su	mmary			_
$R = .559$ $R^2 = .313$ Adjusted R	$2^2 = .300$	F= 24.	p = .0	000

The effects of the pedagogy were likewise found to predict the practice of excellence as shown in Table 5. Findings reveal that the model is significant (F=24.00, p=.000). Furthermore, 42.4

percent of the variations in the practice of excellence can be accounted for by a combination of the four (4) factors, but most importantly, Participation in Social Transformation (t=5.49, p= .000), followed by *Active Engagement and Collaboration* (t=3.35, p=.001). for every unit increase in the perceived effect of the pedagogy on the participants' Participation in Social Transformation, there is a corresponding .441 increase in their practice of excellence. Responses of the participants related to this finding include the following:

Table 6. Regression Analysis of the Effects of the RVM Pedagogy as Predictors of the Practice of the Core Values

Core varies					
Effects of the RVM Pedagogy	Std. 1 — of	Err. B Beta	t	p	
Active Engagement and Collaboration	.066	.208	2.72**	.007	
Deep Understanding and Interrelatedness to Life's Realities	.070	.101	1.28	.201	
Values Formation	.073	.063	.955	.341	
Participation in Social Transformation	.066	.436	6.29**	.000	
Model	Summar	y			

R= .700
$$R^2 = .490$$
 Adjusted $R^2 = .481$ F= 50.72 $p = .000$

As a whole, the pedagogy was found to be helpful in the participants' practice of the core values as shown in Table 6. The model is significant (F=50.72, p=.000). Furthermore, 48.1 percent of the variability in the practice of the core values can be explained by a combination of the four (4) factors, but most importantly, Participation in Social Transformation (t=6.29, p= .000), followed by Active Engagement and Collaboration (t=2.72, p=.007). Furthermore, for every unit increase in the perceived effect of the pedagogy on the participants' Participation in Social Transformation, there is a corresponding .436 increase in their practice of the core values. This implies that students who are actively engaged in the instructional process and who are committed to social transformation are more likely to practice the school's core values.

This was supported by the qualitative data from the focus group sharing. Two of them shared that they learned discipline; they became respectful; they applied what they learned in specific competencies such as preparing liquidity ratios, calculating the nutrient content in food, and managing their finances. They admitted they became determined to move forward despite financial and emotional difficulties. Other responses include the following:

"I apply what I learned here at home such as mixing drinks. The pedagogy enabled me to serve without complaint" (BSHRM student)

[&]quot;I learned to do my best, and not be sloppy, not mediocre in whatever I do" (BSA student)

[&]quot;I love my work so even if I am tired, I maintain a joyful disposition in attending to the needs of the guests in the restaurant during my internship" (BSHRM student)

"I became confident in leading the prayer in the bank where I was assigned." (BSBA student)

"I develop compassion. Here, the instructional process does not create anxiety so I can freely express my thoughts" (BSHRM student)

Discussion

Findings reveal that in general, the effects of the pedagogy (especially on enabling them to participate in social transformation and on their active engagement/collaboration in class) were contributory to the practice of faith, service, and excellence. The findings further imply that when students are exposed to pedagogical processes that integrate care for others, being other-oriented, and contributing to the upliftment of people in the community, they spontaneously transfer this learning and develop the passion to embody the values wherever they are.

Such finding is supported by Hahn (2010) which asserted that when students are exposed to social realities coupled with conducive environments, they most likely develop attitudes that promote civic participation. Moreover, they develop the ability to judge what is right, passionately pursue it and act accordingly. The contribution made by the RVM Pedagogy to students' values confirms what Astin, Astin, and Lindholm (2011) found that students' undergraduate experiences are significantly enhanced when qualities such as caring and equanimity are developed throughout their academic career; and facilitating an environment of transparency and consent encourages the development of values (Smith, Vicuña, & Emmanuel, 2015). The findings are also aligned with the thrust of UNESCO (2002) that the development of values has been a major concern to the most education system in different countries of the world.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In a nutshell, the study concludes that the participants' perceived effects of the RVM pedagogy can make a difference in their practice of the school's core values of faith, service, and excellence. This means that active engagement and participation in social transformation are contributory factors to the students' practice of core values. The findings of this study point to the need for teachers to examine their instructional processes to ensure that these are more student-centered so they can more actively engage. Furthermore, group activities or learning tasks that are more engaging, meaningful, and challenges have to be explored. They also need to implement innovative strategies that spur students to be more involved in community service. The study further recommends that school administrators consider revisiting their instructional practices if these align to develop graduates imbued with the school's core values according to the school's philosophy and avowed vision and mission.

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