

Implementation of Character Education among Private Schools

¹Princess B. Estabillo, ²Levita P. Dugay, ³Mary Ann D. Batali, ⁴Irene T. Daus

¹Bangaan Elementary School

²Bonfal Pilot Central School

³Bangaan Elementary School

⁴Quezon National High School

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ABSTRACT

Character Education is at the heart of a free and appropriate public education. Hence, this study ascertained the relationship between the level of teachers' implementation of character education when grouped according to their profile. The descriptive-correlation method of research was used in this study as it is the most appropriate and applicable method to answer the specific problems. The Likert point scale was used to collect data from private elementary teachers in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya as respondents. Descriptive statistical techniques such as frequency, percentage, and weighted mean were used to determine the distribution of the respondents' profile, and the level of teachers' implementation of character education. To establish a significant relationship between the variables, the T-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used. Results of the study shows that almost of the statements rated as strongly agree by the respondents, these show that the private schools in Bayombong are implementing character education as part of their school curricula. Further, committees and school plans are inclined with their character education's goal.

Key Words Implementation, Character Education, School Curricula

INTRODUCTION

Eva Sakellaridi (2006) defines character education as an education that promotes and nurtures the intellectual, ethical, social and emotional development of a person. She said that this is a continuous process of adopting to enable young people and adults to become moral, caring, critical and responsible individuals. She also mentioned that this type of education is representing a bonding relationship on values and skills that is necessary for success. In her theory about knowledge, she referred to two kinds of knowledge. The first one, which is the general knowledge encompasses a range of a wider subject, and the second one which is the specialized knowledge that is obtained through an extensive reading and training in a particular field of studies. On the other hand, she stated that values are the beliefs and moral codes of a person about what is good and bad which tends to influence attitude and behaviors.

A book published by Stephen Covey (1989) entitled *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* talks about the importance of character education and he stated that almost all the literature in the first 150 years or so focused on what could be called the character ethic as the foundation of success—things such as integrity, humility, fidelity, temperance, courage, justice, patience, industry, simplicity, modesty, and the Golden Rule.” He wrote about today’s culture that is submerged in negativity, incivility, insults, bullying, harassment, self-centeredness and more. Most people look at those problems but few only are widespread commitments to do something about it. He mentioned that in a classroom, each students needs recognition, self- worth, empathy and belonging so schools should always implement an inherent character development program.

Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao is a core subject that is introduced as a part of DepED K-12 curriculum. This subject aims to guide and mold students to decide and act responsibly. It also aims to develop and enrich personal ethics.

To possess these learnings, one should be understanding, reflective, open to advice, decisive, and open to action. Teaching this subject uses ethical decision-making involving analysis of different issues. Ethical decision making revolves around making a decision in good intentions and the betterment of one's personality. The process of ethical decision making is: 1.) knowing the details of a situation, 2.) careful consideration of the importance of a situation, 3.) being sensitive to moral aspects in situations, 4.) the consciousness of a person on a situation.

For public schools, Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao is introduced starting in Grade 1. For Grades 1 to 3, this subject is taught using their mother tongue, which is Iloko. For the preceding years, it is taught with either tagalog or English until Grade 12. This is a basic subject for public schools. For Christian schools, the Religious Education subject includes Christian values, living, and studies that also tackle Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao.

This study aimed to determine the level of Implementation of Character Education among Private Schools in Bayombong. Specifically, this study sought to 1) determine the demographic profile of the Elementary Teachers in terms of age, gender, highest educational attainment, civil status, and length of experience as a teacher; 2) determine the level of teachers' implementation of character education; and 3) determine the significant difference with the level of teachers' implementation of character education when grouped according to their profile.

RESEARCH METHOD

The descriptive-correlation method of research was used in this study as it is the most appropriate and applicable method to answer the specific problems that were raised. The correlation method was designed to determine if two or more variables are associated with each other, while the descriptive method was used for the purpose of identifying and studying individual characteristic components in the population.

As this study aimed to determine the perceptions of elementary teachers regarding character education in private schools, a suitable instrument was chosen to collect data from the targeted population. To provide a more comprehensive assessment of character education implementation, future administration of the study may obtain data from multiple stakeholders, including teachers, school administrators, pupils, and parents. In addition to the questionnaire, classroom observations and document analysis may be employed to validate and supplement self-reported responses. Relevant school documents, such as curriculum guides, school policies, pupil handbooks, activity plans, character education programs, and assessment records, may be examined to determine the extent to which character education is integrated into actual school practices. The instrument used to collect data is a questionnaire. The instrument was structured around clear indicators of character education implementation, namely: (1) curriculum integration, (2) teacher practices, (3) school policies and institutional support, (4) extracurricular and service-learning activities, (5) parental involvement, and (6) assessment and monitoring procedures. These indicators were intended to provide a more systematic assessment of how character education is implemented in the participating private schools. The questionnaire may be further validated by experts in education and character development to establish its content validity and reliability before administration. The questionnaire was formulated in the form of a checklist using the Likert 4-point scale rated as 1.00-1.75, "Strongly Disagree"; 1.76-2.50, "Disagree"; 2.51-3.25, "Agree"; and 3.26-4.00, "Strongly Agree". The questionnaire's results were consolidated and came up with the mean, which determines the pulse of the respondents regarding the study.

The respondents of the study consisted of private elementary teachers in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, namely PLTC Elementary Department, Muir Woods Academy, United Methodist Christian School of Bayombong Inc., Sierra College Elementary Department, and Kingsway Christian Academy. A total of 30 teachers were the number of respondents.

To conform to the ethical standards and practices of research, the researchers sought permission to conduct the study from the school principals. After obtaining the necessary permission, the researchers personally administered the questionnaire to the private elementary teachers of Bayombong. After the retrieval, the data were tallied, classified, analyzed, and interpreted.

In analyzing and interpreting the data gathered, descriptive statistical techniques such as frequency, percentage, and weighted mean will be used. Frequency and percentage will be used to determine the distribution of the respondents' profile, and the level of teachers' implementation of character education.

T-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) will be used to identify the significant differences in the level of teachers' implementation of character education when respondents are grouped by profile.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Profile of the Respondents

Table 1. The profile of respondents

Profile	Specifics	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	6	20.0
	Female	24	80.0
Civil Status	Married	6	20.0
	Single	24	80.0
Age Mean: 23.53	21-22	10	33.3
	23-24	12	40.0
	25-26	5	16.7
	27-28	3	10.0
Length of Experience	1-6 months	4	13.3
	7-12 months	15	50.0
	More than 1 year - 3 years	11	36.7
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelors' Degere	30	100

The table above shows the profile of the respondents. It is observed that there are more female (24 or 80%) than male (6 or 20%) respondents. Concerning civil status, 24 or 80 percent are single while 6 or 20% are married. The age of the respondents ranges from 21 to 28 years old with a mean of 23.53. More respondents are from 23 to 24 years old, with 12 or 40 percent. Also, there are 10 or 33.3 percent who are aged 21 to 22 years old, while there are 5 or 16.7 percent aged 25 to 26 years old. The fewest respondents are 27 to 28 years old and above, with 3 or 10 percent. In their length of experience, 15 or 50 percent of the respondents are in the service for 7 to 12 months, 11 or 36.7 percent are in the service for more than a year to 3 years, and 4 or 13.3 percent are in the service for 1 to 6 months. Lastly, all of the respondents are graduates of a bachelor's degree.

3.2 Level of Teachers' Implementation of Character Education

Table 2. Level of teachers' implementation of character education in connection with the statements listed.

Statements	Mean	Description
1. Character/ethics education is a very important part of our school mission.	3.77	Strongly Agree

2. Character/ethics education objectives are explicitly identified in our pupil's handbook.	3.73	Strongly Agree
3. School faculty would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.	3.67	Strongly Agree
4. Pupils would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.	3.37	Strongly Agree
5. Our school has a committee that meets regularly to advance a strategic plan for character/ethics education.	3.27	Strongly Agree
6. Our teachers purposefully integrate character/ethics lessons into their academic curricula and artifacts of these lesson are visible in the school.	3.80	Strongly Agree
7. School faculty teach and practice a clearly strategy of character-based decision making.	3.70	Strongly Agree
8. We seek to develop pupil's leadership as a part of our character/ethics education strategy, which clubs and extra-curricular activities.	3.60	Strongly Agree
9. We purposefully seek to plan service opportunities, which includes service learning as a part of our character/ethics education strategy.	3.73	Strongly Agree
10. Our school faculty recognize the definitions and can demonstrate lesson applications that cultivate moral and performance character.	3.73	Strongly Agree
11. Our school faculty recognize the definitions and distinct applications of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and how this relates to pupil character formation.	3.83	Strongly Agree
12. Our school faculty have had professional development opportunities specifically focused on character/ethics education in the last three years.	3.50	Strongly Agree
13. Schools should assume a central role in shaping the character of youth.	3.33	Strongly Agree
14. Character education can reverse the perceived moral decline of today's society.	3.53	Strongly Agree
15. Character education prepares pupils to become responsible citizens.	3.67	Strongly Agree
16. Negative pupils' behaviors can reduce through character education.	3.60	Strongly Agree
17. Character education would contribute to improved pupil's achievement.	3.63	Strongly Agree
18. Character education is an important as an academic education.	3.60	Strongly Agree
19. Parents at our school understand and support character education mission.	3.13	Agree
20. Character education programs that include parents can be most effective.	3.43	Strongly Agree

The respondents strongly agree that character education is a very important part of the schools' mission. Further, they strongly agree that the objectives of character education must be explicitly identified in the student handbook and teachers and pupils should be able to identify and define the school's core values to a visitor. Furthermore, they strongly agree that their school has a committee that meets regularly to advance the strategic plan. Also, they strongly agree that teachers in their school purposefully integrate character/ethics lessons into their academic curricula and practice character-based decision-making. Moreover, they strongly agree to develop pupils' leadership and plan service opportunities, which includes service learning as a part of our character/ethics education strategy. In addition, they strongly agree that their school faculty recognize the definitions and can demonstrate lesson applications that cultivate moral and performance character, and distinct applications of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and how this relates to pupil character formation. They also strongly agree that they had professional development opportunities specifically focused on character/ethics education in the last three years. Likewise, they strongly agree that schools should assume a central role in shaping the character of youth, character education can reverse the perceived moral decline of today's society and prepares pupils to become responsible citizens. They also strongly agree that it can reduce negative pupils' behaviors. Similarly, they strongly agree that it can contribute to improved pupil's achievement, it is an important in academic education, and programs that include parents can be most effective. Lastly, the respondents agree that parents in their school understand and support character education mission.

3.3 Significant Difference in the Level of Teachers' Implementation of Character Education When Grouped According to their Profile

Table 4. T-test on the Level of Teachers' Implementation of Character Education When Grouped According to their Sex

Statements	P value	Decision
1. Character/ethics education is a very important part of our school mission.	.140	Accept Ho
2. Character/ethics education objectives are explicitly identified in our pupil's handbook.	.692	Accept Ho
3. School faculty would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.	1.000	Accept Ho
4. Pupils would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.	.856	Accept Ho
5. Our school has a committee that meets regularly to advance a strategic plan for character/ethics education.	.115	Accept Ho
6. Our teachers purposefully integrate character/ethics lessons into their academic curricula and artifacts of these lesson are visible in the school.	.183	Accept Ho
7. School faculty teach and practice a clearly strategy of character-based decision making.	.849	Accept Ho
8. We seek to develop pupil's leadership as a part of our character/ethics education strategy, which clubs and extra-curricular activities.	.721	Accept Ho
9. We purposefully seek to plan service opportunities, which includes service learning as a part of our character/ethics education strategy.	.692	Accept Ho
10. Our school faculty recognize the definitions and can demonstrate lesson applications that cultivate moral and performance character.	.105	Accept Ho

11. Our school faculty recognize the definitions and distinct applications of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and how this relates to pupil character formation.	.235	Accept Ho
12. Our school faculty have had professional development opportunities specifically focused on character/ethics education in the last three years.	.379	Accept Ho
13. Schools should assume a central role in shaping the character of youth.	.205	Accept Ho
14. Character education can reverse the perceived moral decline of today's society.	.009	Reject Ho
15. Character education prepares pupils to become responsible citizens.	.055	Accept Ho
16. Negative pupils' behaviors can reduce through character education.	.025	Reject Ho
17. Character education would contribute to improved pupil's achievement.	.038	Reject Ho
18. Character education is an important as an academic education.	.721	Accept Ho
19. Parents at our school understand and support character education mission.	.490	Accept Ho
20. Character education programs that include parents can be most effective.	.596	Accept Ho

The table above shows the t-test on the level of teachers' implementation of character education when grouped according to their sex. A significant difference was obtained in the statements "Character education can reverse the perceived moral decline of today's society.", "Negative pupils' behaviors can reduce through character education.", and "Character education would contribute to improved pupil's achievement." This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference on the level of teachers' implementation of character education when they are group according to profile. This means that their sex affects the level of implementation of character education in the statements mentioned but has nothing to do with the other statements.

Table 5. T-test on the Level of Teachers' Implementation of Character Education When Grouped According to their Civil Status

Statements	P value	Decision
1. Character/ethics education is a very important part of our school mission.	.459	Accept Ho
2. Character/ethics education objectives are explicitly identified in our pupil's handbook.	.246	Accept Ho
3. School faculty would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.	.765	Accept Ho
4. Pupils would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.	.337	Accept Ho
5. Our school has a committee that meets regularly to advance a strategic plan for character/ethics education.	.444	Accept Ho
6. Our teachers purposefully integrate character/ethics lessons into their academic curricula and artifacts of these lesson are visible in the school.	.840	Accept Ho

7. School faculty teach and practice a clearly strategy of character-based decision making.	.289	Accept Ho
8. We seek to develop pupil's leadership as a part of our character/ethics education strategy, which clubs and extra-curricular activities.	.298	Accept Ho
9. We purposefully seek to plan service opportunities, which includes service learning as a part of our character/ethics education strategy.	.265	Accept Ho
10. Our school faculty recognize the definitions and can demonstrate lesson applications that cultivate moral and performance character.	.708	Accept Ho
11. Our school faculty recognize the definitions and distinct applications of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and how this relates to pupil character formation.	.508	Accept Ho
12. Our school faculty have had professional development opportunities specifically focused on character/ethics education in the last three years.	.855	Accept Ho
13. Schools should assume a central role in shaping the character of youth.	.507	Accept Ho
14. Character education can reverse the perceived moral decline of today's society.	.468	Accept Ho
15. Character education prepares pupils to become responsible citizens.	.401	Accept Ho
16. Negative pupils' behaviors can reduce through character education.	.057	Accept Ho
17. Character education would contribute to improved pupil's achievement.	.389	Accept Ho
18. Character education is an important as an academic education.	.298	Accept Ho
19. Parents at our school understand and support character education mission.	.415	Accept Ho
20. Character education programs that include parents can be most effective.	.658	Accept Ho

The table above shows the t-test on the level of teachers' implementation of character education when grouped according to their civil status. A significant difference was obtained in the statements "Pupils would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.", and "Character education programs that include parents can be most effective" This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference on the level of teachers' implementation of character education when they are group according to profile. This means that their civil status affects the level of implementation of character education in the statements mentioned but has nothing to do with the other statements.

Table 6. ANOVA on the Level of Teachers' Implementation of Character Education When Grouped According to their Age

Statements	P value	Decision
1. Character/ethics education is a very important part of our school mission.	.679	Accept Ho

2. Character/ethics education objectives are explicitly identified in our pupil's handbook.	.105	Accept Ho
3. School faculty would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.	.350	Accept Ho
4. Pupils would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.	.038	Accept Ho
5. Our school has a committee that meets regularly to advance a strategic plan for character/ethics education.	.797	Accept Ho
6. Our teachers purposefully integrate character/ethics lessons into their academic curricula and artifacts of these lesson are visible in the school.	.183	Accept Ho
7. School faculty teach and practice a clearly strategy of character-based decision making.	.077	Accept Ho
8. We seek to develop pupil's leadership as a part of our character/ethics education strategy, which clubs and extra-curricular activities.	.205	Accept Ho
9. We purposefully seek to plan service opportunities, which includes service learning as a part of our character/ethics education strategy.	.105	Accept Ho
10. Our school faculty recognize the definitions and can demonstrate lesson applications that cultivate moral and performance character.	.105	Accept Ho
11. Our school faculty recognize the definitions and distinct applications of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and how this relates to pupil character formation.	.235	Accept Ho
12. Our school faculty have had professional development opportunities specifically focused on character/ethics education in the last three years.	.379	Accept Ho
13. Schools should assume a central role in shaping the character of youth.	.530	Accept Ho
14. Character education can reverse the perceived moral decline of today's society.	.106	Accept Ho
15. Character education prepares pupils to become responsible citizens.	.350	Accept Ho
16. Negative pupils' behaviors can reduce through character education.	.205	Accept Ho
17. Character education would contribute to improved pupil's achievement.	.271	Accept Ho
18. Character education is an important as an academic education.	.591	Accept Ho
19. Parents at our school understand and support character education mission.	.298	Accept Ho
20. Character education programs that include parents can be most effective.	.016	Accept Ho

The table above shows the analysis of variance on the level of teachers' implementation of character education when grouped according to their age. No significant difference was obtained on all the statements. This leads to the acceptance of the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' implementation of character education when they are grouped according to profile. This means that their age does not affect the level of implementation of character education.

Table 7. ANOVA on the Level of Teachers' Implementation of Character Education When Grouped According to their Length of Experience

Statements	P value	Decision
1. Character/ethics education is a very important part of our school mission.	.095	Accept Ho
2. Character/ethics education objectives are explicitly identified in our pupil's handbook.	.240	Accept Ho
3. School faculty would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.	.022	Reject Ho
4. Pupils would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.	.696	Accept Ho
5. Our school has a committee that meets regularly to advance a strategic plan for character/ethics education.	.183	Accept Ho
6. Our teachers purposefully integrate character/ethics lessons into their academic curricula and artifacts of these lesson are visible in the school.	.212	Accept Ho
7. School faculty teach and practice a clearly strategy of character-based decision making.	.458	Accept Ho
8. We seek to develop pupil's leadership as a part of our character/ethics education strategy, which clubs and extra-curricular activities.	.580	Accept Ho
9. We purposefully seek to plan service opportunities, which includes service learning as a part of our character/ethics education strategy.	.240	Accept Ho
10. Our school faculty recognize the definitions and can demonstrate lesson applications that cultivate moral and performance character.	.397	Accept Ho
11. Our school faculty recognize the definitions and distinct applications of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and how this relates to pupil character formation.	.651	Accept Ho
12. Our school faculty have had professional development opportunities specifically focused on character/ethics education in the last three years.	.416	Accept Ho
13. Schools should assume a central role in shaping the character of youth.	.468	Accept Ho
14. Character education can reverse the perceived moral decline of today's society.	.107	Accept Ho
15. Character education prepares pupils to become responsible citizens.	.199	Accept Ho
16. Negative pupils' behaviors can reduce through character education.	.052	Accept Ho

17. Character education would contribute to improved pupil's achievement.	.246	Accept Ho
18. Character education is an important as an academic education.	.052	Accept Ho
19. Parents at our school understand and support character education mission.	.027	Reject Ho
20. Character education programs that include parents can be most effective.	.038	Reject Ho

The table above shows the analysis of variance on the level of teachers' implementation of character education when grouped according to their length of experience. A significant difference was obtained in the statements "School faculty would be able to identify and define our school's core values to a visitor.", "Parents at our school understand and support character education mission." and "Character education programs that include parents can be most effective." This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' implementation of character education when they are grouped according to profile. This means that their length of experience affects the level of implementation of character education in the statements mentioned but has nothing to do with the other statements.

CONCLUSION

This study was launched to determine the level of implementation of character education among Private schools in Bayombong. This study was conducted among elementary teachers in private schools in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya during the school year 2018-2019. To accomplish this, a survey was conducted with a questionnaire as the main tool. Thirty private elementary teachers were the respondents.

Results showed that most of the respondents are female, single, 23 to 24 years old, have a teaching experience of 7 to 12 months, and are graduates of a bachelor's degree. About the level of implementation of character education, the respondents strongly agree to most of the statements and agree that parents in their school understand and support the character education mission.

Significant difference tests show that their sex, civil status, and length of experience affect the level of implementation of character education on various statements, while their age does not affect the implementation.

This study measured the level of implementation of character education in private elementary schools in Bayombong. With almost all the statements rated as strongly agree by the respondents, these show that the private schools in Bayombong are implementing character education as part of their school curricula. Further, committees and school plans are aligned with their character education goals.

Considering the conclusions, the researchers recommend the following: (1) Strengthen the indicators for character education implementation. Schools may establish clear and measurable indicators covering curriculum integration, teacher practices, school policies and institutional support, extracurricular and service-learning activities, parental involvement, and assessment and monitoring procedures. These indicators may provide a more systematic basis for determining the extent of character education implementation. (2) Enhance the validation of the research instrument. Future researchers may use validated and reliable instruments or subject existing instruments to further validation by experts in education and character development. This may strengthen the accuracy and consistency of the assessment of character education implementation. (3) Include multiple stakeholders in future studies. Future researchers may obtain perspectives not only from teachers but also from school administrators, pupils, and parents. The inclusion of different stakeholders may provide a more comprehensive understanding of how character education is planned, implemented, experienced, and supported within the school community. (4) Supplement survey data with other sources of evidence. Classroom observations and document analysis may be incorporated to complement questionnaire responses. Relevant documents such as school policies, pupil handbooks, curriculum plans, activity plans, character education programs, and assessment records may be examined to verify the actual implementation of character education and reduce reliance on self-reported information. (5) Strengthen assessment and monitoring procedures. Schools may develop appropriate procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' character development. Assessment results may be used to provide feedback, identify areas for improvement, and enhance character education

programs and classroom practices. (6) Examine the relationship between implementation and behavioral outcomes. Future studies may investigate whether differences in the level of character education implementation are associated with pupils' actual behavioral outcomes. Documented school records, classroom observations, teacher assessments, and other appropriate behavioral indicators may be considered as sources of evidence. (7) Conduct comparative studies among schools. Future researchers may compare schools with different character education programs, approaches, or levels of implementation. Such studies may provide practical insights into the similarities and differences in implementation and identify practices that may be considered for further development. (8) Strengthen parental involvement. Consistent with the findings of the present study, parents may be more actively involved in the planning and implementation of character education programs. Clear communication between schools and parents may help ensure shared understanding of the school's character education goals and promote consistency between school and home practices. (9) Expand the scope of future research. Similar studies may be conducted among a larger number of private and public schools in Nueva Vizcaya and other areas. Future researchers may also consider larger and more diverse samples to provide broader evidence regarding character education implementation.

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