

EMERGING PAULINIAN VALUES FROM RESEARCH EXPERIENCES OF UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study also aimed to propose an action plan to improve the CNAHS students' research experiences. The study utilized a convergence mixed method, action research design. The participants of the study are the 31 student research groups. The instrument used was an online form inquiring about their weekly research-related experiences, and the specific Paulinian values that were realized from those experiences. It used frequency and percentage for quantitative analysis and narrative analysis for the qualitative data. Findings reveal that the Paulinian core value that emerged with the highest frequency from the BSN4 students' experiences is community (f=256), which is realized during communication and interaction with the stakeholders of research. It is seconded by commitment to mission (f=154), which is recognized when they fulfill both research and academic responsibilities. The core value of charisma (f=130) is felt when they face challenges in research while using their unique gifts and aspire to create quality output. Charity (f=82) is manifested when they accept changes and ideas for their research. Finally, from the experiences of praying to God to seek guidance for research emerged the value of Christ-centeredness (f=57).

Keywords: Research, Paulinian 5 Cs, nursing research

INTRODUCTION

Being a part of the tripod function of higher education institutions together with instruction and community service, research has always been regarded as an integral part of academic activities of universities in a global scale [3]. Government, legal and professional regulating bodies of tertiary schools upholds research as an important aspect that defines the state and effectiveness of a program or college. For an academician, research activities, programs and publications have career, social and financial implications. Being a university, St. Paul University Manila (SPU Manila) is gradually and systematically raising research consciousness and assimilating research culture among its undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff and administrators. Its establishment of a research center, inclusion of qualified research personnel and reinforcement of policies and procedures to involve its members in scholastic productivity, are clear indicators that SPU Manila is truly walking towards the direction of following international academic research hegemony. St. Paul University Manila has been in existence for over a century. With its current vision of forming a community of disciples deeply rooted in Christ, the school does not only produce academically inclined and competent graduates, but also form professionals and practitioners who are Christ-centered, charitable,

community and service-oriented, committed and charismatic. Aside from general and core courses offered by their respective programs, the university also require students to go through religious and values education programs to augment the attainment of this mission. It also offers extracurricular activities that further develop both the students' personality and spirituality^[12].

One of the programs that St. Paul University Manila offers is Bachelor of Science in Nursing under the College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences. For the past 50 years, SPU Manila CNAHS has led the formation of compassionate, skillful and globally competitive nurses. CNAHS is considered as a valuable nursing education institution as evidenced by continuous high licensure exam passing percentages and graduates taking important positions in various health agencies in and out of the country. Also, CNAHS has made a name due to its growing research culture and research productivity. For almost a decade, the college has hosted biannual research forums for both professionals and students. Moreover, students and faculty members from the CNAHS have presented their research in both local and international conference, even winning research-related contests. Truly, SPU Manila recognizes that nurses are not only care providers for patients and managers of health organizations, but also they are compassionate

researchers.

In the BSN program in the CNAHS, research is integrated from the first to the fourth year. As indicated in the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) memo 14 (2009), the students go through two formal research courses. Within a one-year period, the students have to go through the whole research process and submit a full research manuscript as a partial requirement for the degree.

As a research instructor and mentor for five years, the researcher has noticed that the BSN students undertaking the research courses have varying values and behaviors towards the activities required by the subject. Research or 'thesis' as a social construct seems to elicit more negative than positive responses and appraisals among those who went through and are going through the process. Although there seems to be a general assumption that doing research builds character and certain traits, there is a scarcity of literature that tries to find the values that researchers develop in the scholarly activities that they do. Given these class observations, the social reality of the college 'thesis' and personal beliefs about scholastic productivity, the researcher hopes that this study provides an enlightenment of what specific Paulinian values are recognized and felt by Paulinian Nursing students from their research experiences as they go through the process.

Statement of the Problem

This study attempted to determine the emerging Paulinian values from the research experiences of senior BSN students undergoing the Nursing Research 2 course.

More specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the emerging Paulinian values from the research experiences of the participants in terms of the following core values?
 - 1.1 Community;
 - 1.2 Commitment to mission;
 - 1.3 Charism;
 - 1.4 Charity;and
 - 1.5 Christ-centeredness?

2. Based from the findings, what actions can be recommended to improve the research skills, output and experiences of undergraduate students?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a mixed methods design. According to Johnson, et al as cited by Angell & Townsend, mixed methods research is "the type of research in which a research... combines the elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches... for the purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration..."

More specifically, this study used the convergent parallel mixed methods design. This approach, quantitative and qualitative strands are conducted concurrently and merged at the point of interpretation. This study is utilized to gain a more complete understanding of the topic, or to validate quantitative scales. The quantitative strand of the study is found in the computation of frequency of the Paulinian values reflected, and qualitative analysis will be done to uncover and relate these values with their research experiences. Also, the use of both approaches which have demonstrated the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in the study of school values [9]. Finally, this study is an action research for it presents a concrete action plan based from the findings of the study.

Research Instrument

Since the study is internet-based, the research instrument used is an online form constructed using google docs. This is to facilitate the ease in collection and mining of the data to an electronic form, for easier analysis. Other noted advantages of using online forms are reduction of costs, timeliness of results, improved accuracy, increased response rates and accessibility (Das, 2012). The link for the forum is posted in the personal blog site of the researcher, www.learnburger.blogspot.com. The online form is entitled: Nursing Research Progress Worksheet. A clause warranting informed consent and ethical consideration is found before the start of the first question.

Preliminary questions included the names of

the group members and research titles. The form also inquired for a description mentor and mentee sessions. The questions in the online forum that were actually analyzed in the study are those that asked: (1) the research activities that were done in the week; (2) the difficulties encountered in doing their research with the week, and; (3) three Paulinian values that they reflected from the week's research experiences (see appendix for screenshots of the online form). For each question, a sample answer is indicated to ensure accuracy and consistency of responses. The answers are then downloaded as cell inputs in a Microsoft Excel file. The online form was presented to and validated by the CNAHS dean.

Research Participants

The participants of the study are the thirty-one research groups of BSN batch 2012-2013 (Les Enfants de Marie), officially enrolled in the Nursing Research 2 class during the first semester. The types of research studies done by the research units included quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods designs. Each sampling unit of researcher/s was comprised of one, two and three members. One submitted online form with complete responses corresponds to one research unit. For this study, one participant equates to one research unit. The researcher used universal sampling: all the research units were included in the study.

Data Collection Procedure

The faculty researcher secured administrative clearance from the CNAHS dean during the start of the semester, before the Nursing Research 2 class. During the first meeting, the researcher, who is also an instructor of the class, discussed the procedure of updating the Nursing Research Writing Progress Worksheet. The effectiveness of the instruction was evaluated through a return demonstration.

The researcher instructed the participants to accomplish this form on a weekly basis and submit it online every Saturday before 5pm. The time span of the study was from mid-July to September of 2013. A methodological limitation that was noted in the study that not all research units posted on a regular basis and missed some weeks.

In order to properly answer the question inquiring about the Paulinian values reflected from the experiences, the students were provided with a list of all specific Paulinian values and behavioral indicators as they are categorized in the Paulinian 5 Cs or core values. The list served as a guide in identifying the value that struck them the most during their research activities in the week.

At the end of the Nursing Research 2 course, the researcher downloaded all the responses in a Microsoft Excel format and yielded a total of 693 responses. Out of this number of responses, the researcher only considered 679 whose responses were complete and had answers which complied with the proper format. The researcher tallied both the specific values and the core value which each belongs to. This is the quantitative analysis strand of the study. The researcher utilized qualitative narrative analysis. For a systematized analysis of information from the postings, Powell and Renner (2003) introduced a five step process in analyzing narrative data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Community Core Value

Among the realized specific Paulinian values under the community core value, communication emerged as the one most mentioned by the research units (f=109). Qualitative analysis of experiences shared by the students demonstrates that this value is appreciated when they communicate with their research group mates, advisers and panel members. This can be illustrated by the following narratives:

“...Working apart with my partner in our research and doing what was assigned to us, we have practiced good communication so as to practice uniformity in analyzing...”

“...Doctor communicated with us though she was miles away from the country. It is always essential to keep in touch with an adviser because they are the guides to an excellent research.”

“...We need to communicate with our entire panel, adviser because it is important that they know what the status of our research...is”

“...we have a poor communication with our adviser and I pray that we can talk to her soon”

Other experience wherein the value of communication was realized by the student researchers was dealing with respondents during data gathering. One research group shares, “...when we had our first interview, we had a very good communication and we built rapport easily...” This value was also recognized when they secure administrative clearances as manifested by the post, “...we talked to the secretaries of the schools we have visited this week and explained our intention to conduct our study in their school, we also asked for their contact number so that we could follow up our request...”

Cooperation is the second most common value on community that emerged from the participants' research experiences (f=63). This value is expressed mostly in cooperating with research partner and adviser, as one participant posted:

“...in order for us to finish our research study with a good outcome it is important for us research partners to work together and comply with the tasks assigned to us. As well as, cooperating with our research adviser, putting in her ideas and suggestions as well...”

According to some participants, effectively dealing with the respondents and the locale was also a form of cooperation. Some also noted that cooperation is important in both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as reflected from the following posts:

“...Cooperation - it is one of the reasons why we have done our tally on time...”

“...This week was all about cooperation. We have to cooperate with another person in order to have the verbalizations translated. We had to coordinate with each other because of all the clashed ideas which we had to transform into one united one.”

The third most common value realized under the core value of community is dialogue (f=18). Students find this value during their interaction with research group member, adviser and respondents. Also to a few, dialogue is important in expressing research ideas, setting schedules and solving problems. One

student posts:

“...I feel that listening attentively to every detail is important especially with regards to research timing of schedules because I have assumed and modified my own schedule of activities and it lead to waste...”

Some responses indicated respect as a value realized through accepting rejection of prospective respondents to partake in the study, following the procedure of securing administrative clearance and treating data carefully and preventing bias in analysis, as one participant stated, “...One of the most challenging parts of this week was trying to prevent bias from affecting the interpretation of our results. In this aspect, we really had to put ourselves in our respondent's shoes...”

Research units recognized the value of connectedness locally and globally, through the experiences of searching for foreign literature for analysis, communicating with an adviser in another country and sampling graduate-respondents from other nations.

Respect for cultural differences and diversity also emerged as a significant value. This was felt during the times were translating and interpreting narratives, and dealing with respondents abroad.

Other values under the community core value which also emerged but in lesser frequency than those previously mentioned were mutuality, interdependence, solidarity, coordination, freedom from discrimination, protecting human rights, sense of belongingness, wide use of web and media, sharing of resources and unity.

This core value of community is overtly expressed in the SPU Manila Research Center's mantra: “research adds service to life, and research adds life to service.”

Commitment to Mission Core Value

Among the realized specific Paulinian values under the commitment to mission core value, sense of responsibility emerged as the one most mentioned by the research units (f=126). It also important to note that this specific value has the highest incidence compared to the rest, covering 18.56% of the total

value responses. Qualitative analysis of experiences shared by the students demonstrates that this value is usually recognized in terms of accomplishing assigned research tasks. This can be illustrated by the following narratives:

“...we must be able to do the planned activities in order to be able to finish the research on time. We must recognize the importance of knowing our responsibilities in order to make our research...”

“...in the research study that we are conducting it is important to know our responsibilities in order to finish our tasks/parts so that we could finish and accomplish our research study...”

“...we are now having a sense of responsibility because we need to move forward with our research. We should be responsible especially on the task and opportunity that our adviser gave us...”

Balancing research activities and academic requirements is another experience wherein which the participants' sense of responsibility is challenged. This is manifested through the following quotes:

“...We felt that we really need to be responsible enough in managing our time in order to have a successful data gathering because other than [being researchers] we are nursing students, we also have hectic schedule that's why we really need to adjust on our respondents...”

“...we still made sure that we could finish the tallying despite the exams...”

“...Even if we're both tired due to our prior clinical and community exposure, we still pushed through passing our requirement [to the locale]...”

The practice of time management both efficiently and poorly also brought upon the value of sense of responsibility among the student research groups. One group shares how they managed their time effectively:

“...We felt that being responsible to your action and works is important to the process of research because you need to manage your time to finish the study...”

On the other hand, another unit posts managing time in a phenomenological study was challenging for them:

“...Time management was truly one issue that [my partner] and I had difficulty with this past week. We have realized that qualitative research takes more time than expected. We need to be more responsible in time management in order to finally finish this...”

It can be noted that in most of the activities related to the research process, such as sampling, securing administrative clearance, data collection, analysis and actual writing, emerges the Paulinian value of sense of responsibility. A peculiar experience noted that is related to this value was working solo in research. This is usually shared by research units with only one member. A solo student researcher responds:

“...throughout the process of finishing my research, I always feel the sense of responsibility since I am the only one working on this research. I know that if I would not move, nothing will really happen to me...”

In the act of owning up to mistakes, some participants also reflect sense of responsibility. For instance, one participant shares their experience about late submission, “...we are responsible [for] any sanction that we will get in our research...” Another research group posts: “...we are taking all the responsibilities of the delays and corrections in relation to our research...”

Another specific Paulinian value that emerged under the commission core value is accountability. The most common experience shared by the students wherein this value has been realized is due to late submission of research requirements. Here are some responses that illustrate this point:

“...the researchers shall be accounted on the reason why their research paper will be passed late...”

“...Since we didn't able to submit on time our research, we are liable in any consequence that our panel will give...”

“...we weren't able to finish all the survey, which was supposed to be done this week...”

Accountability was also realized in the efforts to accomplish assigned tasks, managing time and handling the data. Accountability in the careful handling of data can be seen in the post of one participant:

“...By us being accountable, the respondents will have their trust on us and will give the information that we are asking from them. By knowing that we are accountable for such data, we will be careful and we’ll do our work properly...”

Sacrifice was the third most common value under commission that was recognized. Sacrifice was realized by the students when they set priorities and manage their time. Some mentioned that they had to give up leisure time to finish their research, as shown by the following statements:

“...during our afternoon break, we usually go and do our survey instead of having our break...”

“...Though the challenges of sitting and analyzing for hours exist, the sacrifice of the time put into the work will shine through as it will benefit others...”

Other specific values that emerged under the commission value are involvement in social issues (one group did a study about abortion), deep sense of direction and purpose and tranquil daring.

Charism Core Value

Among the realized specific Paulinian values under the charism core value, courage emerged as the one most mentioned by the research units (f=18). Qualitative analysis of the narratives demonstrates that the common experiences wherein this value is felt is when the students are facing changes and difficulties in research. This is illustrated by the following responses:

“...I hope that while making this study, we will be able to face all the challenges and difficulties with courage and confidence...”

“...even though we already did data collection changing the questionnaire and began again from scratch will defiantly need a lot of courage and percipience...”

“...It takes courage to withdraw from the institution we have been vying for all these weeks. Looking for participants for such a short length of time also requires it...”

Another common experience wherein courage is realized is during encounters with respondents for data collection. Some of the student researchers expresses that she needs courage in administering a survey among student respondents during their class: “We should have the courage to gather data because sometimes we could interrupt a class but still we should have respect in stating our intention...” Another nursing research group, doing a phenomenology about an HIV and AIDS prevention and care advocate has learned the value of courage during their interview with her. The student researchers post:

“...courage was present in our participant. She said that if you do not have an initiative to speak for yourself and for the whole HIV community nothing will happen...”

The specific value under charism that garnered the second highest frequency (f=17) is healthy ambition. Many of the participants expressed their aspiration to create quality research output as seen in the following posts:

“...We really want to finish our research strong. We want to be able to reach our goal comprehensively and to the best of our ability. We want to open new doors with our research because we understand that this topic is unique especially in a conservative country such as the Philippines. That is why we are ambitious to improve our interpretation and analysis of the verbal cues...”

“...this study is not only for us to pass a research paper and to complete our course requirement... It is for the future nurses to know how to help the children on their studies and for effective health teachings to children to be done...”

Healthy ambition is also reflected in aiming for future research dissemination and awards. One participant shares: “we always put in our mind as a motivation that we have one of the best research in our batch...” Another research group aims to present their output in another school: “we still hope that

our research will be chosen for inter school research presentation.”

Aspiring for perfection is the third most common value that emerged under charisma. This was experienced by the participants in ensuring the quality of the research output. Others were so concerned about the good quality of research that they had to forego submitting the manuscript on the due date prescribed, as reflected in the following quotes:

“...One of the reasons why we will not be able to pass in our research is because we really want to make it the best final draft as possible. We would rather it be late than to turn in something rushed and not well-thought about...”

“...as said by one of my group mate, ‘I don’t want to pass half [baked] work.’ Worse comes to worst, we won’t pass on the deadline. We would not pass it not unless we did it ‘perfectly’...”

Other charismatic specific values that arose from the experiences are critical thinking and creativity. This value emerged from the experience of analyzing qualitative data and development of themes, as illustrated by one research group through the post, “...since we are in the process of categorizing and analyzing of our themes, critical thinking is very essential in order to do this properly...” Also critical thinking is realized during making necessary abrupt changes, such as deciding to change the respondents and reformulating the survey tool.

Love for study, academic excellence and thirst for knowledge also emerged as a significant specific charisma values. Most participants felt these values in doing and finishing research in its totality, without mentioning specific research incidents.

Leadership is another value that surfaced from the experiences. This is seen in the practice of shared leadership within the group, as illustrated by the post: “...This week we have learned that as two researchers working in one research, we must be each other’s leader and remind each other of each other’s responsibilities...” Moreover, leadership is also enfolded through taking initiatives.

Pursuing professionalization also emerged as a

charismatic value. This is practiced when interacting with respondents and administrators of locale. Other values that were identified under charisma that did not garner a notable frequency are pursuing lifelong learning and assertiveness.

Charity Core Value

Among the realized specific Paulinian values under the charity core value, acceptance emerged as the one most mentioned by the research units (f=27). Qualitative analysis of the narratives demonstrate that the common experiences wherein this value is recognized is when the students are accepting changes and challenges in research. This is illustrated by the following responses:

“...We were able to accept the things our co-author wants to change [in] our research paper and revise it...”

“...I feel that when we are talking with our adviser and panel we always need to accept whatever they want us to change because [it is] for the best...”

“...acceptance: We felt that even though our schedule proposals for data gathering were rejected we still managed to adapt with the undesirable turn out of events...”

“...We accepted the last minute changes that were made in our study because we believe that it would be beneficial and it is for the betterment of our research. We student nurses are open and known for... flexibility and adaptability...”

Also, the aforementioned value is felt when the research group accepts support from other people, whether it be from family members or classmates who are not part of the group. One participant shares that her sister, some alumni and classmates assisted her in data management: “the help I was able to receive from this study was really overwhelming. At first I was hesitant but I realized that I needed other people’s help to meet the deadline...”

The value of acceptance is also manifested when the researchers receive the evaluation from the panel members during validation. One group posted, “...we accepted the panel’s decision [of] major revision. In

the brighter side, we will [be] able to learn from our mistakes.”

Openness is the next most common value realized under the charity core value. Being open was recognized by the research groups in the exchange of ideas and criticism within the group, from the adviser and panel members. For instance, a participant posted: “We’re very thankful to each other that we share our ideas and it feels good for both of us to work together again...”

Another specific value that emerged under the charity core value is kind language, which is usually recognized when communicating with respondents. In line with this, a research group answered, “... [I] and my partner talked about how we should approach the people whom we’re going to conduct are research to. We said that we need to be courteous and show that we are Paulinian...”

Tact was also a value under charity that was realized from their experiences, especially during careful handling of data, from collection to analysis and presentation. One participant who was doing an internet-based research expressed her concern about upholding confidentiality of the data, “...I realized that this research I am conducting has a community, a cyberculture community. Hence, I should be tactful in sharing what I read and see in their forum...”

Other values that emerged under the charity core value were forgiveness, friendliness, kindness, concern for the deprived, hospitality and joy.

Christ-centeredness Core Value

Among the realized specific Paulinian values under the Christ-centeredness core value, deep personal relationship with God emerged as the one most mentioned by the research units (f=25), followed by practice of personal prayer (f=10). Qualitative analysis of the narratives demonstrates that the concrete activity wherein these two values are recognized is through praying to God. This is illustrated by the following responses:

“...We always pray to the Lord to guide us in finishing the research and guide us on the right method of analysis in our study...”

“...we are in really sorrowful days now, because we cannot have proper consultation. We are praying to God that He will help us to pass through this tough time...”

“...With all the pressure and the deadline [fast] approaching, we put God first and pray for his help that we may finish our research paper with no revisions at all...”

Other ways that the student researchers practice this value is through attending mass and offering their efforts to Him. It is also indicated in the posted statements of some participants that they seek for God during the difficult times of the research, as illustrated by the following:

“...This week had been a real challenge for me, I needed to finish three major tasks on different subject while doing my research, I was getting exhausted which I dealt with my praying dearly everyday...”

“...I am starting to lose hope in finishing my research. But I always end up going to the prayer room and asking God for the strength to face these adversities and give me wisdom to know what step I should take next. I know, I am not alone in this, because I have Him...”

From the research experiences, also emerged the value of peace under the Christ-centeredness core value. This value is realized as the group takes effort to maintain a harmonious relationship. One participant illustrates this by posting:

“We consider peace for this week because, even though we have allotted of things that needs to be done... and with all of the chaos around us, and the pressure that we are experiencing, we still try to maintain our peace with each other, even if at times we have our [shortcomings]...”

“...even if we had some petty [misunderstandings] with each other, we were still able to have peace with each other...”

Also, a few participants reported feeling inner peace when they reach certain milestones in research. One research group shares: “...we felt inner peace when we saw the progress in our research letter...”

This is also related to the post: "...thank God we finally getting into the core of our study, we are almost starting it by next week..."

Other values that emerged under the Christ-centeredness core value are Love of Christ, faith, reverence, awe, closer to God and lightness of spirit.

Paulinian Five C's

The core value that got the highest frequency is community (f=256), followed by commission (f=154), charism (130), charity (82) and Christ-centeredness as that gained the least frequency (f=57).

CONCLUSIONS

Based from the findings, the researcher therefore concludes that:

Community is the core value that is most frequently realized as undergraduate nursing students go through the research process. For the Paulinian student nurse researcher, research is a highly social activity wherein they communicate, interact, collaborate and work with the various stakeholders of their respective study to ensure its efficient conduct.

Undergraduate nursing students doing research conduct their study with a sense of responsibility. Being only a partial requirement to earn their BSN degree, they exert effort to work around their schedules to achieve both their research and academic goals. Paulinians consider research challenges and difficulties as opportunities to make use of their God-given intellect, abilities and leadership skills. Despite the uneasy nature of research, BSN students undertaking this endeavor express their charism through aspirations to create a quality paper and to disseminate its results. BSN students doing research resilience as they accept changes and inputs for the improvement of their study. They are open to ideas. However, there seems to be a misfit on how acceptance as a specific value of charity is actually manifested. Not much of the charitable nature of research was exposed in the responses. Christ-centeredness is the value least realized in the research process. It is important to note, however, that Paulinians place God in the center of their scholastic activities, and make Him seem like a constant member of the research groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings presented and conclusions drawn, the researcher therefore proposes the proceeding action plan for St. Paul University Manila:

1. Further emphasis on the importance of communication skills; teaching proper oral and written, and verbal and non-verbal communication techniques that can be utilized in the conduct of research.
2. Upgrading internet connection; increasing availability of internet for students; Awareness campaign for existing online research databases available; making more online research databases available.
3. Improving the coordination of curricular and extracurricular activities within the program; monitoring performances; adjusting requirements and schedules as needed.
4. Assessment of student's capability and attitude towards research, and available resource before granting solo- authorship; closer monitoring of solo researcher's progress.
5. Monitoring of research progress; Constant consultation; Logistic support; Speedy address of arising concerns.
6. Hosting of research forums; Involvement in outside research forums; Finding avenues for publication; Co- authorship with faculty.
7. Monitoring of research progress; Constant consultation; Logistic support; Speedy address of arising concerns.
8. Values clarification program; strengthening value understanding through infusion in the classroom.
9. Encouragement of students to pray and participate in sacraments; Offering prayers and mass intentions for the student's research.
10. Including reflective process in research classes; Full implementation of the self- realization page in research manuscripts.

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