

Editor's Note

In this maiden issue of the Harris Journal of Education are eight (8) qualitative studies, which utilized different research methods and approaches in dealing with the specific questions raised in the different studies. The topics in this issue of the journal are mostly focused on curriculum studies, which include theological and field education, indigenous science, gifted children, peace concepts in the preschool, school cleaning, preschool textbook, and guidance program; with the last paper dealing on gender biases.

The first study by Manabat examined the significant contribution of theological field education in the ministerial formation, education and empowerment of pastors and deaconesses of the United Methodist Church in the Philippines who are engaged in holistic and transformative ministries. Using grounded theory - with naturalistic ethnography, appreciative inquiry, and narrative approach, the 21 participants were able to give light on the following: (a) the theology and practice of socially transforming ministry in the Philippines, (b) the involvement of congregations and/or constituents in holistic ministry, and (c) the role of field education and theological education in the transformation and development of passion and commitment to socially-transforming ministry among pastors and deaconesses.

The study by Pawilen explored the indigenous knowledge that can be integrated in the elementary science curriculum and the strategies that can be used in integrating indigenous knowledge in the curriculum. An interview with teachers and members of a local community in Ilocos revealed that several categories of indigenous knowledge (often called indigenous science) are taught and practiced in the community, which are parallel to some areas of science in the curriculum. Real-Life Story Model of Integration, Problem-based Approach to Integration, and Thematic Approach are three of the possible models identified that can be used in integrating indigenous knowledge in the elementary science curriculum.

In the third paper, Faustino designed a differentiated curriculum for gifted children in grade 1 science and investigated the implications of the curriculum to the teacher and gifted children. The differentiated curriculum was designed after identifying the needs, interests, and learning preferences of the 27 children who participated in the study. A try out of the differentiated curriculum was done to investigate the behaviors of the children and the teacher during the lesson. The observation coupled with the responses of the teacher and the children to several questions asked showed that through the differentiated curriculum the learning of science became more meaningful, relevant, and interesting to the gifted children. Moreover, through the differentiated curriculum the teacher successfully engaged and motivated the gifted children to the lesson.

The paper of Santos on "Integrating peace concepts in the preschool curriculum of Harris Memorial College" used document analysis to investigate the peace related expressions and concepts integrated in the preschool curriculum of HMC and what teaching strategies and activities were used by the teacher to strengthen the integration of the identified peace related expressions and concepts. The preschool curriculum and

the instructional plans prepared and used by the preschool teacher for a period of six months were analysed. Results showed that 28 peace concepts and expressions are embedded in the six domains of the curriculum and the curriculum standards set, while 12 teaching strategies were used by the teacher in strengthening the integration of the peace concepts identified.

In "The cleaning of one's heart and mind," Manzano tried to determine the practices of school cleaning, as part of the curriculum, in improving the values of kindergarten, elementary, and high school learners. Using historical and descriptive methods of research, this study presented the different theories and practices of school cleaning among schools in different countries worldwide, and specifically, in the Philippines. Findings revealed that school cleaning is part of traditional education practice that has the original purpose of ascetic training to the school populace in the Philippines. The study also found out that three types of school cleaning exist among the schools surveyed: (a) Professional Cleaning Type, (b) Professional and Student Cleaning Type, and (c) Student Cleaning Type. The last type of school cleaning is used because of the lack of fund and in some cases cleaning is considered an important part of purifying one's heart. Similar to schools in other countries, hygienic reason was identified by some schools why they clean the school surroundings.

The sixth study by Faustino, Distajo, Santos, and Ladia is an analysis of the textbook prescribed by the Department of Education (DepEd) for public kindergarten classrooms in the Philippines. The researchers determined what contents are included in the kindergarten textbook, the types of learning activities found in the textbook, and the skills developed through the learning skills and whether these skills lead to the achievement of the goal of kindergarten as stated in the K to 12 program. The analysis showed that the contents of the kindergarten textbook were divided into five learning areas: Filipino, English, Numeracy, Sensory-perceptual, and Socio-emotional. The researchers noted that most of the learning activities were focused on the development of simple knowledge and understanding, such as identifying, matching, and coloring; and only few activities were geared towards the development of higher-order thinking skills, such as problem-solving, and creative and critical thinking skills. Implications as well as guidelines were recommended for teachers in selecting kindergarten textbooks and those who are planning to write and publish kindergarten textbooks.

The paper by Distajo aimed to identify stressors the college students of Harris Memorial College encountered, and analyzed how the guidance program services is addressing these issues and concerns revealed by students. Data from counselling records of students during counselling sessions indicated that the common stressors experienced by students are categorized into the following: social relationships, academic, family, adjustments, financial, and self. Several programs provided through the Guidance Services Office of the college were identified to help and support students in facing issues and challenges in their training in the deaconess-formation program. Implications of the guidance program services were also discussed.

The final paper is a feminist analysis, which aimed to identify attitudes, cultural beliefs, and perceptions regarding women and men, and the manifestations and effects of gender biases and discrimination on the role and status of clergywomen and

deaconesses of The United Methodist Church. It also discovered and described forms of resistance by church women workers to address gender biases. Using document analysis, key informant interview and life stories, Broncano found out that the gender biases in the church were manifested in the following: 1) unequal access to income and other benefits between male clergy and women church workers; 2) unequal allocation of workload, duties and responsibilities; 3) unfair treatment of church members which includes among others, the lack of women's representation in decision making bodies of the church; and 4) discriminatory behaviors and practices of male pastors, part of which is the androcentric interpretation of the Bible and the use of language which excludes women. Women church workers have also employed different strategies to address gender biases within the church.