

Values and Character Formation Practices of Grade 8 Learners

Karren G. Molina¹, Delia R. Casillan²

¹Teacher II, Department of Education, DepEd-Candon City

²Associate Professor V, Commission on Higher Education

Abstract

MOLINA, KARREN G. 2024. **Values and Character Formation Practices of Grade 8 Learners**
Master of Science in Education Major in General Education, Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College, Graduate School, Tagudin, Ilocos Sur.

Adviser: DELIA R. CASILLAN, EdD

This study used a mixed-method research design to explore the values and character formation practices of Grade 8 learners at Candon National High School during the 2024-2025 academic year. It assessed learners' demographics, engagement levels in values activities, challenges faced, and the effectiveness of a tailored training program. A total of 319 respondents were selected for the quantitative phase, while qualitative data were collected through interviews for deeper insights.

Findings indicated that most learners were female, with college-educated parents and significant social media use. The students demonstrated a "Very High" level of values and character formation, particularly in Maka-Diyos, Makatao, Makakalikasan, and Makabansa. Challenges included understanding values, peer pressure, and lack of role models, with family support impacting their experiences. The mother's education level significantly related to the learners' values formation.

A training program was developed to tackle six challenges: understanding of values, family support, academic issues, peer and social media influence, mental health, and cultural understanding. It was rated "Very Highly Valid," making it suitable for the Department of Education.

The study recommended further research on student profiles, longitudinal studies on values development, and greater involvement of mothers in character formation initiatives. It also proposed implementing the validated training program to enhance learners' values and character practices.

Keywords: Values formation, character education, Maka-Diyos, Makatao, Makakalikasan, Makabansa, social media influence, family support, validated training program, educational attainment, challenges in values education.

Introduction

Values are determiners of how people live together, helping create harmony and peace without causing harm to one another. It encourages people to become compassionate and responsible members of the community. Acting as forces of transformation and integration, values not only guide personal growth but also weave individuals into a unified social fabric, where each person feels a sense of belonging. Values like kindness, honesty, and respect empower individuals to make choices that build trust, deepen relationships, and foster meaningful connections across diverse backgrounds. Serving as an inner compass, values lead toward actions that bridge divides, promote empathy, and uplift others, making life better for

everyone around. When shared values are upheld, it forms the foundation of a strong community where each person feels supported and has the opportunity to grow, knowing that everyone is working together to create a better, more compassionate, and understanding world. Through transformation and integration, values enable to transcend differences, ultimately nurturing a society rooted in shared purpose and collective well-being.

The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines launched the "MATATAG" agenda to enhance the quality and accessibility of basic education, with a strong emphasis on values education. The MATATAG initiative, announced under DepEd Order No. 010, s. 2024, focuses on instilling core Filipino values—Maka-Diyos (God-centered), Makatao (humanity), Makakalikasan (Environment-conscious), and Makabansa (Patriotism)—through an updated curriculum. This curriculum promotes character formation alongside academic skills to prepare students for responsible citizenship and personal growth. The core values of Maka-Diyos (God-centered), Maka-Tao (Humanity), Makakalikasan (Environment-conscious), and Makabansa (Patriotism) guide school policies and activities, fostering a well-rounded education. Maka-Diyos promotes spirituality and moral integrity, encouraging schools to include ethics and religious understanding in the curriculum. Maka-Tao emphasizes respect and humanity, vital in the Philippines' diverse culture, promoting an inclusive environment where every student feels valued.

DepEd also highlights Makakalikasan, which encourages environmental consciousness and responsibility. Schools teach sustainability and conservation to prepare students as advocates for environmental stewardship. Finally, Makabansa instills patriotism and appreciation for Philippine culture and history, fostering pride and commitment to nation-building through civic engagement.

These core values are essential to the Philippine educational system, shaping students' character and behaviors for academic success and responsible living. By upholding these ideals, educators contribute to developing morally upright, socially responsible, and environmentally conscious individuals, ultimately creating a better society for all. (Department of Education, 2020).

Review of Literature

Level of Values and Character Formation Practices

It focused on examining the perceived levels of values and character formation practices within diverse demographic groups, particularly emphasizing educational contexts. Smith et al. (2021) conducted a comprehensive study among secondary school students to assess the efficacy of character education programs. Their findings indicated that a substantial majority of students evaluated the character formation practices implemented in their schools as either "High" or "Very High." This positive assessment suggests that students perceive these programs to exert a significant influence on their moral and ethical development. The study underscores the importance of structured character education initiatives in cultivating favorable character traits among adolescents, thereby affirming the role of well-implemented programs in shaping students' values and enhancing their ethical decision-making abilities.

This study contributes to understanding the impact of character education programs on students' perceptions and underscores the need for further research to explore the long-term effects and sustainability of such initiatives in educational settings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Level of Values Formation Practices of the Grade 8 Learners of Candon National High School

Indicators	Mean	DL
Maka-Diyos		
1. Engages oneself in worthwhile spiritual activities	4.38	VH
2. Respects sacred places	4.76	VH
3. Respects religious beliefs of others	4.87	VH
4. Tells the truth	4.23	VH
5. Returns borrowed things in good condition	4.57	VH
6. Demonstrates intellectual honesty	4.39	VH
7. Aspires to be fair and kind to all	4.49	VH
8. Identifies personal biases.	4.33	VH
9. Recognizes and respects one’s feelings and those of others	4.67	VH
Grand Mean	4.52	VH
Maka-Tao		
1. Shows respect to all	4.89	VH
2. Waits for one’s turn	4.55	VH
3. Takes good care of borrowed things	4.67	VH
4. Views mistakes as learning opportunities	4.55	VH
5. Cooperates during activities	4.57	VH
6. Recognizes and accepts the contribution of others toward a goal.	4.53	VH
7. Considers diverse views	4.48	VH
8. Communicates respectfully	4.56	VH
9. Accepts defeat and celebrates others success	4.60	VH
10. Enables others to succeed	4.59	VH
11. Speaks out against and prevents bullying	4.41	VH
Grand Mean	4.58	VH
Makakalikasan		
1. Shows a caring attitude toward the environment	4.85	VH
2. Practices waste management	4.60	VH
3. Conserves energy and resources	4.51	VH
4. Keeps work area in order during and after work	4.57	VH
5. Keeps one’s work neat and orderly	4.58	VH
Grand Mean	4.62	VH
Makabansa		
1. Identifies oneself as a Filipino	4.86	VH
2. Respects the flag and national anthem	4.87	VH
3. Takes pride in adverse Filipino cultural expressions, practices and traditions	4.76	VH
4. Promotes the appreciation and enhancement of Filipino languages	4.75	VH

5. Abides by the rules of the school, community, and country	4.60	VH
6. Enables others to develop interest and pride in being a Filipino	4.62	VH
7. Demonstrates appropriate behavior in carrying out activities in the school community, and country	4.52	VH
8. Manages time and personal resources efficiently and effectively	4.54	VH
9. Perseveres to achieve goals despite difficult circumstances	4.62	VH
10. Conducts oneself appropriately various situations	4.58	VH
Grand Mean	4.58	VH
Overall Mean	4.67	VH

DL – descriptive level; VH – Very High

Table 1 reveals the highest among the values formations is Maka-kalikasan with a grand mean of 4.62, while the lowest among the four formations is maka-Diyos with a grand mean of 4.52. The indicators are with a very high level of practice. Further, the overall mean of the level of values formation practices is 4.67. This means that the level of practices of the students is Very High.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings, the following conclusion are drawn: The level of values and character formation practices of the respondents is Very High. Hence, the Grade 8 learners of Candon National High School very highly practice the different activities that improve their values such as Makadiyos, Makatao, Makakalikasan and Makabansa.

A similar study can be conducted by investigating the level of values and character formation in other grade levels. Future researchers may conduct longitudinal studies that track the development of learners' values and character over time.

REFERENCE:

1. Department of Education. (2021). Values integration in the Philippine basic education curriculum.