RESEARCH ARTICLE

SITUATIONAL PRACTICES ASSESSMENT OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL EQUITY POLICY FRAMEWORK

*Ramil C. Moroscallo

Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Dipolog Campus, Dipolog City, Philippines

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Multicultural education creates equal educational opportunities from diverse gender, religion, social, and ethnic groups. This study assesses the experiences of students towards situations of multicultural education in Jose Rizal Memorial State University (JRMSU) System as basis for development of educational equity policy framework. Actual situations and practices rendered to students were the main focus of the study. The quality of these situations and practices was assessed using five areas, i.e., equality in learning, culture, faculty, curriculum and students. Descriptive research was used with the survey questionnaire as the main tool in gathering the data needed for this investigation. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage were used in describing the data. In measuring the difference between the groupings of the respondents was analyzed through the use of Chi-square test w/ Yates' Correction. Findings reveal that majority of the respondents rated YES, which means that they experienced positively the situational practices of multicultural education in JRMSU in terms of Equality in Learning, University Culture, Faculty, Curriculum, and Students. Furthermore, result found that there is no significant difference in student respondents' experiences when they are grouped according to ethnicity and religion. To maintain the positive reactions of students on the equality that they enjoyed in JRMSU, an educational equity policy framework was proposed. The University would enhance its national and international reputation maintaining students with exceptional achievement and maximizing their potentials for equity outcomes. This benefits the creative and intellectual life of the University, and support engagement with the University's diverse communities.

INTRODUCTION

This study assessed the JRMSU's practices of multicultural education. Multicultural education's aim is equal educational opportunities. The students are more likely to achieve when the total university climate is more consistent with their diverse cultures. The researcher wish to find out if the students in their diverse cultures experience an equal opportunity to learn. Banks and Banks (1995) define multiculture education as a field of study and an emerging discipline whose major aim is to create equal educational opportunities from diverse gender, religion, social, and ethnic groups. Instruction in multicultural understanding according to Ragoff (1990) can help raise the academic expectations of minority students and combat any stereotypes. Research indicates that students come to school with many negative attitudes toward and misconceptions about different cultures (Vega *et al.,* 2006).

*Corresponding author: **Ramil C. Moroscallo,**
Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Dipolog Campus, Dipolog City, Philippines.

Research also indicates that lessons, units and teaching materials that include content about multi-culture can help students to develop more positive intergroup attitudes (Vega *et al.,* 2006). There are current shortcomings, failings and discriminatory practices in education towards multiculture. The unequal opportunity to achieve her or his full potential, unequal participation in intercultural environment, teachers are stereotyping, not fully student-centered and not inclusive of the voices and experiences of the students. To address this gaps, this study will further assess the JRMSU System whether or not the premier state university in Zamboanga del Norte is practicing or incorporating Multicultural Education and find out if the students experience an equal opportunity to learn. Results and findings will be submitted to the management committee for proper action and further to develop Educational Equity Policy Framework.

METHODOLOGY

This study used the Descriptive Method of research with the use of the questionnaire checklist.

A questionnaire was prepared by the researchers to be answered by students. It was followed by its validity and reliability. Subsequently, the questionnaires was retrieved. The result was tallied, analyzed and interpreted using proper statistical treatment. The questionnaire of the study composed of two (2) parts, namely: the profile of the respondents in terms of ethnicity and religion and then the students situational practices of multicultural education. The 391 respondents of the study were all from five campuses of Jose Rizal Memorial State University or JRMSU namely Dapitan Campus, Dipolog Campus, Katipunan Campus, Tampilisan Campus, and Siocon Campus.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It was found out in Table 1 that the cebuano ethnicity was the majority group of the respondents.

When religion was taken into consideration, it was found out that catholic religion revealed the most numbered compared to non-catholic. Of the 15-item list in Table 2 of situational practices in terms of equality in learning in JRMSU, almost all of the items were answered YES. This means that the students experienced equality in learning in JRMSU. Item number 2 was rated the highest YES answer with 100% which states that their university welcomes male and female students without hesitation. Table 3 shows that of the 15-item list of situational practices of JRMSU culture, the students experienced them positively through their YES answers which rated the highest percentage compare to NO answers. This means that most of the student respondents enjoy the culture of JRMSU. Table 4 shows the situational practices of multicultural education in terms of faculty. Most of the students response positively to the practices in terms of faculty. Item number 1 rated the highest percentage of 95.91% which states that "the faculty

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

	Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
1	Cebuano	245	62.66%
2	Non-Cebuano	146	37.34%
	Total	391	100.00%
	Religious Group	Frequency	Percent
1	Catholic	301	76.98%
2	Non-Catholic	90	23.02%
	Total	391	100.00%

Table 2. Students Experiences to Situational Practices of Multicultural Education in terms of Equality in Learning in JRMSU

	Equality in Learning in JRMSU	Yes	
1	Our university give equal educational opportunities from diverse racial, ethnic, social class and cultural groups	367	93.86%
2	Our university welcome male and female students without any hesitation	391	100.00%
3	Our university accepts exceptional students like Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) without hesitation	372	95.14%
4	Our university accepts students from diverse cultural, social class, racial, and ethnic groups	379	96.93%
5	JRMSU believe that no two learners are exactly the same	328	83.89%
6	In JRMSU, student's background and experiences are considered by instructors when teaching	326	83.38%
7	In JRMSU, members from various ethnic groups can assist the faculty in facing issues of ethnic differences and similarities	326	83.38%
8	In JRMSU, every student have an equal opportunity to achieve her or his full potential	362	92.58%
9	All students in JRMSU have equitable opportunities to learned and to perform to a standard	359	91.82%
10	Students in JRMSU equally acquire social skills needed to interact effectively with students from other racial, ethnic, cultural, language and social groups	361	92.33%
11	The seat arrangement in JRMSU are flexible that allow students movement and activities	323	82.61%
12	The strategies of JRMSU's faculty will not only work with one learner but may work with the other	360	92.07%
13	The total environment and culture of JRMSU is promoting equal status in the culture and life of the university	364	93.09%
14	Students in all classrooms of JRMSU are heterogeneous	301	76.98%
15	Stereotyping and other related bias that have negative effects on racial and ethnic relations were reduce or eliminated in JRMSU	301	76.98%

Table 3. Students Situational Practices of Multicultural Education in terms of JRMSU Culture

	JRMSU Culture	Yes	
1	The university provided the students more varied and responsive learning environments	342	87.47%
2	The university is caring environment that always enhance academic achievements	364	93.09%
3	The university is nurturing learning environment that embraces all students with different backgrounds	370	94.63%
4	The university's classrooms were a business-like and a non-threatening	249	63.68%
5	The university is grounded in the ideals of social justice, educations equity, and a dedication to facilitating educational experience	343	87.72%
6	The university is essential to laying the foundation for the transformation of society	351	89.77%
7	The university is essential to laying the foundation for the elimination of oppression and injustice	327	83.63%
8	JRMSU give value to the differences in prior knowledge, experiences of learners from diverse background	363	92.84%
9	In JRMSU, every student is prepared to competently participate in an increasingly intercultural society	356	91.05%
10	JRMSU is active participant in ending oppression by ending oppression within their own walls	344	87.98%
11	JRMSU is producing socially and critically active and aware students	361	92.33%
12	JRMSU is fully student-centered and inclusive of the voices and experiences of the students	333	85.17%
13	JRMSU is equipped with physical environment conducive for learning	331	84.65%
14	The university provided all students with opportunities to participate in extra and co-curricular activities that develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that increase academic achievement and foster positive inter cultural relationships	373	95.40%
15	The university provided opportunities for students from different racial, ethnic, cultural and language groups to interact socially under conditions designed to reduce fear and anxiety	370	94.63%

Table 4. Students Situational Practices of Multicultural Education in terms of Faculty

	Faculty		Yes
1	The faculty help students to acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in pluralistic democratic society	375	95.91%
2	The faculty help students to interact, negotiate, and communicate with people from diverse groups in order to create a civic and moral community that works for a common good	357	91.30%
3	The faculty help students acquire the knowledge and commitments needed to make reflective decisions	371	94.88%
4	The faculty help students to take personal, social, and civic action to promote democracy and democratic living	356	91.05%
5	The faculty avoid stereotyping wherein they will not make or think of labels to males and females	345	88.24%
6	The faculty help students to develop their ability to make changes in the institutions in which they live, and situations to apply the knowledge they have learned	371	94.88%
7	The faculty help all students develop more positive attitudes towards different racial, ethnic, cultural and religious groups	364	93.09%
8	The faculty are prepared to effectively facilitate learning for every individual student, no matter how culturally similar or different from themselves	357	91.30%
9	Faculty never make assumptions about an individual student based on their perception of that individual's race, ethnicity, culture or gender	333	85.17%
10	The faculty are sensitive to the needs of multicultural students	317	81.07%
11	The faculty use content from diverse groups when teaching concept and skills	361	92.33%
12	The faculty get to know each student as a unique individual	342	87.47%
13	The faculty help students to develop positive intergroup attitudes and behaviors	365	93.35%
14	The faculty modify their teaching strategies so that students from different racial, cultural, and social class groups will experience equal educational opportunities	371	94.88%
15	The faculty learn as much about and become as sensitive to and aware of racial, ethnic, cultural and gender groups other than themselves	365	93.35%

Table 5. Students Situational Practices of Multicultural Education in terms of Curriculum

	Curriculum	Yes	
1	There is a subject that talks about heroes and holidays	349	89.26%
2	There is a subject that incorporate about women in history	326	83.38%
3	We are taught to view events and issues from diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives	360	92.07%
4	We are taught not only learn to view issues from multiple perspectives but also become directly involved in solving related problems	364	93.09%
5	We are taught to learn decision-making and social action in order to achieve multicultural goals and a more vibrant democracy	375	95.91%

Table 6. Students Situational Practices of Multicultural Education in terms of Students

	Students	Yes	
1	The students reach their full potential as learners	335	85.68%
2	Students are socially aware and active beings, locally, nationally, and globally	351	89.77%
3	Students learn about themselves and others as they study various cultures	376	96.16%
4	Students analyze the beliefs, attitudes, values and behavior that are characteristics of particular culture	373	95.40%
5	Students develop an appreciation and understanding of other cultures	380	97.19%

Table 7. Test of Difference on the Experiences in the Situational Practices of Multicultural Education when Respondents are grouped According to Ethnicity

Factors Compared	Experiences in the Situational Practices of Multicultural Education					
Respondent's Ethnicity	Level of Significance (α)=95%	Degrees of Freedom 1	Critical X^2 3.841	Computed X^2 1.1826	Interpretation Not Significant	Action/Decision Accept H_o

Table 8. Test of Difference on the Experiences in the Situational Practices of Multicultural Education when Respondents are grouped According to Religion

Factors Compared	Experiences in the Situational Practices of Multicultural Education					
Respondent's Religion	Level of Significance (α)=95%	Degrees of Freedom 1	Critical X^2 3.841	Computed X^2 0.5839	Interpretation Not Significant	Action/Decision Accept H_o

help students to acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in pluralistic democratic society. Table 5 shows the situational practices of multicultural education in terms of curriculum. It shows that the students were positively practiced the situations in their respective curriculum with 90.28% acceptance that they practiced the above situations. Item number 5 with 95.91% acceptance rated the highest percentage that their curriculum taught them to learn decision making and social action in order to achieve multicultural goals and a more vibrant democracy.

It shows in Table 6 that the respondent students practiced positively the situations of multicultural education in terms to students. The total of 91.75% answered YES while only 8.25% answered NO. Item number 5 was rated the highest percentage which states that "they develop an appreciation and understanding of other cultures". The data in Table 7 above shows the difference between students' experiences in the situational practices of multicultural education when they are grouped according to ethnicity. The critical X^2 is greater than the computed X^2 thus the null hypotheses was accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference of their experiences when they are grouped according to ethnicity. The data on Table 8 above shows the difference between students' experiences in the situational practices of multicultural education when they are grouped according to Religion. The critical X^2 is greater than the computed X^2 thus the null hypotheses was accepted. In this connection, there is no significant difference of respondents experiences when they are grouped according to Religion.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, JRMSU System students positively experienced and practiced multicultural education in the areas namely: equality in learning, JRMSU culture, faculty, curriculum, and students. Ethnicity and religion were not significantly associated with their practices of multicultural education. Therefore, the university will further develop an educational equity policy framework.

Proposed Educational Equity Policy Framework Policy

- The University acknowledges the distinct status of students.
- Provide and maintain a supportive, hospitable and welcoming educational environment for all students in the University.
- The University will identify and seek to eliminate unfair and illegal barriers and support equitable access, participation, engagement and success for all students, especially those from ethnicity and religion sectors, by developing robust equity strategies with measurable outcomes.

- The University aims to provide a safe and inclusive study environment characterized by impartial, merit based decision making. It will plan, resource, monitor and report progress towards the achievement of aspirational equity goals. It will foster fairness and respect for social, cultural and gender identity diversity.
- The University will enhance its national and international reputation and attract, retain and support talented students to achieve their potential through its commitment to equity outcomes. This will benefit the creative and intellectual life of the University, and support engagement with the University's diverse communities.
- The University opposes discrimination, including discrimination on the prohibited grounds stated in the Human Rights Act, being sex, marital status, religious belief, ethical belief, colour, race, ethnicity or originating tribe, disability, age, political opinion,family status, and sexual orientation.

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