Perspective of Religiosity among Faculty-members of a Philippine University

Dennis M. Bautista

M.A.T., Tacloban City 6500

ABSTRACT

The concept of religiosity still holds true to almost every individual human person. A person seeks the presence of a Supreme Deity to govern him and for him to adore. This paper determined the level of religiosity of the faculty members, extent of their religiosity and how they view these concepts in their lives. The respondents are male and female belonging to different age brackets. Most of the respondents are Roman Catholics since Catholicism is still the religion in the Philippines that has the most number of believers. The result reveals that the power of media, side by side with one's educational attainment can be influential to a person's religiosity. Despite the varying views among the respondents, it was found out that there is a significant relationship among the two variables specifically on factors such as family's social spectrum and the perceived religious effects of the chosen media. This study is a replication of another study about the religious perspective of students conducted in the same university.

Keywords: *Religiosity, Perspective, Society, Grounded theory approach, Descriptive- survey design.*

INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is a country with predominant Christian inhabitants. In fact as of the 2010 demography of the Philippine Statistics Authority, 74 million out of 92 million Filipinos are catholics. It is surprising if most of the respondents are Catholics. Thus, Filipinosare known for its colorful traditions and celebrations most of which are of Christianity inspired. A Christian tradition known as the summer Sta. Cruzan, is a show case of beautiful young women of the community among whom one would be chosen as Reyna Elena. Reyna Elena or Queen Elena, was the mother of the famous defender of the infant Christian Church, Constantine, who according to history was the one who was able to identify the real wooden cross to which Christ was crucified in Calvary. Queen Elena was a beautiful woman, who is being represented by the most beautiful lady of the place during the Sta. Cruzan. However, it is unfortunate, that in recent times, beautiful women are being replaced by the members of the so called LGBT's (Lesbian, Gays, Bisexuals and Transexuals).

For instance, television shows today are sometimes conceived as mind conditioning tool to help people accept new ideas. Certain suggestive scenarios like infidelity, abortion, and many others are portrayed as acceptable even when in truth and in fact, they are not. The old ideas contrary to these new ones are considered double standard and need to be changed.

Our present society is confronted with so many problems that can be attributed to the religiosity and morality of individuals. This problem is not purely organizational but societal in nature (Jocano, 1997). In Leyte Normal University, the personal notion of values of the

Page : 32

faculty, dictates its effects on their personal life and actuation towards their individual action. Thus, there is a need to determine the personal conception of the university's employees and students with regard to religiosity and analyze if their ideas are in conformity with the well-founded notions as written and explained in the different schools of thought or religious denominations. Obviously, religious beliefs have become foundations of moral systems in a group or society. This step would create a unified notion that would propel the university to a strong promotion of morality in the university.

Religiosity is characterized by deep faith in God. Etymologically it is taken from a Latin word "religionem" meaning: respect for what is sacred, reverence for the gods, obligation, the bond between man and the gods (Abun, 2012). In the strict sense of the word, a person who is religious imbibes and inculcates into his being the teachings of his church and practices all these teachings in his dealings with his fellowmen.

The church, as an important agency of socialization, provides the spiritual and moral needs of the members of society. Its followers learn the norms of conducts and codes of behavior set forth by every religious institution. What is right and what is wrong are delineated and prescriptions for rewards and punishments are made. Concepts of heaven and hell motivate individuals to do what is good in order to be at peace with his maker (Panopio, 2002).

For this noble purpose of learning institutions are known to be constant in their academic requirements for their students study not only values education but religious education as well. While in public schools, students who do not have the opportunity to study religious education have values education incorporated in other subject areas and even catechesis. Private higher education institutions owned by religious organizations offer theology subjects.

LNU as the center of excellence in teacher education in the region with other courses in the arts and sciences and management and entrepreneurship, must not only provide quality and relevant academic training but moral training as well. One of the problems that beset the university though is on the aspect of ethical realm during the years of formation of the students whereby through their learning experiences students can imbibe and likewise manifest both the ethical and the unethical practices of their mentors. It is worse when only the unethical practices come out to be readily recognizable in the mentors' practices thereby totally and negatively affecting the welfare of the teaching profession and eventually stains the quality of the graduates of the university. This study is a replication of another study about the religious perspectives of students conducted in the same university.

This study investigated the level of religiosity of the faculty of Leyte Normal University.

Specifically this study answered the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the LNU faculty in terms of the following;

   a. gender
   b. age
   c. marital status
   d. educational attainment
   e. membership to religious movement
   f. level of exposure to media
   g. parents' background as to their educational attainment, occupation, economic status, and moral conviction

Page : 33

2. What are the respondents' personal views about religiosity?
3. What is the level of religiosity of the LNU faculty?
4. Is there a significant relationship between respondents' selected profile and their religiosity?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the following theories: the Psychological Foundation of Education of Jean Piaget (McLeod, 2009 &Dasen, 1994), Social Influences in Cognitive Development of Vygotsky (McLeod, 2007 &Shaffer, 1996), the Social Learning theory of Bandura (Bandura, 1977) and the concept of Cognitive Dissonance as coined by Leon Festinger (Mcleod, 2008).

Piaget believed that the students as learners discover their individual talents and abilities according to the stimuli that stir their curiosity and interest. The teacher guides the learners' own discovery and knowledge (McLeod, 2009). Every teacher should aim to bring about changes for the better in the light of the principle involved in the learning experiences of the individual student inside and outside the classroom. This is also known as learning by doing, where teachers guide the students in what they do. Thus, as guides, the moral turpitude of the teachers play a vital role. Learners' behavior changes as a result of observing other behaviors and consequences.

Vygotsky, like Piaget, believed that young children are curious and actively involved in their own learning and the discovery and development of new understandings/schema (McLeod, 2007). He believed in social transmission as an important factor for cognitive development of the child learner. However, Vygotsky placed more emphasis on social contributions to the process of development, whereas Piaget emphasized self-initiated discovery.

Bandura's theory comparably stated that behavior is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning. Children observe the people around them behaving in various ways (McLeod, 2011). In this theory, learners observe people around them, who they call models.Some models existing around the learners do sometimes respond to the behavior that is being imitated with either reinforcement or punishment. Reinforcement can either be positive or negative that will usually lead to a change in a person's behavior.

This study used the above mentioned theories to get the idea on how the Leyte Normal University employees promote religiosity because they exist as models to the students. The behavior of each LNU faculty reinforces the student's idea about things. The students' actions in the future may have something to do from what they have observed and believed from the faculty while they were still students.

In the process of learning and development, sometimes man is confronted with two or more conflicting cognitions such as ideas, values, beliefs or emotional reactions. These produce a feeling of discomfort leading to an alteration in one of the attitudes, beliefs or behaviors to reduce the discomfort and restore balance. Such theory is called cognitive dissonance theory coined by Leon Festinger (McLeod, 2008). He believed that, to be able to cope up with such a feeling, man must focus on more supportive beliefs or behaviors that outweigh the dissonant one existing in him. Man must also reduce the importance of the conflicting beliefs and change the same so that it would be consistent with other beliefs and behaviors.

Page : 34

This theory somehow supports the study conducted by Bulatao (1966), on Split-level Christianity, wherein Filipinos tend to join religious activities yet commit cultural practices which are deemed as unethical in the context of public office. In a sense, only those who view the continuity between the religious and the secular realm manifest consistency of morality.

The theories mentioned above support the beliefs that man's nature is highly influenced by the kind of society or environment where he is in. Individuals choose the kind of life they wanted to follow with the idea that such choice would give them the goodness that they wanted to attain.

METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire consisted of three parts: Part I solicited the demographic profile of the faculty of LNU such as age, educational attainment, family and educational background, and religious affiliation. Part II was made of questions that identified the levels of morality of the respondents. The said questionnaire also contained the five religious components found in part I of the said questionnaire, such as knowledge, beliefs, behavior, practice and consequence. Part III was made of questions that identified the personal perceptions or views of the respondents about morality.

The said questionnaire was validated and subsequently improved by conducting a dry run. To fill-in unanswered items in the questionnaire, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted with grounded theory approach, an inductive way of analyzing data to selected LNU faculty to determine their individual inputs with regard to morality.

This study used the descriptive survey design that utilized both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative aspect of this study refers to the holistic view of the respondents regarding morality and religiosity through statistical inquiry, while the qualitative aspect of this study pertains to the expository descriptive analysis of the concept of religiosity. Library research, more particularly on the different principles and ideas about religiosity and morality was employed. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with grounded theory approach, an inductive way of analyzing data was employed.

In order to obtain a holistic data on of the respondents' views on morality, the study utilized the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). To determine significant relationship or association between demographic and personal factors and morality, respectively, the contingency coefficient was used. This is a chi-squared based statistics measuring the degree of relationship or association of dependence of the classifications in a frequency table.

In this study, the respondents were the faculty of LNU, Tacloban City, Leyte, Philippines. The faculty of the university is composed of 126 instructors and professors. However, only 116 out of the 126 faculty members answered the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The respondents are male and female but belonging to different age brackets where age bracket 30-49 were the majority, which explains that majority of the LNU faculty are no longer new in the field of teaching. The educational qualification of the respondents were mostly Master's level/graduate studies. Further, the Roman Catholics dominated it because of the fact that the Philippines is a Catholic nation. The data reveals further that, Born Again

Christians come next. Most of the respondents were exposed to both the broadcast media and the print media, which in one way or the other may propel one to think that all have access to information.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of LNU Faculty

	Faculty	
Sex	N	%
Male	54	46.55
Female	62	53.45
Age		
10-19	1	0.86
20-29	24	20.69
30-49	58	50.00
50-65	33	28.45
Civil Status		
Single	42	36.21
Married	70	60.34
Widow/er	4	3.45
Level of Educational Attainment		
College Level/Graduate	3	2.59
Master's Level/Graduate	86	74.14
Doctorate Level/Graduate	27	23.28
Membership in Religious and Morality Movement		
Roman Catholic	110	94.83
Born Again Christian	4	3.45
IglesianiKristo		
Latter Day Saints		
Jehovah's Witness	1	0.86
Dating Daan		
Islam	1	0.86
Methodist		
Jesus is Lord		
Level of Exposure to Media (Newspaper)		
Very Often	10	8.62
Often	55	47.41
Slightly Often	40	34.48
Seldom	9	7.76
Never	2	1.72
Level of Exposure to Media (Radio)		
Very Often	13	11.21
Often	49	42.24
Slightly Often	40	34.48
Seldom	10	8.62

Never	4	3.45
Level of Exposure to Media (Television)		
Very Often	14	12.07
Often	49	42.24
Slightly Often	29	25.00
Seldom	11	9.48
Never	13	11.21
Level of Exposure to Media (Internet)		
Very Often	30	25.86
Often	60	51.72
Slightly Often	25	21.55
Seldom	1	0.86
Never	0	0.00
Total	**116**	**100.00**

To authenticate the validity and authenticity of the respondents' answers, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was utilized by calling a number of respondents representing the three groups. They were asked to validate their answers with the researcher asking the necessary questions which were also found in the questionnaire. Their answers where triangulated with the result of the questionnaire, thus validating the answers to be true and reliable.

Most of the respondents were exposed to the broadcast media rather than the print media. The table reveals that majority of the respondents very often use the television, while others use the internet and radio, respectively, and slightly read the newspaper. Nevertheless, all of them are exposed to media in one way or the other which may propel one to think that all have access to information.

Table 2
Faculty's View on Religiosity

Ideas, Beliefs, Doctrines, Practices and Consequences	5	4	3	2	1
God exits.	92	24	0	0	0
God created the world.	93	23	0	0	0
God created man according to His image and likeness.	102	14	0	0	0
Satan and hell exist.	84	31	0	0	0
There is life after death.	84	31	0	0	0
I believe that my religion is very important in my life.	103	13	0	0	0
I believe that the whole creation of God is good and must be respected.	93	24	0	0	0
I believe that there is heaven.	96	20	0	0	0
I believe that in the end of time, we will be judged according	10	14	0	0	0

Page : 37

to what we did.	2				
I believe that the Bible is the word of God.	95	21	0	0	0
I live my life in accordance with the teachings of my religion.	83	33	0	0	0
Prayer is a tool to communicate with God.	96	20	0	0	0
I must respect my fellow men.	98	18	0	0	0
Avoiding sin is a must.	88	28	0	0	0
I am willing to share my blessings with others especially the needy.	92	24	0	0	0
I admit my sin to God and ask for His forgiveness.	100	16	0	0	0
I always pray.	59	57	0	0	0
Attendance in religious services and activities is a must.	60	56	0	0	0
I am willing to do what God, as per religious teaching wants me to do.	73	43	0	0	0
Doing good things while alive would merit a place in heaven.	77	39	0	0	0
The important decisions of my life are always influenced by my religious beliefs.	64	52	0	0	0
I am influenced by my religious beliefs on what I wear.	61	53	0	0	0
I am influenced by my religious beliefs and affiliation on what I do.	61	53	0	0	0
I am influenced by my religious beliefs on what or whom I associate with.	62	52	0	0	0
I am influenced by my religious beliefs on what social activities I undertake.	59	57	0	0	0

5 – Strongly Agree   **2 – Fairly Agree**   **3-Agree**
4 – Moderately Agree   **1 – Uncertain**

Such beliefs and practices have been in existence in our society even before the coming of the Spaniards who introduced Catholicism to us. In everything that they do, they always invoke the presence of God, which is a good manifestation since teachers are not only expected to enhance the intellectual capability of their students but also uplift their religiosity.

This study affirms the religious nature of the respondents which is a good quality for an academic staff to have. Religiosity is the quality of being religious; pious; devout and affected, with excessive devotion to religion (dictionary.com). Religiosity has been believed to have a strong effect on behaviors, outcomes, and attitudes as wide ranging as seatbelt use and optimism, and as important as morality and family relation (Regnerus & Smith, 2005). Strong belief in God is one of the values that Filipinos possess and cherish. In almost everything that a Filipino does, he would always include God in such undertaking. In difficult moments, God is always implored that such iniquity will be solved.

There is no coincidence in this table showing that respondents are deeply religious. Being Filipinos, it follows that religiosity as one of their most cherished values, will also be observed or expected from them.

Table 3 shows the relationship between religiosity, demographic, and personal factors of the faculty respondents. The result reveals that there is a significant relationship between religiosity and the demographic profile of the faculty respondents. Factors such as family, social spectrum, and the perceived moral effects of the chosen media are highly significant while parents' education and occupation, the mothers' moral conviction, and frequency of access to newspapers are significant. The said factors play a very significant role in the formation and development of one's behavior. Johnson (2013) says, that all moral behaviors are learned, and much of what are learned about the environment and the world comes from media. It can influence moral development either positively or negatively. Therefore, people must be very careful in choosing the kind of media outlet they will going to patronize.

Table 3
Relationship between Religiosity and Demographic and Personal
Factors of the Faculty

Demographic and Personal Factors	Contingency Coefficient	Pearson chi-square value	df	Significance
Sex	.053	.326	1	.568
Age	.095	1.065	3	.786
Civil Status	.091	.966	2	.617
Highest Educ'l Attainment	.054	.336	2	.845
Religion	.150	2.669	1	.102
Parents' Education	.302	11.635	4	.020*
Parents', Occupation	.230	6.507	2	.039*
Family's Social Spectrum	.317	12.964	2	.002**
Fathers' Moral Conviction	.047	.259	3	.967
Mothers' Moral Conviction	.306	11.964	4	.018*
Previous School Enrolled In	.203	4.993	7	.661
Place of Residence	.119	1.657	2	.437
Frequency of Access to				
Newspaper	.277	9.583	4	.048*
Radio	.118	1.627	4	.804
TV	.299	11.374	4	.023
Internet	.137	2.233	3	.526
Classification of Program, Movies, Reading Material Resorted to	.167	3.334	4	.504
Perceived Moral Effect of the chosen media	.327	13.764	3	.003**

*α<.05 Significant   ** α< .01 Highly Significant

The above results are good revelation of the quality of LNU faculty. Siddhartha Gautama said, that the ship is stable and in good condition if its crew work harmoniously with each other (Boeree, 1999). With a faculty giving high regard for religiosity and with the conception that teachers are exemplars in a learning institution, chances are, students may likewise have a tendency to be religious.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were derived;

1. The Leyte Normal University being a center of excellence employs faculty with high educational attainment as it is shown in table 1 where Master's Degree holders dominate followed by Doctorate Degree holders.

2. All of the respondents believe that God exists. They are aware of their respective church's divine teachings and laws. Having accepted and practiced the doctrines of the church to which they belong, majority of the respondents imbibe distinctive characters that radiate the goodness that they possess.

3. In Table 3, the faculty of the university are taught of different religious ideas and practices in their respective churchesthat these reflect upon their views in life and the performance of their work. The diversity of ideas of the respondents with regard to their work and all the aspects related to it is manifested in their different views of religiosity.

4. Despite the varying views among respondents, it was found out that there is a significant relationship between the two variables most specifically on factors such family's social spectrum and the perceived moral effects of the chosen media.

5. Factors such as Parent's education. Parent's Occupation, mothers' moral conviction, and frequent access to newspaper have contributed to the LNU faculty high religiosity.

And to my deceased parents, Atty. Arturo Q. Bautista and Leticia M. Bautista, who have encouraged me to reach this milestone in my life. Papa and Mama thank you very much.

REFERRENCES

i.   Abun, D, SVD, 2012, The effect of religion towards moral values of college students in Ilocos Sur, Philippines, E-International scientific research journal, Vol. IV

ii.   Bandura, A. 1977, Social learning theory, New York: General learning press'

iii. Boeree, C. G., 1999, The life of Siddhartha Gautama, Shippensburg University.

iv.   Bulatao, J., 1966, Split-level Christianity, Ateneo de Manila University Press.

v.   Dasen P. 1994, Culture and cognitive development from a Piagetian perspective in W.J. Lonner& R.S. Malpass (Eds), Psychology and Culture, Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

vi.   Jocano, F. L.,1997, Filipino value system: A cultural definition, Punlad Research House.

vii. Johnson, M., 2013, Media and morality,retrieved from http://mediasmarts.ca/blog/media-and morality'

viii. Mcleod,Saul A., 2007 ,Vygotsky-Simply psychology, retrieved from http://www.simply , psychology. org/vygotsky.html

ix.   McLeaod, Saul A, 2008, Leon Festinger Cognitive Dissonance-Simply Psychology, retrieved from http://www.simplypsychology.org/festinger. html

x.   McLeod, Saul A, 2009, Jean Piaget Cognitive Theory – Simply Psychology, retrieved from http://www.simplypsychology.org/piaget.html

xi.   McLeod, Saul A, 2011, Bandura-Social learning theory, retrieved from http://www.simplypsychology.org/bandura.html

xii. Panopio, Isabel and Raymundo, Adelisa. *Sociology: Focus on the Philippines.* Quezon City,

xiii. Philippines: Ken Incorporated, 2004

xiv. Regnerus, M.D. & Smith, C., 2005, Selection effects in studies of religious influence, Review of religious research, Vol. 47 (1), pp. 23-50

xv.   Schaffer, R ,1996, Social Development. Oxford: Blackwell.