

EXPLORING A COLLABORATIVE-PARTICIPATORY PROCESS IN
DEVELOPING A MULTICULTURAL TEACHER EDUCATION
CURRICULUM

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DEDICATION

This thesis is lovingly dedicated to ...

the memory of my father

the late Artemio S. Reyes

who died during the second year of my scholarship

yet believed that I could be a doctor someday

and

the Agusan community.

May this work serve as a legacy

to the future teachers of the local community.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis was to instigate a collaborative participatory process in developing a multicultural teacher education curriculum that is relevant and responsive to the needs of the Agusan community in the Philippines and to examine the process. The curriculum development process itself reversed the usual approach, from *top-down* to *bottom-up* by directly involving teachers and students in curriculum planning and decision-making. This inverted approach aimed to bring about success indicators of empowerment in terms of curriculum decision-making among the participants involved. The study led to the development of a collaborative participatory process curriculum model suitable for the local campus of a school or university. The key features of the collaborative participatory process model that emerged in the process of curriculum development were identified and described in this research. In addition, the study described the extent to which the collaborative participatory process model achieved its purpose of providing a locally responsive curriculum in a teacher education university.

Research methods used were a combination of two qualitative approaches: collaborative participatory action research (CPAR) adapted to the context of curriculum development, and a grounded theory approach, which informed the data analysis. The study was conducted at the Philippine Normal University Agusan campus. Four administrators, five teachers, four students and the researcher were purposively selected as participants to form the curriculum development team. The curriculum team collaboratively identified the multicultural curriculum focus through a series of curriculum development meetings. Ten meetings, some which combined focus groups and workshops, were held over a semester from June to October 2008. Meetings were audio and videotaped and documented by field notes with the assistance of two local process observers for local language translation. The research also used other sources of data such as participant

observation, an exposure trip to the local community and individual interviews. Validation of multicultural curriculum outcomes was achieved through a meeting with a reference group and the general faculty. Verbatim transcriptions of data and individual interviews were coded and analyzed using NVivo 8 software. Grounded theory was used as the methodological procedure to the analysis of data following the stages of open, axial and selective coding.

Results of the study showed evidence not only of individual but also collective empowerment of the participants involved through the collaborative participatory process. Moreover, the active and direct involvement of all curriculum stakeholders, particularly teachers and students, in curriculum development led to the successful creation of a multicultural curriculum. The participants' empowerment resulted from the space created for the voices of previously uninvolved participants to be heard in curriculum decision-making. The teachers' and students' empowerment showed that a *bottom-up* model in creating a curriculum for a local context is feasible and desirable. The collaborative participatory curriculum process model developed in this research could be a model for other universities with local campuses to the possibility of reversing the current curriculum model from *top-down* to *bottom-up* to be responsive to their own local community. This curriculum model could also be used in designing school curricula other than a multicultural education curriculum.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'meys', written in a cursive style.

Wilma S. Reyes

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