

Introduction

The Philippines has considerable experience in the field of human rights education. By and large, the exigencies of the time caused the development of human rights education programs since the 1970s and probably even earlier. Since 1986, the Philippines has been officially requiring the teaching of human rights in schools.

In consideration of this situation, the Philippines was included in a four-country research project launched in 2003 by the Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center (HURIGHTS OSAKA). The research project is a comparative study of education policies and human rights awareness in India, Japan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. Similar to the Philippines, these countries are considered to have significant education policies related to human rights education, and have been implementing human rights education programs in their respective formal education systems.

The research project is designed to provide an independent and critical review of the existing state of human rights education in school programs in these countries by analyzing how the national education policy structure supports human rights education, and what impact is there in terms of human rights awareness of students.

The project has the following specific objectives:

1. To clarify government's support for human rights education in schools.
2. To clarify problem areas in implementing human rights education in school programs.
3. To identify measures for effective human rights education in school programs.

It has two components:

1. Analysis of national policies on human rights education in schools, and
2. Survey of human rights awareness among secondary school students in selected schools.

The Philippine study was commissioned to the Center for Research and Development in Education (CREDE) of the Philippine Normal University. The research in the Philippines started in February 2004.

Research Procedures

The policy analysis component of the project was done through documentary analysis as well as interview of key people in the formal education field. Purposive sampling of the interviews was employed because people were selected on the basis of the role they play in policymaking and implementing structures for the teaching of human rights.

Documents were gathered from a variety of sources including the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), various libraries, websites of relevant government agencies and universities in the Philippines, and bookstores. The documents consisted mainly of executive orders, departmental memorandums, orders and guidelines, the national school curriculum, and national action plans and programs.

Interviews were held with officials in the DepEd, CHR, CHED, and non-governmental institutions/organizations (which are partners of the government in the promotion of human rights education).

The field survey involved 2,001 secondary school students from 26 selected public and private schools representing four regions of the country, namely, the National Capital Region (NCR), Southern Tagalog Region (Region IV), Eastern Visayas Region (Region VII), and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Out of the 26 schools, five were selected for focus group discussion (FGD) with 10 teachers (2 teachers per school) and 50 students (10 students per school) participating.

The number and type of schools representing each region are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Number and Type of Schools per Region

Region	Type of School		Total
	Public	Private	
NCR	5	4	9
Region IV	3	4	7
Region VII	2	2	4
ARMM	6	0	6
Total	16	10	26

The students were in second year secondary school whose ages ranged from 12 to 15 years. Intact classes were used, each class numbering more or less 40 students. The classes in both public and private secondary schools were heterogeneous in terms of mental ability or achievement as students were selected on a “first-come, first-served” basis and not on grades obtained the year before. See Appendix H for the list of participating schools.

The research variables included gender, type of school, ethnicity, geographic classification and region. The 1996 National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) Standard Geographic Code was utilized in classifying the respondents into categories of geographic classification. The NSCB (<http://www.nscb.gov.ph/activestats/psgc/default.asp>) lists different municipalities and classify them as rural, urban and partially urban. The variables and their respective samples are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The Number of Respondents per Variable

Variable	N
A. Gender ¹	
Male	805
Female	1,160
B. Type of School	
Public	1,215
Private	786

¹ Some of the questionnaires were returned without indicating the gender of the student-respondents. This resulted in having a total of 1,965 respondents, and not the 2,001 total number of respondents.

Table 2. (cont.)

Variable	N
C. Ethnicity	
Christian	1,505
Muslim	496
D. Geographic Location	
Urban	1,115
Partially Urban	886
E. Region	
NCR	715
IV	548
VII	317
ARMM	421

Three data gathering instruments were used: 1) the human rights awareness survey questionnaire, 2) FGD questions for teachers, and 3) FGD questions for students.

The survey questionnaire was developed in consultation with research partners in India, Japan and Sri Lanka. It consisted of 69 items as follows:

General Sources of Knowledge on Human Rights	3 items
Knowledge of Human Rights Documents	6 items
General Human Rights Principles and Issues	21 items
Human Rights Situations (Proper Action to Take)	10 items
Human Rights Situations (Classification into Human Rights Violation and Non-Violation)	9 items
Process of Teaching-Learning, Materials and School Ethos	20 items
Total	69 items

The content and format of the survey questionnaire were validated prior to administration. See Appendix D for the questionnaire.

PNU initially drafted the FGD questions and were eventually adopted by the research partners and HURIGHTS OSAKA. (See Appendix E and F for the FGD questions)

Letters of request were sent starting in February 2004 to the various schools identified for the field survey. Follow-up communication revealed questions and doubts about the project among the school heads. Some schools refused to participate for various reasons such as schedule of the survey falling within the review sessions for the final examination; engagement of the school in many activities; non-participation of the school in any research activity as a policy; early final examination period; absence of Principal/Director; and the Principal being new in the school. Some schools were dropped from the list for lack of follow-up communication with the Principal/Director. Delays in the administration of the survey also occurred due to the non-availability of school heads who were either out of town/country or attending conferences in other places. The DepEd provided the list of schools per region.

The whole duration of the survey administration was from 17 February 2004 until 3 November 2004. In each school, the researchers informed the students of the purpose of the study and gave general directions on the survey administration. Questions from the students about the survey were entertained. They were given a questionnaire each and instructed to place their answers on the questionnaire itself. At least an hour was allotted for them to answer the questions, but some students finished within 30-45 minutes. As soon as they were through with the survey, they gave back the questionnaire to the researchers. FGDs were separately held for some students and some teachers respectively. One researcher was in charge of the FGD for students, while another researcher took charge of the FGD for teachers.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the survey results. Frequencies and percentages were used to illustrate nominal data, while means and standard deviations described averages and dispersions. The t-test was used to find out differences between means of the data which are interval in nature among the variables used. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare differences in means among regions and the Duncan Multiple Range Test clustered the regions in terms of their similarities and separated those which were significantly different from the cluster. In effect, the statistics were used to describe the current awareness of students on human rights and test differences if any that exist between and among them in terms of such awareness.