



Teachers' Lived Experiences in Promoting Education for Humanization: A Phenomenological Study in Christian Basic Education Institutions

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Abstract – This phenomenological study investigates how teachers in schools teach Education for Humanization. Education for Humanization is about treating people with respect and kindness. The study used interviews with teachers. Analyzed the results to see how teachers teach and why they do it that way. The teachers said that Education for Humanization is about making sure students are treated with dignity and respect. They want to create a welcoming place for all students to learn. The teachers also said they try to be kind and understanding with their students. Even though the teachers were able to do a job of teaching Education for Humanization they had a lot of problems to deal with. They had to do a lot of work and did not have resources. They also had students with needs. The study found that the teachers' personal beliefs and sense of purpose helped them keep going even when things were tough. Education for Humanization is not just good for students it is also good for the teachers. It helps them feel like they are doing something meaningful. Education for Humanization is a part of what teachers do in Christian schools. It helps teachers teach students in a way that's respectful and kind. Education, for Humanization is a way of teaching that helps students and teachers grow and learn together.

Keywords – Education for Humanization, Christian Basic Education Institutions, Inclusive Education, phenomenological study.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is about more than learning things. It is about helping people become the version of themselves. This is what we mean by Humanization. It is a process that helps people understand their worth and think critically about the world.

As stated by Freire that people learn best when they are talking to each other and sharing ideas. This way of learning is called pedagogy. It is the opposite of sitting in a classroom and listening to someone talk. When students are able to share their thoughts and ideas, they start to see the world in a way. They become more aware of what's going on around them

and they want to make a difference.

In the Philippines there are schools that teach people about their faith and how to be a person. These schools, like Christian Basic Education help people learn about God and how to live a life. They teach people that they are special and that they should treat others with respect. Some people, like Brubaker and Espiritu think that schools like this are very important. They help people become the version of themselves and prepare them to make a positive impact on the world.

Teachers are very important in this process. They help create an environment where students feel safe

and respected. They help students learn and grow in a way that's meaningful to them. Some people have studied how teachers do this. They have looked at how teachers combine their faith with their work and how this helps students. By understanding how teachers do their job we can learn how to make education better. Education should be about more than learning facts. It should be about helping people become citizens and live a life of purpose.

Education, for Humanization is what we are talking about. It is a way of learning that helps people understand their worth and think critically about the world. Humanization is what happens when people are treated with respect and dignity. Humanization is what we should be striving for in our schools.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study utilizes a qualitative, descriptive phenomenological design based on Husserl's philosophical tradition. Following Colaizzi's (1978) seven-step method, the researcher employs epoché to bracket preconceptions, ensuring an authentic, participant-centered account. By analyzing in-depth interviews through the lenses of Moustakas (1994) and Creswell & Poth (2018), the research uncovers the essential meanings of teachers' lived experiences.

B. Research Locale

The study was conducted in four Christian Basic Education Institutions in Cabuyao City, Laguna: Glorious Dawn Village School, Maranatha Christian Academy, IFL Christian Academy, and St. Aloysius School. These sites were purposively selected for their shared faith-based philosophy and commitment to holistic formation. This setting provided a contextually rich environment to explore the interplay between institutional mission and humanizing pedagogy.



Fig.1. Map of Cabuyao City, Laguna, Philippines

C. Population and Sampling

The study utilized purposive sampling to select ten teachers from four Christian institutions, ensuring they met specific inclusion criteria. Data collection continued until data saturation was achieved. Primary instruments included an expert-validated, semi-structured interview guide and a reflective journal for bracketing. Ethical standards were maintained through informed consent and alphanumeric coding to ensure participant confidentiality.

D. Research Participants

Table 1. Participants Inclusion Criteria

Participant	Inclusion Criteria
P1	Participants must have at least two (2) years of active teaching experience .
P2	Actively involved in the school's faith -based and human formation programs. Active involvement in these programs signals a personal and professional commitment to the values of Christian humanizing education that is central to the study's focus.
P3	Participants must demonstrate reflective engagement in promoting Education for Humanization in their classrooms, as evidenced by their openness to discuss their pedagogical practices, challenges, and insights during the interview process.
P4	Participants must have at least two (2) years of active teaching experience. Actively involved in the school's faith -based and human formation programs. Active involvement in these programs signals a personal and professional commitment to the values of Christian humanizing education that is central to the study's focus.

E. Research Instrumentation

Data was collected using a researcher-developed, semi-structured interview guide, expert-validated by three specialists and pilot-tested for clarity. It utilized open-ended questions to elicit narratives on practices and challenges. Complementing this, a reflective journal facilitated reflexive bracketing and captured non-verbal cues. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, ensuring a nuanced, authentic understanding of participants' experiences.

F. Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection followed a systematic process beginning with ethical approval and administrative clearance. Purposive sampling and formal invitations ensured voluntary participation. Primary data were gathered through 60-minute, audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews, which were transcribed verbatim. To ensure trustworthiness, member checking was conducted, allowing participants to verify findings, while secure data storage maintained strict confidentiality throughout the study.

G. Ethical Consideration

The study strictly adhered to the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and APA ethical standards. Institutional Ethics Review Committee clearance was secured, and participants provided written informed consent, ensuring voluntary autonomy and the right to withdraw. Confidentiality was maintained through alphanumeric coding and secure data storage, prioritizing beneficence and non-maleficence to safeguard participant well-being throughout the research process.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following Colaizzi's (1978) method, data from ten purposively selected teachers across four Christian institutions were analyzed. Five emergent themes were identified from in-depth interviews and reflective narratives. The analysis focused on how educators interpret and sustain humanizing practices despite contextual challenges. Findings were validated via member checking, ensuring an authentic portrayal of teachers' professional and spiritual vocation.

Table 2. Research Question Alignment and Emergent Thematic Structure

Research Question	Interview Focus	Emergent Theme/s	Analytical Focus
RQ1. What and inclusive classroom practices, interactions, and positive experiences do teachers describe in their work with learners?	Classroom practices, learner interaction, and positive experiences	Theme 1: Humanizing and Inclusive Pedagogical Practices; Theme 2: Dignity-centered Inclusive Interaction	Practices such as kamustahan, adaptive instruction, respect-building, active listening, and classroom belonging emerged as concrete expressions of humanization.
RQ2. How do teachers interpret and embody the principles of education for humanization in their day-to-day teaching decisions, strategies, and relationships with students?	Teacher interpretation, teaching decisions, strategies, and relationships	Theme 3: Role of Christian Values in Education for Humanization	Teachers viewed humanization as a vocation grounded in dignity, faith, values formation, and teacher modeling.
RQ3. What challenges and constraints do teachers encounter in fostering humanizing and inclusive education?	Readiness, instructional constraints, policy demands, and learner diversity	Theme 4: Barriers to Humanizing Education	Teachers experienced challenges related to diverse learner needs, behavioral concerns, limited training, lack of resources, curriculum pressure, and administrative workload.
RQ4. How do teachers make meaning of these experiences and challenges, and what insights do they derive about their role and professional identity?	Meaning-making, faith, resilience, identity, and transformation	Theme 5: Transformative Inclusive Learning Experiences	Teachers interpreted their work as a faith-guided vocation that transforms both learners and teachers through empathy, patience, reflection, and resilience.

Table 3. Thematic Matrix for Theme One: Humanizing and Inclusive Pedagogical Practices

Superordinate Theme	Subthemes	Direct Quotes
Humanizing and Inclusive Pedagogical Practices	Responsive and Adaptive Teaching for Learner Diversity	<p>P2: "The lesson must be tailored to the child's age and background because every child is different."</p> <p>P6: "If a student has a special condition, I teach the others how to respect and support them."</p> <p>P8: "Value formation is mandatory. A teacher must be prepared and adapt what is done in class."</p>
	Promoting Respect, Empathy, and Shared Values	<p>P3: "It is important to teach children respect, empathy, and care for each other."</p> <p>P7: "Nobody is left behind. Every child is heard and valued in every discussion."</p> <p>P10: "Understanding that they are created in God's image is the ultimate way to promote humanization and inclusivity."</p>
Building Meaningful Teacher-Student Relationships		<p>P1: "We have specific classroom practices like kamustahan. This is where we learn about what the child is going through."</p>
		<p>P5: "We talk about what happens at home, which helps them feel that the classroom is a safe space."</p>
		<p>P9: "By praying for their families, I am showing them that I care for their life outside of school."</p>

The first theme defines humanizing education through three dimensions: adaptive teaching, empathy/shared values, and meaningful relationships. Central to this is "kamustahan," a pedagogical check-in focusing on student well-being over curriculum. Teachers reject the "banking model," instead practicing "pedagogical tact" (Van Manen) to honor the Imago Dei. This approach transforms classrooms into democratic spaces where dignity and faith intersect.

Table 4. Thematic Matrix for Theme Two: Dignity-

centered Inclusive Interaction

Superordinate Theme	Subthemes	Direct Quotes
Dignity-centered Inclusive Interaction	Participating in Classroom Guidance	<p>P4: "I interact with them in a way that will not hurt them."</p> <p>P6: "I provide compassionate guidance and teach the rest of the class to respect them."</p> <p>P10: "I listen to them and become more patient, especially with reactive children."</p>
	Encouraging Student Voice and Participation	<p>P1: "We listen to their opinions without judgment."</p> <p>P3: "I guide them so that even the quiet ones feel they have a voice in the group."</p> <p>P7: "Everyone is listened to. Every opinion is valued."</p> <p>P9: "There is respect because there is no judgment, and they are open to giving opinions."</p>
	Creating an Inclusive Classroom Environment	<p>P2: "I show respect for their dignity to create a sense of belonging."</p>

This theme emphasizes reciprocal respect and relational presence (Van Manen, 2016) over top-down authority. Educators model dignity through "corrective compassion," replacing harsh discipline with active listening and patience. By utilizing servant-leadership and "po/opo" to bridge authority gaps, teachers create safe, inclusive spaces where students feel a sense of belonging, transforming discipline into a restorative, faith-driven encounter.

Table 4. Thematic Matrix for Theme Three: Role of Christian Values in Education for Humanization

Superordinate Theme	Subthemes	Direct Quotes
Role of Christian Values in Education for Humanization	Humanizing Purpose of Teaching	<p>P1: "As a teacher, we serve as models of love and wisdom."</p> <p>P9: "The role of the teacher is to impart life to the students."</p> <p>P10: "Christ is the number one role model in morality and values."</p>
	Respect for Human Dignity	<p>P5: "Inclusivity helps me understand how students socialize with respect and dignity."</p> <p>P8: "Respect their values and individuality, no matter where they came from."</p>

Formation of Responsible Persons	<p>P2: "Good things should be taught to young learners so they can apply them in life."</p> <p>P3: "Humanization is important because they can use it when they grow older."</p> <p>P6: "At the primary level, this is their foundation and they will carry it to higher grades."</p>
Values-Integrated Teaching Practices and Pedagogical Decision-Making	<p>P4: "I teach Christian values so children become responsible for their actions."</p> <p>P7: "We are not the only ones teaching; children also have different skills that we learn from."</p> <p>P10: "Christ is the number one role model in morality and values."</p>

Instructional, Institutional, and Curriculum Constraints	<p>P1: "The challenge is balancing humanizing and maintaining strict discipline."</p> <p>P10: "The challenge comes when lessons in Science must be related to faith and Christian values."</p>
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Teachers face a "dialectic of struggle," balancing humanizing pedagogy against institutional "limit-situations" (Freire, 1970). Rigid curriculum demands and "performativity" pressures often squeeze out meaningful encounters like kamustahan, threatening "pedagogical presence" (Van Manen, 2016). Despite a "poverty of resources," educators resist being reduced to mere technicians, fighting to preserve student dignity against dehumanizing, machine-like systemic expectations.

Table 6. Thematic Matrix for Theme Five: Transformative Inclusive Learning Experiences

Superordinate Theme	Subthemes	Direct Quotes
Transformative Inclusive Learning Experiences	Enhanced Learning Participation	<p>P1: "One positive experience is the child's self-confidence and enhanced self-esteem."</p> <p>P4: "Children become transparent about their experiences and what they want to say."</p> <p>P6: "When you see that they understand and follow, that is a positive experience."</p> <p>P9: "I also learn from them because they are the next generation."</p>
	Meaningful Learning Environment	<p>P3: "You see that the child learns what you teach, and they say thank you or please."</p> <p>P7: "They show respect in return and are ready to listen to the teacher."</p> <p>P8: "We must deepen patience, especially when a child has a special need."</p>
	Meaningful Learning Engagement	<p>P2: "They follow classroom rules and show respect by listening."</p> <p>P5: "I see them saying please, favor po, and opo."</p> <p>P10: "I am proud because I see the change in the child; the quiet child becomes expressive."</p>
	Faith-Guided Teaching Resilience	<p>quiet child becomes expressive."</p> <p>P8: "We must deepen patience, especially when a child has a special need."</p> <p>P10: "I am proud because I see the change in the child; the quiet child becomes expressive."</p>

This theme highlights the spiritual foundation of humanization, where teachers integrate their Christian identity with professional practice. Educators view students through the lens of Imago Dei, utilizing "axiological modeling" and phenomenological reflection (Van Manen) to weave Gospel values into lessons. This "spirit of service" transforms the classroom into a formative space where faith-driven patience fosters student dignity and social responsibility.

Table 5. Thematic Matrix for Theme Four: Barriers to Humanizing Education

Superordinate Theme	Subthemes	Direct Quotes
Barriers to Humanizing Education	Diverse Learner Needs	<p>P2: "Behavior is a challenge, especially when children lack discipline from home."</p> <p>P3: "They come from different family backgrounds, so I try to understand where they are coming from."</p> <p>P5: "It is stressful to adjust because students have different backgrounds."</p> <p>P9: "Diversity of religion is a challenge, especially when explaining messages through songs."</p>
	Learner Behavioral Issues	<p>P4: "Children today have their own thinking and are influenced by social media."</p> <p>P8: "The problem is how to deepen values education among the generation of gadgets."</p>
	Teacher Readiness and Limited Instructional Resources	<p>P6: "We need to think of new strategies so classmates understand a student with a special condition."</p> <p>P7: "Teachers need training to level up their teaching strategies."</p>

This theme illustrates the reciprocal transformation of eachers and students through "reflective thoughtfulness" (Van Manen, 2016). By leaning on

spiritual practices and collegial solidarity, educators move from "denouncing" oppressive structures to the "annunciation" of hope (Freire, 1970). This mutual growth reaffirms the teacher's vocation and awakens the student's agency, transforming the school into a living community of grace.

IV. SUMMARY

The study uncovers the essential structure of humanizing education as a faith-driven vocation. It reveals how teachers integrate adaptive practices and Christian values to foster student dignity while navigating institutional tensions. Sustained by spiritual reflection and collegial support, this relational process culminates in the mutual transformation of educators and learners, orienting both toward holistic formation, compassion, and truth.

V. CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that teachers view humanizing education as a spiritual vocation grounded in the Imago Dei. Beyond curriculum, educators enact "kamustahan" and adaptive teaching to foster inclusive, dignity-centered spaces. While hindered by institutional pressures and "limit-situations," teachers maintain faith-guided resilience. This reciprocal process results in transformative learning experiences, where both students and teachers achieve moral and spiritual growth.

Education for Humanization is a relational, faith-driven vocation prioritizing student dignity over content delivery. Guided by "reflective tact," teachers transition from "banking" models to co-creative, dialogical partnerships. While systemic administrative pressures create significant tension, the practice remains a transformative spiritual imperative. Ultimately, this mutual journey fosters holistic growth, social responsibility, and vocational fulfillment for both educators and learners.

To bridge the gap between ideals and practice, institutions should adopt a Humanizing Pedagogy Framework and Relational Presence Policies, prioritizing "Dignity-Based Mentoring" over administrative compliance. Recommendations include "Bureaucratic De-loading" to recover

relational capacity and "Holistic Assessment Policies" that utilize moral growth portfolios. By formalizing spiritual vocation through "Virtue-in-Practice" protocols, schools transform humanization from an abstract concept into a systemic, measurable reality.

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