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The Study of Muslim Culture: Basis for Culturally Congruent Nursing Education

Elmer G. Organia*, Corazon B. de la Peña, Samuel F. Migallos, Sarah Bernadette L. Baleña, Elsie A. Tee, Jose C. Dagoc Jr., Mark Ryan Y. Contaoi, Richard Deo Rox R. Alave, Melody A. Zaragoza

Notre Dame of Tacurong College, The Philippines
*Correspondence: E-mail: elmerorgania123@gmail.com

A B S T R A C T

This study was conducted to explore the Muslim Maguindanaon culture. A Husserlian descriptive phenomenology was used to gather and describe the experiences of the participants. The Level 2 and Level 3 student nurses were chosen using the purposive sampling technique. The data were analyzed using Colaizzi's process of phenomenological data analysis. The formulated meanings were categorized into five (5) emergent themes. The emergent themes gathered from the participants were: (1) Cultural practices and traditions of the Muslim Maguindanaon family, (2) Experience of acceptance, respect, and supportive the school community, (3) Student organizations as social networks for relevant Islamic activities, (4) The curriculum and instruction with considerations of the Muslim Maguindanaon culture, and (5) A Catholic school delivers quality education while respecting the diversity of Muslim Maguindanaon students. The study's findings were used as a framework to develop a culturally congruent nursing education for Muslim Maguindanaon student nurses. It is recommended that the culturally congruent nursing education model, educators' guide, prototype curriculum, and mapping of program outcomes shall guide the delivery of culturally congruent nursing education for Muslim Maguindanaon students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Muslims are composed of around 1.8 billion people and are considered the second largest tradition after Christianity. Because of this, the possibility of having encountered them is very high. As a result, the way they are being dealt with may provide challenges, especially for those unfamiliar with their culture (Hildebrandt, 2015).

Student nurses coming from different cultures need caring and understanding, and this changing diversity among students brings in unique needs. It must be shown in its applicability during admission, actual classes, and the implementation of retention policies for diverse student nurses until graduation (Christensen, 2014).

The application of transcultural nursing is essential, especially in transitioning into an increasingly multicultural society, to ensure that a culturally competent workforce is well-established and cared for (Abdulrehman *et* al., 2017; Burns, 2020) There should be scrutiny of faculty preparation, including their competence to meet the diverse students' needs and concerns. They must clearly understand the principles and scope of delivering culturally congruent nursing education (Nancy-Barr & Shena-Gazaway, 2017). As a foundation for becoming effective faculty, role models, and mentors, they must possess the desire to understand the diverse culture of students in a supportive school environment. They must be competent to assist the students in developing interactions that will facilitate acceptance and improve culture-specific communications, especially with Muslim Maguindanaon student nurses.

The researchers encountered unique experiences with their Muslim student nurses (Syachruddin *et al.,* 2018). They were always worried about their class schedule on Fridays, which is also their worship day, the design of their uniform in which they request the use of hijab during their hospital duties, which the hospitals do not allow, limited availability of halal food served at the cafeteria in school and hospitals during their hospital duty, considerations during Ramadan especially on their low school performance as a result of fasting, conflicts with their classmates wherein parents and other relatives want to get involved, and their limited participation in school activities that are usually initiated with a mass at the school chapel. Muslim parents have high hopes and pride if their children finished their studies, as evidenced by congratulatory banners to recognize this community's achievement. Because of this, if their children are failing, some parents would intimidate the faculty to allow their children to pass the subject (Neubauer *et al.,* 2019).

This study was conducted to deepen the understanding among non-Muslims of the Islamic culture through Muslim Maguindanaon student nurses' voices. This will also address issues of discrimination against them in a Catholic school. Specifically, this will ensure a conducive learning environment for minority student nurses provided by culturally competent faculty. The nursing curriculum will also be enhanced by including additional program outcomes. Through this, mapping the curriculum can integrate essential aspects of culturally congruent nursing education. In nursing practice, this study aims to encourage student nurses from different cultural backgrounds to demonstrate an openness of their mindset and render culturally competent care to patients without deviating from their original cultural make-up. In this premise, the researcher was inspired to conduct this study because no similar research was done in the country yet.

2. METHOD

This study used a qualitative phenomenological research design. Specifically, a Husserlian descriptive phenomenology was used to gather and describe Muslim Maguindanaon student

nurses' experiences as the basis for creating a framework that provides a culturally congruent nursing education (Tassone, 2017; Wojnar, & Swanson, 2007). This study was conducted in Catholic schools composed mainly of Christian and Muslim students. The setting is bounded in the north by the Province of Maguindanao, where most Muslim student nurses reside.

This study used a purposive sampling technique. The inclusion criteria are the following: (1) pure Muslim Maguindanaon student nurses, and (2) at least one-year residency in the school as a student nurse. This sampling technique hoped to identify participants who are interested in participating in the study. Initially, the researcher listed all the possible participants that fit the purpose of the study. After this, the Muslim Maguindanaon student nurses were invited to the research orientation that includes the distribution of questionnaires and informed consent for them to review. A maximum of two weeks was given to sign the consent form and confirm their participation.

In this study, the researcher modified the assessment guide to explore the Muslim Maguindanaon culture in educational settings. The validated questionnaire's final form has retained the 12 categories. These categories include biocultural variations and cultural aspects of the incidence of disease, communication, cultural affiliations, cultural sanctions and restrictions, economics, developmental considerations, education, health-related beliefs and practices, kinship and social networks, nutrition, religion and spirituality, and values orientation (Henry, 2018). The grand tour question, related questions, and probing questions were included to explore the participants' experiences in school.

Immediately after the concept paper's approval by the Panel of Evaluators, the researcher prepared the manuscript for proposal defense (Bennett, 2015). After the approval of the proposal, the questionnaire was validated by three experts, and the revisions were carried out and submitted for approval to the Panel of Evaluators. Once approved, the manuscript was forwarded to the San Pedro College-Research Ethics Committee (SPC-REC) to evaluate and complete ethical requirements. Once completed, the researcher sought Joyceen S. Boyle and Margaret M. Andrews' permission to adopt their Transcultural Nursing Assessment Guide for Individuals and Families (Prosen *et al.,* 2015).

The researcher hired a research assistant responsible for conducting the interview. The criteria for the research assistant are the following: a master's degree in nursing who had conducted a phenomenological study, can articulate the context of the questions, and capable of determining data saturation.

Two weeks before the actual interview, the research assistant was oriented to the interview protocol, including the interview questions and informed consent. This is to give him enough time to study and be familiar with the questions. Before the actual interview, the research assistant was oriented again to discuss the interview questions, clarifications, and ethical considerations. A pilot interview was also conducted with three Muslim student nurses who were similarly qualified to the actual participants.

On the other hand, participants' orientation was initially conducted online wherein the informed consent and questionnaire were sent in a group chat created for possible participants. This is to give time to review the questionnaire and decide on their participation in the study. Once they had decided, the participants were scheduled by the research assistant for a face-to-face interview. Since the City was declared under General Community Quarantine (GCQ), the participants were ferried from their residence to the school by their classmates residing in the Maguindanao Province. The study's reorientation and signing of informed consent were conducted at the College Guidance Office one hour before the actual interview. Participation in this study was voluntary, and the participants can freely withdraw at any time if they feel uncomfortable without fear of repercussions.

During the interview, a well-lighted, quiet, and well-ventilated consultation room at the College Guidance Office was provided to facilitate the participants' expression of their experiences. With the participants' permission, an audiotape recorder was used to document the interview to make the research assistant attentive during the conversation. The interview lasted approximately one hour and 30 minutes to two hours and 30 minutes per participant while observing the health protocols like wearing of face mask and face shield, handwashing, physical distancing, and use of disinfectants (Behar-Horenstein *et al.,* 2017).

If the participants were not comfortable, they were advised to relax and see some friends or classmates outside the interview room. For any psychological distress, the Guidance Counselor was also available to listen and assist the participants in ventilating their feelings and providing an opportunity to discuss their experiences. He helps in making them feel calm and comfortable. This strategy was used to reduce the emotional discomforts that the participants may have felt during the interview. Snacks were also served, and a token was given to each participant. The participants were also assured of confidentiality. No identifying information was entered on the demographic forms, and they were given aliases or pseudonyms.

This study practically demonstrated trustworthiness in providing rigor and strength to the study's validity and reliability in all stages. Throughout the study, trustworthiness approaches were undertaken using Lincoln and Guba's criteria, which include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is the believability, accuracy, and truth of information from the participants. This can be attained by establishing trust and rapport to facilitate understanding and full participation of the participants. Transferability is the capacity to apply the study's findings if used in a similar context and culture.

Moreover, dependability refers to the stability of data over time, even under different conditions. The findings shall be consistent and could be repeated. Lastly, confirmability refers to the degree of neutrality or objectivity and implies that the data will accurately represent the participants' information and not be made up by the researcher. The findings must reflect the participants' voices and conditions of the inquiry and not the researcher's biases or perspectives.

Furthermore, the transcribed data were stored on the researcher's password-protected personal computer, and all the materials were destroyed immediately after the completion of the study. Lastly, hardbound copies of the final manuscript were submitted to the Graduate School, and the findings of the study were disseminated in the Graduate School research forum and other venues, including the publication of the study.

The study's findings were used as a basis for developing a framework for culturally congruent nursing education. The framework and relevant programs were institutionalized and embedded in the curriculum. It will undergo a review from the academic and curriculum committee members to ensure everyone's awareness and collaboration.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's process of phenomenological data analysis (Horrigan-Kelly *et al.,* 2016). The researcher was able to formulate five hundred twenty-four (524) meanings from the significant statements. The formulated meanings were categorized into five (5) emergent themes. The emergent themes gathered from the participants were cultural practices and traditions of the Muslim Maguindanaon family, experience of acceptance, respect, and supportive the school community, student organizations as social networks for relevant Islamic activities, the curriculum and instruction with considerations of the Muslim Maguindanaon culture, and a catholic school delivers quality education while respecting the

diversity of Muslim Maguindanaon students. Based on the findings of the study, the Culturally Congruent Nursing Education (CCNE) Model was developed.

This CCNE Model is a visual guide that depicts a Muslim Maguindanaon student nurse's experiences in a Catholic school. The student nurses carry their cultural identity before they enrolled in a Catholic institution. Meanwhile, the school has its own identity through its mission and vision that needs to be maintained and achieved while responding to the students' diverse cultural needs. As a result, the Muslim Maguindanaon students experienced challenges related to their cultural beliefs and practices. This model is inspired by Leininger's Sunrise Enabler which depicts the seven (7) factors needed to deliver culturally congruent care in the area of nursing practice. These factors include technological, religious, philosophical, kinship and social factors, cultural values, beliefs and lifeways, political and legal aspects, economic factors, and educational factors. The enabler comprises four levels that will lead nurses in the three modes of action: culture care preservation, culture care accommodation, and culture care repatterning. Andrews and Boyle developed the Cultural Assessment Guide for Individuals and Families. It is composed of 12 categories that will help nurses achieve cultural competence through the assessment guide that will enable nurses to provide ethical, thoughtful, and safe care to clients of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Since Leininger's framework and assessment guide of Boyle and Andrews are intended to deliver culturally congruent care for patients, this Culturally Congruent Nursing Education Model is designed to deliver culturally congruent nursing education for student nurses through the mapping of the program outcomes, prototype curriculum, educators' guide, and relevant programs and activities (Rassool, 2015) (see **Figure 1**). This model can provide quality nursing education with careful consideration of the Muslim Maguindanaon culture. This model has five emergent themes that evolved from this study, which are now considered essential factors in this framework for delivering culturally congruent nursing education.

Figure 1. Culturally congruent nursing education model.

3.1. Emergent Theme 1: Cultural Practices and Traditions of Muslim Maguindanaon Family

Having an attached family is one of the striking features of Muslim society. A typical Muslim Maguindanaon family is an extended family where their grandparents, siblings, and other relatives stay in one household. They have strong family ties that offer advantages like psychological and financial support. This implies that Muslim students gain support at home so that they can survive the challenges in school. Thomas *et al.* (2017) stated that the typical Muslim family is an extended family spanning three or more generations, and this family structure offers advantages, including psychological and financial support.

On the other hand, the participants also feel special and respected if they are called "bai" (princess) or "datu" (prince). Calling them by these names is a symbol of Muslim nobility. The Muslim Maguindanaon participants also expressed their respect for the elderly. For them, it is a moral obligation to both family and community to treat their elderly with great value and respect. The elderly in a Muslim family is regarded with respect and dignity. They must be involved in arbitration matters like serious concerns and social functions such as funerals, weddings, and visits. They are also considered wise individuals with the capacity to solve problems and prevent a crisis. The Muslim family has a strong family support structure where an extended family is consulted for vital decisions.

Another value significant for the participants is modesty. They believe that Muslim Maguindanaon students are expected to exemplify modesty in school through their dress and behavior, especially with persons of the opposite sex. Modesty is expressed through moderation, respect, and humility. For women, modesty is also expressed by avoiding socialization with men in public and wearing a headscarf. This is also supported by Andrews and Boyle (2019), for them, modesty in Islam is a form of mixed nonverbal and verbal communication reflected in dress, speech, or behaviour (Henderson *et al.,* 2016). Modesty is a very significant issue among most Islam. Women should wear loose clothing covering the whole body without revealing the body's curves and shapes and wear a head covering (hijab).

Moreover, results revealed that the Muslim Maguindanaon values being humble and generous. They claim that they are willing to help their classmates with whatever they need in school as long as they have something to share. Sidek *et al.* (2015), in their effort to study different religions' positive traits, it was found that all religions emphasize developing good characteristics, including generosity and humility. Still, they differ in the emphasis they introduced. Furthermore, the celebration of Ramadan is considered a charity month and serves as Islam's foundation. Muslims are encouraged to help the poor and vulnerable in their community, not gain favor from them but should be based on their traditions. Muslims are also expected to help those who are neglected to meet their basic needs (Carrington *et al.,* 2015).

Another value that evolved in this study is the participants' loyalty to their religion despite being in a Catholic school. The result implies that they will still hold on to their beliefs and practices even in school and will ultimately experience challenges related to their classmates and teachers from other cultures or religions. As a result, they will ask for consideration to provide them the opportunity to do so. Loyalty is authentic to the teachings on which it is based. Commitment in Islam is the expression of brotherhood, kindness, and compassion Muslims ought to have for one another.

In a study conducted by Rockenbach *et al.* (2017), Muslim students claimed that they spend more time in religious activities than other religious groups and generally exhibit high religious commitment levels. They also demonstrate a deep commitment to God and the religious observances of the Muslim faith's core features.

Surprisingly, Muslim Maguindanaon also believes in folk healers. The participants expressed that they perform rituals using water to improve their performance in school. The study's findings imply that some students may rely on these rituals without studying their lessons and ultimately affecting their academic performance. Albougami *et al.* (2016) stated that Muslims use folk remedies of varying cultural roots using olive oil or honey to prevent or treat ailments. Regarding blood transfusion, some Muslim Maguindanaon will only receive blood donated by their fellow Muslims. It is acceptable for Muslims to receive blood from others because it is only the blood that is being transfused, not the essence of eating pork.

In terms of relationships, opposite-sex relationships are viewed differently by the participants; for some, it is acceptable, but not for others. The school system values students. It must pay attention to how the school provides a conducive environment for building healthy relationships with appropriate considerations of the students' cultural beliefs. Muslims are not allowed to have intimate relationships without marriage. It is also forbidden in Islam for a man and woman to engage in a relationship outside marriage. Muslims should have good relations with all people, males, and females at school, at work, or in neighborhoods. A Muslim should be courteous and kind to everyone. However, it is not allowed in Islam to take a person of the opposite gender as a very close friend.

On the other hand, the participants believe that same-sex relationships in Islam are prohibited. This indicates that it is not acceptable for the participants to see gay or lesbian students in school, especially in Muslim Maguindanaon. Still, participants stated that they would treat them with respect. With this, the school must create awareness of cultural considerations while maintaining respect despite gender preferences. Hildebrandt (2015) stated that the Quran condemns homosexual actions. However, it does not state the punishment, but some prophets said that the sentence is flagellation to death by stoning. For him, it is widely assumed that homosexuality is illicit in Islam. However, a difference should be made between homosexual acts and homosexual persons. Only homosexual acts are considered misconduct and are punishable by death or isolation.

The participants also have opposing views about early marriage. Some participants believe that early marriage is encouraged as it awaits a reward from God. On the other hand, some participants opposed early marriage and viewed their studies as a priority. In Iran, the legal age of marriage is set at 13 for girls and 15 for boys.

However, if girls are below 13 and boys below 15, marriage can be done if their father and the court give permission. In Bangladesh, 30% are married before reaching the age of 15. Although child marriage is illegal, their birth certificates are forged by bribed officials. In the Philippines, Muslim girls who already had their first menstruation and 15 years old Muslim boys can get married. The main reason for early marriage is to preserve family honor and solve economic constraints.

Getting married while studying may have a significant impact on the performance of students. With the axiom, once a girl is married, she automatically becomes a woman regardless of age. Usually, they are not emotionally and physiologically ready to demonstrate a wife and a mother's roles, ultimately affecting their school performance. Their families force girls to get married while studying, hoping that it will yield them returns financially without considering the adverse effects on academic performance. For Muslim Maguindanaon, the result revealed that early marriage is a common practice but not acceptable for most participants (Atkinson, 2015). To Sibtayn International Foundation, the reason for early marriage is to prevent indulging in premarital sex. Before boys and girls develop an attraction towards each other and become victims of lust, they should settle down and get married.

In addition, having a chaste and modest wife is one of the good fortunes of Muslims. The relationships during childhood last compared to adult relationships, opening harmonious relationships. However, marriage should take place if the match is found and not be dependent on age. The Islamic Relief also stated that early marriage is unwanted marriage and violates human rights, which are also God-given. Islamic marriage can only be valid if it ensures the couple's well-being and health, including their family and community considerations. In a study conducted by Field and Ambrus (2008), early marriage has schooling consequences. It leads to poor academic performance caused by multiple responsibilities. Frequently, the students cannot graduate because of sustained pressure at home and in school.

Parental consent for marriage is also a unique practice of Muslim Maguindanaon. Most participants view parental consent as coercion and deprivation of their rights, but one participant claimed that she trusts her parents to decide what is best for her. For Islamic Relief (Bensaid & Grine, 2014), Islamic marriage is a consensual arrangement wherein freedom and the capacity to consent of both parties are respected. Therefore, forced marriage is not valid in Islam. They believed that consent is essential for a valid marriage, and no one can be forced against their will. Consent also falls as a protection for women to decide on matters that will affect their life.

In terms of language in communication, the participants expressed that they prefer to use Tagalog as a language for better understanding. Instead of using their mother tongue language in school, they use a language easily understood by everyone. For some participants, speaking Tagalog, which is typical for everyone to understand, is better because students have different tribes and religions with different languages. It also becomes apparent that the delivery of instruction and interaction is affected by the expression of ideas using language as a medium of instruction.

In a study conducted by Gatwiri (2015), language proficiency affects students' learning ability because of its role in regulating the cognitive process. She said that language barriers might lead to academic difficulties, discrimination, psychological distress, or alienation. The examination performance can be affected by processing information challenges. It was recommended that faculty strategize their lessons not to be challenging for them to cope with, especially those who have difficulty in the primary language.

Furthermore, conflict occurs when the nursing student feels the need to discard their culture's uniqueness in language to please their teachers and classmates from the dominant cultures. Moreover, Flint *et al.* (2018) also claimed that instructors and students are always having language barriers, which will lead to obstacles in establishing a rapport that supports the students' learning. They suggested that instructors must create culturally responsive strategies that acknowledge the diversity of students. Instructors must be learners also of the diverse culture of students to establish equal access to education for all.

For Muslim Maguindanaon participants, touch from strangers and distant family members is not acceptable. Participants expressed that touch is prohibited in Islam. Even a touch from cousins is not allowed unless it is necessary, like saving someone's life or being closely related by blood or marriage. This means that male and female students are not allowed to hug or even shake hands, and in many instances, non-Muslims are not aware of this. This implies that instructors may consider their teaching strategies to respond appropriately to this cultural belief, especially in group activities. It is strongly discouraged for the opposite gender to touch except for family members (Amin & Abdelmageed, 2020). It is believed that physical contact with the opposite sex is discouraged and unnecessary. The Quran forbids men from

touching women if they are not immediate family members or their wives (Begum & Seppänen, 2017).

Moreover, Cavico *et al.* (2015) said that it is unlawful for males to unnecessarily touch females. For most, it is acceptable to make handshakes and hug the opposite sex, but for traditional Islam, even a simple pat on the back will make them uneasy. Wehbe-Alamah (2008) also claimed that the opposite sex is not allowed to stay alone privately without their relatives' presence.

Eye contact has different meanings in different cultures. In other countries, eye contact conveys honesty, engagement, and interest; however, eye contact is interpreted as aggression, disrespect, and challenge to authority. The participants expressed that they are reluctant to have eye contact with teachers while comfortable with friends. In the United States, eye contact with a person signifies that interest in what the person is saying. Looking down or away is considered distracted or uninterested or thought to lack confidence. In Asia, it is often considered polite to have brief eye contact. Japanese women avoid looking someone in the eyes is being courteous and respectful. For Muslims, eye contact is much less common and considered less appropriate. Only brief eye contact is permitted between a man and a woman. Also, children's stare at elders or authorities is deemed disrespectful (Nikfarid *et al.,* 2018).

The Muslim Maguindanaon students are required to follow opposing pressure between their cultural and school policies' obligations. The participants believe that wearing a hijab is an obligation of a Muslim Maguindanaon woman. It serves as their obligation to Allah and to carry the Muslim identity. They also believe that a Muslim Maguindanaon woman will gain respect if she is wearing a hijab. For some participants, wearing a hijab is a source of their confidence. The findings of the study imply that Muslim Maguindanaon students value the wearing of hijab even in school. Sadly, they are not allowed to wear it during their Related Learning Experiences (RLE). Many Muslims believe that wearing the hijab is a religious obligation.

Two reasons in the Qur'an are the primary bases of this belief (McFarland & Eipperle, 2008; McFarland, & Wehbe-Alamah, 2018). First, it enjoins women to conceal their bosoms and adornments; second, the Prophet Muhammad's wives and daughters wear long garments in public to prevent molestation. The women must hide their hair and wear loose-fitting clothing that reveals only their hands and feet. The dress worn varies depending on the country of origin, tradition, culture, and religiosity. The hijab is the most common type of religious covering among Muslim women. Some women wear the abaya, a robe-like dress that covers both the head and the body. Others wear the chador, a black cloak that is common in Iran. Rarely seen is the burqa, an outer garment covering the entire body, including the eyes concealed by a net.

Furthermore, the women should wear loose clothing covering the whole body without revealing the body's curves and shapes. Hwang & Kim (2020) also said that Islamic attire's primary goal is to limit women's physical exposure and attractiveness to men in their immediate family. This also refers to the Hijab Effect, which implies that women wearing hijab will receive higher ratings for other personal characteristics within Muslim communities. However, as Muslim women do not have to wear the hijab in front of other women, the hijab may affect Muslim women. A study conducted in public schools in the US revealed that women who wear hijabs are recognizable. Many Muslims describe prejudice and Islamophobia in school settings that resulted in maltreatment incidents due to anti-Muslim bias.

The Islamic Network Group believes that girls may begin wearing hijab at an early age, but it should start around puberty. Usually, not all women are wearing hijab religiously. It is based on their personal choice and expectations of their family from them. The use of hijab may result in teasing, bullying, or pressure from peers because of the current events that relate to Muslims. In this case, instructors must be aware of these concerns to create a supportive and accepting learning environment.

The Department of Education Order No. 32 emphasized its policy to protect students' religious rights, especially wearing hijabs in school. It directs the schools to allow Muslim girls to wear uniforms appropriate for their religious beliefs, especially for Physical Education (PE) classes. It also emphasized that Muslim students must not be required to participate in the religious rites of non-Muslims.

Another theme that evolved is the participants' expression that they are grateful for wearing hijab despite being in a Catholic school. Still, they would want that they will be allowed to wear them, especially during hospital and clinical exposures. The participants claimed that it is their crowning glory and requests that they be permitted if it does not interfere with giving care to their patients. In a study conducted in Indonesia and Malaysia, their governments prohibited wearing hijabs in hospitals because they claim that hospitals do not represent any religion.

Therefore, it is expected that nurses should abide by the health agency guidelines, and no one must be exempted based on religious or cultural background. Moreover, in the Islamic Movement's news magazine, wearing a hijab in hospitals was banned in workplaces like hospitals because it is considered dangerous, against the hospital dress code, dirty, or alienates other people.

The participants also expressed that they have varied practices in wearing the hijab. For some, it will be difficult to remove their hijab during hospital duties, but others understand the need to remove the hijab. Some women cannot remove the veil because of their firm belief that this may lead to sin. For others, veiling is a personal choice, and they can choose not to wear a hijab without compromising their beliefs.

Furthermore, a study was conducted in Zamboanga City, Philippines, to determine and describe the wearing of the hijab by Muslim student nurses while on hospital duty. In a study conducted by Rubio (2016), the participants perceived that wearing a hijab while on hospital duty could affect student-nurse-patient relationships and performance; it can also be a source of infection. However, they were sympathetic toward wearing the hijab because of cultural, religious, and personal considerations.

The study unearthed the complexity of wearing the hijab while on hospital duty and the hospital dress code's pertinent significance. It was recommended that a sensitive approach must be carried out so that the hospital dress code shall not be violated. Lastly, in a study conducted by Hopkins *et al.* (2020) on cultural considerations in working with student nurses, they emphasized that it is the educators' responsibility to reasonably accommodate Muslim students' religious beliefs, especially wearing the hijab.

Being prayerful is shared across all cultures and religions; the study revealed that Muslim Maguindanaon is immensely religious and believed that praying five (5) times a day is mandatory. The participants claim that the Muslim Maguindanaon are prayerful and want to do this even if they are in school. They emphasized that it is really in the Maguindanaon culture that they need to pray wherever they go, it may be for studies, mealtime, and prayer serves as food for their souls. They believed that despite the challenges they encounter in practicing this belief, especially in a Catholic school, still, they must pray.

The participants are also eager to pray in school, especially on Fridays, but they expressed difficulties because they have no prayer room. Some of them expressed their discomfort, especially that they need to go home to pray. Nazish and Kalra (2018) stated that Islamic prayer is performed five times a day. It involves reciting Quran citations in specific postural positions involving sitting, bowing, standing, and kneeling.

The participants shared their perceived effects of praying. They believe that nothing is impossible when they pray, and it improves their performance in school to make them feel better and remove stress. The participants verbalized difficulty in praying in school because no prayer room is available. They need to go home to pray, or if there is vacant time, they pray in their boarding houses. Despite the limited opportunity to pray in school, the participants expressed that they received support from their teachers by excusing them from class for prayer, especially on Fridays. The participants experienced tremendous support from their classmates and instructors. They said that they experienced respect from their classmates by allowing them to pray in the classroom without disturbing them. The instructors also excused Muslim Maguindanaon students to pray if they have scheduled classes. If the school has a prayer room, it will allow students to pray comfortably. It can minimize anxiety, not be late in class, or miss essential school activities.

The participants are hopeful that a prayer room will be provided for them and want to include their prayers in class. They also stated that they respect that the school is a Christian school, but they pray five times a day. Instead of seeing them pray in the hallways, they want to have a prayer room where they can be comfortable. Generally, prayers are performed at a specific time of the day, and usually, the prayer during midday at lunch hour affected the students. The Federation of Islamic Association suggested that a particular room must be designated for Muslim students to minimize interruption or disturbance as they pray. It is also recommended that a washing area shall also be provided because Muslims wash their feet, arms, hand, and face and rub their head before praying.

The Muslim Maguindanaon participants are conscious of the food they eat which is one of the vital concerns of Muslim Maguindanaon students in school. They conveyed the cultural food restrictions, their experiences eating with Christians, fasting during Ramadan, the school canteen's services, and the considerations they received from their classmates and instructors.

The participants expressed that they are prohibited from eating pork because it is written in the Quran. Aside from pork, eating dog meat is not also allowed, including drinking alcoholic beverages. For some participants, food cooked with utensils used in cooking pork is also avoided. They believe that their prayers will not be accepted for 30 days if they ate or drink prohibited food. For Acas and Loanzon (2020), the term halal means lawful or permissible, while haram means unlawful. The idea of halal and haram is followed as an Islamic dietary rule. All foods are halal except pork and its by-products, carnivorous animals, blood, animals slaughtered improperly or dead before slaughtered or killed in the name of anyone animals without external ears, and foods contaminated by any of these.

Moreover, Wehbe-Alamah (2018) said that Muslims abide by dietary restrictions to attain their maximum health status. They avoid unlawful or haram food that includes alcohol, drugs like marijuana, and other medications containing alcohol such as cough syrups if there are alternatives. They are also not allowed to consume the meat of animals that uses their teeth or claws to kill their prey. Pork meat and other food with pork derivatives are considered haram, including gelatin and insulin. Muslims are also prohibited from consuming blood from dead animals but allow blood transfusion.

The participants also vary in responses to having meals with Christians. Some participants require distance when someone is consuming pork, while others do not. Some participants do not like pork's smell and usually feel discriminated against and will transfer the table. In contrast, others are comfortable eating together with Christians, and it is acceptable as long as they do not insist on eating pork.

One of the Pillars of Islam is fasting which is performed during Ramadan. Participants believe that they are exempted if women are having menstruation. They also expressed difficulty performing fasting in school because it affects their studies. Ramadan is a month when Muslims practice fasting from dawn to dusk to strengthen their religious commitments. They abstain from eating and drinking, including gum, medication, and smoking. Muslims are only allowed to eat or drink at night. Abolaban and Al-Moujahed (2017) stated that fasting exemptions are pregnancy, breastfeeding, old age, illness, and menstruation. However, some Muslims with diseases insist on fasting to satisfy their spiritual needs.

The school canteen also plays a crucial role in serving culturally appropriate food options for students from various cultures, especially Muslim Maguindanaon students. The participants in this study expressed satisfaction with how they are being treated by canteen staff, and they usually remind the students if the food displayed has pork. The participants also commend that the school canteen is clean and spacious. The students expressed some Muslim students in Davao City are not satisfied with the food services, while others are grateful that some restaurants offer halal food.

A study conducted by Antonopoulou *et al.* (2019) found that students' nutrition and academic performance have a significant relationship. It was also found that students are concerned about the quality of food served, especially on cultural restrictions. They recommended that the provision of halal food must be prioritized.

Another theme that evolved in this study is the instructors' and students' considerations to support the Muslim Maguindanaon students in the practice of their beliefs on food restrictions. The participants expressed that the school is supportive, and they can feel respect during fasting. Their classmates do not eat in the classroom if they know someone is fasting and then apologized if they unintentionally eat in front of them. Participants also feel the acceptance of being reminded by non-Muslims for food preparations if prohibited food is served. Even non-Muslim students do not eat pork if they are with Muslim students, and if there are group activities, they also remind others not to bring pork.

The Muslim Maguindanaon participants claim that their classmates are also mindful of the culture of each other. They also receive the same treatment in school as Christians. Despite being enrolled in a Catholic school, participants claimed that the school is open and welcome. However, some of the participants experienced isolated discrimination and felt left out initially. In a study conducted by Moritz *et al.* (2018), interfaith tolerance must be introduced to reduce religious tensions. Their study revealed that both Christians and Muslims appraised that their religion is the most tolerant and peaceful. However, Muslims displayed overconfidence in their responses related to religious topics.

Participants vary in their preferences with whom they should relate. Some participants prefer to be in mixed cultures and are willing to communicate with anyone without cultural preferences. In contrast, others choose to be with Muslim friends because they are comfortable expressing themselves. Surprisingly, one participant prefers to belong with Christian friends and classmates because he believed that they are better friends than Muslims. For the World Council of Churches, Christian-Muslim relations have a complicated history sometimes marked by rivalry or war. However, in many instances, it is characterized by living together peacefully. Vang *et al.* (2018) stated that the Theory of Social Identity claims

that social groups are vital sources of self-esteem. It is a source of confidence and may have positive effects if group status is enhanced or recognized.

3.2. Emergent Theme 2: Experience of Acceptance, Respect, and Supportive School Community

The experience of acceptance in the school community makes the participants grateful. They claimed that the school accepts Muslims even though this is a Catholic school. The participants also experienced mutual understanding, support, and respect in the school community, especially Christians. They feel respected in school, especially in praying, by not creating noise or leaving the room for a while to give privacy. Participants also feel respected in practicing their food preferences. Their classmates do not offer pork because they know it is prohibited. In a study conducted by Ngamake *et al.* (2016), religious discrimination is positively correlated to psychological distress like anxiety and psychosomatic symptoms.

On the other hand, in a study conducted in Senegal, Kuenzi (2018) found that there is a tendency that Muslim students will become closer to the Catholic faith and become far from the Muslim faith. College education has a negative effect on religion, and as students' progress academically, their confidence in their religion is not improving.

Generally, the participants did not experience any discrimination in school. They verbalized fair treatment without prejudice. They also stated that they are treated as a family.   On the other hand, isolated discrimination was also experienced by a few of the participants. One of the participants said that she was stereotyped and labeled as noisy because a Muslim classmate is not behaving well in class. Also, another participant experienced stereotyping initially. She was asked why Muslims are enrolled in a Christian school. One participant also expressed that her parents do not want her to study in a Catholic school and were worried that she would be discriminated against.

In a study conducted by Ata (2016) on Muslim and Christian students' attitudes toward each other, the results revealed that the respondents have highly positive attitudes. Also, Go (2018) claimed that Catholic school has an advantage in reducing inequities and is favorable for minority students. He believed that Catholic schools could deliver the ideals of a school that is open to everyone.

Lastly, some participants also expressed the causes of isolated discrimination, usually caused by their fellow Muslim Maguindanaon. Participants described the differences in practice and understood the restrictions among Muslims as one cause. They stated that some Maguindanaons are not aware of Islam beliefs and practices, which results in misperception from others. Some Muslims also do not care and sometimes have debates due to different cultural and religious traditions. One participant also stated that some Muslims are stubborn and arrogant.

That is why he only has a few Muslim friends, added by Muslim students who misbehave and create a wrong impression on others. In a study conducted in Australia by Possamai *et al.* (2016) on Muslim students' religious and cultural experiences, the findings revealed that discrimination was reported within the educational setting. The usual concerns are about halal and haram concepts. It was revealed that 42 % of Muslim students reported discrimination because of their practices and beliefs associated with their religion. He stated that human beings naturally do not like or trust those who are different from them.

3.3. Emergent Theme 3: Student Organizations as Social Networks for Relevant Islamic Activities

The school provides the Muslim Maguindanaon to practice and strengthen their beliefs by conducting relevant Islamic activities through the Muslim Student Organization (MSO). The role of student organizations is essential for the holistic development of students. The activities conducted will improve their social and spiritual aspects of development and strengthen their faith and Islamic beliefs despite being in a Catholic school. The MSO conducts relevant Islamic activities and provides opportunities for Muslim students to organize. They also experienced cultural considerations during school activities, where the Muslim culture is showcased in various institutional activities. Sadly, the student organization became inactive, and they are now requesting to reinstate the MSO. The participants showed a willingness to abide by the school policies and willingly help others to follow them. They also emphasized that celebrating Christmas is forbidden for Islam. Activities are also suggested to improve cultural awareness in school.

The Muslim Student Organization (MSO) conduct relevant Islamic activities like symposium about Islam, cultural dances, and outreach programs. The participants' verbalization supports that their organization performs discussions about Islam and the history of prophets and their teachings. The MSO also conduct a symposium about the Muslim Maguindanaon culture and the need to wear hijab. The participants are also thankful that they were given opportunities despite being in a Catholic school. Aside from MSO, some Muslim students are also active in Bangsamoro Youth Program Organization (BYPO), an organization outside the school that conducts outreach programs in the community.

Moreover, the school provides consideration to Muslim Maguindanaon students during activities in school. Muslim students are excused from attending non-Muslim religious activities at the school. Participants stated that they are not obliged to join during spiritual mass in school and feel respected. Muslim culture is also showcased during school activities through dances and wearing traditional dresses. Catholic schools are primarily operating as a learning community; undeniably, the church's teachings are embedded within its system. Despite this, many schools are still preferred by many because of their quality and acceptance of students' diversity (Donlevy, 2008).

Another theme that evolved is related to the prescribed attire during school activities. The participants claimed that socialization activities require the students to wear culturally inappropriate clothing that results in unnecessary body parts exposure. As a response, some Muslim Maguindanaon students innovate to limit body exposure like wearing black stockings or blazers to prevent revealing sensitive body parts. Some participants prefer not to join socialization activities because they came from a conservative family and are not used to wearing tight or revealing attire. Suggested that although schools have discretion on the dress codes, there should be a consideration of students' rights to freely exercise their religious beliefs.

The participants also request that the Christmas party's celebration be made optional because they believed it is forbidden for Muslims. One participant claimed that she asked permission but was not allowed because some Maguindanaons are also attending. The participant had no choice but to attend the Christmas party against her will. She suggested that the celebration of the Christmas Party shall be optional for them. On the other hand, most participants claimed that they were excused when asked permission not to attend. There is nothing wrong with participating in the Christmas party because Muslims also regard Christ as the one who preceded Prophet Muhammad as among God's significant prophets

(Naparan & Balimbingan, 2020). Participating in this celebration simply means that there are friendly relations between Christians and Muslims.

The participants encounter tensions with their Islamic religious principles surrounding their engagement. They recognize this behavior as an acculturation trade-off, wherein the participants reject, compromise, or submerge themselves in this celebration. Therefore, it is the participants' judgment to assess the values and importance of their engagement (Blankinship, 2018; Christensen *et al.,* 2017).

School policies are essential in school to ensure the smooth implementation of activities and to develop discipline among students. Participants expressed their willingness to abide by the school policies, and if they commit mistakes, they are submissive and willing to be disciplined. Meanwhile, some participants also expressed willingness to help their fellow Maguindanaons to correct their errors. They also claimed that policies are followed in school, whether you are a Christian or a Muslim. Muslim students in Canada are doing their best to follow school policies and help others behave well to avoid stereotyping from the majority. In this case, they can build a good impression, and if sustained over time, the minority Muslim students will serve as models of good conduct and obedience to school policies.

The participants also recommended the inclusion of relevant cultural awareness activities. They proposed interfaith activities to discuss students' different cultures to improve cultural awareness. Teambuilding activities are also suggested to understand other values. One participant even suggested conducting more symposiums on cultural differences. Furthermore, participants request to limit or reschedule activities with physical efforts during Ramadan. Rockenbach *et al.* (2017) suggest that higher education leaders must create welcoming spaces for Muslim students in schools. They should make a venue to eliminate misconceptions by conducting awareness programs. Through these efforts, Muslim students will continue to grow and excel without experiencing discrimination. In the United States, some schools celebrate Hijab Day, wherein everyone is encouraged to try wearing the hijab during lunchtime and proposed community service, interfaith dialogues, promoting tolerance, and interaction with non-Muslim faith as avenues for social activities (Brooks & Brooks, 2019).

The Muslim Student Organization (MSO) became inactive for the past school years and discontinued as one of the student organizations under the Social Clubs of the Office of Student Affairs. Participants aspire to reinstate this organization because it provides Muslim students opportunities to conduct relevant Islamic school activities. Hopkins *et al.* (2020) recommend that student organizations provide opportunities for students to plan and implement appropriate activities for their members. But to retain being recognized, they must have adequate membership, and with relevant activities consistently, it implies that the organization's success depends on its members and leaders. Downe *et al. (*2016) believe that leadership from an Islamic perspective is a communication process between members and leaders to achieve goals. The leaders are also primarily expected to have superior knowledge, commitment, and moral values.

3.4. Emergent Theme 4: The Curriculum and Instruction with Considerations of the Muslim Maguindanaon Culture

The curriculum and instruction provide due consideration for Muslim Maguindanaon students. The planning and implementation of the curriculum must be responsive to the cultural needs of every student. In their clinical exposures, the Muslim Maguindanaon has different opinions about assisting in culturally restricted surgeries. They also value the elderly and are willing to understand patients despite differences in culture and beliefs. During

lecture classes, the participants expressed several reactions to the discussion of sensitive topics in class. They also emphasized that some subjects integrate Muslim cultural issues, and their instructors provide consideration to them. The participants also stated that they access information through the internet and also experienced unexpected expenses in school.

The student nurses are required to complete the necessary hours in the clinical area. During this exposure, some situations and responsibilities will challenge their cultural values and beliefs. There are culturally restricted surgeries and procedures in the hospital like abortion, tubal ligation, and urinary catheter insertion that confused the Maguindanaon student nurses about whether to perform these procedures or not. The majority of the participants expressed willingness to perform or participate only if it is part of the hospital's responsibility and protocols, especially for ectopic pregnancies, to save a mother's life. Meanwhile, some participants are doubtful to assist in the restricted procedures but will find a replacement or refuse as much as possible even if it is part of their responsibilities.

The Muslim students' presence and unique needs on college campuses had received relatively lesser attention. There are cultural sanctions and restrictions that the schools failed to recognize and provide appropriate attention to. Moreover, instructors are also hesitant to initiate accommodation due to a lack of cultural awareness of students' diversity. They are focused on the competencies required to achieve but failed to open opportunities to consider students' values and diverse identities.

Another theme that evolved is the participants' willingness to value the elderly and provide unconditional care, love, and support. They claimed their religion, Islam, taught them to care for the elderly, weak, and lowly. Farren (2015) claimed that Islam exhibits a deep appreciation for the elderly. From an Islamic perspective, old age provides the individual with the opportunity for self-purification and reform while emphasizing the Islam character's moral refinement. Islam views old age as God's blessing in life for increased purity, virtue, and reform. Khan *et al.* (2018) also added that taking care of elderly parents is morally and spiritually uplifting for Muslims, and established that kindness shown to parents is a fundamental religious obligation. It reinforces the commitment to speak with grace to the elderly and underlines the particular need for a gentle manner of language, as well as expressions of respect and reverence while precluding embarrassment, stress, and harm

When the Maguindanaon student nurses are assigned to patients from different cultures, participants expressed their willingness to care for them without imposing their own beliefs. They said that almost all of their patients are non-Muslims during their clinical exposures, and the way they provide care is not affected. They also claimed that they would not impose on them their beliefs but instead treat them with respect. Baker *et al.* (2015) believes that caring for patients from different cultures poses constant challenges for health care providers significantly since they have varied adherence levels due to acculturation. The care providers must be competent to provide individualized holistic care that can be achieved only by understanding the traditions, culture, beliefs, and a display of cultural competence (Saunders *et al.,* 2015).

In the classroom, sensitive topics about the reproductive system, sexuality, and family planning are introduced. Some participants expressed discomfort, while others, it is acceptable, and the instructors modify their strategies to fit with Muslim Maguindanaon students' preferences. They stated that they feel awkward initially, but others understood that these topics are essential for them to become nurses. In a study conducted by Rockenbach *et al.* (2017), Muslim students expressed frustration with faculty members' and students' general lack of understanding about Islamic practices and their confusion about the varieties of existing Islamic culture. They experienced a lack of respect for religious diversity

in the classroom and instructors' inability or unwillingness to address inappropriate comments. Muslim students also reported that their spiritual practices were not appropriately accepted.

During the delivery of lessons, some participants appreciate that the Muslim Maguindanaon culture's uniqueness is incorporated in some subjects. Specifically, in their Nutrition subject, the cooking of halal food is introduced. Participants also appreciate that Islamic Studies (IS) subjects are offered in schools that require Muslim Maguindanaon students to wear their hijab and practice other beliefs and rituals in school. Meanwhile, in a survey conducted by Go (2018) to 1068 religious educators in the Philippines, it was revealed that a significant number of respondents exhibited an insufficient understanding of the domains of religious beliefs and value judgment.

In a study conducted by Shunhaji (2018) in Indonesia, it was revealed that Catholic schools that implement compulsory religious education subjects are a complete failure. It is a form of coercion accommodation. It was suggested that Muslim students receive comprehensive Islamic studies instead of receiving Christian religious education subjects.

The participants also received due consideration from their instructors, especially during the celebration of Ramadan. For instance, a return demonstration is scheduled half-day, and the students are dismissed early to have their dinner for night classes. They also claimed that the school observes Muslim holidays. The instructors' role is critical because they need to consider the students' diverse cultures. All participants feel acceptance and support without discrimination from instructors. They also experience fair treatment. The policies of Catholic schools must be inclusive of Muslim students. It must consider justice, fairness, and respect for diversity.

3.5. Emergent Theme 5: A Catholic School Delivers Quality Education While Respecting the Diversity of Muslim Maguindanaon Students

The Catholic school delivers quality education while respecting the culture of Muslim Maguindanaon students. The participants believe that quality education is an identity of a Catholic school that will be the key to getting an excellent job in the future. They also expressed the sources of their motivations in pursuing their studies, which include their parents, relatives, and community. The participants also receive fair treatment, respect, and consideration from their instructors.

The identity of the Catholic school to offer quality education is a well-established reality. The Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines said that quality is absolute and must achieve its highest possible standards (Henderson *et al.,* 2018). The association claimed that creating a conducive environment and having safe, functional, and adequate facilities defines an excellent Catholic school because it helps the school community grow and engage.

Bual and Madrigal (2018) stated that the ultimate purpose of Catholic education is evangelization. However, globalization and secularism depreciate the quality of Catholic education, and the mission and identity of Catholic schools are in the middle ground. Their study revealed that the Diocesan schools adhere to quality standards but suggested that they continuously improve to meet the highest standards. The findings also affirmed that the administrators play a vital role in responding to its evangelical mission while addressing the community's quality education needs.

A study conducted by Madrigal and Oracion (2019) at Silliman University revealed that the level of quality of Catholic education exceeds the benchmark. They also suggest that teaching the meanings of Catholic practices and beliefs must emphasize their practical relevance and not as part of rituals. They also stressed that an excellent benchmark could be achieved when

the curricula, educational objectives, and programs conform to the Catholic Church's teachings. Schools must improve more on the different domains, especially in catering to diverse students' needs.

In addition, Agirdag *et al.* (2017) believe that Catholic schools create fewer inequities, which is favorable for minority or disadvantaged students. They thought that these schools delivered a typical school's ideals for everyone and placed their concern for the oppressed and poor at the epicenter of their social teachings. It is also recognized that the shift in students' demographics is a test of the schools' commitment to fostering shared expectations and interest in maintaining quality education. Mandic *et al.,* (2017) believe that parents consider the school's short distance as their students' school choice. Naparan and Balimbingan (2020) also claimed that it is recognized that private schools offer quality education. Still, aside from providing this, schools need to provide a supportive and welcoming environment for students to cope effectively.

The participants' motivations to finish their studies are their parents, relatives, and community. They believed that their parents worked hard to send them to school, that they consider is offering quality education. They also claimed that the school is better than nearby schools, which will help them look for their future job. The parents are highly motivated to work hard to send their children to a private Catholic school. According to Toutkoushian *et al.* (2019), students whose parents did not attend college are most likely to graduate despite coming from families with low income and fewer academic opportunities. They claimed that the parents' failure to complete their college education serves as their children's motivation to exert great efforts in their studies to finish and make their parents proud.

On the other hand, Egalite (2019) said that parents' educational attainment is linked to their children's educational aspirations. As the parents' education increases, the students' likelihood of completing college education also increases. She claimed that educated parents could enhance their children's school performance by communicating their achievements because of a college education. They can also guide their children well because of their previous experiences and financial stability. Also, receiving quality education from a prestigious school offers a lot of job opportunities upon their graduation. Smith (2019) also stated that more students are attending colleges because having a bachelor's degree is hired quickly with a better salary.

3.8. Discussion

The study's findings imply that Muslim Maguindanaon student nurses are diverse in their family structure, values, beliefs, and practices. On the other hand, the school provides a supportive environment for Muslim Maguindanaon student nurses, despite being a Catholic institution. The participants also gain support and respect in the school community, especially from Christians.

The Muslim Maguindanaon family is an extended family structure with strong family connections that span up to third generations. It is also unique as decisions are affected by involving family members, especially the elderly. The participants also value modesty, generosity, and loyalty to their religion, which affects their relationships in school. The belief in folk healers is also evidence that they have views similar to other cultures (Cole & Ahmadi, 2010).

Opposite-sex and same-sex relationships are given due restrictions, and evident that the participants are conservative. An opposite-sex relationship is acceptable with certain limitations, but for others, it is prohibited. These values may lead to careful considerations in school in terms of tasks and other activities requiring students' engagement. Same-sex

relationship among Muslim Maguindanaon students is also viewed as taboo, but due respect will also be given to gays and lesbians (Clary, 2016).

The participants have opposing views about early marriage. Some participants believe that early marriage is encouraged as it awaits a reward from God. On the other hand, some opposed early marriage and viewed their studies as a priority. Therefore, it is established that Muslim Maguindanaon students start to shift from the traditional belief about marrying early to value education (Anggraeni & Maryanti, 2021; Azizah *et al.*, 2022; Nugraha *et al.*, 2022; Al Husaeni *et al.*, 2022). Some participants submit themselves to parental consent and trust their parents in deciding for their partner, but some view this as an oppression of their freedom. This means that Muslim Maguindanaon student nurses have opposing views because of the modern mindset's influence (Kaihlanen *et al.*, 2019; Kumara *et al.*, 2018).

Some students in school cannot understand the mother tongue language of Muslim Maguindanaon participants. As a result, they prefer to use Tagalog as a language for a shared understanding and facilitate the expression of ideas and establish harmonious relationships with other school students. Meanwhile, touching and having eye contact is also acceptable for close family members, but not for strangers (Ellenbecker & Edward, 2016; Chiatti, 2019).

The participants also believed that wearing a hijab is a Muslim identity that should be continued even in a Catholic school. Sadly, they encountered situations that challenged their dedication to continuing, especially not wearing a hijab during clinical exposures. As a result, the participants have varied choices like wearing hijab as much as possible, but other participants decided not to wear it because they cannot do it consistently. They also have the aspiration to be allowed to wear hijab in hospitals (Branch *et al.*, 2016). Still, it creates challenges as the decision is also based on the hospital protocols, especially on infection control and dress code.

The Muslim Maguindanaon participants are prayerful. They perform Islamic prayer five times a day, but they have difficulty praying during mid-day or lunchtime, especially on Friday, because they need to go home to pray. The participants also aspire that a prayer room will be provided in school. Despite this, the participants gain support from their Christian classmates by praying in their boarding houses or unused classrooms.

The participants are sensitive to halal food options and avoid eating pork, and dog meat, and drinking alcoholic beverages. For some participants, utensils used in cooking pork are also considered haram. It is also unavoidable that Christians and Muslims will eat together. During mealtime, the participants vary in their preferences, some are sensitive to seeing someone eating pork, but it is acceptable for other participants. But despite this, the canteen staff, their classmates, and instructors are respectful and supportive of this belief.

The Muslim Maguindanaon feel acceptance, mutual understanding, and respect from their friends, classmates, and instructors, especially Christians. However, some of them experienced isolated discrimination and were initially left out. The findings of the study mean that a supportive environment is provided in school, but it can be improved by responding to the causes of isolated discrimination and improving orientation programs for new students.

The Muslim Student Organization (MSO) plays a crucial role by providing the participants with an opportunity to get involved in the school's relevant Islamic activities. The activities were conducted to improve the social and spiritual aspects of development and strengthen their faith and Islamic beliefs despite being in a Catholic school. Sadly, the organization's activities were not sustained and discontinued, and the Muslim students request that it be reinstated again. The participants also ask considerations about their attire during school activities, which the themes are not culturally appropriate, including their participation in the

Christmas party as optional. It is suggested that cultural awareness programs shall be strengthened to understand the diversity of students (Sorensen *et al.,* 2019).

The participants perceive the planning and delivery of lessons as responsive to their cultural identity. The sources of their motivation to pursue their studies came from their parents, relatives, and communities. The participants appreciate that the Muslim Maguindanaon culture's uniqueness is introduced in their classes, specifically in their Nutrition subject. They also commend the school for offering Islamic Studies (IS) subjects to them. This will allow the participants to discover and understand Islam better and practice their traditions in these subjects.

Moreover, the instructors provide due consideration in their cultural and religious practices like fasting during Ramadan, praying five times a day, and discussing sensitive topics like sexuality and family planning, dietary restrictions, and hijab. Aside from this, the participants are grateful because they received fair treatment and respect from their instructors and classmates. On the other hand, the Muslim Maguindanaon participants also expressed willingness to understand different cultures' diversity and willingly care for their patients in the hospitals despite diversity.

Lastly, Muslim Maguindanaon student nurses gain support in Catholic schools despite their varied choices in practicing their cultural and religious beliefs. The participants vouched that private Catholic schools deliver quality education while respecting the culture of Muslim Maguindanaon students. It is an identity being accepted and perceived in the community which offers equal opportunities to diverse students to excel. The instructors must continuously create culturally responsive strategies that acknowledge students' diversity and establish equal access to educational opportunities. It is also suggested that the school's commitment to fostering shared expectations and interest in maintaining quality education must be sustainable due to the shift in student demographics.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:
(i) The school administration should intensify the use of the framework for culturally congruent nursing education.
(ii) The nursing faculty shall review the curriculum to strengthen their capacity to respond to culturally diverse students' needs.
(iii) Commission on Higher Education may encourage schools to integrate the transcultural nursing subject to respond to the needs of Muslim Maguindanaon students.
(iv) Nursing Education, nursing schools use innovative approaches to provide a culturally responsive environment.
(v) In nursing practice, nurse practitioners will respect the diverse culture of the student nurses.
(vi) Nursing Research, more intensive studies on instructors' experiences in responding to diverse students' cultural needs should be done.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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