

**BAKAS NG KAGANDAHANG LOOB NG DIYOS
(TRACES OF GOD'S LOVE)
A Proposed Inculturated Approach to
Sacraments for Religious Education**

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Introduction

Our society, which is often centred on output and efficiency, has made us so wrapped up in our daily grind that there seems to be very limited time and opportunity to come together and celebrate our human experiences as one community. Many of the rituals in our Christian community have also become insipid and pointless because many people could not find meaning in them nor could they understand the sacramentality of their human and Christian lives.¹

Boff added that the present-day rites of the seven sacraments in the Catholic Church are anachronistic and stiff that they hardly speak for themselves anymore.² As a result, Catholics have become passive or are simply forced to perform the expected rituals. In other words, the sacraments have become obligatory and participation in the rituals a

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¹Bernard Cooke, *Sacraments and Sacramentality*, Connecticut: Twenty-third Publications, 1983.

²Leonardo Boff, *Sacraments of Life, Life of Sacraments*, Oregon: Pastoral Press, 1987.

drag rather than festive celebrations, where human experiences are enriched and the grace of God reflected in the community.³

Sacraments “are doors to the experience of the sacred.”⁴ But have they truly become doors to the sacred? Are we not often confronted with the problem of making people appreciate the rituals? Some parents even force their children to join the celebration of the Holy Eucharist every Sunday. If these sacraments are celebrations of God’s grace at work in our human experiences, why are there very few Catholics who find meaning in the rituals? This lack of enthusiasm to celebrate the sacraments has become prevalent for majority of Catholics in the Philippines.⁵

Looking back at the history of Christianity, one realizes that Christian faith was shaped and re-shaped less by the concepts or insights of people, and more by their rituals, which expressed and celebrated the human experiences of God’s grace active in their life as a community. At the heart of every religion then, are the community’s celebrations and not its doctrines.⁶ The common story of salvation in Jesus, which the first followers of Jesus experienced, was celebrated by re-enacting the *Last Supper* in the *breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup* (Acts 2:46-47). Theological reflections were born out of these lived experiences celebrated constantly by the first Christians.

Today, it is not enough to re-shape every now and then the texts and the rituals of the Roman liturgy according to pastoral needs. It is necessary to show the link between the message of salvation and the culture of the people.⁷ There is a need to bring about renewal not just in the rituals but also in their theology. The Western theologies, which are often taught in catholic schools, have failed to root in their lives.⁸ They may be familiar with definitions and rituals of these sacraments but they may not necessarily see the relevance of such concepts in their lives. The dualistic, static or conservative view of the Neo-scholastic thought that influenced the Church for centuries made the sacraments appear as commodities to be bought and God as too perfect to be in close contact with humans who are unholy.⁹

³Tad Guzie, *The Book of Sacramental Basics*, New York: Paulist Press, 1981.

⁴J. Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, New York: Triumph Books, 1991, 115

⁵Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines. *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines*, Manila: CBCP Press, 1992, #13.

⁶David Power, *Worship, Culture and Theology*, Washington: The Pastoral Press, 1990.

⁷Anscar Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity and Catechesis*, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1992.

⁸Andrew Gonzalez, *Towards an Adult Faith: Religious Themes in Contemporary Language*, Manila: De La Salle University Press, 2002.

⁹Jose de Mesa, “Retrieving the Sense of Sacramentality of the Ordinary,” *Diskursus* 1, 2 (October, 2002) 210-228.

One of the radical changes resulting from the second Vatican Council's thrust of *aggiornamento* is the Church's openness to different cultures in the world. The old belief in one single culture to be adopted by the universal Church has been discarded. Respect for other cultures is being called for. Re-expression of our faith with special emphasis on the genius of different cultures is now encouraged.¹⁰ Inculturation has become a necessary process in making sense of our Christian faith. Sacramental renewal requires revisiting and re-expressing the sacraments according to the culture of a people.¹¹ To divorce culture from the Christian rituals would deprive people of encountering the divine and experiencing intimate communion with God and with one another.

The best medium for education in Philippine schools would be Filipino. It is through the language that's understandable to students that they could best learn. To deprive them of the chance to learn better because of a language used is to defeat the essence of education. Even some theology professors admit, "what appears to be abstract in English becomes more concrete and even poetic in the vernacular."¹² How can effective religious education take place if the language used is never fully understood? This study then, hopes to respond to this urgent need to inculturate the Christian sacraments. In particular, it is an attempt to use the vernacular and a local thought-pattern of *bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos* (traces of God's love) in making sense of the sacraments and re-discovering the sacramentality of human life.

Conceptual Framework

With the many efforts to re-appropriate the understanding and celebration of the sacraments, the thrust towards the challenge of inculturating our Christian faith has become more urgent. After looking at the different efforts of theologians and liturgists, the researcher found out that more concrete results in religious education should be undertaken in order to make sacramental theology more intelligible and meaningful especially to Filipino students in Catholic schools who are formally instructed about the Christian faith.

In doing this, the researcher found out that theologians share the same perspective of using the mode of mutual and critical dialogue of

¹⁰Austin Flannery, ed., "Gaudium et Spes" in *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, New York: Costello Publishing Company, 1975.

¹¹Jose de Mesa, *Why Theology is Never Far from Home*, Manila: De La Salle University Press Inc., 2003.

¹²Leonardo Mercado, *Inculturation and Filipino Theology*, Manila: Divine Word Publications, 1992, 121.

two traditions: the pole of human experience (context or culture) and the pole of Judaeo-Christian Tradition.¹³ One should be faithful to the Tradition of the Church¹⁴ without disregarding the present experience of the people in the local churches.

Through this study, the researcher presents an inculturated sacramental theology, which may be rooted in the lowland Filipino culture in mutual dialogue with the Judaeo-Christian tradition. As such, re-thinking and re-appropriating the faith necessitates adopting a local thought pattern. *Bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos*, (traces of God's love) which is de Mesa's recommendation in formulating a local understanding of what sacraments are, was employed in this study.

Based on de Mesa's cultural exegesis and enriched by the experimental group's understanding of *bakas* (traces or signs and symbols), the concept expresses rich meanings and implications. It indicates a past reality because it leaves a mark of a person who was here or an event that happened in history, which is very significant to the people. Through the years, this will always be remembered and celebrated. For some, it may even be the cause of coming together to celebrate and renew or nurture relationships.

As a concept, it also indicates something of the present because it serves as a sign or an indication of present condition or state of person or society in general. Filipinos are always noted for their strong sense of "feeling" the situation in order to be guided in their decisions and interactions with others.¹⁵ Through their observation, the sign or symbol may warn them about the present situation or condition of persons.

Bakas also points to the future because it challenges a person to look back in order to be guided in their future undertakings or plans. It leaves prints or stamps that could guide one's journey and could lead one to the right direction. Since these marks are visible, not just in the naked eye but are impressed in the hearts and minds of the people who encountered them, they never fail to kindle the spirit of

¹³Jose de Mesa and Lode Wostyn, *Doing Theology: Basic Realities and Processes*, Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1990. See also Stephen Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, Manila: Logos Publications, 2003.

¹⁴The thrust of Vatican II is not just aggiornamento (that is renewal/change) by considering the contemporary cultural experiences of people but also *ad fontes*, that is go back to the original source of our Faith, Jesus Christ.

¹⁵Jose de Mesa, "Buhay, Karanasan, Aral at Turo: a Filipino Hermeneutics of Experience," *East Asian Pastoral Review* 32, 3&4 (1995) 251-276.

gratitude that leads them to trace the “footprints” of the one that transformed their lives.

Moreover, *Bakas* is a unique sign or symbol that leaves a distinguishing imprint. It helps one to recall and re-experience at present the joy of a reality in the past towards a more hope-filled future. *Bakas* points to the real presence of God which gives meaning to people’s lives. This assures them that God is with them because no mark is left if the person has not been there. The fact that there is a mark proves the existence of that person.

Bakas may often be limited to the marks or memories of the past by most people but based on the analysis undertaken, the word also implies a present reality in which people are able to experience. Lovers who want to express their love for each other make use of marks, signs and symbols to let each other feel the love they have for each other. The whole relationship cannot go on if they are not able to nurture it by the signs and symbols of love and care. Since *Bakas* also implies a future perspective. There are present signs or marks, which can help us in facing the future. The marks of destruction of a war for example, may serve as reminders for the future generations to work for peace and maintain order in society.

Elaborating on the advantages of using *Bakas* as local expression of sacraments, de Mesa ¹⁶ points out the following:

1. *Bakas* appeals to the senses because it is something visual and tangible. These characteristics adhere to the sacramentality of human life and God’s intangible love made concrete through the sacraments.
2. *Bakas* as trace may point out that although something is revealed in God’s graciousness as shown in our past experiences, its fullness is yet to be. It does not give the fullness of the reality of God’s gratuitousness but through the sacraments, a glimpse of it is made alive in the community.
3. *Bakas* is a category known to Filipinos unlike *sakramento* (sacrament) or *mistryo* (mystery), which are simply translations of foreign category.
4. *Bakas* is narrative that necessitates historical reasoning. This adheres more to Filipino understanding of realities unlike the *mistryo* and *sakramento* which calls for logical/rational explanation and are more appropriate to Westerners.
5. *Bakas* spontaneously expresses that someone or something is responsible for it and one has to have a keen eye to recognize what is

¹⁶Jose de Mesa, *Bakas: Retrieving the Sense of Sacramentality in the Ordinary*, Quezon City, Philippines: Anvil Publishing Inc., 2003.

actually present. Sacraments point to the presence of God but it requires faith for people to see his presence in their midst.

6. *Bakas* enables one to point out the aspect of being disciples as expressed in *Pamamakas* (*tracing or following the One signified by the symbol*). This implies keeping track or tracing a mark or sign as indicative of the active discernment of Christians for the presence of Jesus' Spirit in the world. As disciples, we are alert to the signs of his active presence in our community so as to live by our calling of loving one another. In the sacramental perspective then, *pamamakas* indicates discipleship.

Although, there are limitations in the concept *bakas*, the researcher focussed on its richness to re-study and re-think the sacraments in the local thought-pattern of the lowland Filipinos. Since it is rooted in the very language and experience of the people, it does not only present a local equivalent of the sacraments but also recognizes the capacity of our local tongue to re-express our faith.

Aside from the concept *bakas*, the concept *kagandahang-loob* (gracious kindness and genuine love flowing from the depth of one's inner self) is being considered in this study. This indigenous concept is examined to show its ability in re-articulating the theology of sacraments. The thematic cultural exegesis of *kagandahang-loob*¹⁷ highlights the characteristics associated to the concept. It reveals the capacity of *kagandahang loob* to re-express the sacramental presence of God, which is at the very core of Filipino culture.

Kagandahang-loob is not only gracious goodness that wells up from the very depths of one's being but is also a gracious goodness, which characterizes a person. It implies the real nature of the person or the character that reveals who that person really is. It implies all that is good in someone and this is considered as the ideal for Filipinos. It emerges from the heart of a person and finds its expression in the totality of one's life of interrelationship. In other words, this is coming from the inner core of one's being and is shown through the way a person relates with others in authentic goodness.

The following characteristics associated to *kagandahang-loob* helps elaborate the meaning of this local concept:

1. *Kagandahang-loob* is a relational concept. Lowland Filipinos may only realize a person's *kagandahang-loob* in his/her relationship with others. This means that a person may only be judged as *maganda ang*

¹⁷Jose de Mesa, *In solidarity with the Culture: Studies in Theological Re-rooting*, Quezon City: Mary Hill School of Theology, 1991. See also his other book, *Kapag namayani ang Kagandahang Loob ng Diyos*, Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1998.

kalooban if he/she has been known to be exhibiting authentic acts of kindness, goodness, benevolence or generosity to people. It cannot be known or understood outside the context of relationship because only in terms of how one relates with others could one be known as *maganda ang kalooban* (a person who has a good heart). It finds its expression only within our relationship with fellow human beings because it is never isolated from our life with others in the community we live in and belong to.

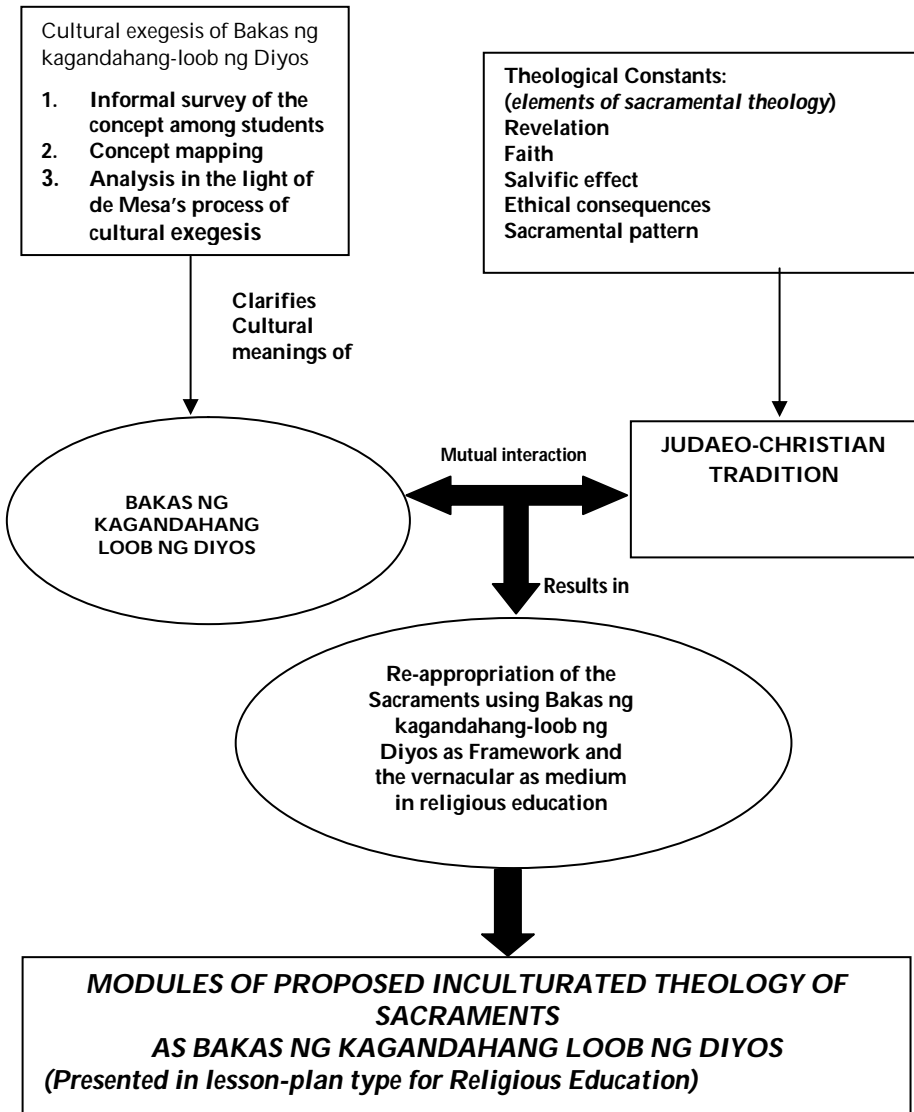
2. *Kagandahang-loob* arises from a person's initiative, which is freely chosen. One is never considered *maganda ang kalooban* if the acts of kindness and goodness were demonstrated simply because of pressure or lack of freedom to choose what one really wants. For lowland Filipinos, acts of kindness to be acknowledged as noble and edifying should well up from the inner core of one's being (or *loob*). It should be a demonstration of free choice and authentic kindness done out of one's initiative to respond to a situation or other person's needs.

3. *Kagandahang-loob* is directed towards the well-being of the other. A person is said to be exhibiting *kagandahang-loob* if he/she is concerned about others' welfare. This means that any demonstration of goodness should be manifested in one's desire to help or foster the well-being of the other. The intention is never selfish or manipulative because it is always directed to the good of another person. When act of kindness is done, it does not expect anything in return because it expresses a gracious act toward the good of the other. Pure goodness oozes out of the person who hopes to contribute to the welfare of others.

Taking all these into consideration, it is easy to understand why *kagandahang-loob* is chosen to denote who God is towards us and how God acts in our lives. The concept is able to express the pure goodness of God, which wells up from God's inner core (*loob*) and is directed towards our well-being. The covenantal character of our relationship with God is also highlighted as we respond to God's self-initiated benevolence and kindness that is never self-seeking or manipulative.

In this study then, *Bakas* and *kagandahang-loob ng Diyos* are two indigenous concepts combined to re-examine and re-articulate our understanding of the sacraments. Both are rich local concepts that are capable of presenting a more intelligible theology of the sacraments. Another important dimension of this study is the use of the vernacular. Evangelization may only occur when the language of the people is the medium of communicating the Gospel.

The following framework illustrates the process of arriving at the proposed inculturated theology of the sacraments.



STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study, therefore, answered the following questions:

1. How were the inculturated framework *bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos* and the vernacular applied in developing instructional materials for religious education of sacraments?

2. Is there a significant difference in the understanding (cognitive) and appreciation (affective) of the sacraments between the control and the experimental group when the inculturated framework *Bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos* and the *vernacular* were used in the religious instruction of the experimental group while the control group was instructed with the ready-made *Western theology* and *English* was used as the medium of instruction?

Research Design

The study made use of the descriptive method of research. This method is concerned with description and interpretation of data. Current conditions, opinions and structures affecting the study are noted for systematic analysis and examination. It is primarily an action research, which presented an inculturated sacramental theology using the concept *Bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos* and the vernacular to an experimental group, which was composed of 30 Catholic Filipino College students of De La Salle-College of St. Benilde.

The process of inculturation suggested by Dr. Jose de Mesa was followed in the formulation of modules, which were field tested to an experimental group comprising 30 Filipino college students of De La Salle-College of St. Benilde. Other theologians' insights enriched the study and validated the framework.

The concepts *bakas* and *kagandahang-loob* were systematically examined and analyzed in order to test their meaningfulness to lowland Filipinos.

The mutual interaction between the culture and the Judaeo-Christian tradition was employed in designing the content of modules or the proposed inculturated sacramental theology.

One unique feature of this research was the use of the vernacular in the re-appropriation of the sacraments. The local language became the venue for retrieving the richness of Filipino culture and the Christian faith. A step-by-step process of inculturation was presented to acknowledge the possibility of using such approach in theologizing.

Moreover, the study determined the effectiveness of using the local framework and language in religious education of sacraments through 30 Filipino college students of De La Salle-College of St. Benilde, otherwise referred to as *experimental group*. To determine if there was a significant difference obtained in the understanding and appreciation of the sacraments after the field testing, the results of

pre-test and post-test of cognitive and affective aspects of perceiving the sacraments for the *experimental group* were compared to the mean scores of another group of 30 Filipino college students, or the *control group*, of the same school who were instructed with Western theology and English as medium of instruction in the study of the sacraments.

Research Instrument

The study presented sacraments as *Bakas ng kagandahang loob ng Diyos*. In order to employ the process of inculturation by Jose de Mesa, two poles of experience namely, the Judaeo-Christian Tradition and the lowland Filipino experience of *Bakas ng kagandahang loob ng Diyos* were utilized to present an intelligible exposition of the message of salvation as related to the sacraments.

One has to take note of what was “constant” in the tradition of the Church especially in re-thinking the Christian faith, in this case, the sacraments. According to de Mesa’s analysis,¹⁸ the sacramental thinking of the visibility and palpability of God’s invisible love is revealed in different cultures and recognized through the faith of the people who experience this self-giving and out flowing love of God.

It is worth noting how this is re-expressed in various cultures and times. Based on the analysis of different formulations or theological perspectives on sacraments, it was observable that all are moulded within a particular culture. Based on analysis done, what remains *constant* in all these formulations in sacramental theology are the following elements:

1. revelation – God’s saving love evident in human history.
2. faith – active response to God’s offer of life and love.
3. salvific effect – the transforming character of God’s saving love.
4. ethical consequences – the commitment to be true disciples of Jesus.
5. sacramental pattern – God’s invisible love made palpable in concrete experiences of human persons.

The following table illustrates these constants in comparison with the different cultural formulations that became part of the Church tradition. *Bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos* as Filipino cultural expression of the sacramentality of God’s saving love is included in the illustration to show its capacity to re-express this aspect of Christian faith.

¹⁸Jose de Mesa, *Bakas: Retrieving the Sense of Sacramentality in the Ordinary*, 78-80.

Comparison of Cultural Interpretations of Sacramentality with the Theological Constants

Theological constants	<i>Mysterion</i>	<i>Sacramentum</i>	Council of Trent	<i>Filipino "Bakas"</i>
Revelation	The <i>mysteria</i> which were the saving deeds of God in Jesus Christ (ontological view)	The <i>mysteria</i> of the life, passion and death of Jesus Christ	Sacraments as instituted by Christ	<i>Pagmamagandang-loob ng Diyos</i> as presence
Faith	participation through initiation	Oath of allegiance	<i>Non ponentibus obicem</i> (by not putting an obstacle)	<i>Pamamakas</i> as active tracing of God's presence in the world and experiences
salvific effect	participation (divinization)	Membership in the community of salvation	"For our justification" (<i>ex opere operato</i>)	<i>Pagbabago ng loob</i> Inner transformation towards becoming more human
ethical consequences	"Imitation" through a process of perception and assimilation one becomes a living and perfect replica of the Redeemer	Allegiance, being loyal, a self-undertaken commitment to Jesus Christ	Remain and grow in sanctifying grace by frequenting the sacraments, especially Penance and Eucharist	<i>Pamamakas</i> as discipleship
Sacramental pattern (visible/ Invisible)	The eternal, spiritual reality/ the temporal and material realities	Loyalty or fidelity/ oath	Invisible grace/ visible sign	<i>Ang nababakas/ ang bakas</i>

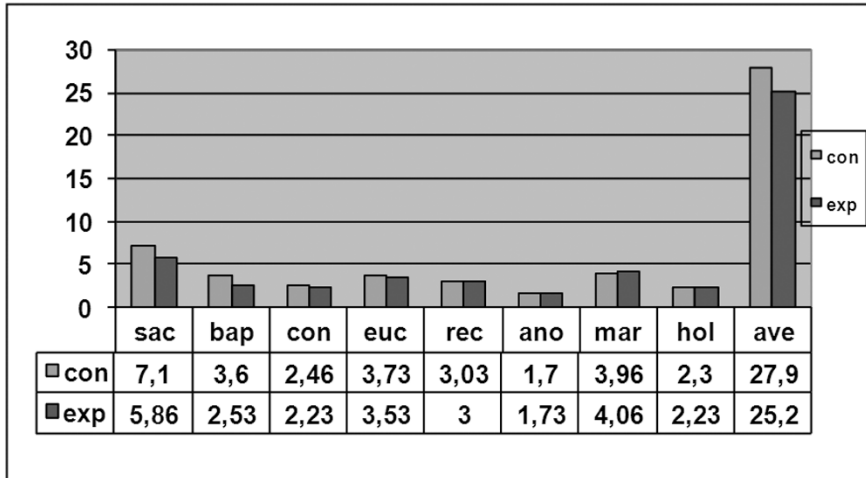
Findings of the Study

A. Findings and Analysis of Cognitive Results

Results of Cognitive pre-test for the control and experimental group showed that there is no significant difference between the two groups' understanding of the sacraments. This implies that before the study was conducted, both groups have similar understanding of the sacraments.

The Figure below presents the mean scores of each of the 8 variables of the cognitive test and the overall mean for both groups.

Pre-test Results of Cognitive Test for Control and Experimental Group



It is noticeable that in most items, the control group scored higher than the experimental group. The overall mean of experimental group, $m = 25.2$ is lower than the control group, $m = 27.9$. This indicates that the control group has a better understanding of sacraments before the conduct of the study.

The results of the pre-test for the understanding (cognitive) of the sacraments of experimental and control groups reveal that there are no significant differences at the beginning of the study for both groups, $t = 2.106, p > .05$.

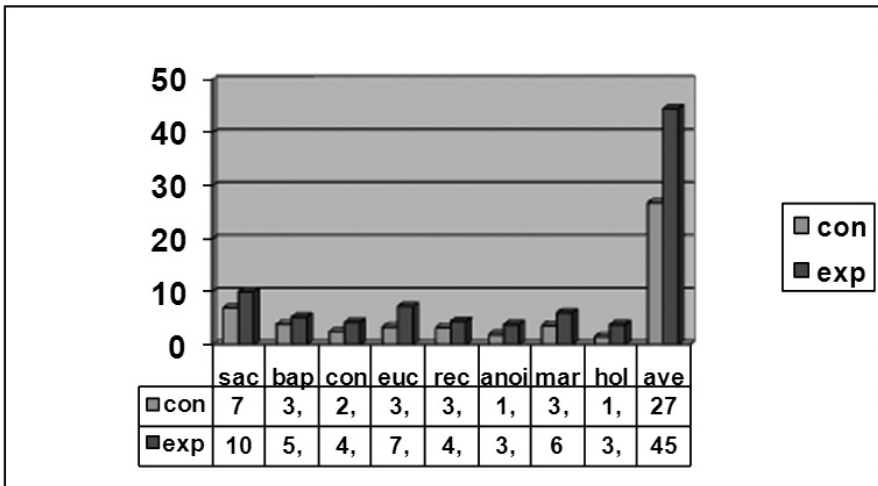
The scores obtained by the experimental and control group do not indicate very satisfactory results in the understanding of the sacraments since there are 50 items in the test and they scored less than the ideal, which is at least 40. Both groups do not display a good grasp of the sacraments in terms of the cognitive aspect of study.

Applying the framework, *Bakas ng kagandahang loob ng Diyos* and using the vernacular for religious instruction of the experimental group about the sacraments while instructing the control group with the ready-made Western theology of sacraments have resulted to significant findings. Students belonging to the experimental group

welcomed the possibility of using the vernacular in discussing the sacraments when they have realized its capacity to express their experiences and ideas more clearly. This was observed through their maximum participation evoked during the discussions. The experimental group showed more ease in using Filipino than in using English especially in discussions and sharing of their insights and experiences.

Looking at the Post-test results of the Cognitive test for the control and experimental group, it is clearly shown that there exists a significant difference in all variables of the questionnaire (see the figure). Having attained an overall mean of 26.8, the control group's score is much lower than the mean score of experimental group, $m = 44.6$.

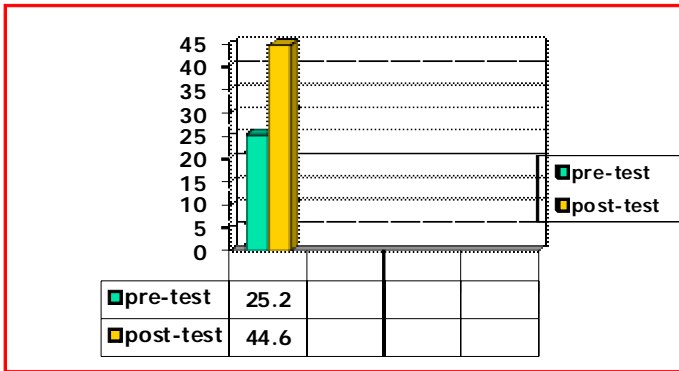
Post-test Results of Cognitive test for Experimental and Control Groups



There is a significant difference in the understanding of the sacraments between the control and the experimental group, ($t = -28.280, p < .05$). The utilization of inculturated framework "*Bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos*" and the use of the vernacular rendered better results in the experimental group's understanding of the sacraments. The experimental group, which were instructed through the vernacular and introduced to a framework rooted in their own culture responded better when compared with the control group.

Looking closely at the cognitive pre-test and post-test mean scores of the experimental group, it clearly indicates that there is a significant difference in the scores.

Cognitive Pre-test and Post-test Results of the Experimental Group

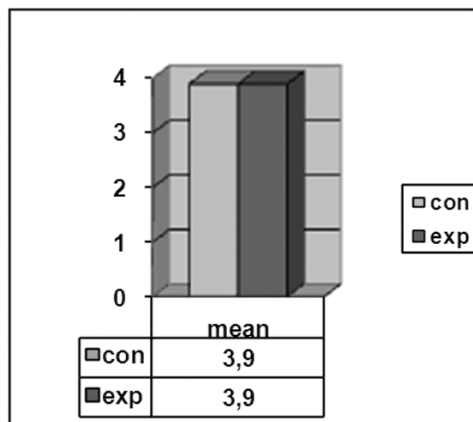


Looking closely at the cognitive pre-test and post-test mean scores of the experimental group, it clearly indicates that there is a significant difference in the scores.

B. Findings and Analysis of Affective Results

Before the study was undertaken, both groups (experimental and control) were given the pre-test for affective component of the sacraments. The results did not render any significant difference in their appreciation of the sacraments.

Pre-test Results of the Affective Test of Control and Experimental Group

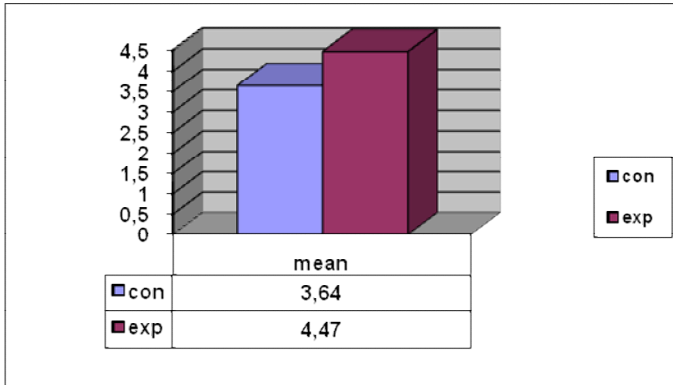


Both groups obtained $m = 3.9$, which indicates that there is no significant difference ($t = -.460, p > .05$) in their appreciation of the

sacraments before the study was undertaken. In Likert's scale, their appreciation of the sacraments falls under average mark.

Post-test results of the Affective test given to the experimental and control group indicate a significant difference in the appreciation of the sacraments between the control and the experimental group.

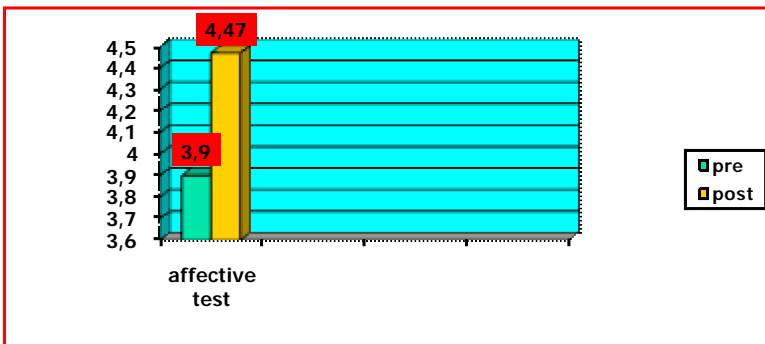
Post-test Results of Affective Test of Control and Experimental Groups



Data obtained indicate that the experimental group scored higher ($m = 4.47$) than the control group ($m = 3.64$). After the implementation of the framework “Bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos” and the use of the vernacular, the experimental group showed great improvement in their appreciation of the sacraments. The significant difference ($t = - 12.605, p < .05$) is clearly indicated.

Comparing the Affective pre-test and post-test of the experimental group, it is noticeable that there is improvement in the appreciation of the sacraments

Affective Pre-test and Post-test Results of the Experimental Group



Since the experimental group showed better understanding of the sacraments, their appreciation has also improved. This is expressed in the consistent higher score of both post-tests results (cognitive and affective) of the experimental group. Hence, there is a need to re-express sacramental theology in a context and language which may touch the hearts of the students. This helps them consider the sacraments in a better light.

The findings of the study proves the assumptions and hypothesis of this study, namely, the inculturated framework *bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos* rather than the Western framework of sacraments was more effective and relevant in religious education of 30 selected Filipino college students of De La Salle-College of St. Benilde and these students belonging to the experimental group preferred the use of the vernacular rather than English in religious instruction.

Conclusions

The study validated the effectiveness of using inculturation through *vernacularization* and the use of local framework namely, *bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos* in articulating a more relevant and intelligible understanding of the sacraments. To affirm the hypothesis that inculturation is an effective approach/methodology in religious education on the sacraments, the researcher employed several assessment tools, pre-testing and post-testing of cognitive and affective aspects of sacraments, written remarks of students about the use of the framework *bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos* and the vernacular, surveys and observations made by researcher in the conduct of the study.

Comparing the *pre-test affective results* of the experimental ($m = 3.94$) and control group ($m = 3.91$), indicates that there was no significant difference in the appreciation of the sacraments ($t = -.460, p > .05$) at the beginning of the study. This means that both groups have the same perception of the sacraments. This was also shown in their *understanding (cognitive)* of the sacraments, where the control group's mean score ($m = 27.90$) in the pre-test was even higher than the experimental group's score ($m = 25.20$). At the beginning of the study then, both groups have a relatively similar perception and understanding of the sacraments.

After the modules were applied to the experimental group and the control group was instructed with the ready-made Western theology of sacraments and English as a medium of instruction, the researcher noted that there were significant differences in the post-test affective and cognitive aspects of the sacraments.

Affective results show that the experimental group ($m = 4.47$) scored higher than the control group ($m = 3.64$). Likewise, a better understanding was gained by the experimental group ($m = 44.6$) when compared with the control group ($m = 26.83$) as shown in post-test results of the cognitive aspect of the study.

Aside from the verbatim remarks of students of the experimental group, which expressed positive regard in using the local framework, *bakas ng kagandahang-loob ng Diyos* and the *vernacular*, the mean scores for the post-test of the experimental and control group clearly revealed the significant differences in the understanding ($t = -28.28, p = < .05$) and appreciation ($t = -12.60, p = < .05$) of the sacraments.

The qualitative and quantitative results and assessments of the study have indicated that the process of inculturation in doing theology is a useful approach/methodology in articulating the faith. Through the use of the local thought and the language they are familiar with, students of the experimental group were given the opportunity to understand and appreciate the sacraments better.

This indicates that religious educators should engage in creative means of instructing the youth in order to effectively render the message of the Gospel. The Western theology being used by most teachers has become abstract and is lacking of dynamism since there seems to be no connection to the ordinary life of the students as was mentioned by the students of the experimental group. Parroting a theology that is unable to touch the core of their being made studying theology pointless and often boring. Likewise the sacraments become empty rituals or duties they have to fulfil. The need for meaningfulness of theology and its relevance to present situations of people should be given serious consideration. Theologians and religious educators should collaborate in their efforts to articulate the Christian faith towards a more effective evangelization.