

Being a Lay Partner in Jesuit Higher Education in the Philippines: A Grounded Theory Application

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Abstract : In Jesuit universities, laypersons, who come from the same or different faith backgrounds or traditions, are considered as collaborators in mission. The Jesuits themselves support the contributions of the lay partners in realizing the mission of the Society of Jesus and recognize the important role that they play in education. This study aims to investigate and generate particular notions and understandings of lived experiences of being a lay partner in Jesuit universities in the Philippines, particularly those involved in higher education. Using the qualitative approach as introduced by grounded theorist Barney Glaser, the lay partners' concept of being a partner, as lived in higher education, is generated systematically from the data collected in the field primarily through in-depth interviews, field notes and observations. Glaser's constant comparative method of analysis of data is used going through the phases of open coding, theoretical coding, and selective coding from memoing to theoretical sampling to sorting and then writing. In this study, Glaser's grounded theory as a methodology will provide a substantial insight into and articulation of the layperson's actual experience of being a partner of the Jesuits in education. Such articulation provides a phenomenological approach or framework to an understanding of the meaning and core characteristics of Jesuit-Lay partnership in Jesuit educational institution of higher learning in the country. This study is expected to provide a framework or model for lay partnership in academic institutions that have the same practice of having lay partners in mission.

Keywords : grounded theory, Jesuit mission in higher education, lay partner, lived experience

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