



NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY
Graduate School

**THE BASIC ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES IN DAPITAN CITY: THEIR
CONTRIBUTIONS TO PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**

By

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A Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School Faculty In Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in Peace and Development

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APPROVAL SHEET

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT of the requirements for the degree of
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CONTRIBUTIONS TO PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT"**

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4. Background/Rationale

The world at large is clamoring for peace. Filipinos are not exempted; in fact, they are even victims of peacelessness. The church in Mindanao is looking for means to help alleviate the situation in this part of the country, through the formation of Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC's) in the different parishes of every diocese in the region.

St. James Parish in Dapitan City is one of those who really responded to the need of organizing BEC's. At present it has more than 300 small communities that are actively promoting not only the spiritual but also material welfare of the community.



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This study was conducted to focus on the extent of the BEC's contributions to peace and development.

8. Statement of the Problem

This study sought to evaluate the Basic Ecclesial Communities in Dapitan City in the light of the peace education framework and the PEACE paradigm of development. Specifically it focused on the following questions:

- 8.1 What is the profile of the respondents of the study?
- 8.2 What are the objectives of the Basic Ecclesial Communities in Dapitan City?
- 8.3 What activities are undertaken by the BEC to realize the objectives?
- 8.4 Are these activities expressive of the Peace Education Framework and PEACE paradigm of development? How?
- 8.5 What are the problems encountered by the BEC's? What solutions did they employ to solve these problems?
- 8.6 What are the contributions of BEC's to peace and development?



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9. Research Methodology

This study made use of the descriptive-evaluative design. The basic ecclesial communities were evaluated in the light of the PEACE Paradigm and Peace Education Framework. Descriptive statistics was also used to describe the population and various components of the study.

There were 140 respondents who represented 140 different communities of St. James Parish. Interviews with key informants were also done according to their individual convenience.

The data gathered were statistically analyzed based on the problems. Profile data and other responses were expressed in frequencies and percentages. Means, standard deviations and overall means on pertinent variables were computed. Responses taken from FGD and key informants were collated and incorporated in the analysis of quantitative data.



10. Summary of Findings

The following constitute the major findings of the study:

- 10.1 The respondents of this study are male and female leaders and active members of Dapitan BEC. They are of different age groups, with various educational attainment and occupations. They have a range of BEC membership from three to more than ten years.
- 10.2 The object of Dapitan BEC is the Diocesan thrust, “towards integral development”.
- 10.3 The BEC undertake activities that answer the spiritual, political, economic, cultural, social and ecological needs of the parishioners. But they are most active in works of evangelization.
- 10.4 All activities undertaken by Dapitan BEC are sometimes expressive of the Peace Education Framework and PEACE paradigm of development to some extent.
- 10.5 The BEC encountered minor problems, which include the lack of concern for the environment, and a set of problems, which may be attributed mostly to a weak foundation in



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knowledge of the Christian faith. These include the lack of awareness and understanding of BEC objective, absenteeism of members, weak formation, lack of knowledge of the Holy Bible, lack of proper motivation, poor communication and others.

Dapitan BEC always employ peaceful means of solving problems through participatory approach such as discussing the problem in a meeting, through dialogue and praying for solutions.

- 10.6 BEC have contributions to peace and development in the sense that their activities are expressive of the Peace Education Framework and PEACE paradigm of development. BEC activities enhance the development of the culture of peace in the locality.

11. Conclusions

The Basic Ecclesial Communities of Dapitan City indeed contribute to Peace and Development. Their contributions include the following:



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The goal of integral development is realized through the BEC activities, which answer the spiritual, political, economic, social, cultural and ecological needs of parishioners.

If BEC is an effective strategy for evangelization, it is also an effective activity towards peace and development.

The BEC activities respond to the six peace issues of the Peace Education Framework such as Personal Peace, Militarization, Cultural Solidarity, Structural Violence, Human Rights and Environmental Care.

The BEC as an institution is to some extent in accord with the PEACE paradigm of development since it is Participatory in its decision-making and activities; Equitable in its opportunities and resources (There is sharing); Appropriate in its education and training; Critical empowerment since BEC's raise members' awareness on social issues; and practice Environmental care because, though limited in extent, some activities for the environment like tree-planting and advocacy against illegal logging and fishing is part of the BEC involvement.



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12. Recommendations

The researcher is forwarding the following recommendations:

- 12.1 More seminars/trainings should be given to BEC's for their holistic development. Members should be encouraged to attend not only the spiritual and faith-related seminars, but also those for social, economic and political development of the community such as cooperativism, peace education and the like.
- 12.2 Seminars/trainings attended by leaders/members should be shared and re-echoed to the BEC or larger group.
- 12.3 Greater involvement of the BEC's to activities related to the six clusters of issues intended for the integral development of the community, not just in purely religious or liturgical activities.
- 12.4 Problems affecting the BEC, though perceived as minor should be addressed before they become major or out of bounds and difficult to solve.



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12.5 Peaceful resolution of problems/conflicts should be continued and all BEC's should be encouraged to use them.

13. Recommendations for Further Studies

1. Replication of the study in other areas.
2. NGO's: Their Role in Peace and Development.



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EVANGELINE C. SAGUIN
Researcher



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