

## INVOLVEMENT AND FORMATION OF PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL OFFICERS IN THE EASTERN VICARIATE OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CAPIZ

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### ABSTRACT

*The church is facing challenges due to the growing secularization of society, leading to a decline in religious influence and participation. The Parish Pastoral Council plays a vital role in the Catholic Church, assisting the priest in fostering an active and enthusiastic parish community. The council's effectiveness depends on active involvement and quality formation from the parish. The study aimed to assess the level of involvement in doctrine, worship, and values, as well as the extent of formation in didache (teachings), koinonia (community), and diakonia (service) of 180 randomly selected parish pastoral council officers in the Eastern Vicariates of the Archdiocese of Capiz. A validated and reliability-tested researcher-made questionnaire was used to gather the data on the socio-demographic profile of the respondents; the level of involvement and the extent of formation of parish pastoral council officers. Statistical tools used to analyze and interpret data were frequency count, percentage, mean, t-test, ANOVA, and Pearson-r. Utilizing the quantitative research design, the results revealed that the level of involvement and the extent of formation of the parish pastoral council officers was "high". The respondents' overall degree of involvement and formation was rated as "high", and when viewed collectively had the same "high level" observed in doctrine, worship, values, didache (teachings), koinonia (community), and diakonia (service). However, doctrine and didache (teachings) are the lowest among the variables of involvement and formation. The parish priest should prioritize and emphasize doctrinal formation for the council members. This can be done through workshops, study groups, and inviting guest speakers to provide in-depth teachings on Church doctrines.*

**Keywords:** *Parish Pastoral Council, Involvement, Formation, Doctrine, Worship, Values, Didache, Koinonia, Diakonia*

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### 1. Introduction

The church has suffered many challenges today. There is the secularization of society, where religious beliefs and practices are gradually being pushed to the sidelines. This shift towards secularism has led to a decrease in the

influence of religious institutions and a decline in the number of people actively participating in religious activities. With the deterioration of our traditional values, as society becomes more individualistic and materialistic, the importance of moral and ethical principles that were once upheld by the church is now overlooked (Pew Research Center, 2015). The effect of popular culture, with the rise of technology and social media, has become increasingly pervasive and influential. Lastly, there is the rising disinterest and disengagement of lay faithful in participation in the different activities and programs the church implements. These can be attributed to a variety of factors, including busy lifestyles, changing priorities, and a lack of understanding or connection with the relevance of these activities in their lives (Smith & Snell, 2018).

The Parish Pastoral Council plays an essential role in the life and mission of the Catholic Church. They are dedicated lay faithful who assist the parish priest and help the parish foster active and enthusiastic parish life. The efficiency of the parish councils always depends on the active involvement and the quality of formation they receive from the parish (Gaillardetz, 2020). Further, in recent years, there has been a growing awareness that in the Church there is a need to enhance the involvement and formation processes of parish pastoral council officers (Rademacher, 2020). Sandstrom (2015) of the United States found out that some larger Christian denominations have low levels of church involvement. This study showed that Catholics are among the denominations of Christians who are least involved in their parishes; only 16% of Catholics are highly involved. Therefore, understanding the factors that influence their participation and the impact of their formation is important for the continued growth and vitality of the parish. In another study conducted in the United States, even though the Catholic Church is the most dominant religious institution in America, composed of 17,000 parishes and about 51 million Catholic adults, despite its scope and influence, the church in the modern millennium has encountered countless challenges and adversities from the massive decrease in membership and inactiveness of the faithful (Masci & Smith, 2018). The study of Jesus (1994) shows the ineffectiveness of the parish pastoral council officers in the Archdiocese of Manila. The internal organization of the councils needs to be improved. The Archbishop should also formulate a formation program for parish priests and parish council members so they would know their roles and responsibilities in the parish.

In the Philippines, every parish must have one Parish Pastoral Council whose task is to foster active and full participation in the entire parish, especially in the pastoral life and mission of the parish. They also cooperate with the priest and other committees of the parish in concern with parish life as worship, spirituality, community, evangelization, education, sacrament, and service (Code of Canon Law, 511). With a deep personal connection to the parish, having lived there for almost six years, it was the researchers' heartfelt aspiration to contribute towards the parish growth by facilitating insights and realizations on how council officers can actively engage and participate in the vibrant life and activities of the parish community. In addition, the researcher pursued this study to find evidence of the different factors that contribute to the involvement and formation of parish council officers, in key areas such as doctrine, worship, and values. The data obtained from this study will also serve as a foundational reference as a guide for the formation of council officers in the Eastern Vicariates of the Archdiocese of Capiz, specifically in terms of deepening their understanding of the teachings of the church (*didache*), fostering meaningful relationship with others (*koinonia*), and enhancing their service to the church (*diakonia*).

In addition, the improved efficiency and impact of the council can also lead to stronger collaboration and unity among the parishes in the Eastern Vicariate of the Archdiocese of Capiz. This can create a sense of shared purpose and collective effort towards the common goal of serving the church and its community (Rausch, 2016). Furthermore, the ongoing involvement and formation of the parish council can foster a culture of continuous learning and growth, empowering council members to become effective leaders and advocates for their respective parishes. Once realized, the council is not merely a set of officers working in the church. It is all baptized Catholics in the world. This means that everyone, as members of the Catholic faith, would have an active and participatory role in the council's functioning and decision-making processes. It would truly be a collective effort, uniting Catholics from all walks of life, backgrounds, and cultures, to shape the future of the church and ensure its continued growth and relevance in the modern world (Groome, 2016).

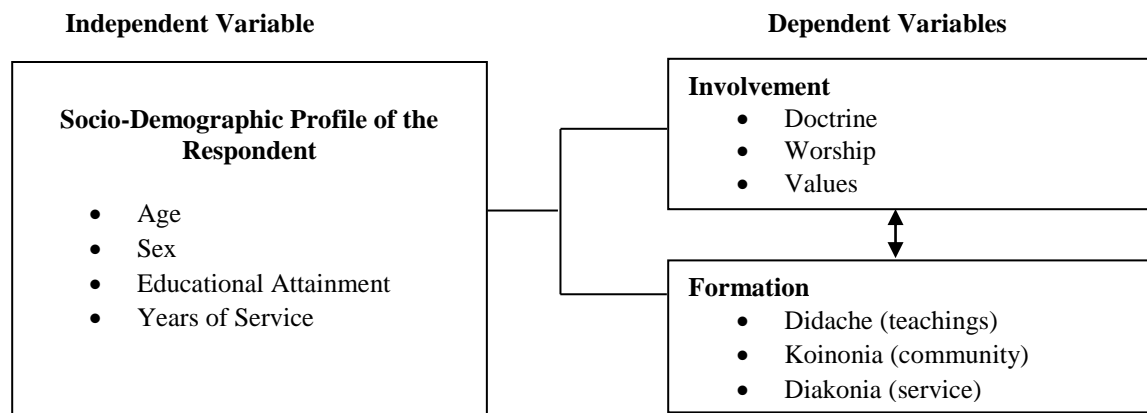


Figure 1. Schematic diagram showing the framework of the study.

## 2. Methods

The descriptive correlational design of the quantitative research was used in this study. The descriptive method is used to describe the data and characteristics of the population or phenomenon under investigation (Calderon, 2006). This form of study collects data in order to test hypotheses or answer questions about the current state of the subject of study. According to Creswell (2014), descriptive research is crucial in providing a comprehensive summary of the current state of affairs in a given context, thus enabling researchers to capture detailed information regarding the characteristics and functioning of the subjects being studied.

On the other hand, Calmorin (2006) emphasizes that correlation research design is used to examine a link between or among two or more relevant variables. Hair et al. (2010) further elaborate that correlational research is essential for understanding the strength and direction of relationships between variables, which can aid in making predictions and informing decision-making processes. The descriptive research approach was used in this study to determine the level of manifestation of involvement among the respondents in terms of doctrine, worship, and values, as well as the extent of formation in terms of didache (teachings), koinonia (community), and diakonia (service). While the correlational research approach was applied in establishing the significant relationship between the involvement and formation of the respondents. The descriptive-correlational method was appropriate for the current study because it described the level of involvement and the extent of formation among the respondents while also determining the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

## Results and Discussion

### *Level of Involvement as a Whole*

The level of Involvement as a whole, as well as their level of doctrine compliance, worship, and values governing behaviour, as perceived by the Parish Pastoral Council Officers in the Eastern Vicariates of the Archdiocese of Capiz, is reflected in Table 1, verbally interpreted as “High”.

Table 1. The level of Involvement as a whole.

Involvement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Values	3.92	High
Worship	3.71	High
Doctrine	3.67	High
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.77</b>	<b>High</b>

The study's findings reveal that the respondents, rated their overall involvement as "High," with a grand mean score of 3.77. This indicates that their participation was not occasional, but rather consistent and regular. This suggests a strong connection between their involvement and their commitment to the organization and its activities. They seemed driven by a sense of purpose and a desire to actively contribute, respond, and make a difference. The study examined three different facets of involvement (Values, Worship, and Doctrine) to gauge the overall level of participants' engagement. While the grand mean scores across these areas ranged from 3.67 to 3.92, falling within the "High" level of involvement on the designated scale, the specific interpretations provided a nuanced picture. "Values" boasted the highest grand mean of 3.92, signifying a particularly strong emphasis on aligning with core principles and beliefs. Even though the lowest score of 3.67 was still considered "High," there was a noticeable lack of emphasis on the "Doctrine" component among the three aspects of involvement for parish pastoral council officers. This indicates that the council had a shortfall in their understanding and ability to effectively communicate the teachings of the church to others. To address this concern, the church must take action by offering training and educational opportunities for council members to help them enhance their knowledge and skills in this area. By doing so, the council will be better equipped to fulfill its role in promoting and explaining the church's doctrines to the community.

According to Butin (2010), it is crucial and obligatory for every Catholic, particularly church leaders, to possess knowledge and comprehension of the faith and the doctrine of the Church. The doctrine serves as the Church's expression of its beliefs, encompassing the Catholic's understanding of God, their faith, and their practices. In the ever-changing landscape of the new millennium, promoting and safeguarding the Catholic doctrine stands as one of the fundamental responsibilities of priests and council leaders within the Church. While doctrinal involvement is often associated solely with the Church hierarchy, it is important to note that the lay faithful and council officers of the Church also have the right and duty to participate in the Church's doctrinal authority. Cardinal Newman, in his book published in 1859, highlighted the role of the lay faithful in the Church, particularly in matters of doctrine and teachings. He emphasized the significance of their involvement and participation in the Church's doctrinal authority.

Furthermore, the participation of the lay faithful in the Church's doctrine is elaborated upon in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the document *Lumen Gentium*. These sources affirm that the faithful are entitled to a certain authority in believing and teaching the true doctrine (Ettolil, 2021). Therefore, it is crucial for every Catholic, including church leaders, to possess knowledge and understanding of the faith and the doctrine of the Church. This responsibility extends to promoting and safeguarding the Catholic doctrine in the ever-changing world. Moreover, the participation of the lay faithful in matters of doctrine is recognized and emphasized in various Church documents, highlighting their role in the Church's doctrinal authority. This finding indicates that, from the respondents' perspective, all dimensions of involvement – regardless of their specific nature – played a prominent role in their overall engagement. In other words, the data suggests that involvement was present in the Parish Pastoral Council Officers in the Eastern Vicariates of the Archdiocese of Capiz. Furthermore, the results show that the Parish Pastoral Council Officers in the Eastern Vicariates of the Archdiocese of Capiz had a good relationship with each other, a positive attitude and values about themselves, and a sense of respect, which indicated very important characteristics in the parish community.

Drawn by faith and fellowship, Catholics are called to fully embrace the rich tapestry of church life. Theologian Andrew Whitworth (2021) explained that participation is not simply a duty, but a beautiful expression of love and unity. Echoing Jesus' call to love one another as He loved all men, the church finds within its walls a vibrant community of nurturing and cherishing members. Here is an experience a profound sense of connection, witnessing lives woven together in empathy, service, and shared growth. From offering a helping hand to fellow parishioners to learning together in faith, active involvement uplifts and strengthens both parish pastoral council officers and the community. Just as a spiritual family provides unwavering support, so too does the church offer a haven against temptations and a path toward overcoming life's obstacles. In short, through active participation and engaging in various activities and initiatives, we not only responded to Whitworth's urging to embody the spirit of selflessness and service to others, but we also unearthed the profound and life-altering potential that lies within the act of belonging, making meaningful contributions, and experiencing personal growth alongside one another within the embrace of Christ's boundless love (Whitworth, 2021). Through the collective efforts, the council officers not only discovered the transformative power that comes from fostering a sense of community and interconnectedness but also uncovered the immense joy and fulfillment that springs forth from actively participating in the shared journey

of faith and service. As they embraced this unity and collaboration, they not only enriched their own lives but also became catalysts for positive change within the wider community, inspiring others to actively participate in the church. (Whitworth, 2021).

#### *Extent of Formation as a whole*

The findings of the extent of formation of the respondents are displayed in Table 2 and verbally interpreted as "high". Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the Parish Pastoral Council Officers' understanding and participation in the three fundamental aspects of Church life, Didache (teachings), Koinonia (community), and Diakonia (service).

Table 2. The extent of formation of Parish Pastoral Council Officers

Formation	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Koinonia (community)	4.00	High
Diakonia (service)	3.81	High
Didache (teachings)	3.75	High
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>High</b>

The results reveal that the extent of formation of Parish Pastoral Council Officers when taken was "High," having a mean of 3.85 as well as its component in terms of Koinonia (community) (M=4.00), Diakonia (service) (M=3.81), and Didache (teachings) (M=3.45) respectively. Of the three components, Koinonia (community) exhibits the highest mean score, highlighting the council officers' exceptional strength in building and fostering community. This robust commitment to formation is not simply a characteristic of these officers, but a vital facet of their identity as both leaders and dedicated Catholics. Having personally encountered the transformative power of faith through evangelization, each officer naturally seeks to deepen their understanding and actively share the gospel with others. This inherent desire to learn and share lies at the heart of their role and fuels their service within the parish. In response to the various issues faced by the lay faithful in the new millennium, the Pontifical Council of the Laity's 2004 publication, *Essential Role of the Laity*, showcased the significance of continual formation in every Catholic's faith. The document also affirmed the duty of Catholics to receive proper education in the faith, which includes attending catechesis or religious classes, taking part in bible studies in the parish, joining prayer groups and various Church ministries, and going on spiritual retreats.

In this regard, it is essential for the officers of the parish pastoral council to actively pursue continuous formation within the parish to strengthen their connection with God. Engaging in an ongoing process of learning and growth enables these officials to delve deeper into the realms of theology and faith, ultimately fostering a more profound and intimate relationship with the divine. By actively participating in a wide array of educational programs, workshops, and spiritual retreats offered within the parish, these officers are presented with invaluable opportunities to expand their knowledge and explore various facets of their faith. The significance of continual formation within the parish, as highlighted by Ferguson (1999), cannot be overstated. This commitment to lifelong learning allows council officers to deepen their understanding of the teachings and principles of the Catholic Church, thereby equipping them with the necessary tools to effectively carry out their roles and responsibilities within the parish community. Through active participation in educational programs, workshops, and spiritual retreats, the Parish Pastoral Council Officers have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of their faith and expand their knowledge of Church doctrines. These experiences can help them navigate the complexities of their faith, challenge their existing beliefs, and gain a broader perspective that enables them to serve the parish community more effectively.

Moreover, the pursuit of continual formation within the parish offers officers of the pastoral council the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals who share their passion for spiritual growth and development. By participating in these communal activities, council members can engage in meaningful discussions, exchange ideas, and draw inspiration from one another. This collective journey of learning and growth not only strengthens the bond between council officials but also fosters a sense of unity and camaraderie within the larger parish community (Ferguson, 1999).

Table 3. Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
15 - 35 years old	51	28.3
36 - 56 years old	52	28.9
57 – 80 years old	77	42.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	84	46.7
Female	96	53.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
Elementary graduate	6	3.3
JHS and SHS Graduate	69	38.3
College Graduate	102	56.7
Post Graduate	3	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Years of Service</b>		
1-5 years		
6-10 years	69	38.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>61.7</b>
	<b>180</b>	<b>100%</b>

Presented in Table 3 is the socio-demographic profile of the respondents according to age, sex, educational attainment, and years of service.

**Age.** The survey results revealed a significant age disparity among the 180 respondents, with the older demographic being the most prominent group in terms of participation. A striking 77 individuals, accounting for approximately 42.8% of the respondents, fell within the age bracket of 57-80. This indicates a clear preference for parish involvement among the senior population, as they constituted the largest portion of the survey respondents. Notably, the number of participants in this age group surpassed the combined representation of both younger and middle-aged respondents. In comparison, a respectable number of 52 individuals, equivalent to 28.9% of the respondents, belonged to the age range of 36-56. Additionally, 51 individuals, representing 28.3% of the respondents, were between the ages of 15 and 35. Despite their significant numbers, the combined total of these two age groups still fell short of the participation level of the senior demographic. These findings highlight the dominance of the older age group in terms of engagement and involvement in the parish. It suggests that the senior population shows a higher level of interest and active participation in parish activities compared to their younger counterparts. This age disparity within the survey results emphasizes the need for targeted strategies and initiatives to engage and involve individuals from different age groups to ensure a more inclusive and diverse parish community.

**Sex.** It was found that more than half, specifically 96 individuals, accounting for approximately 53.3% of the total respondents, were females. In contrast, nearly half of the respondents, 84 individuals, or 46.7% of the total, were males. These findings indicate that there was a greater number of female respondents compared to their male counterparts. Furthermore, the results of the study suggest the predominance of female officers in the Parish Pastoral Council in the Eastern Vicariates of the Archdiocese of Capiz. The fact that the majority of the respondents were female implies that women held significant positions and played a crucial role in the leadership and decision-making processes within the Parish Pastoral Council. This points to the importance of female representation and their contributions in shaping the direction and activities of the council. It is worth noting that the study focused on the respondents who served as officers in the Parish Pastoral Council in the Eastern Vicariates of the Archdiocese of Capiz.

**Educational Attainment.** The survey revealed that a significant majority of the participants, specifically 102

individuals, which accounted for approximately (56.7%) of the total respondents, possessed a bachelor's degree. This indicates that a large portion of the participants completed their undergraduate studies and obtained a higher level of education. Furthermore, the survey revealed that 69 individuals, equivalent to 38.3% of the respondents, completed their junior and senior high school education. This implies that a considerable number of participants achieved a level of education beyond elementary school but did not pursue higher education. Interestingly, the survey also indicated that a small minority of participants, specifically 6 individuals, only completed elementary school. This accounted for approximately 3.3% of the total respondents, suggesting that a few participants had a relatively lower level of formal education. Additionally, the survey findings revealed that only 3 individuals, representing a mere 1.7% of the respondents, attained the highest degree possible. This suggests that a very small number of participants pursued advanced degrees beyond a bachelor's degree. In summary, the survey results highlight the educational backgrounds of the participants, with a majority having bachelor's degrees, followed by those who completed junior and senior high school. The findings also indicate that only a few participants had either elementary education or the highest level of educational attainment.

**Years of Service.** The survey results indicate that a majority of the respondents, specifically 111 individuals, accounting for approximately 61.7% of the total respondents, had between 6-10 years of experience in serving the parish. This suggests that a significant number of participants were actively involved in serving the parish for a considerable period, ranging from six to ten years. Additionally, the survey revealed that over a third of the respondents, 69 individuals or 38.3% of the total, had 1-5 years of service in the parish. This implies that a substantial number of participants were relatively new to serving the parish, with less than a decade of experience. Taken together, these findings highlight the dedication and commitment of the respondents to serving the parish community. The majority of the participants served the parish for at least 6-10 years, indicating a significant level of experience and a long-standing involvement in parish activities and initiatives. This demonstrates their deep-rooted connection and continued commitment to their role in the parish community.

Table 4. Differences in the level of involvement in terms of the demographic profile of the respondents.

Compared variables	T/F Value	Sig. Value	Description
Level of Involvement (GM=3.77)			
Age	1.405	0.248	ns
Sex	2.237	0.021	s
Educational Attainment	2.207	0.089	ns
Years of Service	0.556	0.579	s

$\alpha = 0.05$

The grand mean of the level of involvement of the Parish Pastoral Council was presented in Table 4 (GM=3.77). The result in Table 4 shows no significant difference in the level of involvement of the respondents when they were grouped according to age ( $F=1.405$ ) with sig. value=0.248, educational attainment ( $F=2.207$ ) with sig value= 0.089, and years of service ( $F=0.556$ ) with sig. value=0.579. However, a significant difference existed in sex ( $t=2.327$ ) with sig. value=.021. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the perception of the respondents as to the level of involvement in terms of sex is rejected. These results imply a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of the male and female respondents. This suggests that their level of involvement in church activities may have been influenced by their sex. It conforms to the study of Smith and Johnson (2018) found empirical evidence supporting the statement that there is a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of male and female respondents regarding their level of involvement in church activities. Female respondents reported higher levels of involvement in church activities and perceived these activities to be more important compared to male respondents. This suggests that gender plays a role in influencing the level of involvement in church activities.

#### *Differences in the extent of formation when grouped according to Socio-demographic profile*

The following tables present the data with results that show the number or scores of the compared variables using an ANOVA or Independent Samples test, the outcome of the t or F values, and the interpretations that determine whether the variable or profile is significantly different or not to assess the significant differences in the extent of formation of the parish pastoral council in terms of socio-demographic profile.

Table 5. Differences in the extent of formation when grouped according to Socio-demographic profile

Compared variables	T/F Value	Sig. Value	Description
<b>Extent of Formation (GM: (GM=3.85))</b>			
Age	0.002	0.990	ns
Sex	2.930	0.004	s
Educational Attainment	7.419	0.000	s
Years of Service	1.384	0.168	ns
$\alpha = 0.05$			

Generally, the grand mean on the extent of formation in Table 5 is 3.85, verbally interpreted as “High”. This suggests that, on the whole, participants perceive the level of formation to be significantly increased. The result in the table above reveals no significant differences in the extent of formation when age and years of service were considered. A significant difference existed in terms of sex and educational attainment.

**Extent of Formation and Age.** The result in Table 5 shows that no significant difference existed in the extent of formation of the respondents when they were grouped according to age. The calculated  $F=1.928$  value with a significance level of 0.05 clearly shows that the null hypothesis of no difference will not be rejected because the result of  $\text{sig}=0.146$  indicates that there is no difference between the variables compared. The outcome shows that the extent of formation is the same for all age groups.

**Extent of Formation and Sex.** The results, in Table 5, show that there was a substantial variation in the degree of formation according to sex. A t-value of 2.930 and a sig. value of 0.004, which is less than the significance level of 0.05 alpha, indicates that the scores rejected the null hypothesis, which states that there is no difference between the variables under comparison. Thus, respondents' perceptions of the Parish Pastoral Council's development varied depending on sex.

**Extent of Formation and Educational Attainment.** Notably, Table 5 shows the computed F-value = 7.419 and sig-value = 0.000, which are highly significant at the 0.05 alpha level, indicating that there was a substantial difference in the respondents' extent of formation. This demonstrates that the null hypothesis was not accepted. This clarifies even more why different respondents had differing opinions on the degree of formation in terms of educational achievement.

**Extent of Formation and Years of Service.** The t-value=1.384 and sig. value=0.168 is displayed in Table 11. However, the results are not statistically significant at the 0.05 alpha level, indicating that the extent of formation did not change significantly based on the respondents' years of service classification. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the variables under comparison was not rejected. This indicates that respondents' levels of formation exhibited at the same extent.

Since parish pastoral council officers serve as leaders in the parish, formation is a major theme in their lives, as it is in the lives of all Catholics. Every council officer who has already experienced evangelization wants to learn more about the faith and spread the gospel to other believers. The diverse range of disciplines involved in the formation and involvement of parish pastoral council (PPC) officers underscores the multifarious character of their work. From a theological standpoint, writers such as Biesel (2011) and Duffy (2014) highlight PPCs' co-responsibility with the clergy, establishing a common commitment to the Gospel and the community's needs as the foundation for their work. Additionally, the parish council officials have the chance to develop into well-formed religious individuals who are passionate, capable of leading both the church and society, compassionate, and committed to pursuing



justice through the church's formation program. Fulfilling the mission of discipleship within the framework of the Church's communion and mission is the primary goal of council formation. Through pastoral training, religious education, and catechesis, the council's formation program seeks to bring people's faith and lives closer together. The various forms of formation procedures among parish council leaders are spiritual, theological, and human values formation (encyclopedia.com).

*Relationship between the level of Involvement and the Extent of Formation of the Parish Pastoral Council*

The relationship between the level of Involvement and the extent of formation is presented in Table 6. It displays the score to determine whether one affects the other and vice versa.

Table 6. Relationship between the level of Involvement and the Extent of Formation of the Parish Pastoral Council

Indicators	N	R	Sig.value	Description
Level of involvement	180	0.722	0.000	S
Extent of Formation	180			

According to the findings presented in Table 12, there was a strong positive correlation ( $r=0.722$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) observed between the level of involvement and the extent of formation among the respondents. This suggests that as the parish pastoral council becomes more involved, their level of formation also increases. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that there is a significant relationship between involvement and formation in the council. For the Parish Pastoral Council to function smoothly and fulfill its overall mission, the officers must be engaged and continuously develop their skills. Leadership development is particularly emphasized, as officers are expected to undergo training and development programs to enhance their ability to lead effectively within the parish community (Smith, 2017). Furthermore, active participation in outreach and service programs is considered essential, as council members contribute to the advancement of social justice and volunteerism (Johnson, 2019). Creating a sense of community and ensuring that every parishioner's voice is heard heavily relies on effective communication and teamwork (Brown, 2018). By fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, the parish pastoral council can promote a stronger sense of belonging among its members and the wider parish community. The existing literature highlights a multifaceted interplay of various factors that influence the involvement and formation of parish pastoral council (PPC) officers. These factors encompass theological, social, organizational, and contextual aspects, all of which contribute to shaping the officers' experiences. The involvement and formation of PPC officers cannot be attributed to a single factor, as it is influenced by a combination of elements. Theological factors, such as the understanding of one's role within the church and the spiritual growth of individuals, play a significant role in shaping officers' involvement and formation. The officers' commitment to their faith and their understanding of the church's mission guide their level of engagement and the extent to which they seek personal and spiritual development. Also contribute to the involvement and formation of Parish Pastoral Council officers, fostering a culture of continuous learning and growth. Social factors also come into play, as officers interact with fellow council members, parishioners, and the wider community. The relationships formed within these social networks influence officers' involvement and formation. The support and collaboration of council members, as well as the feedback and participation of parishioners, contribute to the officers' growth and development. Organizational factors within the PPC structure and functioning also impact officers' involvement and formation. The availability of leadership development programs, training opportunities, and resources provided by the council contribute to officers' growth and effectiveness in their roles. The structure and processes of the council, such as the allocation of responsibilities and decision-making procedures, also influence officers' level of involvement and formation.

Furthermore, contextual factors, such as the specific characteristics of the parish and its surrounding community, shape the officers' experiences. The unique needs, challenges, and opportunities present in the parish context influence the officers' priorities, initiatives, and level of engagement. The cultural, social, and demographic aspects of the community also play a role in shaping officers' involvement and formation.

In summary, the involvement and formation of PPC officers are influenced by a complex interplay of theological, social, organizational, and contextual factors. Recognizing and understanding these multifaceted influences can contribute to the development of strategies and initiatives that effectively support the officers' growth and enhance their contribution to the parish community.

### 3. Conclusions and Implications

The following conclusions were drawn from the aforementioned findings and results:

The respondents exhibit a consistently high degree of involvement, commitment, and participation in various aspects related to their beliefs or faith. This suggests a strong and dedicated connection of the respondents to their belief system or faith community. The consistency in the high ratings across these different aspects implies that individuals are not only actively participating in religious activities but also deeply committed to the underlying principles, rituals, and ethical values associated with their faith. A "high" extent of formation in Didache (teachings), Koinonia (community), and Diakonia (service) collectively suggests a well-rounded and deeply committed engagement with the teachings, community life, and service aspects of the respondents' faith. It implies a comprehensive commitment to both understanding and living out the principles of their religious tradition within a supportive and service-oriented community. Age, educational achievement, and years of service do not seem to be associated with variations in perceptions of involvement, while gender appears to be a factor that influences how individuals perceive their level of involvement in the studied context. The lack of discernible differences in evaluations based on age and years of service suggests that, within the studied population, individuals from different age groups and with varying years of service perceive the extent of formation similarly. This could indicate a consistent experience of formation across different generational and service-related backgrounds. The notable distinction based on sex and educational attainment implies that there are variations in how individuals of different genders and educational levels perceive the extent of formation. The highly significant relationship suggests that as individuals become more actively involved in the context under consideration (whether it be a religious community, educational setting, or another organization), they also tend to undergo a more extensive process of formation. This may indicate that active participation contributes to personal and spiritual growth, and, conversely, a well-formed individual.

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