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**RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATION NEEDS AND ACADEMIC PERSISTENCE
OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS IN BANILAD CENTER
FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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14 March 2024

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Biographical Sketch

The researcher, Nicholette Jeanne Pancho Legaspi, was born on February 10, 1993 in Cebu City, Philippines. After completing her primary and secondary education with honors at Sacred Heart School - Ateneo de Cebu, she pursued a degree in Linguistics and Literature with Professional Education at the University of San Carlos. In 2014, she graduated as *summa cum laude* and received The Outstanding Graduate Award.

Over the course of her decade-long career, Nicholette has worked in both academic and corporate environments in the Philippines and United Arab Emirates. She has worked across a portfolio of multi-national brands including Philips Middle East and Turkey, Abbott Laboratories Middle East, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) Middle East, Nutricia (Danone) Middle East, VOX Cinemas, and Global Snow (Ski Dubai, Snow Abu Dhabi, Snow Oman, and Ski Egypt).

Her work has been featured in several publications including the Philippine Daily Inquirer, The Freeman Cebu, SunStar Cebu, Gulf News, Khaleej Times, and Arabian Business. She also received international awards from Muse Creative Awards and Summit Marketing Effectiveness Awards.

At present, she travels between Abu Dhabi, where she lives with her husband, and Dubai, where she works as a copy editor for Majid Al Futtaim Entertainment, the region's leading entertainment provider.

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While there appears to be only one author in this entire work, none of it would have been possible without the support of:

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Dedication

To the Author of All Knowledge

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam!

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Abstract

Recent trends on rising dropout rates in the Philippines indicate the critical need to offer vulnerable youth with opportunities to access education and employable skills. Such opportunities are provided by Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centers which are more accessible to marginalized students with limited financial resources to pursue higher studies.

This study analyzed the role of religious communication needs in improving the academic persistence of vocational students in Banilad Center for Professional Development (BCPD), an all-girls TVET center located in Cebu City, Philippines. Quantitative results showed that there was a moderately high level of academic persistence and significantly high level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD. Based on the Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient, there was a moderately positive association between the two variables of this study. Furthermore, qualitative results revealed that the majority of the students, including those who did not identify as "religious", agreed that the current religious communication offered in BCPD played a beneficial role in their academic persistence.

Ultimately, this study explored religious communication as an alternative intervention strategy to address increasing dropout rates and out-of-school youth rates in the Philippines by providing vulnerable youth with access to higher quality TVET programs that meet their needs, including religious communication needs.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Religious communication is “the symbolic interaction process that takes place between an individual and God in the establishment of a religious relationship through symbolic shared reality, and in so doing, the individual’s religious communication needs are met” (Slabbert, 2022). **Religious communication needs**, similar to Maslow’s (1954) Hierarchy of Needs, help explain human motivations and behavior including **academic persistence**.

While not strictly religious in nature, O’Connor (2008) observed that there were significantly lower dropout rates in alternative schools that met their students’ needs than in traditional schools across the United States.

Academic persistence refers to the “conscious action of students to maintain education status and continue to higher levels of study” (Thalib et. al., 2018). While it is a crucial area of focus, the academic progress and career advancement of marginalized youth has received limited attention from the research community. (Blustein, 2006 in Diemer et. al., 2009). Today, over three million youth in the Philippines are not attending school, and 63% of them are females (Education Development Center, 2021). Given the correlation between out-of-school youth trends and poverty rates, it is crucial to provide at-risk youth with opportunities to

acquire skills and knowledge that will make them employable (Education Development Center).

TVET is a type of alternative education that involves the “study of technologies and related sciences and acquisition of practical skills relating to occupations,” combined with general education (Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, n.d.). As the lead agency of TVET in the Philippines, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), faces many challenges including low quality of education and training in TESDA’s own schools, outdated curricula, and lack of qualified trainers (The World Bank, 2003) – all of which negatively impact its students’ academic persistence.

Fortunately, numerous private organizations offer TVET for underprivileged youth. One such provider is BCPD, a member of the Foundation for Professional Training, Inc. (FPTI). BCPD not only provides TESDA-accredited programs on Hotel and Restaurant Services (HRS), but it also strives to meet its students’ needs, including religious communication needs, by incorporating the educational vision of St. Josemaria Escriva, the founder of Opus Dei.

Opus Dei is Latin for “Work of God”. It is a Personal Prelature of the Catholic Church with a mission to “spread the Christian message that every person is called to holiness and that every honest work can be sanctified” (Opus Dei, n.d.). For St. Josemaria, educating young people starts with a deep appreciation for lifelong holistic study to keep up to date on the advances in their fields (Evans, 2012).

To further investigate the role of religion in enhancing the quality of vocational training (Kamran & Ochinowski, 2018), the researcher in the present study analyzed the religious communication needs in improving the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD.

Statement of the Problem

The researcher explored the following questions:

1. What was the degree of association between the level of academic persistence of the vocational students and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD?
2. How did religious communication improve the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine the degree of association between the level of academic persistence of the vocational students and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD.
2. Analyze the role of religious communication in improving the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD.

Significance of the Study

This study analyzed the role of religious communication in improving the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD. By doing so, it shed light on the importance of communication needs and its role in effective religious communication as an alternative intervention strategy for schools to address high dropout and out-of-school youth rates in the Philippines.

As many as 10 percent of Filipinos between the ages of six and 24 are out-of-school youth (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2017). During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the out-of-school youth rates increased from 16.9% in January 2020 to 25.2% in April 2020 (Education Development Center, 2021). And while lack of financial resources is often cited as the main reason for dropping out of school, it is not the only reason. Parreño (2023) found that a combination of employment/looking for work, high cost of education, and lack of interest were the main reasons for dropping out of school. To address the latter, he suggested the application of alternative teaching methodologies to arouse the students' interest in education.

Ultimately, this study explored religious communication as an alternative intervention strategy to be employed in both Christian schools and universities, as well as in public and private TVET centers which are more accessible to marginalized students. By leveraging the role of religious communication on academic persistence, the high rate of out-of-school youth in the Philippines can be addressed with appropriate action, offering vulnerable youth with opportunities to gain employable skills and knowledge with higher quality TVET programs.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

In this study, the researcher intended to analyze the role of religious communication in BCPD in improving the academic persistence of its vocational students. Given the wide scope of the study of religious communication, the researcher focused on Ansie Slabbert's (2022) concept of religious communication which is "the symbolic interaction process that takes place between an individual and God in the establishment of a religious relationship through Symbolic Shared Reality, and in so doing, the Religious Communication needs are met." Using this concept, religious communication was defined within the parameters of the individual's relationships with himself/herself, with other human beings, and with his/her God.

In terms of academic persistence, the researcher focused on the concept of academic persistence by Thalib et. al. (2018) which is the "conscious action of students to maintain education status and continue to higher levels of study." In the present study, academic persistence was solely based on self-report and did not include other related concepts such as academic performance (measured by grades) and retention rates (measured by calculating the quotient between retained students and total number of students).

Chapter II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Review of Literature

Religious communication is an alternative intervention strategy for schools to support students' **academic persistence**. By offering religious communication that meets students' **religious communication needs**, schools can encourage students to complete their studies to gain access to suitable employment opportunities.

While there is limited research on religious communication, it is not a new phenomenon, pre-dating Christianity itself as an ancient means of educating young people (Fer, 2020).

In investigating the concept, Dr. Ansie Slabbert (2022) defined religious communication as “the symbolic interaction process that takes place between an individual and God in the establishment of a religious relationship through symbolic shared reality and in so doing the individual’s religious communication needs are met.”

Other definitions of the term religious communication are:

- The transmission of “religious values from generation to generation” (Ottuh, 2020).
- “A kind of communication linking man with the Absolute, referring to the Absolute” (Marcyński, 2016).

- “The process of externalizing, presenting, as well as portraying religion as a reality capable of uniting persons within the area of the institution of the Church and based on the universal message of the Gospel” (Pastwa, 2020).

As the definitions suggest, the majority of studies conducted on religious communication are Christian-centric.

In “Religious Communication and National Development”, Whyte and Chikwudi (2020) observed that while Nigeria is a predominantly religious country, its religious ideals are largely negated by prevailing societal ills such as poverty, corruption, and religious violence. They concluded that religious ideals and values were largely lacking from religious communication on national discourse and emphasized the need to reflect religious teachings in all aspects of Nigerians’ lives, personal and national.

Abacan (2018) determined the role of religion as communication intervention in establishing environmental awareness among the students at St. Bridget College, Batangas. She concluded that religion was an effective form of communication intervention by significantly establishing the students’ level of awareness on environmental initiatives.

Bartolome (2022) conducted a study on the social media engagement of three parishes in Bulacan during the height of the COVID-19 lockdown. Using a multi-method approach that combined content analysis on the parishes’ top 100 performing Facebook posts and focus interviews on key informants, he found that the three parishes employed a proactive social media strategy, providing an online

substitute for their parishioners to attend mass, participate in religious activities, and foster a sense of belongingness in their parish community.

Peña (2022) applied an interdisciplinary method to draw valuable insights and recommendations on religious communication, drawing parallels with Christ's Seven Last Words. He found that religious communication offered people new perspectives amidst tragic events like the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing them to recognize their own limitations, develop more meaningful relationships, and meditate on how they could deepen their faith.

Still within the context of a post-pandemic world, Le Duc (2022) examined the social media content of the Dalai Lama, Pope Francis, and Mufti Ismail Menk during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. While communicating theological and spiritual wisdom, they proved highly influential in dispelling the widespread fear and misinformation online about the dreaded virus.

All five studies focused on Christianity; however, each of the researchers had widely varying ideas of religious communication and analyzed some (not all) of the variables in an elementary communication process (see Table 1).

Table 1.

Comparison between religious communication studies

	Sender	Channel	Message	Receiver	Feedback
Abacan (2018)	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bartolome (2022)	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
Le Duc (2022)	✓	✓	✓	-	-
Peña (2022)	-	-	✓	-	-
Whyte and Chikwudi (2020)	-	-	✓	✓	✓

Abacan examined the channel, message, receiver, and feedback but not the sender. In contrast, Bartolome examined the sender, channel, message, and receiver but not the feedback. Le Duc focused on the sender, channel, and message but not the receiver and feedback. Peña zeroed in on the message and disregarded the rest of the variables. Whyte and Chikwudi analyzed the message, receiver, and feedback but not the sender and channel.

For this reason, Slabbert's (2022) *An Investigation of the Concept of Religious Communication* is unique in that she examined all the variables in Berlo's SCMR Communication Model. After conducting 20 interviews from two religious' orientations, Protestantism and the New Age Movement, she analyzed the interview transcripts through the symbolic interactionist perspective and developed a Religious Communication Model composed of all the variables in an elementary communication model (sender, message, channel, receiver, and feedback) with the addition of non-rational and intuitive aspects.

Slabbert (2022) proposed that the effectiveness of religious communication was directly proportional to the extent of shared realities. The shared realities were classified as external reality (where interpersonal communication took place), internal reality (where intrapersonal communication took place), and religious reality (where transcendental communication took place). According to Slabbert, “The shared realities can either be enlarged or made smaller depending on the effectiveness of the communication between the individual and God; individual and other human beings; and the individual and himself.”

In other words, not only does effective religious communication have the potential to impact an individual’s religious reality (“God is my Father”) and internal reality (“I am a child of God”) but also their external, everyday reality (“As a child of God, I am created for a purpose”) – meaning in life.

Academic Persistence

Thalib et. al. (2018) defined academic persistence as the “conscious action of students to maintain education status and continue to higher levels of study.” In a post-pandemic study that compared the academic persistence levels of Filipino adolescents from low-income regions and high-income regions, Aruta et. al. (2022) found that meaning in life was a predictor of academic persistence: adolescents from high-income regions with high levels of meaning in life showed the highest levels of academic persistence; adolescents from low-income regions with low levels of meaning in life showed the lowest levels of academic persistence. This points to meaning in life (not socioeconomic status) as the more salient source of motivation,

in support of previous studies conducted by Makola (2014) and Sennett et. al. (2003) on meaning in life and its positive role in education despite socioeconomic disadvantage.

Steger et. al. (2009) defined meaning in life as “the extent to which people comprehend, make sense of, or see significance in their lives, accompanied by the degree to which they perceive themselves to have purpose, mission, or overarching aim in life.” Parreño (2023) found that students with low levels of meaning in life had a higher tendency to lose interest in pursuing their studies. He identified lack of interest as one of the three main reasons for school dropouts in the Philippines, along with employment/looking for work and high cost of education. However, if meaning in life was indeed the more salient source of motivation than socioeconomic circumstances, then addressing the students’ lack of interest [in their studies] should be considered the top priority to reduce dropouts and out-of-school youth rates. For this reason, Parreño recommended the application of alternative teaching methodologies to arouse students’ interest in education.

For most (if not all) young people, adolescence is a time full of major identity transformations (Benson et. al., 2003), when they confront existential issues (meaning in life) while experiencing great ambiguity and uncertainty (Fer, 2020). “During this time, students may be attracted to traditional and fundamentalist religions... that promise definitive answers, especially in the area of spirituality and spiritual development” (Love and Talbot, 1999).

At the turn of the 21st century, Love and Talbot (1999) called for the intentional inclusion of religion and spirituality in the area of student development. This was echoed by Regnerus (2000) who observed that the role of religion in building relationships and habit of hard work promoted a more socially acceptable view of success and discouraged otherwise illegal means of attaining wealth and power. Furthermore, he found that the impact of a student's level of religious practice on academic progress became even stronger as rates of poverty grew in a neighborhood (Regnerus, 2001).

“To be clear, we're not talking about pushing faith onto people... this is about looking for the institutions that support the children who need it most and improving outcomes for those children,” said Irvin Scott, a Harvard Graduate School of Education Senior Lecturer (Shafer, 2017). He is now one of the leading proponents of bringing faith (religion) and education communities together.

In the Philippines, one of the leading academic institutions which combines quality education and effective religious communication is BCPD. BCPD is a poverty alleviation project of the Foundation for Professional Training, Inc. (FPTI), a non-stock, non-profit, and non-governmental organization (Banilad Center for Professional Development - About Us, n.d.). Accredited by the Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC), FPTI operates BCPD and four other schools in Luzon: Punlaan School in San Juan, Manila, Manila Institute for Culinary Arts and Residential Services (MICARS) in Malate, Habihan School in Quezon City, and Anihan Technical School in Calamba, Laguna.

Since its inception in 1982, BCPD has been “preparing young women for employment or entrepreneurship and higher educational attainment through academic-technical skills training and work ethics imbued with Christian values” (Banilad Center for Professional Development - About Us, n.d.). It also boasts 100% employment rate for the graduates of its Hotel and Restaurant Services (HRS) program, a “two-year course that prepares the students for the National Certificate II (NC II) in Cookery, Bread and Pastry Production, Food and Beverage Services, Housekeeping, and Front Office Services” (Banilad Center for Professional Development - Hotel and Restaurant Services, n.d.).

For this reason, the researcher analyzed the religious communication needs to improve the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD based on Slabbert’s (2022) Religious Communication Model.

Theoretical Constructs

Slabbert (2022) has defined religious communication as “the symbolic interaction process that takes place between an individual and God in the establishment of a religious relationship through symbolic shared reality and in so doing the religious communication needs are met”. She has proposed that the effectiveness of religious communication is directly proportional to the symbolic shared realities. “The more successful the communication, the bigger the identification. The intersubjectivity (which refers to the symbolic shared realities) impacts on the effectiveness of the communication and strengthening of the relationship” (Fisher, 1978 in Slabbert, 2022).

Based on a qualitative investigation which compared two forms of religions – Protestantism and the New Age Movement – Slabbert (2022) has designed the Religious Communication Model under the assumption that all religions have a similar communication process and structure but vary in terms of orientation, direction, intent, and message.

Religious Communication Model

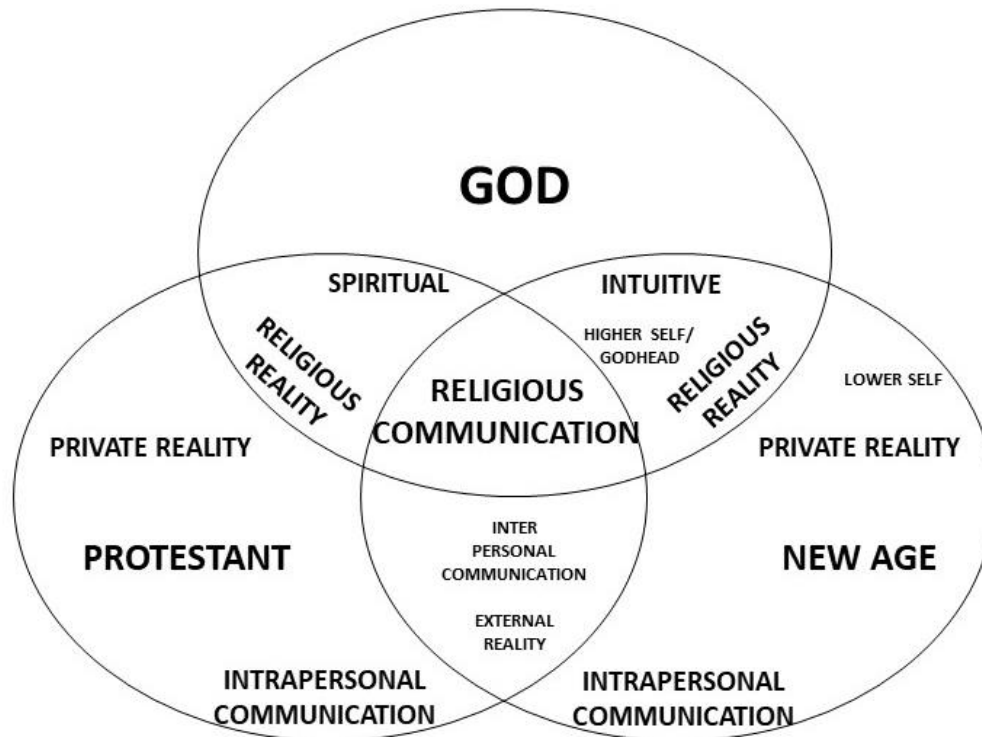
The three components of Slabbert’s (2022) Religious Communication Model are:

- Broad Realities
- Two-Dimensionality
- Communication Process

Component 1: Broad Realities

Figure 1.

*Slabbert's Religious Communication Model - Component 1: Broad realities*¹



The first component of Slabbert's (2022) Religious Communication Model visually represents the three broad realities, providing religious communication its intersubjective context. The three broad realities are:

- External reality (also called everyday reality) where interpersonal communication takes place.
- Internal reality (also called private reality) where intrapersonal communication takes place.
- Religious reality where spiritual communication takes place.

¹ Slabbert, A. (2022). An investigation of the concept religious communication. *Communicare: Journal for Communication Studies in Africa*, 12(2), 44–60. <https://doi.org/10.36615/jcsa.v12i2.2003>

In Figure 1, the three main circles represent the God image in two different religious contexts: Protestantism and the New Age Movement. For both religious contexts, religious communication occurs within symbolic shared realities – within external, internal, and religious realities. The more successful the religious communication, the bigger the symbolic shared realities (Slabbert, 2022).

Component 2: Two-Dimensionality

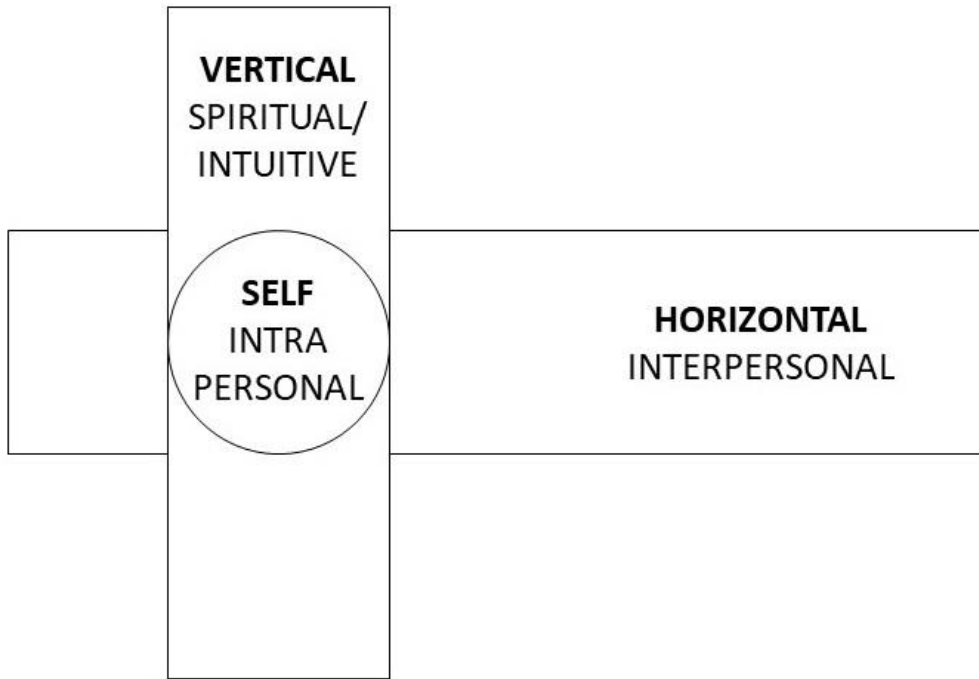
The second component of Slabbert's (2022) Religious Communication Model visually represents its two-dimensionality: vertical dimension and horizontal dimension. In Figure 2, the vertical rectangle represents the vertical dimension between the individual and their God (spiritual/intuitive communication), and the horizontal rectangle represents the horizontal dimension between the individual and other human beings (interpersonal communication). The circle at the intersection represents the self (intrapersonal communication).

According to Slabbert (2022), while there is no difference in the horizontal communication between Protestantism and the New Age Movement, there is a difference in their vertical communication. In Protestantism, the vertical communication is Transcendental, because the individual is distant from and can never be God; instead, they can enter into a personal relationship with Him through Jesus Christ. In the New Age Movement, the vertical communication is immanent,

Figure 2.

Slabbert's Religious Communication Model -

Component 2: Two-dimensionality¹



because the individual can enter into a direct relationship and become one with God (or their godhead image).

Vertical communication and horizontal communication are interdependent with one another (Slabbert, 2022). Vertical communication is not possible without horizontal communication, since the individual's knowledge about their religion is a result of prior communication with other human beings. At the same time, horizontal communication is enriched and only made complete by vertical communication. In this way, both vertical communication and horizontal communication are interdependent dimensions in religious communication.

¹ Slabbert, A. (2022). An investigation of the concept religious communication. *Communicare: Journal for Communication Studies in Africa*, 12(2), 44–60. <https://doi.org/10.36615/jcsa.v12i2.2003>

Component 3: Communication Process

The third component of Slabbert's (2022) Religious Communication Model is the Communication Process within the religious reality. In Figure 3, the top left-hand side corresponds to the Religious Communication Process in the New Age Movement (see sections in purple), whereas the top right-hand side corresponds to the Religious Communication Process in Protestantism (see sections in green).

As previously mentioned, the vertical communication in the New Age Movement is predominantly immanent, while the vertical communication in Protestantism is predominantly transcendental (Slabbert, 2022). The difference stems from their God images: the New Age Movement godhead is a force or power which humans can achieve oneness with, while the Protestant God is infinitely superior to humans.

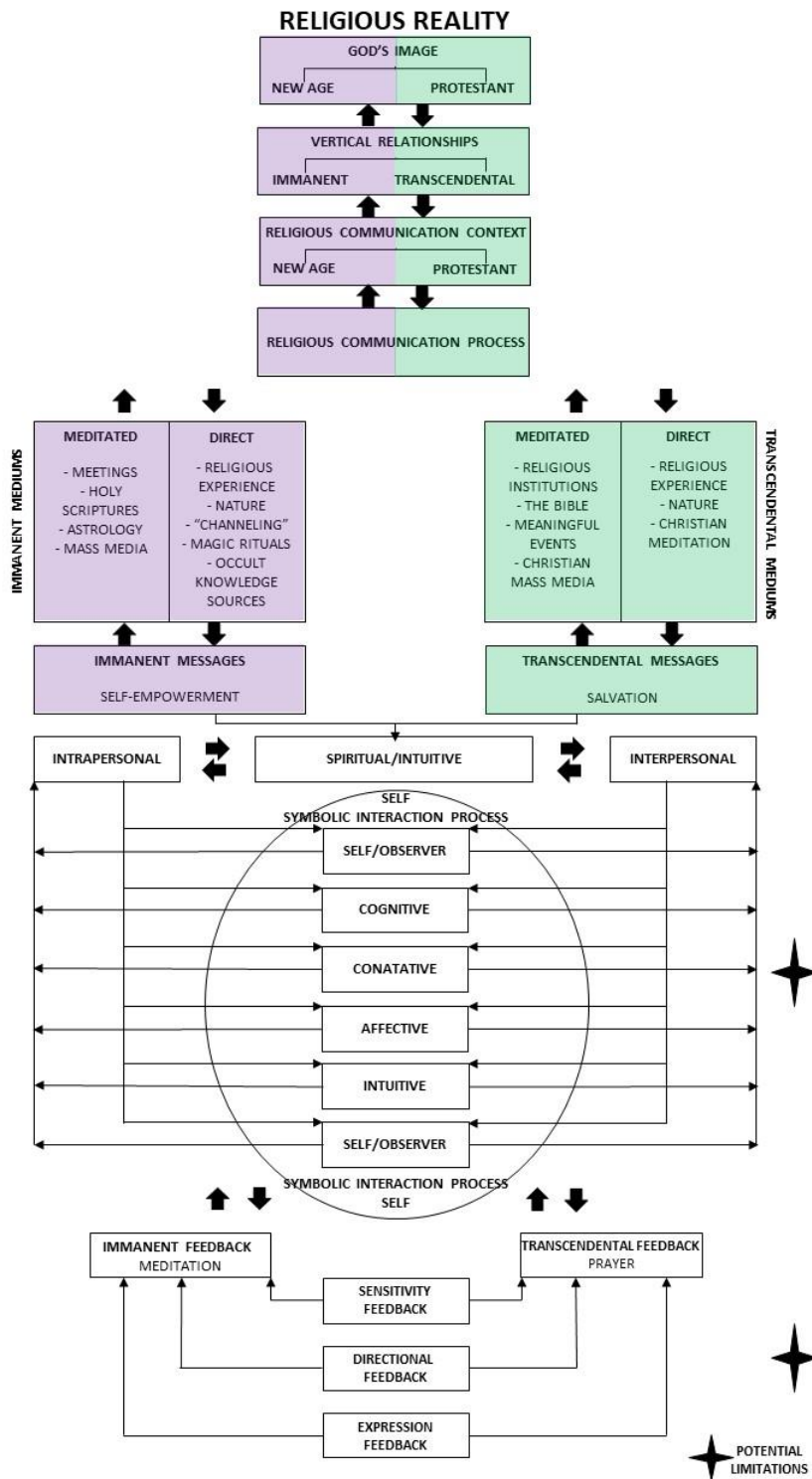
In the New Age Movement, the immanent messages of self-empowerment are channeled through immanent mediums which can be divided into meditated and direct mediums (Slabbert, 2022). Meditated immanent mediums include meetings, Holy Scriptures, astrology, and mass media, whereas direct immanent mediums include religious experience, nature, channeling, magic rituals, and occult knowledge sources.

In Protestantism, the transcendental messages of salvation are channeled through transcendental mediums which can also be divided into meditated and direct mediums (Slabbert, 2022). Meditated transcendental mediums include religious institutions, the Bible, meaningful events, and Christian mass media, whereas direct

Figure 3.

Slabbert's Religious Communication Model -

Component 3: Communication process¹



¹ Slabbert, A. (2022). An investigation of the concept religious communication. *Communicare: Journal for Communication Studies in Africa*, 12(2), 44–60. <https://doi.org/10.36615/jcsa.v12i2.2003>

transcendental mediums include religious experience, nature, and Christian meditation.

As previously mentioned, Slabbert (2022) defines religious communication as “the **symbolic interaction process** that takes place between an individual and God in the establishment of a religious relationship through symbolic shared reality and in so doing the religious communication needs are met.” This symbolic interaction process takes place within the individual’s self, which is represented by the big circle in Figure 3. Within this circle are the self’s cognitive, affective, conatative, and intuitive dimensions:

- **Cognitive.** This refers to the dimension of **reason and logic** where the individual defines the unexplainable side of religion and serves as the foundation for the other dimensions.
- **Affective.** This refers to the dimension of **feelings** which enables the individual to experience feelings in their religion.
- **Conatative.** This refers to the dimension of **actions (rituals and sacraments)** which serves as the routine to reinforce the individual’s relationship with their God.
- **Intuitive.** This refers to the dimension of **experiences** which enables the individual to experience their God in their everyday lives.

The individual’s cognitive, affective, conatative, and intuitive experiences form the basis of their meaning-making and religious reality (Slabbert, 2022). Through this symbolic interaction process, a synthesis takes place between intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, and spiritual communication.

Messages are encoded and decoded, and feedback consequently occurs in the following types:

- **Sensitivity.** This refers to a type of feedback where the individual is **aware** of their God but is not influenced by this awareness.
- **Directional.** This refers to a type of feedback where the individual's thoughts and feelings are influenced or **directed** by their awareness of their God.
- **Expression.** This refers to a type of feedback where the individual **expresses** the influence of their God in their lives by means of rituals, rites, or lifestyles.

Religious communication contains all the variables in an elementary communication process (see Table 2).

Table 2.

*Comparison between religious communication
in Protestantism and New Age Movement¹*

Elementary Communication Process Variables	Religious Communication	
	Protestantism	New Age Movement
Sender	Individual	Individual
	God	God
	Other human beings	Other human beings
Receiver	Individual	Individual
	God	God

	Other human beings	Other human beings
Channel	Transcendental mediums	Immanent mediums
Message	Transcendental messages: Salvation	Immanent messages: Self-Empowerment
Response	Prayer	Meditation
	Sensitivity	Sensitivity
Feedback	Directional	Directional
	Expression	Expression

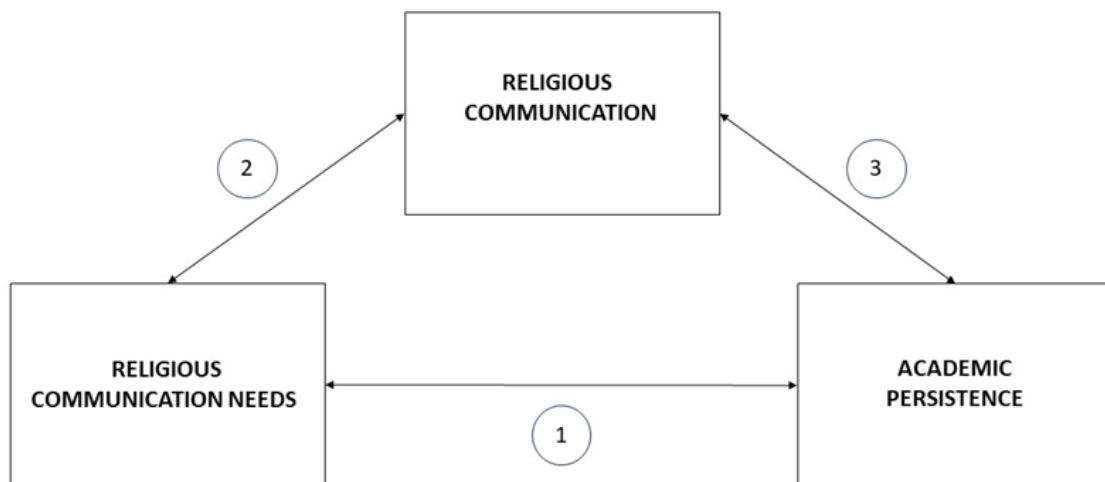
¹ Adapted from Slabbert, A. (2022). An investigation of the concept religious communication. *Communicare: Journal for Communication Studies in Africa*, 12(2), 44–60. <https://doi.org/10.36615/jcsa.v12i2.2003>

The Religious Communication Model provides a template for understanding how religious communication occurs among vocational students in BCPD.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 4.

*Conceptual Framework - Analysis of religious communication
and academic persistence*



Research Hypothesis

This study analyzed the role of religious communication in improving the academic persistence of vocational students in Banilad Center for BCPD using the research hypothesis that the more the religious communication needs are met, the higher the level of academic persistence (see Figure 4 - Arrow 1). Stemming from this hypothesis, it can be further argued that the more the religious communication needs are met, the more effective the religious communication (see Figure 4 - Arrow 2), and the more effective the religious communication, the higher the level of academic persistence (see Figure 4 - Arrow 3).

In *An Investigation of the Concept of Religious Communication*, Slabbert (2022) defined the term **religious communication** as “the symbolic interaction process that takes place between an individual and God in the establishment of a religious relationship through Symbolic Shared Reality, and in so doing, the Religious Communication needs are met”. She also used the term **religious communication needs** interchangeably with the term **ontological needs** which is derived from the study of existence.

In this study, religious communication is the interplay of communication not only between the individual and his/her God but also between the individual and him/herself and the individual and other human beings to understand his/her existence. When the individual’s need to understand his/her existence (religious communication need) is fulfilled, he/she finds meaning in life in the same way that when a student understands why he/she must complete his/her study, this gives him/her a reason to persist.

In the *Academic Persistence Scale*, Thalib et. al. (2018) defined the term **academic persistence** as the “conscious action of students to maintain education status and continue to higher levels of study”. In this study, academic persistence refers to the values, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs of the students with the aim to successfully complete their studies.

Such values, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs are influenced by the process of communication. Based on the assumption, “The bigger the identification, the more successful the communication” (Fisher, 1978 in Slabbert, 2022), it can also be

assumed that the more the individual's values, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs are aligned with the communication, the more effective the communication – including religious communication.

Operational Definition of Terminologies

Academic persistence. This term refers to the “conscious action of students to maintain education status and continue to higher levels of study” (Thalib et. al., 2018). In this study, it refers to the students' level of determination to complete their two-year Hotel and Restaurant Services (HRS) program in BCPD. This was measured by a **survey questionnaire** based on the Academic Persistence Scale developed by Thalib et. al.

Religious communication. This term refers to “the symbolic interaction process that takes place between an individual and God in the establishment of a religious relationship through Symbolic Shared Reality, and in so doing, the Religious Communication needs are met” (Slabbert, 2022). In this study, it refers to the Christian communication in BCPD. This was measured by a **survey questionnaire** based on Slabbert's Religious Communication Model.

Religious communication needs. This term was used interchangeably with the term *ontological needs* in Slabbert's (2022) Religious Communication Model. Given that ontology is concerned with the nature of existence (*being*), then religious communication needs or ontological needs can be defined within the context of Maslow's (1954) cognitive needs – the need “for sheer knowledge (curiosity) and for

understanding (the **philosophical, theological**, value-system-building explanation need).” In this study, religious communication needs were identified using a series of **focus group discussions** with prompt questions based on Slabbert’s (2022) Religious Communication Model.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To analyze the role of religious communication in improving the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD, this study employed the Mixed-Methods Research (MMR) approach, specifically the Convergent Parallel Mixed-Methods design. This design involves concurrently collecting quantitative and qualitative data and independently analyzing them before integrating both data sets to validate one set with the other (Dawadi et. al., 2020).

- **Quantitative Approach.** This was employed to describe the quantifiable area of the study: to determine the degree of association between the level of academic persistence of the vocational students and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD. The key method of data collection was a cross-sectional survey based on the Academic Persistence Scale (Thalib et. al., 2018) and Religious Communication Model (Slabbert, 2022). Following the survey, the researcher calculated the Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient between the two variables (level of academic persistence and level of satisfaction with the current religious communication).
- **Qualitative Approach.** This was used for the qualifiable area of the study: to analyze the role of religious communication in improving the academic

persistence of its vocational students in BCPD. The key method of qualitative data collection was a series of focus group discussions.

Following the collection of the quantitative data (from the cross-sectional survey) and qualitative data (from the focus group discussions), both data sets were integrated and subjected to a thematic analysis.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted on the premises of BCPD. Located in Cebu City, Philippines, BCPD is an all-girls TVET school and poverty alleviation project with a mission to “prepare young women for employment or entrepreneurship and higher educational attainment through academic-technical skills training and work ethics imbued with Christian values” (Banilad Center for Professional Development - About Us, n.d.). BCPD offers a two-year Hotel and Restaurant Services (HRS) program that “prepares the students for the National Certificate II (NC II) in Cookery, Bread and Pastry Production, Food and Beverage Services, Housekeeping, and Front Office Services” (Banilad Center for Professional Development - Hotel and Restaurant Services, n.d.).

Respondents of the Study

The respondents were Hotel and Restaurant Services (HRS) students enrolled in BCPD during the first semester of academic year 2023-2024. All of them were female

vocational students aged 16-23 from low-income families (< PHP 120,000 total annual income) and identified as Christians.

Sampling Scheme

Out of a total population of 74 vocational students, 54 students (73%) successfully completed the survey (see Table 3); the remaining 20 students (27%) were not able to participate due to scheduling conflicts in their off-campus on-the-job training. Following the survey administration, four vocational students from each year and section were randomly selected to take part in a series of focus group discussions.

Table 3.

Distribution of Respondents

Year & Section	Population	Sample - Survey	Sample - FGD*
HRS 1 Section 1	16	9	4
HRS 1 Section 2	15	15	4
HRS 2 Section 1	21	20	4
HRS 2 Section 2	22	10	4
Total	74	54	16

* Focus Group Discussion

Table 4.*Survey Results of Focus Group Respondents*

Year & Section	Respondent	AP* Score	RC* Score
HRS 1 Sec 1	Student BB	83	92
	Student MS	61	75
	Student ST	71	83
	Student WA	79	74
HRS 1 Sec 2	Student DS	84	80
	Student KO	67	88
	Student NR	67	54
	Student YC	96	97
HRS 2 Sec 1	Student AB	64	90
	Student CA	77	76
	Student JC	53	94
	Student MO	73	97
HRS 2 Sec 2	Student AT	58	84
	Student GB	69	86
	Student HA	81	87
	Student JD	92	100

* AP - Academic Persistence *RC - Religious Communication

Research Instruments

Given the quantitative and qualitative nature of the present study, the key methods of data collection were a cross-sectional survey and a series of focus group discussions.

- ***Cross-sectional survey.*** This involves “collect[ing] data at one point in time from a sample selected to describe a population at that time” (Alreck and Settle, 1985 in Librero et. al., 1997). In the present study, the survey questionnaire contained a total of 40 items: 20 items on academic persistence based on the Academic Persistence Scale (Thalib et. al., 2018) and 20 items on religious communication based on the Religious Communication Model (Slabbert, 2022). Each item contained a statement from the first-person point of view. The respondents rated each statement as follows: Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, or Strongly disagree.
- ***Focus group discussion.*** This involves “assembl[ing] a group of individuals to discuss a specific topic, aiming to draw from the complex personal experiences, beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes of the participants through a moderated interaction” (Nyumba, et. al., 2018). In the present study, the researcher facilitated a total of seven focus group discussion sessions using prompt questions based on Slabbert’s (2022) Religious Communication Model.

Data Gathering Procedure

Table 5.

Schedule of on-campus data collection

Day 1 - Thursday, November 9, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Administered survey to HRS 1 Section 1• Administered survey to HRS 1 Section 2• Administered survey to HRS 2 Section 1
Day 2 - Monday, November 13, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Administered survey to HRS 2 Section 2• Facilitated focus group discussion (session 1) with HRS 2 Section 1
Day 3 - Tuesday, November 14, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitated focus group discussion (session 1) with HRS 1 Section 2• Facilitated focus group discussion (session 1) with HRS 2 Section 2• Facilitated focus group discussion (session 1) with HRS 1 Section 1
Day 4 - Wednesday, November 15, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitated focus group discussion with HRS 2 Section 1 (session 2)• Observed Christian Living class of HRS 2 Section 1
Day 5 - Thursday, November 16, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitated focus group discussion with HRS 1 Section 2 (session 2)• Facilitated focus group discussion with HRS 1 Section 1 (session 2)

* There are no classes on Fridays in BCPD.

Survey Administration

The researcher prepared a survey questionnaire which contained a total of 40 items: 20 items on academic persistence based on the Academic Persistence Scale (Thalib et. al., 2018) and 20 items on religious communication based on the Religious Communication Model (Slabbert, 2022). Once the questionnaire had been finalized, the researcher worked with a professional translator to translate the questionnaire from English to Cebuano-Bisaya. She proceeded to create an online version of the bilingual questionnaire on Jotform.com, an online form builder.

The researcher traveled from Dubai, United Arab Emirates to Cebu City, Philippines, in order to personally administer the online survey at BCPD.



L-R: **Mary Anne L. Ruiz**, Vice-Director for Academic Affairs, **Charisma Rhea S. Castro**, Vice-Director for External & Alumnae Affairs, **The Researcher**, **Elizabeth M. Lopez**, School Director, and **Sarah Josefa M. Laragan**, Vice-Director for Student Affairs of BCPD

The vocational students were instructed to gather inside a closed classroom environment and access the online survey using either their personal mobile phones or tablets provided by the school. At the start of the survey, the researcher introduced herself to the students, gave a brief background of her study, as well as explained the instructions and provided an example in both English and Cebuano-Bisaya. The participants rated each item as follows: Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, or Strongly disagree.



The Researcher with some of the students of BCPD during the Survey Administration

Following the survey administration, sixteen vocational students, four from each year and section, were randomly selected to participate in a series of focus group discussions at BCPD. The researcher conducted a total of seven face-to-face sessions, each running for approximately one hour in duration. To facilitate the discussion, the researcher utilized prompt questions based on Slabbert's (2022) Religious Communication Model.



The Researcher with some of the students of BCPD during the Focus Group Discussions

During the first session, the respondents were instructed to gather inside a closed classroom environment and form a circle. The researcher re-introduced herself to the students, gave a brief background of her study, and assured the respondents of their

right to anonymity. The respondents then took turns sharing their most unforgettable experience with God and created a list of:

- What they liked about BCPD
- What they did not like about BCPD
- What they would change about BCPD
- What made their life in BCPD difficult

The list also served as a simplified version of a SWOT analysis.

STUDENTS' SWOT ANALYSIS

what I like about BCPD

- has a good and efficient way of teaching
- friendly and understanding staffs, teachers and Directors
- can make your relationship to God more concrete

what I don't like about BCPD

what I would change about BCPD

- can easily go out the students if theres something important things to go or buy outside
- canteen

what are making my life in BCPD difficult

- financial situation
 - a quiet distant from ^{our} home
 - heavy traffic
- class will be dismissed at 4 (for the students so that they can easily went home w/o being stucked in traffic.

What I Like About BCPD

They have a good quality ~~and~~ to train their students.

They have mentors who you can freely express your feelings or emotions.

They treat each one of us as a family and they also welcome new students as their own family.

This is the school I ^{can} only say that I ^{have} to do in a right manner.

They also teach students good behavior and values.

What I would change BCPD

What I don't Like BCPD

What are making my life in BCPD difficult

I find it difficult when I have to wake early so that I won't be late because of a heavy traffic.

When I go home late because I have an ulce and I need to eat at a right time.

What I like about BCPD

- Teachers in BCP are very patient to their student and trying their best to make their student understand the ~~topic~~ lesson.

- A good quality of teaching and BCPD helps ~~me~~ to closer to GOD.

- All teachers and student in BCPD are very respectful and (~~polite~~) friendly.

What I would change about BCPD.

-

What I don't like about BCPD

(~~there was no internet~~)

What are making my life in BCPD difficult.

- Traffic because BCPD is quite far from our home

- financial problem, I can't pay the tuition immediately

What I Like About BCPD

- It has industry partners and many opportunities after we graduate
- good ~~quality~~ and efficient teaching.
- There are facilities inside that we can use. We can also be closer to God, because of their teachings.

What I Don't Like About BCPD

-

What I would change About BCPD

- I hope the students can go out easily if there is an emergency or if they are sick.

- proper place ~~to~~ / or more place to stay and eat during lunch time.

What Are Making My Life in BCPD Difficult.

- Traffic, since BCPD is quite far from my home.
- financial ~~pr~~ situation, i cannot pay immediately.

-

What I like about BCPD is

What I like in BCPD is we have mentor each student here unlike high school days, A friendly teacher and classmates it also offer BCPD school a good job in our profession we acquire

What I don't like about BCPD

The thing I don't like in BCPD is I felt pressure by the subject but I can manage to do better also the schedule sometime is confusing to me

What I would change about BCPD

I would change about BCPD is more classroom ^{issues} because BCPD is a growing family.

What are making my life in BCPD difficult

Sometime it's financial problem but we are able to make it

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT BCPD

- What I like about BCPD is that they want their students to have a bright future and ~~the~~ also they focus about God. and they are good to discipline their students.

WHY I DON'T LIKE BCPD

- Why I don't like BCPD because when it comes to given a test, sometimes we don't understand the situations so we got a low scores.

WHAT I WOULD CHANGE ABOUT BCPD

- If I would change about BCPD is their rules because sometimes they are super strict when it comes to ~~str~~ their student.

WHAT ARE MAKING MY LIFE IN BCPD DIFFICULT

- The rules because it is my first time to study this kind of school.

What I like about BCPD

- What I like BCPD was the opportunity that the school is giving and offering to us. The discipline and process that they are giving to us. Also on having a mentor really made us open on every situation and problem that we encounter. Having such session in school lead us and guide us to really know our goal and also to know what we really want to.

What I don't like about BCPD

- I don't really have a dislike on the school but maybe it's on confiscating the phone yet I really don't hate such practice because I know that it is for our own good for us to focus on our learning also.

What I would change about BCPD

- Nothing. I've seen lots of product of BCPD and they are all great. And that is the reason also why I join here and be part of the school. I wanted to be like them so why would I change the process. I want to be like them so I must also experience what they experience here in BCPD.

What are making my life in BCPD difficult:

- Maybe if our class schedule change because we're going home on our home town on weekend to buy veggies to be sold on carbon. So maybe that will make us struggle. But if ever it really need to change we must adapt to it.

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT BCPD

Their goals / the school goal is to help women in general to have a better future or to have high rate of employment. They are very firm about teaching the students and not only in skills but also in religion and the manners. I love that their goal focuses also to help unprivileged womens to (help them) be able to earn and have a fresh start.

WHAT I DON'T LIKE ABOUT BCPD

It's very strict ^{here} at BCPD and I was like culture shocked about how firm they are with their rules. I don't like that they don't have canteen here and we are only able to go out during lunch time but only 2 girls can go.

WHAT I WOULD CHANGE ABOUT BCPD

I would love to ^{have} (put a) canteen here so that everyone can buy food during break time or vacant time.

WHAT ARE MAKING MY LIFE IN BCPD DIFFICULT

I guess it's their learning system, because here in BCPD we are moving forward faster

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT BCPD

- Director (Teachers)
- Teachers
- Their attitude
- Surroundings

WHAT I DON'T LIKE ABOUT BCPD

- Rules

WHAT I WOULD CHANGE ABOUT BCPD

- My Personality
- Behavior

WHAT ARE MAKING MY LIFE (DIFFICULT) IN BCPD DIFFICULT

- Working Student (before)
- Financial Struggles
- Subjects

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What I like about BCPD

What I like about BCPD is their way of showing us the way towards God. By showing us the way, I mean that they have a subject on Christian living which is for me a great way to know more about God and the Bible. This helps us in getting closer to God and strengthen the faith we have for him. Also the number of opportunities they provide their students.

What I would change about BCPD

- Some rules and add some of mine
- The building / infrastructure

What I don't like about BCPD

What I don't like about BCPD is

- Its strictness in things we have to do / say like our lunch or when we have to go outside for something ~~the~~
- What I don't also like are some of the students that can be quite obnoxious and doesn't care about others.

What are making my life ~~difficult~~ in BCPD difficult

- Traffic

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT BCPD

- their teachings about God.
- they are very generous especially when the students are in need.
- very holy school
- their devotion to God.
- they taught us prayers and rosary.

WHAT I DON'T LIKE ABOUT BCPD

- they are very strict when it comes to school rules.
- when we have something to buy ~~at~~ we still need to inform ~~at~~ them and need ^{some} gatepass to go outside.
- when it comes to proper grooming they are ~~we~~ so strict.
- the way we move it should be professional and we should follow their rules or else they will kick you out.

WHAT I WOULD CHANGE ~~ABOUT~~ ABOUT BCPD.

- I think ~~there~~ ^{I have} no ~~changes~~ ^{answers to} ~~that~~ ^{changes} give the way they make the students be professional.

WHAT ARE MAKING MY LIFE ^{IN BCPD} DIFFICULT ~~AT~~ BCPD

- financial status

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT BCPD :

- They not just focused on academic but also in relationship with God
- They select mentors to help the students in different aspects
- They offer lots of scholarships and opportunities to students
- They help and guide students
- They do things / rules to discipline students which is a good thing for me, because unlike to other universities or schools
- The teachers there / here is very understanding (most of the teachers)

WHAT I DON'T LIKE ABOUT BCPD :

- Sometimes strict
- You will hesitate to share your problems sometimes
- I feel like I don't trust the other staffs

WHAT I WOULD CHANGE ABOUT BCPD :

- Maybe, they could lessen their being strict
- So the other staffs should be open and friendly so that some students won't hesitate to confront them if there's something wrong

WHAT ARE MAKING MY LIFE DIFFICULT IN BCPD DIFFICULT :

- ~~Some~~ My other responsibilities, being an SK councilor, got conflicts with the schedules here

What I like about BCPD?

- there's a lot of opportunities
- Religious
- Helps me to be a better woman or it becomes me an elegant person

What I don't like about BCPD?

- they're too strict
- they don't like it when someone is wearing inappropriate clothes
- they some students ~~don't~~ ^{doesn't know to} ~~clean~~ ^{they} clean their mess.

What I would change about BCPD?

- I want them to remove the classes when students are having their on-the-job training

What are making my life in BCPD difficult?

- I sometimes find it hard to manage my time and I know ^{that} it is not just me but ~~also~~ for other students in BCPD as well. Sometimes the teachers are giving us lots of activities. Especially now that we will be having our ojt and also we have our business ^{away} or thrift clothes.

What I like about BCPD

- They helped student to reach their goals.
- They offer a unique teaching to young women: Especially God life
- After the student graduated they automatically find a job

What I don't like about BCPD

- They are strict in terms of holding hands inside the campus
- They are conservative of clothing
- They only 2 events in one year here at campus

What I would change about BCPD

- I change the way they are strict of holding hands because we are all girls
- I allow student to use cellphone for class.

What are making my life in BCPD difficult

- When I experience my first DJT it's a big adjustment for me
- Traveling here at school
- Reaching their standard

What I like about BCPD

- They give many opportunities
- They encourage us to continue, what are the possibilities that happens to our future
- They teach us good manners and right conduct, have a good teachers

What I don't like about BCPD

- When there's an event ~~they~~ ^{do} ~~their~~ ^{not} schedule ~~is~~ ^{does} not out properly.
- When there's an event the cloth that we want to wear ~~with~~ ~~not~~ is not allowed because they want that should be uniform like black pants + BCPD shirt only
- Some students are ^{not} friendly

What I would change about BCPD

- I should know how to adapt in every situation / environment
- I should practice social gaming / interactions
-

What are making my life in BCPD difficult.

- People,

What I like about BCPD :

I like BCPD because it is a catholic school and they teach us about God.

- BCPD have mentors to monitor every student's if they have a problem, in school, in their work, as jobs, and especially to their family.

- BCPD (~~is very strict and they~~) always shown a care to all students and also they always want a good for every students.

What I don't like about BCPD ?

- BCPD is very strict and sometimes they didn't listen to the reasons of some students.

- BCPD have a small facilities of buildings.

- Some students don't have a good manners.

What I would change about BCPD ?

- I would change about BCPD are the facilities or buildings. It needs to have a big facilities because many young women want to study here.

- (~~to~~) to have a good manners that needs to all students.

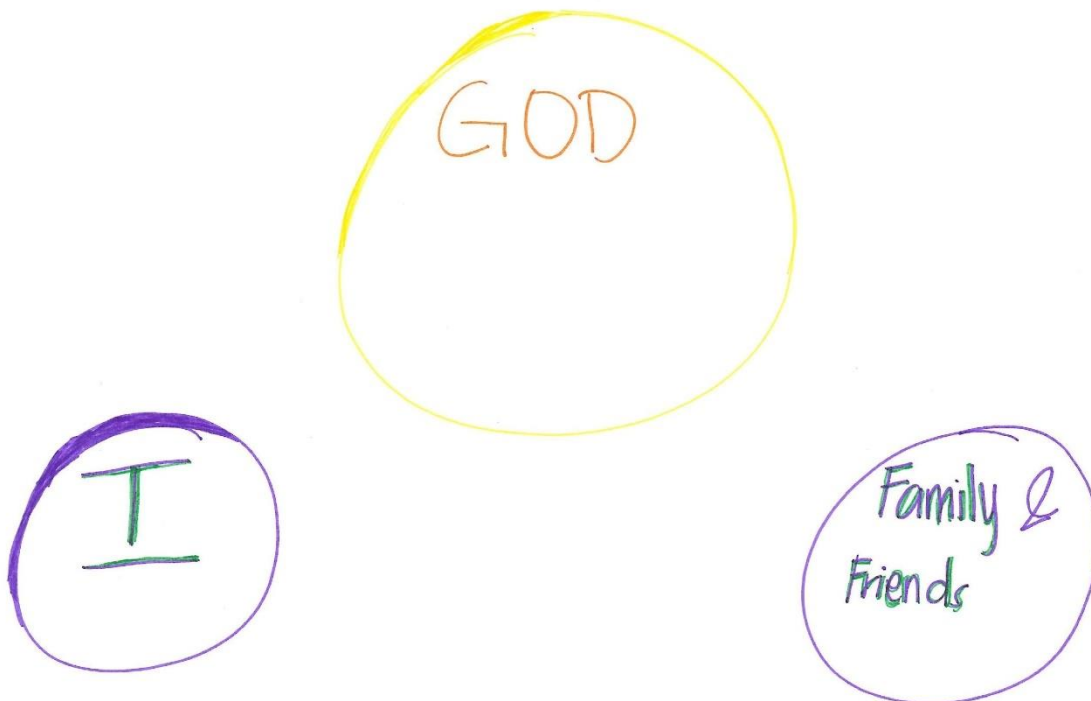
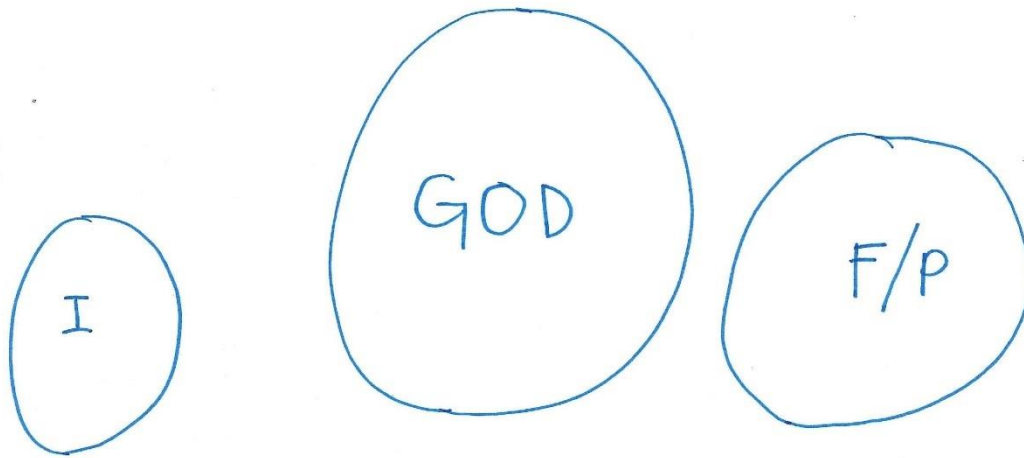
What are making my life in BCPD difficult?

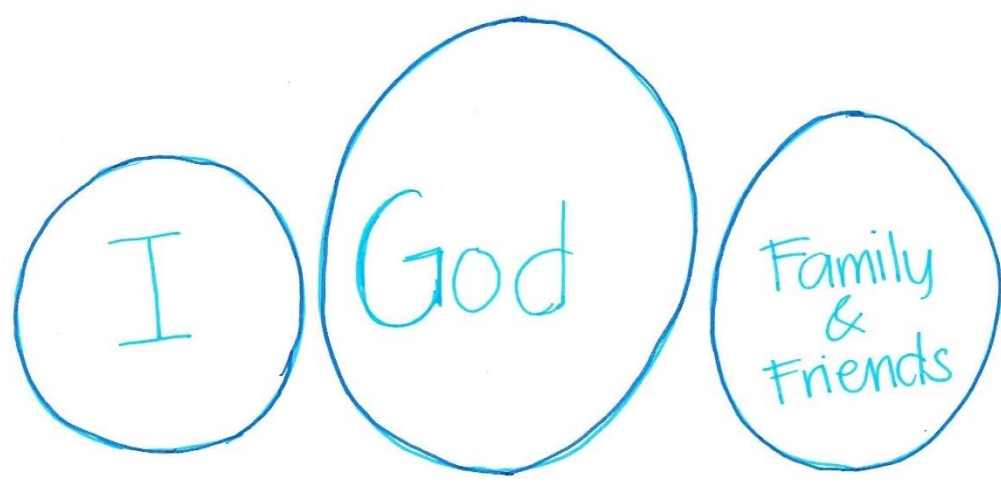
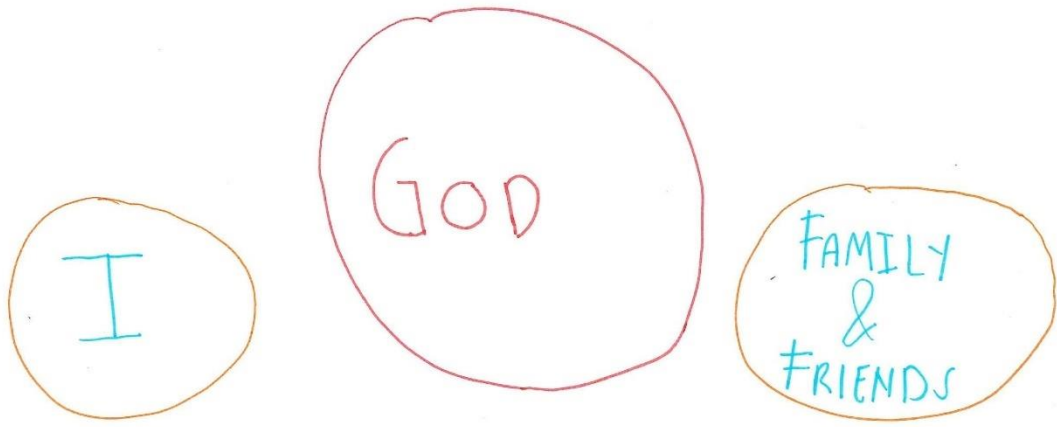
- It makes my life difficult because of the policies that need to follow.

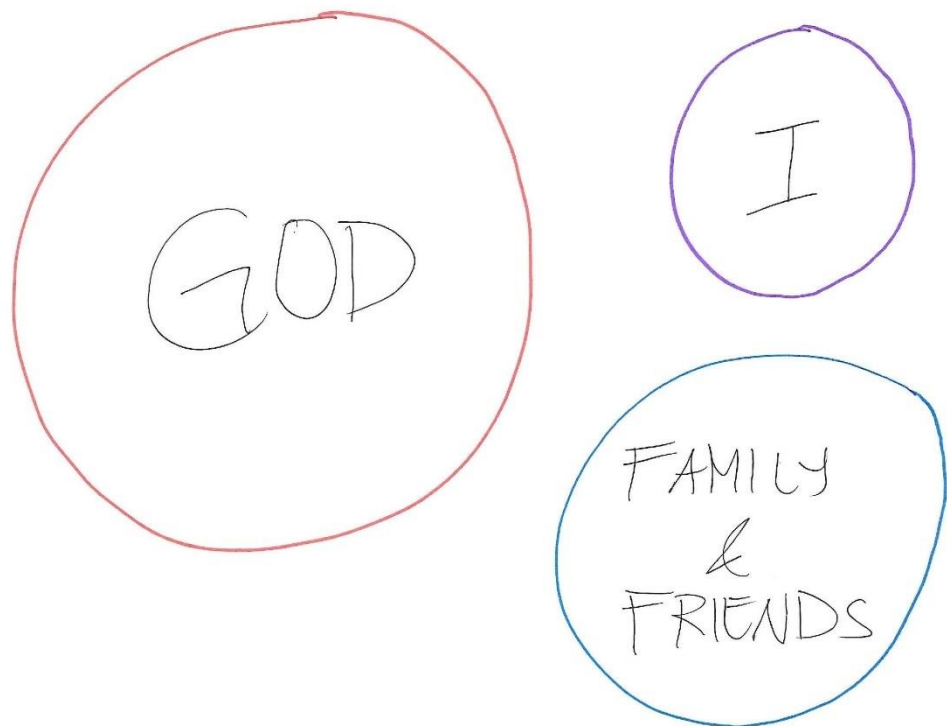
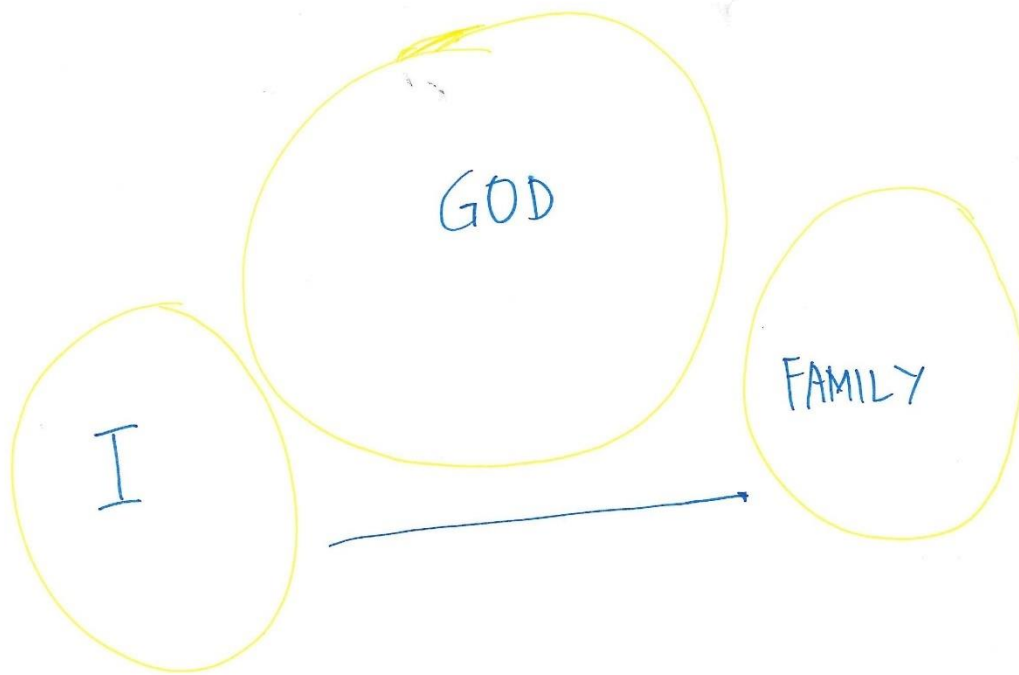
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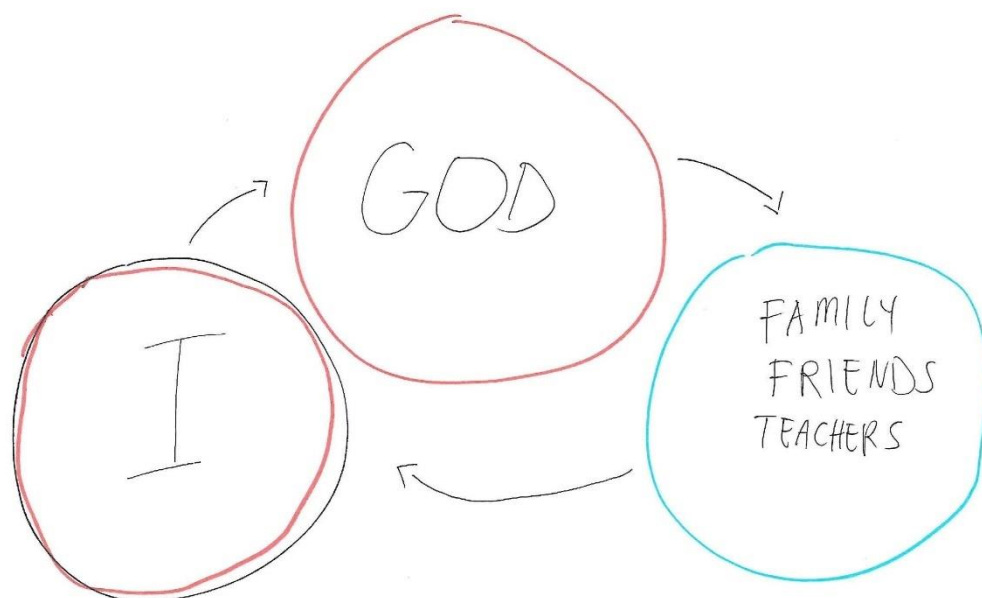
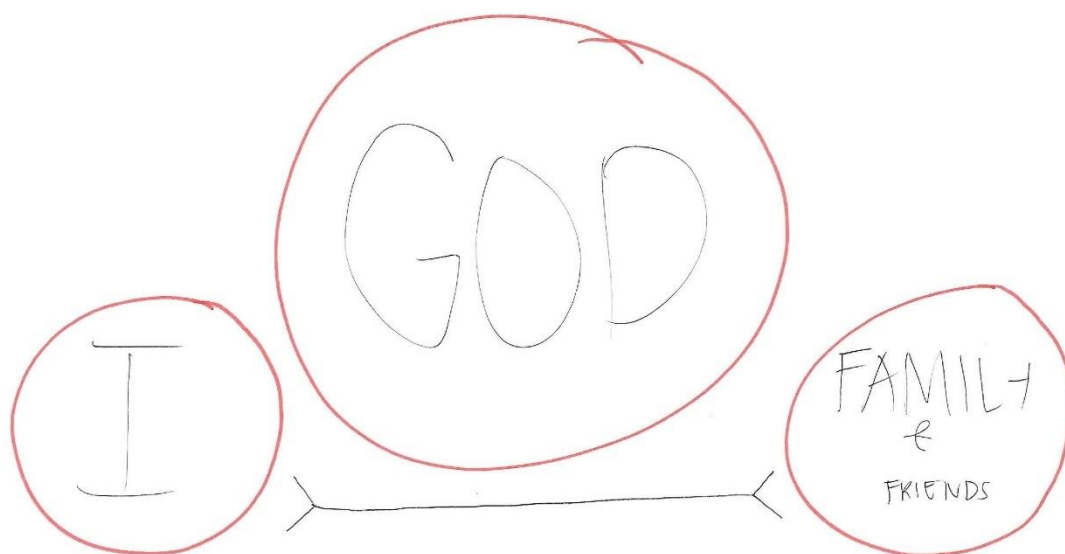
During the second session, the respondents were again instructed to gather inside a closed classroom environment and form a circle. The researcher provided a recap of the previous session and once again reassured the respondents of their right to anonymity. They were then asked to draw three circles representing themselves, others (family and friends), and God. They took turns explaining their drawings and examined their classmates' drawings for similarities and differences.

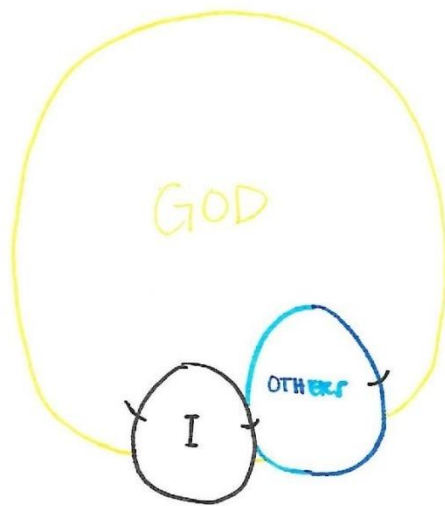
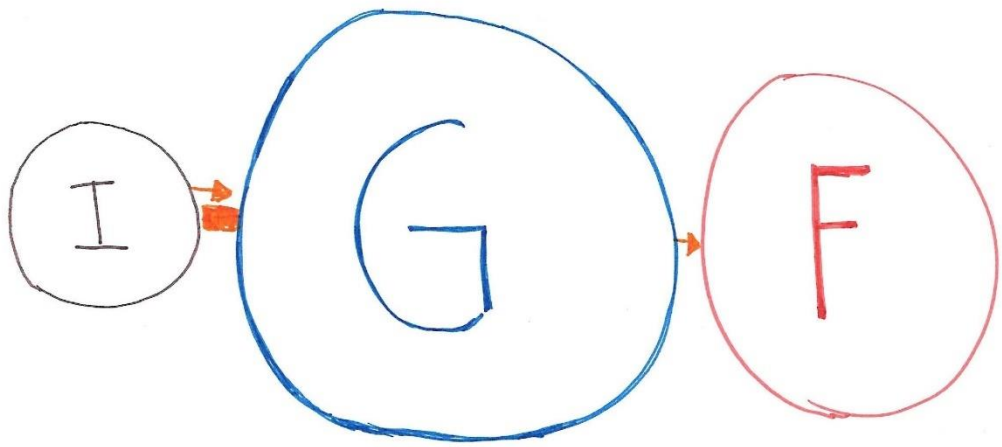
STUDENTS' ILLUSTRATIONS OF SELF, GOD, AND OTHERS

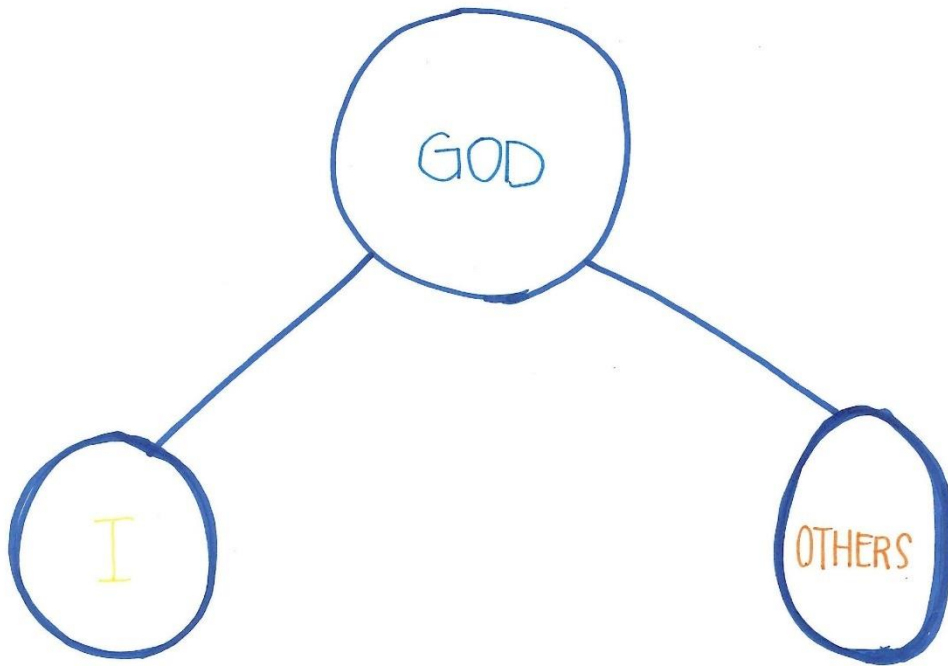












Afterwards, the researcher provided each respondent with a small whiteboard and marker and read selected statements from the survey questionnaire. The respondents wrote “Agree” or “Disagree” on their whiteboard, raised their answers, and gave brief explanations behind them.

All focus group discussion sessions were recorded using Zoom, a video call platform. The researcher used Read.ai, an artificial intelligence tool for hybrid meetings, as a Zoom plug-in to automatically transcribe the audio recordings. The researcher made further manual edits to input the Cebuano-Bisaya portions of the discussion.

At the end of the on-campus data gathering, the researcher presented the initial research findings to the Executive Committee of BCPD.



The Researcher with the Executive Committee of BCPD during the presentation of initial findings. L-R: **The Researcher, Sarah Josefa M. Laragan**, Vice-Director for Student Affairs, **Elizabeth M. Lopez**, School Director, **Charisma Rhea S. Castro**, Vice-Director for External & Alumnae Affairs, and **Mary Anne L. Ruiz**, Vice-Director for Academic Affairs of BCPD

Data Analysis

The quantitative data was initially analyzed using Jotform's advanced functionalities:

- **Assigning calculation values.** Each item on the survey was classified as either a favorable item or an unfavorable item. **Favorable items** correspond to values, attitudes, behaviors, or beliefs that exhibit high levels of academic persistence (ex. AP Item #8: I am determined to complete all the tasks assigned to me) or high levels of satisfaction with religious communication (ex. RC Item #7: Learning about Christian Living in BCPD helps me work hard in my studies). On the other hand, **unfavorable items** correspond to values, attitudes, behaviors, or beliefs that exhibit low levels of academic persistence (ex. AP Item #11: I find it difficult to complete the daily tasks I have planned) or low levels of satisfaction with religious communication (ex. RC Item #9: I don't see the relationship between religion and the HRS program). Based on their favorable-unfavorable classification, each item was assigned values (see Table 6).

Table 6.

Assigned values of survey items

Response	Favorable Item Value	Unfavorable Item Value
Strongly Agree	5	1
Agree	4	2
Neutral	3	3
Disagree	2	4
Strongly Disagree	1	5

- **Performing calculation.** Once the values had been assigned, the researcher entered the formula to automatically calculate the total score of the academic persistence survey and the total score of the religious communication survey of each respondent. Higher scores indicated higher levels of academic persistence and higher levels of satisfaction with the current religious communication.

Using the raw quantitative data, the researcher calculated the Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient, "a nonparametric measurement correlation... It is used as a hypothesis test to study the dependence between two variables" (Dodge, 2008). The resulting value was used to determine the degree of association between the students' level of academic persistence and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD.

To validate the quantitative data (survey results), the qualitative data from seven focus group discussion sessions was initially analyzed using Read.ai's audio recording transcription tool. The researcher reviewed the text transcripts against the original audio recordings and made further manual edits to input the Cebuano-Bisaya portions of the discussion.

Using the raw qualitative data, the researcher performed thematic analysis on a semantic level which involves identifying patterns or themes "within the explicit or surface meanings of the data and the analyst is not looking for anything beyond what a participant has said or what has been written" (Braun and Clarke, 2006 in Maguire and Delahunt, 2017). Emerging themes were subsequently identified in line with

Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework to analyze the role of religious communication in BCPD in improving the academic persistence of its vocational students.

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data on the degree of association between the level of academic persistence of vocational students and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD, as well as the role of religious communication in improving the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD.

Level of Academic Persistence Among Vocational Students in BCPD

To measure the level of academic persistence, this study used a survey questionnaire containing 20 items on academic persistence based on the Academic Persistence Scale (Thalib et. al., 2018). The participants rated each item as follows: Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, or Strongly disagree.

Table 7 presents the summary of findings from the survey on academic persistence. Each of the 20 items were categorized under four themes: Goal setting, Managing problems and failures, Ability to focus, and Time management. The average score (AVG) was calculated based on the total value per item divided by the number of participants (n=54).

Table 7.*Summary of findings from the survey on academic persistence*

Theme	Item #	Question	AVG	VI*
Goal Setting	1	I already have a plan and know which profession to take up after graduation.	4.41	Agree
	5	I do not have a clear plan yet after graduating from BCPD.	2.33	Disagree
	6	I am able to focus on the goals I set for myself since I first started in BCPD.	4.26	Agree
	15	I prefer to go with the flow without a goal in life.	3.46	Neutral
	20	I plan my daily activities, so that I can achieve my goals in life.	4.30	Agree
Managing Problems and Failures	2	I am confused about how to overcome failures.	3.31	Neutral
	9	Failure only keeps me from achieving success.	3.22	Neutral
	12	Failures often make me think I will never be able to achieve my dreams.	2.93	Neutral
	13	I can find new solutions to unresolved problems.	3.87	Agree
	16	I tend to forget my original goal when I encounter failures.	2.46	Disagree

	18	I tend to lose hope when my grades do not match my expectations.	3.24	Neutral
	19	I will give up on my long-term goals if they become too difficult to achieve.	3.13	Neutral
Ability to Focus	3	I always focus on what needs to be done until the task is completed.	4.06	Agree
	7	I am able to turn down my friends' invitation to have fun when I have school tasks to complete.	4.04	Agree
	8	I am determined to complete all the tasks assigned to me.	4.35	Agree
	14	My mind becomes easily divided when I think about the many dreams I have not yet achieved.	3.61	Agree
	17	I can keep working on a task until I achieve the right results.	4.35	Agree
Time Management	4	I am able to complete my school assignments on time.	3.85	Agree
	10	I can balance my time well to study, work (if working), rest and play.	4.00	Agree
	11	I find it difficult to complete the daily tasks I have planned.	3.04	Neutral

* VI - Verbal Interpretation

Legend: **Green** - Favorable Response, **Yellow** - Neutral Response, **Red** - Unfavorable Response

Based on the results of the survey, the average level of academic persistence among vocational students in BCPD was 72.39/100.

Goal Setting

A significant portion of the student population were goal-oriented and had a generally positive outlook for the future (see Figure 5). Coming from low-income family backgrounds, the students expressed similar goals: to graduate from BCPD, to secure a stable job, and to support their families financially.

In addition to sharing similar goals, the majority of students also shared a similar dream of working on a cruise ship. Student BB explained:

“Mao man gyod na akong aim diri mao na nianhi ko diri kay kasagaran sa mga mo-graduate kay mokuan man og cruise ship. Like sa akong cousin unya mao gyod na akong goal. Naa na koy clear nga picture of myself na maka-graduate na mag-cruise ship gyod ko after” (Student BB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: That has always been my aim here in BCPD, because most of the graduates have been able to work on cruise ships. Just like my cousin who was able to work on a cruise ship, this is also my goal. I already have a clear picture of myself that I will be able to graduate and work on a cruise ship.

Analysis of Religious Communication to Improve Academic Persistence

Goal Setting

54 Responses

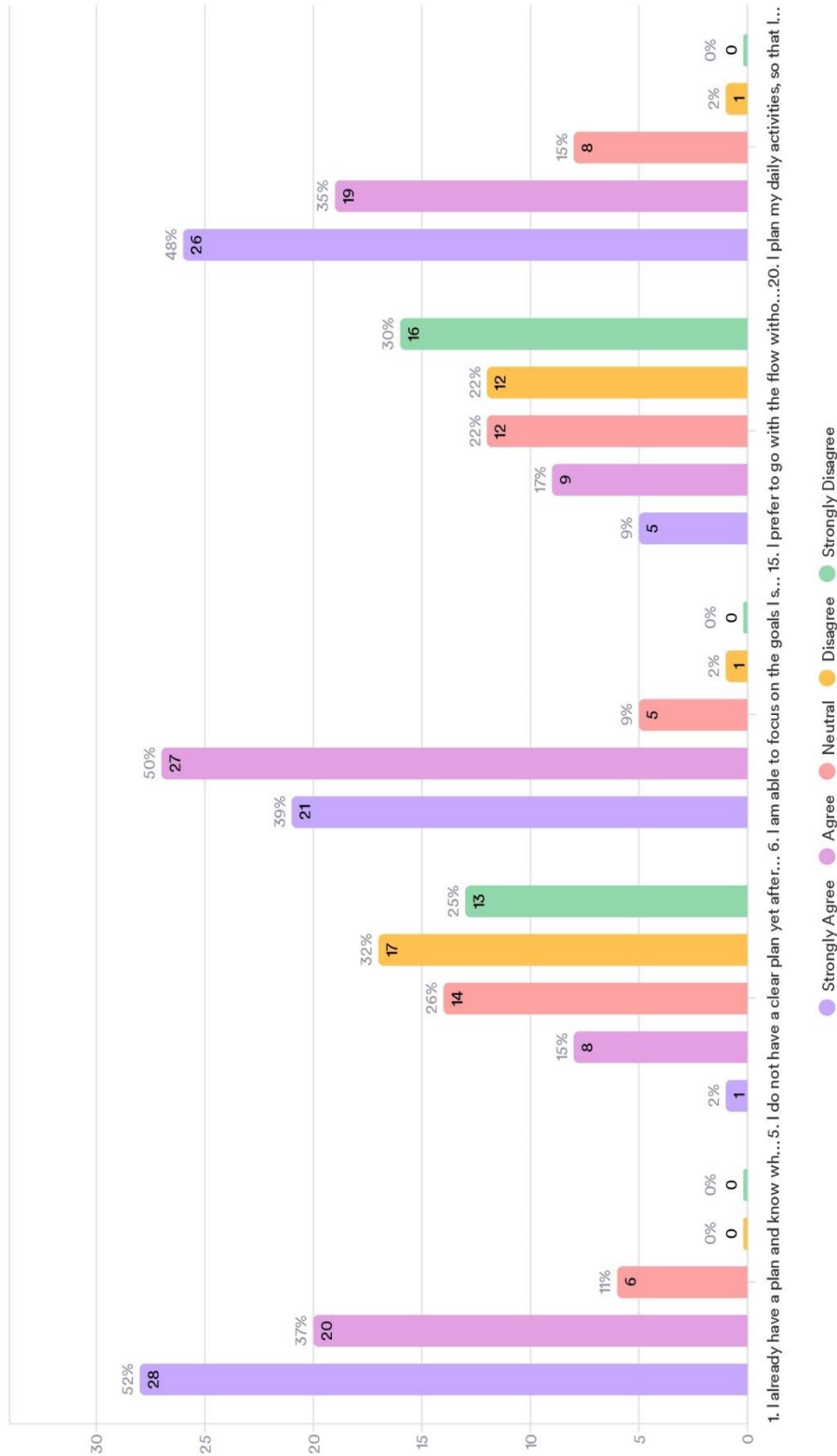


Figure 5.

Summary of responses from the survey on academic persistence -

Theme 1: Goal setting

According to O'Connor (2008), having a goal for the future is a key factor in academic persistence. Although other factors such as positive relationships with teachers, having classes structured to meet students' needs, and student empowerment also contributed to academic persistence, without having a goal for the future, the other factors were not enough to keep the students persisting in school.

In the present study, not only did the students exhibit a strong sense of goal-orientation, but they also shared similar goals (working on a cruise ship). This aligns with Slabbert's (2022) Religious Communication Theory in which she proposed that the effectiveness of religious communication – or any communication for that matter – is directly proportional to the symbolic shared realities. By sharing similar goals, the students were able to reinforce each other's commitment to persist in their studies amidst multiple life stressors.

In addition, the students recognized BCPD's vital role in helping them achieve their goal. When asked if she already had a clear picture in her mind after graduating, Student ST responded:

“Yes, naa. Ganahan ko mag-cruise ship... kay mao ni ang reason nieskuwela ko sa BCPD kay lagi two years ra, then dali ra sad daw makakuha og work”
(Student ST, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: Yes, I do have a clear picture. I want to work on a cruise ship. This is the reason why I studied in BCPD, because they offer two-year programs, and I heard that it's easy to secure a job.

BCPD's Hotel and Restaurant Services (HRS) program is a "two-year course that prepares its students for the Philippine National Certificate (NCII) in the same qualifications on Cookery, Baking and Pastry Production, Food and Beverage Services, Bartending, Front Office Services, and Housekeeping" (Banilad Center for Professional Development - Hotel and Restaurant Services, n.d.). This means that they only need to spend half the time it normally takes to complete a conventional four-year degree and pay a much lower subsidized tuition fee (PHP 600 as of November 2023) to acquire multiple employable skills and significantly increase their career prospects. BCPD has also been consistently providing 100% employment to its graduates, thanks to its long-standing partnerships with leaders in the hospitality industry.

Managing Problems and Failures

Among the four themes under Academic Persistence, Managing Problems and Failures garnered the highest number of unfavorable responses (see Figure 6). Several students were vocal about their struggles in managing life stressors.

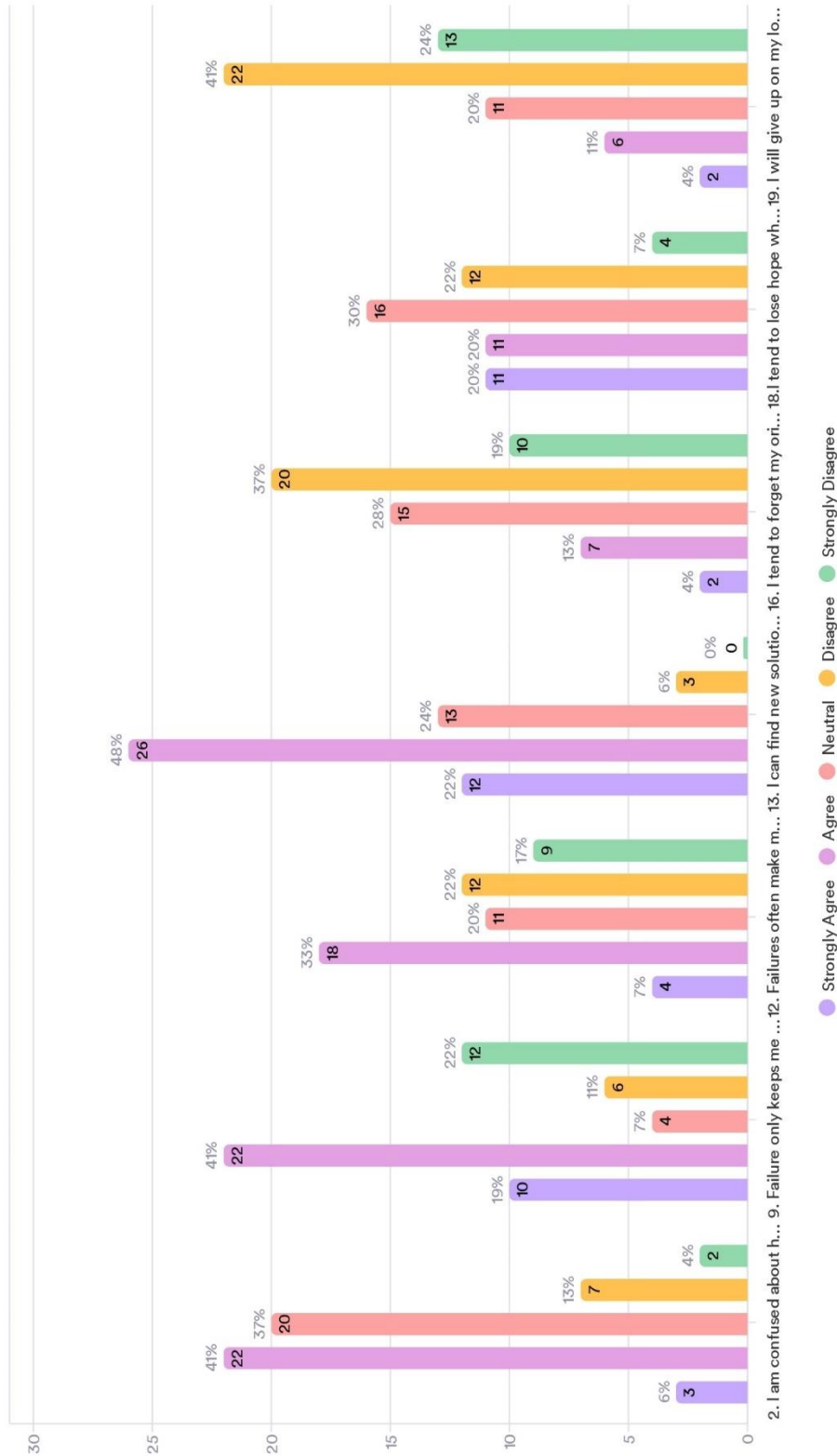
When asked if she was confused about how to overcome failures, Student BB said she agreed and explained:

"Labi na kanang wa pa gani mahuman sa usa, naa na say moabot nga lain na sad. Mora kag... mahugno lagi. Ingon ana unsaon nimo pag-overcome og mga problem nga daghan naman kaayo" (Student BB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

Analysis of Religious Communication to Improve Academic Persistence

Managing Problems and Failures

54 Responses



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Figure 6.

Summary of responses from the survey on academic persistence -

Theme 2: Managing problems and failures

English Translation: Especially when you have not overcome one problem, another problem arises. It feels like you are shattered. Like how do you overcome all these problems?

When asked the same question, another student, Student WA responded:

“Naay part nako nga mo-agree then naay part nako nga mo-disagree. Dako gyod ang part mo-agree kay basta naa gani koy problema, kay hunahunaon man gyod nako permi hangtod di masulbad, so mapuno akong utok, ma-distract pod ko” (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: There is a part of me that agrees and another part that disagrees. A larger part of me agrees, because whenever I have a problem, I think about it all the time until I end up not resolving it, so my mind is filled with thoughts that distract me.

Most of the students spoke in length about dealing with multiple stressors from their everyday life such as family problems, health problems, and financial problems, as well as from their student life such as getting low grades, missing deadlines, and not meeting their teachers' expectations.

“Students in late adolescence experience heightened sensitivity about personal identity, ideology, relationships, and decisions about the future when concerns about individual purpose, meaning and commitment interact with forces of cognitive development, maturation, and social expectations” (Dalton, 2001 in Fer, 2020). This

begged the question: how did the students' ability to manage problems and failures impact their academic persistence?

When asked if her personal problems affected her studies, Student MS, added:

“Sometime[s] pero akong gipanguhaan gyod karon nga dili ko dapat magpadala kay kanang mo-affect man gyod sa akong grado. Pareha ato pagkagahapon kay kanang gamay man kaayo ko’g score sa FBS gahapon ba... Na-distract ko sa, kadto sa trabaho pod nako, unya kanang sa family pod, like sa akong kaugalingon pod... Dapat ko mangita og way para madako gani akong score... Bata pa ko, kanang nakaingon ko sa akong kaugalingon nga ganahan ko motrabaho sa hotel” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: Sometimes but I try my best not to let my emotions take over, because it will affect my grades. Like what happened yesterday when I had a very low score in my Food and Beverage Services class. I got distracted by my part-time job, as well as family matters and personal problems. I really need to find a way to get my score/grade up. Ever since I was a child, I said to myself that I really want to work in a hotel.

Based on a recent study by Aruta et. al. (2022), meaning in life was found to predict academic persistence positively and significantly. “Adolescents with a greater sense of meaning and purpose exhibit more determination and effort when engaging in academic and other relevant goal-related tasks” (Aruta et. al.). In the present study, Student MS’ sense of purpose (to work in a hotel and support her family), enabled her to manage her failure to achieve a high score in her FBS class. She

overcame her own feelings of disappointment and formed a resolution to exert more effort in her studies (need to find a way to get my score/grade up).

This also aligns with the holistic process of religious communication with the “self becoming both observer and participant” (Meltzer, Petras & Reynolds, 1975 in Slabbert, 2022). In the first part of the anecdote, Student MS assumed the role of an observer who was unable to control her emotions and got distracted by her external reality (part-time job and family). However, in the second part of the anecdote, she assumed the role of an active participant who renewed her commitment (get her grades up) to fulfill her childhood dream (work in a hotel).

As Student NR succinctly put it, “When we fail, we learn. So, we keep moving, and we keep striving for our goals. Without failure, we cannot achieve what we want” (Student NR, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

Ability to Focus

Based on the survey results, the students reported significantly high levels of concentration when it comes to completing their tasks (see Figure 7). When asked if her mind easily became divided when she thought about the many dreams she had not yet achieved, Student NR disagreed. She explained that while there were times she entertained thoughts of dropping out of school for a second time, she had her sights set on working on a cruise ship like most of her classmates:

Analysis of Religious Communication to Improve Academic Persistence

Ability to Focus

54 Responses



Figure 7.

Summary of responses from the survey on academic persistence -

Theme 3: Ability to focus

“Kanang mag-call center na lang ko if ever. Kanang practical way like call center na lang, anha man gihapon tanan... So as what I have experienced... [because] I stopped schooling last year, then I entered a lot of jobs... But in my mind, I’m really aiming [to work on] a cruise ship. Mao gyod akong original [goal], pero nag-stop lang ko because of financial... I’ve experience[d] [working in] call centers... It’s so tough, because it’s really not my passion [because] I really want to serve, and I am really into caring [for] customers... That’s why I continued [my studies] ... I really want to finish school” (Student NR, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: I will just go back to working in a call center if ever I decide to drop out. It is the practical option, because anyway, that is where everyone will end up in. So as what I have experienced, because I stopped schooling last year, then I entered a lot of jobs. But in my mind, I am really aiming to work on a cruise ship. Working on a cruise ship has always been my original goal, but I had to stop schooling because of financial constraints. I have experienced working in call centers. It is so tough, because it is really not my passion, because I really want to serve, and I am really into caring for customers. That is why I continued my studies. I really want to finish school.

According to Eccles and Wigfield’s Theory of Expectancy-Value, learning behaviors are directly determined by the students’ expectancy perceptions (how likely they are to succeed) and their value perceptions (what they will gain from performing the task) (Roland et. al, 2016). In the present study, Student NR believed she had a better chance of success by finishing her studies (high expectancy perceptions) and was more passionate about face-to-face customer care by working

in a hotel (high value perception). Because of this, she chose to resume her studies over a readily available job as a call center agent despite financial constraints.

This also aligns with the interdependency between intrapersonal communication and interpersonal communication (Slabbert, 2022). In the present study, there was a disconnect between Student NR's intrapersonal communication, which was centered on her passion for face-to-face customer service (caring for customers), and her previous job as a call center agent. This led to her decision to resign from her job and continue her studies in BCPD where the interpersonal communication (centered hospitality training including customer service) aligned with her own intrapersonal communication.

Time Management

Almost all the students recognized the importance of effective time management, although several of them admitted to struggling in this area (see Figure 8).

Analysis of Religious Communication to Improve Academic Persistence

Time Management

54 Responses



Figure 8.

Summary of responses from the survey on academic persistence -

Theme 4: Time management

When asked what made her life in BCPD difficult, Student AT cited personal struggles with time management as the root cause of her difficulties.

“I sometimes find it hard to manage my time, and I know that *dili lang ako rang usa*; other students... in BCPD as well. Sometimes the teachers give us lots of activities, and especially now *nga mag-OJT na mi* and *naa pod mi business sa entrepreneur[ship] nga ukay-ukay, unya lain pod nga students naa pod sila business*. So *kuan maglisod mi manage sa among time kay mamaligya pa mi, nya klase pa. Nya kanang nag-meeting sila last week, nya ana among mga ginikanan na depende gyod daw sa hotel dili na ba mi mag-day-off*. So, six days among work, *nya ang day off namo kay klase pa gyod, so wa mi kabaw, unsaon so difficult gyod namo diri gyod sa BCPD*” (Student AT, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: I sometimes find it hard to manage my time, and I know that it is not just me; other students in BCPD as well. Sometimes the teachers are giving us lots of activities, and especially now that we are starting our on-the-job training, we still have to run our small business of selling secondhand clothes as part of our requirement for entrepreneurship class, and the other students also have their own small businesses. So, we struggle to manage our time, because we have to sell secondhand clothes and attend classes. Then they had a meeting last week, and our parents said that it depends on the hotel where we are assigned for our on-the-job training if we will be given a day off. So, we work six days a week, and on our one day off, we have to attend classes, so we really do not know how to manage, so it is really difficult for us here at BCPD.

According to O'Connor (2008), "making classes more *meaningful* to students by using more experiential instructional techniques contributes to academic persistence." In this study, Student AT mentioned on-the-job training and secondhand clothes selling as examples of experiential instructional techniques. However, it is worth noting that she did not recognize the explicit connection between her class work and the real world ("So we struggle to manage our time, because we have to sell secondhand clothes **and** attend classes"). Differentiating between her regular classes and experiential instructional techniques indicated that she did not find them meaningful which, in turn, negatively contributed to her academic persistence.

Even though Student AT expressed valid concerns on how to manage her time given her heavy workload, her other classmates were able to recognize the meaningful connection between their regular classes and on-the-job training.

"What I like about BCPD is like they offer lots of scholarships and opportunities to students, especially like before [the end of] our first year... we [underwent] TWSP for us to be like more ready to improve our skills, and now we have PPP in baking" (Student MO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 13, 2023).

TWSP stands for Training for Work Scholarship Program, while PPP stands for Public-Private Partnership. Both programs are designed to expose vocational students to real-world working environments. BCPD has long-standing partnerships with leaders in the hospitality industry including Radisson Blu Cebu, Marco Polo

Plaza Cebu, Shangri-La Mactan Cebu, Mövenpick Cebu, and other leading hotels and restaurants across Cebu, Philippines.

According to Slabbert (2022), “The bigger the shared reality, the higher the intersubjectivity, which again increases the impact and effectiveness of the communication taking place”. While both Student AT and Student MO were required to complete the exact same number of hours in their on-the-job training, Student MO found more meaning in BCPD’s experiential instructional techniques, because they were aligned with her own internal reality (TWSP and PPP prepare her to improve her skills). She expressed a more positive outlook, because she was able to recognize their meaningful connection with her studies which, in turn, positively contributed to her academic persistence.

Level of Satisfaction with the Current Religious Communication in BCPD

To measure the vocational students’ level of satisfaction with the religious communication in BCPD, this study used a survey questionnaire containing 20 items on religious communication based on the Religious Communication Model (Slabbert, 2022). The participants rated each item as follows: Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, or Strongly disagree.

Table 8 presents the summary of findings from the survey on religious communication. Each of the 20 items were categorized under four themes: St. Josemaria, Establishing meaning between religion and everyday life, Learning about

God, and Relationship with others. The average score (AVG) was calculated based on the total value per item divided by the number of participants (n=54).

Table 8.

Summary of findings from the survey on religious communication

Theme	Item #	Question	AVG	VI
St. Josemaria	1	I am able to apply St. Josemaria's teachings in my studies.	4.19	Agree
	5	I disagree with several teachings of St. Josemaria.	1.50	Disagree
Establishing Meaning Between Religion and Everyday Life	3	BCPD helps me find meaning between my student life and my prayer life.	4.74	Strongly Agree
	4	I enjoy classes that help me find meaningful connections between God and my studies.	4.59	Strongly Agree
	9	I don't see the relationship between religion and the HRS program.	1.81	Disagree
	11	I feel pressured to perform religious practices even if I don't want to.	2.09	Disagree
	13	Performing religious practices helps me to become a better student.	4.56	Strongly Agree
	14	My prayer life is separate from my student life.	2.94	Neutral

	16	Religion only distracts me from my studies.	1.57	Disagree
	18	I prefer to keep my everyday life separate from my spiritual life.	2.78	Neutral
	19	I think BCPD puts unnecessary focus on religion.	1.69	Disagree
Learning About God	2	I did not learn anything new about God in BCPD.	1.44	Strongly Disagree
	7	Learning about Christian Living in BCPD helps me to work hard in my studies.	4.59	Strongly Agree
	8	Learning about God in BCPD is important for me.	4.67	Strongly Agree
	17	The things I learn about God in BCPD are relevant to my everyday life.	4.52	Strongly Agree
Relationship with Others	6	Having a mentor in BCPD helps me when I encounter challenges in my life.	4.59	Strongly Agree
	10	My classmates inspire me to strengthen my relationship with God.	4.00	Agree
	12	I find it uncomfortable when my mentor invites me for a mentoring chat with her.	1.83	Disagree
	15	My teachers and mentors discourage me from questioning my Faith.	1.70	Disagree

	20	When I have questions about my Faith, I can easily talk to my teachers and mentors about them.	3.96	Agree
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* VI - Verbal Interpretation

Legend: **Green** - Favorable Response, **Yellow** - Neutral Response, **Red** - Unfavorable Response

Based on the results of the survey, the average level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD was 84.83/100.

St. Josemaria

The spiritual and doctrinal formation imparted at BCPD is entrusted to Opus Dei, a personal prelature of the Catholic Church founded by St. Josemaria Escriva. The essence of St. Josemaria's teaching is that everyone is called to holiness amidst their everyday ordinary life (Evans, 2012).

Despite being criticized as being either *too* conservative for its loyal adherence to Catholic doctrinal and moral teachings or being *too* liberal for enthusiastically embracing the Second Vatican Council, an overwhelming number of students responded in favor of St. Josemaria's teachings as part of the current religious communication being provided in BCPD (see Figure 9).

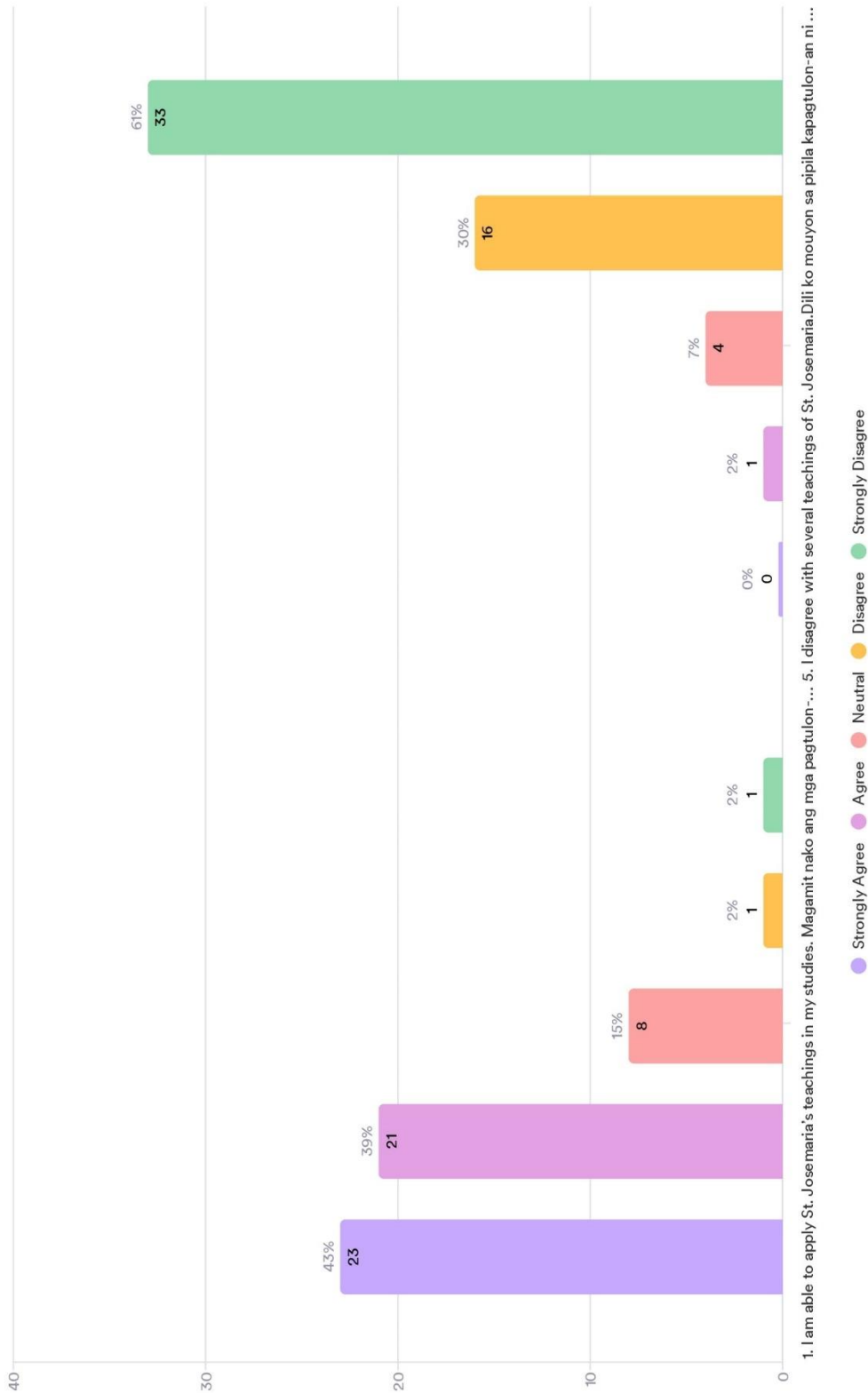
During the focus group discussions, when asked to draw three circles representing themselves, others (family and friends), and God, all participants either drew God as the biggest circle among the three circles, or at the center of their drawing, or even both as the biggest circle at the center.

Figure 9.

Summary of responses from the survey on religious communication -

Theme 1: St. Josemaria

St. Josemaria
54 Responses



1. I am able to apply St. Josemaria's teachings in my studies. Magamit nako ang mga pagtulon... 5. I disagree with several teachings of St. Josemaria. Diii ko moyon sa pipila kapagtulon-an ni...

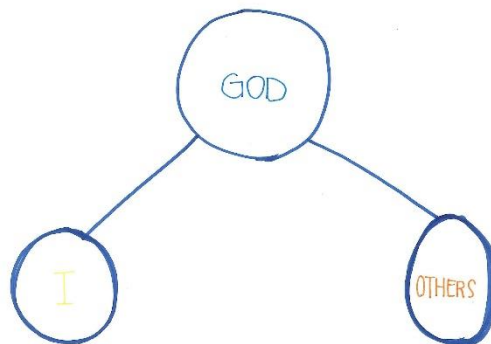
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Explaining her illustration (see Figure 10), Student JC said:

“I put God in the center because... God is everything. God is in the center of our life... Then others, my family, they're also connected to God. They're very faithful. And they always need God, especially when they have problems that they encounter and my friend[s]... God is my best friend. He is my mentor. He is my best friend. He is my father. When I have problems, I seek God. I talk to God. Like, He's really my best friend” (Student JC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 13, 2023).

Figure 10.

*Student JC's illustration of herself, God,
and others (family and friends)*



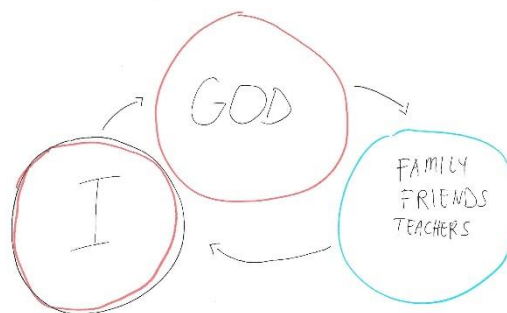
According to Slabbert (2022), the effectiveness of religious communication is directly proportional to the symbolic shared realities (external/everyday realities, internal/private realities, and religious realities). In the present study, Student JC's religious reality, where communication between her and God takes place, was enlarged by her own internal reality and external reality, because her family and friends were also closely connected to God. By surrounding herself with people who

shared her close relationship with God, religious communication was reinforced to the point that she identified God with her family and friends (“best friend, mentor, father”). This supports Slabbert’s theory on religious communication that “The bigger the identification, the more successful the communication.” (Fisher, 1978 in Slabbert, 2022).

In addition, Student YC explained her illustration (see Figure 11), “I put God in the center with a hollow red circle, because God is a loving father and our provider, and in return for His goodness to us, I always put Him first. God is always in the center for me, and that speaks of how high my Faith is” (Student YC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

Figure 11.

*Student YC’s illustration of herself, God,
And others (family and friends)*



Slabbert’s (2022) Religious Communication identified three types of feedback, namely Sensitivity, Directional, and Expression Feedback. Student YC’s response illustrated Expression Feedback because she was expressing her religious beliefs.

Establishing Meaning Between Religion and Everyday Life

Most of the students responded positively regarding the connection between their religious life and their everyday life (see Figure 12). Student CA explained: “I don’t think there’s a difference, because talking to God is just like talking to my friends, because I think he’s someone... I can always just talk to without pressure” (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023).

Like Student JC, Student CA’s religious reality was enlarged by her own internal reality and external reality (Talking to God is just like talking to my friends). This supports Slabbert’s (2022) theory that the bigger the identification, the more successful the communication.

The students were generally in agreement that religion was beneficial to their everyday life as students. However, they were divided as to where to draw the line between the two. Student WA explained:

“Parehas man mi dili relihiyosa... pero motuo ko ni God... Sa among pamilya kay di man sad mi tig-pray, pero kon naay problema, mo-pray mi... Diri ra gyod ko naabot nga na-closer ko ni God” (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: We are alike in that we are not religious, but I still believe in God. In my family, we do not usually pray unless we encounter problems. It is only here in BCPD when I grew closer to God.

In contrast to Student YC who exhibited Expression Feedback in the previous section on St. Josemaria, Student WA's response illustrated Directional Feedback. Directional Feedback is a type of feedback which occurs "when the individual's belief system directs their thoughts and feelings" (Slabbert, 2022). In other words, students like Student WA who differentiated their religious life from their student life were merely directed by their religious beliefs but were not necessarily adopting them in their lifestyle or engaging in religious rituals and practices which were more closely associated with Expression Feedback.

When faced with life's challenges, some students also expressed more difficulty in establishing meaning between their religious life and everyday life. Student HA explained:

"I have a broken family... my mother [has] another [family], and my father [has] another [family]... I felt that I blame[d] myself why *na-ingon ana akong* family. *Dayon mao na siya, nawad-an ko'g paglaum. Kadtong time nibalhin ko'g church...* my spirit was on fire. *Naduol ko sa Ginoo. Nibalik ko sa Ginoo. Mas nasabtan nako ang pulong sa Ginoo*" (Student HA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: I have a broken family. My mother has another family, and my father has another family. I felt that I blamed myself for why it happened to my family. That is what happened, I lost hope. When I converted, my spirit was on fire. I grew closer to God. I returned to God. I was able to understand the Word of God better.

Student HA's family problem corresponded to a religious communication barrier. According to Slabbert (2022), "Possible barriers could be symbolic shared systems that are not shared or **factors which cannot be controlled by the individual**. For instance, the unknown mystery of God or even the individual's own psychological state."

On the other hand, Student HA's conversion emphasized the two-dimensionality of religious communication where "the spiritual/intuitive supernatural communication between the individual and God (vertical axis)... intersects with the interpersonal/human communication (the horizontal axis) through intrapersonal communication in the individual's self" (Slabbert, 2022). In other words, religious communication does not only take place between the individual and God but also involves the individual and themselves (intrapersonal communication) and the individual and others (interpersonal communication).

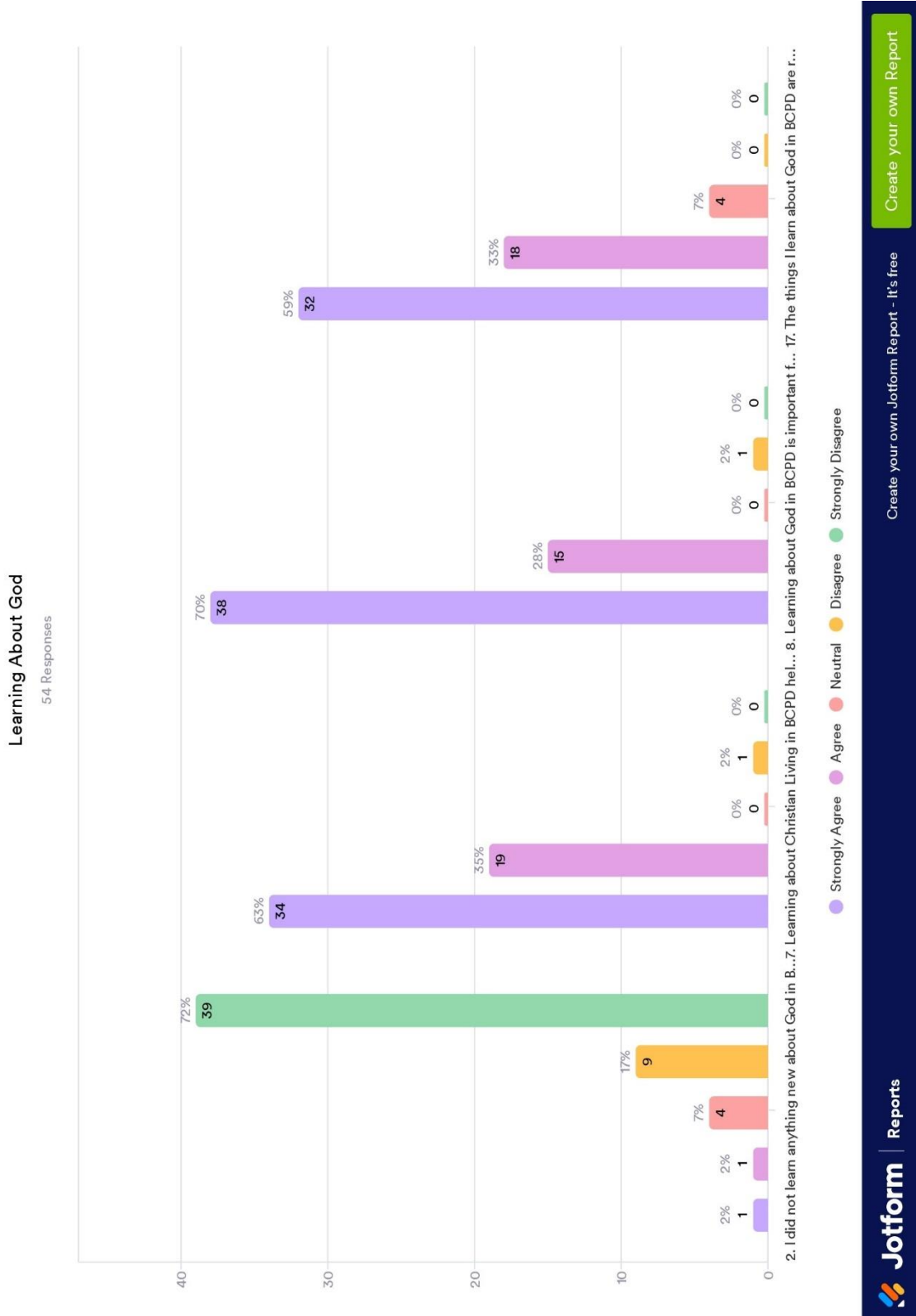
Learning About God

Students were strongly in favor of learning about God as part of the current religious communication being provided in BCPD (see Figure 13).

Figure 13.

Summary of responses from the survey on religious communication - Theme 3:

Learning about God



Spiritual formation is one of the key features of BCPD's Hotel and Restaurant Services (HRS) program to foster holistic development. BCPD promotes a loyal adherence to the doctrine of Christian Faith by providing spiritual formation activities to students, parents, teachers, and staff including but not limited to:

- **Christian Living Class.** All students are required to attend a two-hour Christian Living class every week. This is taught by a female member of Opus Dei.
- **Meditation.** Students are advised to attend a 30- to 40-minute Christian meditation every week in the form of a guided prayer reflecting on a Gospel passage and Catholic doctrine. This is given by a priest of Opus Dei inside the school's oratory.
- **Recollection.** Students are advised to attend a two-hour mini retreat every month consisting of praying the rosary, spiritual reading, examination of conscience, meditation, confession, and often concluding with Holy Mass. This is also given by a priest of Opus Dei inside the school's oratory.

When asked what she liked about BCPD, Student BB cited its spiritual formation activities, "[BCPD] makes our relationship [with] God more concrete... we have [a] subject, Christian Living... that talks about God... Every Thursday, [we have] meditation or recollection" (Student BB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

"The symbolic interaction process takes place in the individual's self where his cognitive, affective, conative, and intuitive experiences create the meaning he ascribes to his world around him and the way in which he constructs his

religious reality... The cognitive dimension refers to reason and logic, which serves as the foundation for the other dimensions to understand and interpret the unexplainable aspects of religion” (Davis, 1967, Kaufmann, 1958, Stewart, 1980 in Slabbert, 2022).

Student BB was able to develop a **more concrete** image of God and strengthen her relationship with Him by learning about religion in BCPD. Like most of her classmates, she studied in a public elementary and high school where religion class was not mandatory and was taught in its most basic level. For Student BB, BCPD’s spiritual formation activities engaged her on a cognitive dimension, helping her form a better understanding of her own faith.

Such activities (Christian Living classes, meditation, and recollection) also serve as religious mediums which have a similar function to traditional mediums in an SCMR+F communication process. For a Christian, religious communication (between the individual and God) takes place through Christian meditation, the Bible, nature, religious experiences, preaching, and the mass media (Slabbert, 2022).

Relationship with Others

Overall, the students reported highly positive relationships with their teachers, mentors, and classmates (see Figure 14).

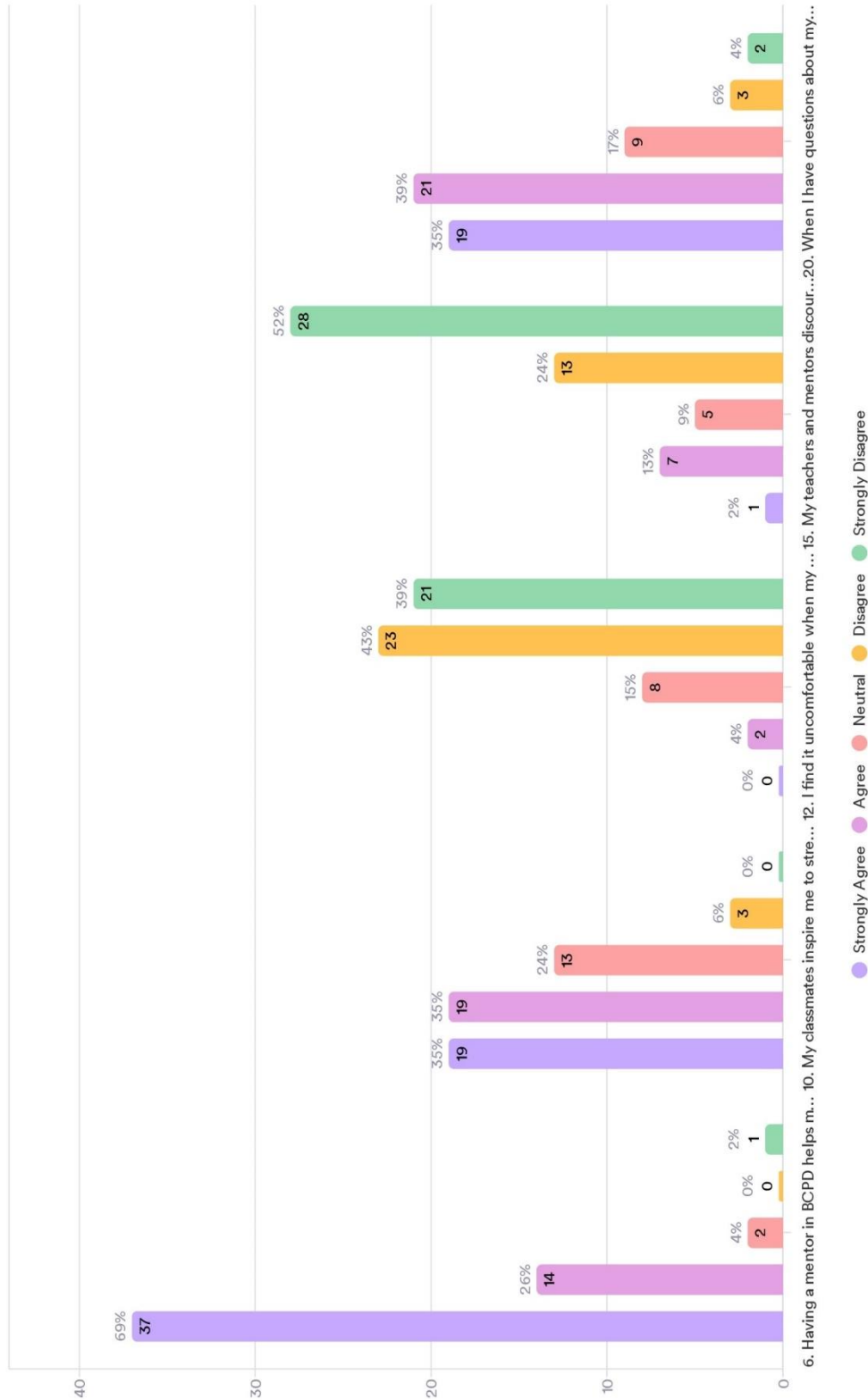
Figure 14.

Summary of responses from the survey on religious communication -

Theme 4: Relationship with others

Relationship with Others

54 Responses




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Student YC even explicitly mentioned her teachers when asked to draw three circles to illustrate herself, God, and Others. She said: “For me, teachers are precious... They are not just like teachers who teach you something. They’re like parents... to me... I’m not *sipsip* [teacher’s pet], but... I’m really close with my teachers, because I respect them so much” (Student YC Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

On the other hand, Student JD mentioned her mentor when asked what she liked about BCPD. She explained: “BCPD has mentors to monitor every student if they have a problem in school, in their work as OJTs [on-the-job trainees], and especially to their families. BCPD always show[s] care to all students and also they always want [what is] good for every student” (Student JD, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

Life coaching/mentoring is another course feature of BCPD’s HRS program to foster holistic development. It forms part of the personalized approach of the Foundation for Professional Training, Inc.’s (FPTI) educational system which differentiates it from other technical-vocational institutions. It is a venue where various concerns that impact students’ life is discussed with the purpose of helping the students, whether they are in school, at home, or in the workplace.

Speaking of her classmates, Student MS said:

“This is a school [that] I can only say [that I am very] confident. Like *dili ko makulba-an or ma-pressured sa akong classmates kay kanang gipa-feel pud nila nako, nga kanang fair ra mi. Kanang wala mi kopetensya nga nahitabo sa*

among section” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: This is a school that I can only say that I am very confident. I do not feel nervous or pressured by my classmates, because they make me feel like we are all equal. There is no competition in our section.

She proceeded to share her experience of being bullied in junior high school, citing it as one of the reasons why she temporarily dropped out of school:

“Unya kana ang reason pod nga nag-stop pod. Kay kanang mahadlok ko menter og university ba, kay naa na gani ang trauma nako nga basin mabalik na sad na i-bully ko... Pagsud nako ani kay mas nakuyawan ko kay babay diay mi tanan, then basin ba’g ma-usab na pod to na i-bully ko. But as time went by, kay kanang gipa-feel nila nga di ko kinahanglan mabalaka kay kanang fair ra ilang tan-aw nila” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: That is also one of the reasons why I stopped going to school. I am afraid to enter the university, because I already have a trauma of being a victim of bullying again. When I was admitted to BCPD, I was even more scared because this is an all-girls school, and I might end up being bullied again. But as time went by, my classmates in BCPD reassured me that I have nothing to worry about, because everyone is treated fairly.

According to Slabbert (2022), religious communication requires “feedback from *significant others* as part of the horizontal dimension (between the individual and others) that influences the vertical dimension (between the individual and God).” In

fact, one cannot exist without the other. In the present study, the students' positive interpersonal communication with their teachers, mentors, and classmates had a positive impact on their spiritual communication and relationship with God.

Degree of Association Between the Level of Academic Persistence and the Level of Satisfaction with the Current Religious Communication

Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient was computed to determine the degree of association between the level of academic persistence among vocational students in BCPD and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD.

"The Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is a nonparametric measurement correlation... It is used as a hypothesis test to study the dependence between two variables." (Dodge, 2008). In this study, the two variables were the Level of Academic Persistence (X) and the Level of Satisfaction with the Current Religious Communication (Y). "There is a positive correlation between X and Y, if the value of the correlation coefficient is positive; a perfect positive correlation corresponds to a value of +1" (Dodge, 2008). On the other hand, if the value of the correlation coefficient is negative, then there is a negative correlation. If the value is close to zero, then X and Y are not correlated. Table 9 presents the summary of analysis using Spearman's Rank Correlation.

Table 9.*Summary of analysis using Spearman's Rank Correlation*

Level of Academic Persistence (X)	Rank of X	Level of Satisfaction with Current Religious Communica tion (Y)	Rank of Y	d	d ²
79	13	74	47.5	34.5	1190.25
67	39.5	79	40.5	1	1
73	22.5	87	24.5	2	4
83	8	92	14	6	36
67	39.5	70	49.5	10	100
72	27.5	92	14	13.5	182.25
74	19.5	90	18	1.5	2.25
61	49.5	75	45.5	4	16
71	31.5	83	37	5.5	30.25
62	47.5	75	45.5	2	4
63	46	84	33.5	12.5	156.25
96	1	97	6.5	5.5	30.25
77	15.5	84	33.5	18	324
68	36.5	78	42	5.5	30.25
73	22.5	93	11.5	11	121

74	19.5	93	11.5	8	64
68	36.5	84	33.5	3	9
70	33.5	84	33.5	0	0
61	49.5	70	49.5	0	0
76	17.5	90	18	0.5	0.25
67	39.5	88	22.5	17	289
81	10	98	3	7	49
67	39.5	54	54	14.5	210.25
84	6.5	80	39	32.5	1056.25
73	22.5	95	9	13.5	182.25
77	15.5	76	44	28.5	812.25
64	44.5	90	18	26.5	702.25
85	4.5	98	3	1.5	2.25
72	27.5	88	22.5	5	25
57	53	64	53	0	0
72	27.5	82	38	10.5	110.25
53	54	94	10	44	1936
64	44.5	86	27.5	17	289
65	42.5	74	47.5	5	25
71	31.5	86	27.5	4	16
76	17.5	97	6.5	11	121
65	42.5	77	43	0.5	0.25
81	10	98	3	7	49
79	13	84	33.5	20.5	420.25

62	47.5	67	52	4.5	20.25
73	22.5	97	6.5	16	256
72	27.5	89	20.5	7	49
72	27.5	79	40.5	13	169
79	13	91	16	3	9
94	2	97	6.5	4.5	20.25
81	10	87	24.5	14.5	210.25
72	27.5	69	51	23.5	552.25
69	35	86	27.5	7.5	56.25
92	3	100	1	2	4
85	4.5	89	20.5	16	256
58	51.5	85	30	21.5	462.25
70	33.5	86	27.5	6	36
84	6.5	92	14	7.5	56.25
58	51.5	84	33.5	18	324
Sum of d^2			11,077		
R _s Value			0.5778		
Critical probability (p) value and statistical significance level			p = 0.001 (99.9% statistical significance level)		

There was a moderate positive correlation between the two variables, ($r_s[54] = +.58, p = 0.001$), in support of Hypothesis 1 of the present study: The more religious communication needs are met, the higher the level of academic persistence.

Role of Religious Communication in Improving Academic Persistence

To analyze the role of religious communication in improving the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD, this study used Braun and Clarke’s six-step thematic analysis framework: (1) become familiar with the data, (2) generate initial codes, (3) search for themes, (4) review themes, (5) define themes, and (6) write the findings of the thematic analysis (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017).

Subsequently, three themes were identified: Communicating with God, Communicating with Others, and Communicating with Oneself (see Table 10).

Table 10.

Themes and Codes

Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Communicating with God	Who is God for me?	God is at the center of everything
		God is always close to me
	What has God done for me?	God helps me overcome my problems
		Time is a gift from God
	How can I grow my love for God?	Prayer is a source of comfort
Communicating with Others		My family made me who I am today
		My family and friends bring me closer to God
	What have they done for me?	My family supports me
		My teachers and mentor support me
		BCPD brings me closer to God

		BCPD has a positive impact in my life
		BCPD imposes rules for my own good
	How can I grow my love for them?	I bring my family and friends closer to God
		I dedicate my studies and work to my family
Communicating with Oneself	How well do I know myself?	I know what I want in life
		I know my areas of improvement
	How can I grow as a person?	I look for ways to adjust myself to new experiences
		I learn from my failures

Communicating with God

The first theme identified was Communicating with God which was rooted on the Christian message of love for God in line with Jesus Christ's commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Mt 22:37, Christian Community Bible, 2012). Under the first theme, three sub-themes emerged: Who is God for me? What has God done for me? And how can I grow my love for God? (see Table 11)

Table 11.

Theme 1: Communicating with God

Theme: Love for God		
Sub-Theme	Code	Quote
Who is God for me?	God is at the center of everything	<p>"God is the center... For me <i>lang</i> because of God, my life changed <i>gyud</i>. Based on my <i>ku-an lang gyud</i>, from my relationship to myself with God to others. So <i>mao na nga</i> I put him in the center because <i>tungod pud niya</i>, our relationship with my family became stronger. So that's why God is the center." (Student MO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"We put Him [God] at the center of our lives... He's at the middle between me and my parents." (Student BB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"<i>Sa family kay si God ang center... Gi-center namo si God sa every namo kon naay problema. Kon unsay mahitabo sa among life. Dako mi og salig ni God.</i>" (Student ST, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"And I put God as a center, because I [and] my family and friends put him in the center of our lives, because He guide[s] us every time." (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"God is in the center... because God is a loving father and our provider, and in return for his goodness to us, I always put him first. God is always in the center for me, and that speaks of how high my faith is." (Student YC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"God at the center, because for me, God must be the center of everything, like in everything <i>gyud</i>." (Student NR, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"God is something that connects us... My family also, what do you call that? God-fearing?" (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"God is the center for us, because God helped in building back the connection we lost with what happened with our other family members." (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"We seek and need some guidance of God, and that's why we all put God in the center, because God is everything." (Student JC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p>

Who is God for me?	God is at the center of everything	<p>"Because God is everything, he knows everything about us, and he is our savior and provider." (Student KO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Because God is like a connection to us. He binds us all." (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"I put God in the center, because as what Nars said, God is everything. God is in the center of our life." (Student JC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p>
Who is God for me?	God is always close to me	<p>"When I started to dance in front of everybody, it [felt] that <i>naa nako ang Ginoo, nga nagkuan ra sya nag-guide namo para ma-success among event... Mafeel gyud nimo, the way ka musayaw atubangan sa altar then makuan nimo nga murag kamo rang duha sa Ginoo.</i>" (Student JD, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"<i>Bisag gitagaan mi ug challenges ni God pero naa ra gihapon siya ba... Bisan pa'g kanang unsay nga challenge nga among naagi-an, ba pero kabaw mi nga naa ra gihapon siya.</i>" (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"<i>Sa akong pagsud diri noh kay gi – Kabaw naman sad gyod ko nga nag-focus gyod sila kay God. Then ako sad kay... kabaw sad ko sa akong kaugalingon ba nga duol ko ni God.</i>" (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"I am very close and connected to God." (Student JC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"<i>Katong time nga nibalhin na kag church kay kanang my spirit was on fire. Naduol ko sa Ginoo. Nabalik ko sa Ginoo. Kanang mas nasabtan nako ang pulong sa Ginoo, then mao to siya nga there's a transformation in me.</i>" (Student HA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p>
What has God done for me?	God helps me overcome problems	<p>My father was sick. It's called <i>kuan shingles</i>. So, since <i>daghan man siya'g mga responsibilities gud akong papa</i> and so <i>ako pud, naguol pud ko. Maguol ko diri sa skwilahan, maguol pud ko ditto sa balay... Murag taga adlaw na lang ko maghilak... Unya dira sa oratory kanang kuan ra nalabyan ra nako na. Di gyud ko mag-pray. Adto gyud nako ka-realize nga need gyud kaayo nako si God... Maa to kanang wala na gyud ko kapugong nisud gyud ko sa oratory ako ra usa. Nag-pray gyud ko nga... maayo na gyud akong papa kay kanang naguol gyud ko. Maa to after a few days. naayo na gyud akong papa.</i> (Student AT, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p>

<p>What has God done for me?</p>	<p>God helps me overcome problems</p> <p>“Naka-stop man ko ug one year nga mo-school kay nagtrabaho kay para mo-help sa akong family. So ganahan naman kaayo ko moskwela, so akong gi-ampo ni God kay kanang mayta maka-school na ko. Kanang gihatag gyud ni God nga kanang para ako-a gyud ni nga makaskwela jud ko, kay sige ko ug ampo nga kanang mayta makapasar ko.” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>“He lights up our life whenever there are times nga kanang we’re going through the darkness.” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>“So, because of my relationship with God, my life become lighter. So, from darkness, from being hopeless to a disciple of God.” (Student MO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>“God gives me strength. He motivates me when I’m feeling down, when my problems got heavy. God is my strength also... When I have problems, I seek God. I talk to God. Like, He’s really my best friend.” (Student JC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>“Even though I have so many problems and problems that comes in my life, but God’s never, never leave me, but God’s here, hear me and kanang willing to help me everything that, everything that I need... Without God, I don’t know how to manage myself if I have a problem.” (Student AB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>“I can consider him that He [God] has my back... So I can always just turn to God and ask Him for any strength, for guidance that I need, for the challenges... God is always in my back, guiding me and supporting me in every challenges I face.” (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>“Gitagaan gihapon mi niya og blessings. Bisan pa’g nasunogan mi. Natagaan gihapon mi niya og balay. Kay among business kay kanang gipapadayon pa gihapon niya para naa gihapon mi kita.” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>“My parents split with each other. And then it is like the situation where my faith in God really strengthened, because that time I feel like I am alone, because my parents are not around, but then it’s like it’s like his way for me to like be more close to him.” (Student YC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>“My unforgettable moment with God is when my mother died. That’s 2019. And kuan it feels so much pain in [my] heart that time, because it’s pandemic and my mother died. So, it’s really strengthened my faith of Him.” (Student DS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p>
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<p>What has God done for me?</p>	<p>God helps me overcome problems</p>	<p>"I was covered with darkness, like I was very depressed that time... At that moment, also, I want to end up my life. Yes. Because of being hopeless... So <i>ingon ana, sukad ato kay na-enlightened gyod ko then na-strength akong Faith ni God.</i>" (Student MO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 13, 2023)</p> <p>"I lost my sister, my grandmother, and now I lost him [my father]. I don't know what to do anymore. It was during pandemic, so I can't reach out to my friends... That was when I started to lose connection with God, because I kind of resented him for what happened... One day, I just woke up and like I can't take this anymore. And that's when I kind of decided to like I just want to end these things, I want to end everything. Like that's I don't know what came over to me and I just, Lord, please help me. I don't know what to do anymore. And I just cried everything out that night. Then suddenly the next day, I don't know nakatulong ko nag sigeg hilak. Pagmata nako, suddenly, I felt light and like everything is shining brightly unlike before it's always gloomy but when I woke up it was like the sun is shining. It was so bright and right after that I decided to visit the church to thank God, because I know he helped me that time. And that's when I asked for his forgiveness for what I did, for how I resented him for what happened. And for now, I consider that my connection with God was stronger than before." (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 13, 2023)</p> <p>"My unforgettable moment with God is when Odette, the Typhoon Odette came. Then it hit very hard in our place sa Dumalan... We really ask God, Saint Michael, and all the saints that protect our house. And then after that, we're very thankful that only our house didn't have any damage at all, with all the houses in our barangay." (Student NR, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"My mother had a disease sa kidney... I decided to go to church and I prayed for that my mom will heal... I am very thankful especially to God that my mother is now in a good health." (Student JC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"My unforgettable moment, unforgettable story is when I get food poison... five days <i>narman daw wa gihapon ko naayo... we went to the Simala... Then didto ra ko nag-ampo then nagpasalamat sa Ginoo.</i> I think that for everything, he helped me <i>kadtong nasakit ko.</i>" (Student AB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 13, 2023)</p> <p>"My most unforgettable moment with God was in 2021. I actually stopped one year because of our financial status. And that time, I was very down. I don't know what to do because my other batchmates pursued their college life while me. Doing nothing in our house then also that day it was the pandemic days... Luckily, I received good news and that is my sister called me and she offered a course in BCPD, three years course, and I grabbed the opportunity to take that. And fast forward, I enrolled in this school and luckily I passed." (Student JC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 13, 2023)</p>
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<p>What has God done for me?</p>	<p>Time is a gift from God</p>	<p>"Tuesday to Thursday mo-ari ko [at the school]. And then Monday and Friday mag-work ko... Naa gihapon koy adlaw nga mo-work. At least kanang duha ka adlaw, naa gihapon koy sweldo which is para pamplete nako." (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"Kadtong ku-an sa akong friend. She passed away pag March ata kay naa man siyay cancer... Mo-18 na unta siya pag-September 13." (Student ST, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Unya if tagaan mi og higayon kay pasalamat mi ni God kay tagaan mi niya og aras sa among barkada." (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p>
<p>How can I grow my love for God?</p>	<p>Prayer is a source of comfort</p>	<p>"God is in our hearts. So even though I don't speak it, like in yourself lang, like in your mind you're talking to God, like maka-relieve siya sa imong mga feeling." (Student MO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"Sa among family kay di man sad mi tig pray pero ug naay problema, mo-pray mi kay kanang moga-an gani among pamati... Basta makahinomdom ko ni God kay mopray ko kung naay problema ba sa family ra kay kadtong akong sulti, mogaan ra na akong pamati, mokalma ko." (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Talking to God is just like talking to my friends, because I think He's someone like someone I can always just talk to without any pressure." (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"Every time kon nay problem kay mag-ampo mi kang God nga masulbad ang problema. And then especially kanang mga challenge sa life." (Student ST, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p>

Who Is God for Me?

God is at the center of everything. All the students mentioned that God was at the center of their lives. For them, there was an inextricable link between God and their family, indicating that God did not only occupy a central place in the students' individual lives but also within their families.

“God is the center... For me *lang* because of God, my life changed *gyod*. Based on my *kuan lang gyod*, from my relationship to myself with God to others. So *mao na nga* I put him in the center because *tungod pod niya*, our relationship with my family became stronger. So that's why God is the center” (Student MO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023).

English Translation: God is at the center. For me, because of God, my life changed based on my relationship with myself, with God, and with others. So, this is why I put him in the center, because thanks to Him, my relationship with my family became stronger. So that is why God is at the center.

God is always close to me. Several students related religious experiences which strengthened their belief in God. By experiencing God in a concrete way in their lives, the students became even more convinced of their religious beliefs. Some religious experiences took place in a strictly religious nature such as that of Student JD who was an active member of the Ladies of the Altar.

“When I started to dance in front of everybody, it [felt] that *naa nako ang Ginoo, nga nagkuan ra sya nag-guide namo para ma-success among event... Ma-feel gyod nimo, the way ka mosayaw atubangan sa altar* then *makuan*

nimo nga morag kamo rang duha sa Ginoo" (Student JD, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: When I started to dance in front of everybody, it felt like God was present with me, guiding me, and ensuring the success of our event. You can really feel it, when you dance in front of the altar, it feels like it is just between you and God.

On the other hand, some religious experiences were ordinary everyday events which the students attributed to God.

"Bisag gitagaan mi og challenges ni God pero naa ra gihapon siya ba... Bisan pa'g kanang unsay nga challenge nga among naagi-an ba, pero kabaw mi nga naa ra gihapon siya" (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: Even though God gives us challenges, He is still there. No matter what kind of challenges we face, we know he is always there.

What Has God Done for Me?

God helps me overcome problems. Coming from low-income families, the students did not only face academic stressors but also multiple life stressors such as financial issues. Student AT related a time when her father, the breadwinner of the family, could not work because of health complications and attributed his healing as an act of God:

“My father was sick. It's called kuan shingles. So, since daghan man siya'g mga responsibilities gyod akong papa and so ako pod, naguol pod ko. Maguol ko diri sa eskuwelahan, naguol pod ko didto sa balay... Murag taga adlaw na lang ko maghilak... Unya dira sa oratory kanang kuan ra nalabyan ra nako na. Di gyod ko mag-pray. Adto gyud nako ka-realize nga need gyod kaayo nako si God... Mao to kanang wala na gyod ko kapugong nisulod gyod ko sa oratory ako ra usa. Nag-pray gyod ko nga... maayo na gyod akong papa kay kanang naguol gyod ko. Mao to after a few days, naayo na gyod akong Papa” (Student AT, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: My father was sick with shingles. Since he has a lot of responsibilities, I also felt depressed here in school and at home. I cried almost every day. I used to just pass by the school oratory. I never prayed. But at that moment, I realized that I really needed God. So, I could not help myself from going inside the oratory all by myself. I prayed that my father would be healed because I was so depressed. After a few days, my father recovered.

Also due to financial issues, several students spoke about having to drop out of school prior to studying in BCPD. They viewed the opportunity to continue their studies in BCPD as a sign from God.

“Naka-stop man ko og one year nga mo-school kay nagtrabaho kay para mo-help sa akong family. So ganahan naman kaayo ko moeskwela, so akong giampo ni God kay kanang mayta maka-school na ko. Kanang gihatag gyod ni God nga kanang para akoa gyod ni nga makaeskwela gyod ko, kay sige ko

og ampo nga kanang may unta makapasar ko” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: I had to stop schooling for one year to work and help my family. I really wanted to go back to school, so I prayed to God that I could continue with my studies. God granted my prayer, so this is truly my destiny to go back to school. I always prayed that I would pass the entrance exam.

Time is a gift from God. The students showed a unique awareness of the value of time, from recognizing its worth in their ordinary everyday life to reflecting on the fleetingness of life.

“Tuesday to Thursday moari ko [at the school]. And then Monday and Friday mag-work ko... Naa gihapon koy adlaw nga mo-work. At least kanang duha ka adlaw, naa gihapon ko’y sweldo which is para pangplete nako” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: From Tuesday to Thursday, I come to school. On Monday and Friday, I go to work. I still have time to go to work. At least on those two days, I can still earn money for my transportation.

“Kadtong kuan sa akong friend. She passed away pag March ata kay naa man siya’y cancer... Mo-18 na unta siya pag-September 13” (Student ST, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: My friend passed away last March because she had cancer. She would have turned 18 last September 13.

How Can I Grow My Love for God?

Prayer is a source of comfort. The students described a profoundly personal relationship with God grounded in prayer. Some students likened their relationship with God to their human friendships. “Talking to God is just like talking to my friends, because I think He’s someone like someone I can always just talk to without any pressure” (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023).

Some students described the power of prayer to relieve them of their worries, some even citing immediate effect.

“God is in our hearts. So even though I don’t speak it, like in yourself *lang*, like in your mind you’re talking to God, like *maka-relieve siya sa imong mga feeling* [it will relieve you of your negative feelings]” (Student MO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023).

“*Sa among family kay di man sad mi tig-pray pero ug naay problema, mo-pray mi kay kanang mogaan gani among pamati... Basta makahinumdom ko ni God kay mo-pray ko kon naay problema ba sa family ra kay kadtong akong sulti, mogaan ra na akong pamati, mokalma ko*” (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: In my family, we do not pray much. But when problems arise, we pray and feel lighter inside. Whenever I remember God, I pray if there are problems in the family, because like I said, I feel lighter inside. I calm down.

Communicating with Others

The second theme identified was communicating with others which was rooted on the Christian message of love for others in line with Jesus Christ's commandment: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 27:39, Christian Community Bible, 2012). Within the context of this study, the term *others* refers to everyone involved in the students' lives at home and in school: their parents and family, their teachers, their mentor, and BCPD itself as an institution. Under the second theme, two sub-themes emerged: What have they done for me? And how can I grow my love for them? (see Table 12)

What Have They Done for Me?

My family made me who I am today. Most students displayed strong family ties, attributing their very existence to their parents.

"Family is important to me... they molded me for who I am today... Special *man ang family kay... kon wala among parents, kay wa sad mi*" (Student ST, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: Family is important to me. They molded me for who I am today. My family is special, because if not for my parents, I would also not be here.

Table 12.

Theme 2: Communicating with Others

Theme: Love for Others		Quote
Sub-Theme	Code	
What have they done for me?	My family made me who I am today	<p>"Family is important to me... they molded me for who I am today... Special man ang family kay... kung wala among parents, kay wa sad mi." (Student ST, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"My parents... molded me and I became what I am right now" (Student BB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"My auntie decided... to take me with her to Medellin to experience how to worship God... She's a <i>deboto</i> in Medellin... They have a private church there in the mountain... They are Catholic[s], but they have other terms <i>gani</i> of <i>Santo Niño</i>. They call <i>Santo Niño</i> as <i>Migo Puy</i>, because they believe that <i>Santo Niño</i> is the one friend, <i>amigo</i>, and <i>magpupuyuy</i>, kanang heal <i>maakaayo</i>... <i>Atong tayma</i>, we got locked down... then we stayed there for almost three months... <i>Kana ganing mapalibotan gani ko ag kanang mga prayerful people, mura sad gani ko ag madani gani</i>... <i>Atong tayma nakabinuotan gyud ko</i> for three months <i>kay wala gyud kay laing buhat. Ampo, kaon, tulog, ampo, mao ra gyud to didto</i>." (Student GB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"<i>Kanang kon kami sa akong friends, kay kanang kana ganing kay panagsa ra man mi magkita morag once a year ra kay kanang busy mi sa among kaugalingon</i>, then every time <i>magkita-kita mi kay kanang manimba gyod mi</i>." (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Every Sunday <i>gyod mi mag-pray na ma-okay siya kay ni-stage four naman gyod to iyang cancer</i>." (Student ST, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Like my mother, she always says that if you have any problems that you can't say or talk to us, but always just pray to God, asking for any guidance, ask him for what you need, because He's always gonna to give it to you. We always say that God is always there. You can always just ask God for any, for forgiveness or strength, for anything, for forgiveness, for strength, for anything that that you just want to be thankful of." (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"<i>Naabot na ang April, Semana Santa... Nagtinil mi didto, nagkuan mi sa kalbaryo, nag-perform mi kanang nagkandila mi</i>, the sun was really hot then we are using the veil, <i>nagsayal gihapon. Igang kaayo. Ang sa among hunahuna</i>, my aunt said, <i>sakripisyo na sa imong kuan mga sala</i>, before, <i>kanang pagtigom ug kanang pundasyon sa langit aron daw kuno gamay-gamay na lang akong kuan sala</i>." (Student GB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p>
What have they done for me?	My family and friends bring me closer to God	

<p>What have they done for me?</p>	<p>My family supports me</p>	<p>"[My] family, my dead relatives, and everyone that cares for me... I know that they are always beside me, and I can always count on them whenever I need help with anything, with my problems, with any like schoolwork." (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"Family is first. From the start, they take good care of me. And until now, I have them when I'm not feeling well, I have a shoulder to carry on." (Student DS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p>
<p>What have they done for me?</p>	<p>My teachers and mentor support me</p>	<p>"<i>Kanang ganahan siya [Miss P] nga mo-communicate mi niya para masmasabtan daw namo iyang mga discussion. Or like naa ba daw siyay sayop, ngano daw gamay mi ug score.</i>" (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Jolly man gud kaayo siya [Miss G]. Unya maglisod mi sa Math, so mangutana pud mi niya... <i>Kanang maka-ingon jud mi nga free mi niya makapangutana.</i>" (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Miss C interviewed me and asked me if there's anything that I want[ed] to improve... and I said it's confidence. I think she remembered that because during our class in Christian Living, she always picks me to answer the questions." (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"For example, si Miss G ug Miss P. Because <i>kanang</i> they don't just teach the lesson, but they also teach <i>kanang</i> about life. <i>Mo-story man sila about sa ilang experiences. Naa ra sa mi makat-onan ingon-ana.</i>" (Student HA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"They also have mentors who can freely express your feelings or emotions." (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p>
<p>What have they done for me?</p>	<p>My teachers and mentor support me</p>	<p>"<i>Parehas man mi nga dili relihyosa pareha sa uban. Diri ra gyud ko naabot nga na-closer ko ni God.</i>" (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Having a mentor that really guides us on and also giving advice in every situation that we have." (Student NR, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"BCPD has mentors to monitor every student if they have a problem in school, in their work as OJTs, and especially to their families... [I have spoken to my mentor] before through online or chat <i>kay permi man siya magtravel, so moadto sya sa iyang mga anak. Pero okay ra man gihapon siya, mo-cooperate, mangumusta ra gyod kon naa ba mi problem.</i>" (Student JD, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p>

<p>What have they done for me?</p>	<p>BCPD brings me closer to God</p>	<p><i>"Ma-appreciate pud namo iyang effort ba kay kana ganing kahibaw mi nga unfamiliar siya sa among words, pero kanang mag-effort gyud siya ba nga pasabton gyud mi kung unsa iyang ganahan i-deliver sa amo-a... Ma-appreciate sad namo iyang effort ba the way siya mo-discuss kay ganahan siya para makasabot mi. I-try gyud niya nga i-translate ug Bisaya bisan pa'g nagkalisod na siya."</i> (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p><i>"Among teacher kay i-explain man niya kon unsa kana sa religion kon unsa sa among religion."</i> (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p><i>"[BCPD] make[s] your relationship to God more concrete... We have subject, Christian Living. Then kana talks about God. Every Friday, ay every Thursday naa mi meditation or recollection."</i> (Student BB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p><i>"BCPD has a big help with me because they enlightened me, especially God, that I will, that they taught us to not give up and that we should pray always."</i> (Student JC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 13, 2023)</p> <p><i>"[BCPD] is centered in religion. So in school, we always practice um what do you call it? We always pray, we do have our recollection from time to time."</i> (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p><i>"I like BCPD because it is a Catholic school and it teaches us about God."</i> (Student JD, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p>
<p>What have they done for me?</p>	<p>BCPD has a positive impact in my life</p>	<p><i>"[BCPD] helps women in general to have a better future or to have a higher grade of employment. They're very firm about teaching the students not only [in terms of] skills but also in religion and manners. I love that their goal [or] focus is also to help unprivileged women, [for] women to be able to earn and to have a fresh start."</i> (Student YC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p><i>"Sa akong previous nga schools kay kanang di ko ingon ani ka-confident... Like sa class namo kay kanang hilomon ra jud kaayo ko, then di gani ko ka-express sa akong kaugalingon. Then [BCPD] is a school nga I can only say nga kanang confident jud ko."</i> (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p><i>BCPD helps me to be a better woman, or kanang to be an elegant person ba, kay before high school ko kay kuan bugoy kaayo. Kay magkuyog-kuyog man kog laki sauna high school ko. Nya sauna kay naay manung bagay kay manud mi skina nya manan-aw mi. Mao to karon nag-BCPD ko kay murag babae na kaayo ko.</i> (Student GB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p>

<p>What have they done for me?</p>	<p>BCPD has a positive impact in my life</p>	<p>"BCPD always show[s] care to all students and also they always want [the] good for every student." (Student JD, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"They give us opportunity. They encourage us to continue what are our possibilities what happens in our future. They teach us good manners and right conduct and have good teachers." (Student HA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"The goal of BCPD is really <i>kanang</i> effective <i>gyod</i>. <i>Naa gyod silay makita nga bright future sa ilang kaugalingon</i>." (Student DS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"<i>Unya kanang sa school kay morag bawal gyod ka moaway. Kana, mao na akong natun-an. Na kinahanglan gyod diay controlon atong self</i>." (Student KO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p>
<p>What have they done for me?</p>	<p>BCPD imposes rules for my own good</p>	<p>Sometimes they are super strict when it comes to their students... <i>Murag mahuna-huna-an ra pud nako nga para ra pud sa ku-an mao na strict kaayo sila sa amo. For example, no boyfriend policy sila. And ganahan ra man pud sila magfocus pud ilang students sa ilang, para makahoman jud ba sa diri nga school.</i> (Student KO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"The disciplines and how [BCPD] handles the students <i>kay okay ra sad, kay</i> we've seen lots of BCPD products, and they're very great. <i>Um kuan, wala mi need nga i-change kay</i> all those products are great. So, we must also experience what they experienced for us to be great. So, we must follow <i>nalang</i>." (Student KO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"I don't really have dislikes on the school but maybe it is on about phone. Because some of us made them think that using phone[s] is helpful like on searching some words that are unfamiliar with us... But I do appreciate that practice kay it's for our own good to focus on studying." (Student NR, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"It's very strict here and I was really like culture shock about how firm they are with their rules... We are only able to go out during lunchtime only two girls can go. Maybe because they don't want the students to roam around anywhere because we are all girls. I think the thing is they want to protect us." (Student YC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"They have rules of <i>kanang</i> no boyfriend policy. I think they preserve the young students here for purity like something like that. They want to <i>kuan</i> the students ba, for pureness." (Student GB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p>

How can I grow my love for them?	I bring my family and friends closer to God	<p>"Sa akong interview kay gidala nako ang akong whole family diri which is dili ra unta. Pwede ra unta si mama akong kuyog pero ako gyud sila gipugos nga kuyog tang tanan kay para after sa akong interview kanang modiritso ta sa Santo Niño. Bahalag wa pa tay kaon basta atong unahan si God." (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"My mother had a disease sa kidney and it was very hard to accept... And there was a moment that she [got] convulsion and she called us all. And that day, she [began to] hallucinate. She saw light and lots of people na kuhaan na daw siya... Sige ra gyod ko ga ingon nga don't lose hope. Just trust God. Everything will be fine. Everything will be okay. I said that na just pray and God will help you and there will be no problem." (Student JC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 13, 2023)</p>
How can I grow my love for them?	I dedicate my studies or work to my family	<p>"I love my family so much. Even though we are we are poor, I need to be strong because of them... Because I know someday my family needs me... My plan after graduation is to work, because my sister and brother need my support." (Student AB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"Bahala'g gamay nalang akong sweldo. Ako gihapon ihatag sa akong mama akong tanang sweldo. Maka-help gihapon bisag gamay." (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"Ganahan lang gyod ko mag-cruise ship, then para sa iila ra na, ako man na gibuhat for family." (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"If I'll be fortunate to get absorbed of course, and maybe be able to finally... ambag sa bayronon sa bills and be able to shop for the things for my family." (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p> <p>"If I am lucky to be absorbed in my OJT establishment, then I will grab the opportunity and go. I will choose to work after I graduate and I will... my family's needs and myself also." (Student JC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p>

My family and friends bring me closer to God. The students related various ways in which their human relationships brought them closer to the Divine. It should be noted that the students related such God-centered interactions with same-sex family members or friends.

“My auntie decided... to take me with her to Medellin to experience how to worship God... She's a *deboto* in Medellin... They have a private church there in the mountain... They are Catholic[s], but they have other terms *gani* of *Santo Niño*. They call *Santo Niño* as *Migo Puy*, because they believe that *Santo Niño* is the one friend, *amigo*, and *magpupuypoy*, kanang heal *makaayo*... *Atong tayma*, we got locked down... then we stayed there for almost three months... *Kana ganing napalibotan gani ko og kanang mga prayerful people, mora sad gani ko og madani gani*... *Atong tayma nagbinuotan gyod ko for three months kay wala gyod kay laing buhat. Ampo, kaon, tulog, ampo, mao ra gyod to didto*” (Student GB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: My auntie decided to take me with her to Medellin to experience how to worship God. She is a devotee in Medellin where they have a private church in the mountain. They are a Catholic community, but they call the Child Jesus as *Migo Puy*, because they believe He is a friend and healer. At that time, we could not leave because of the COVID-19 lockdown. We stayed there for almost three months. When I am surrounded by prayerful people, it influences me. At that time, I became a good person for three months, because I did nothing but pray, eat, sleep, and pray. That was all I did there.

My family supports me. Despite limited financial means, the students expressed their gratitude for their family's support. Student CA even mentioned her departed loved ones as a source of support:

“[My] family, my dead relatives, and everyone that cares for me... I know that they are always beside me, and I can always count on them whenever I need help with anything, with my problems, with any like schoolwork” (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023).

My teachers and mentor support me. The students described even more support coming from their teachers and mentors at BCPD. Interestingly, the teachers they mentioned were from the classes they found challenging.

“*Kanang ganahan siya [Miss P] nga mo-communicate mi niya para mas masabtan daw namo iyang mga discussion. Or like naa ba daw siya’y sayop, ngano daw gamay mi og score*” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: Miss P wants us to communicate with her, so that we can understand her discussions more. She wants us to communicate if she is doing something wrong, because our quiz scores are low.

“*Jolly man gyod kaayo siya [Miss G]. Unya maglisod mi sa Math, so mangutana pod mi niya... Kanang makaingon gyod mi, nga free mi niya makapangutana*” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: Miss G is very jolly. We struggle at Math, so we ask her. We can really say we are free to ask her questions.

The students also mentioned their mentors as their source of support. They valued their mentors' willingness to listen, their advice, and their concern for their well-being and family. Student CA showed deep appreciation for her mentor who was also the one who interviewed her when she first applied in BCPD:

“Miss C interviewed me and asked me if there's anything that I want[ed] to improve... and I said it's confidence. I think she remembered that because during our class in Christian Living, she always picks me to answer the questions” (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion November 15, 2023).

BCPD brings me closer to God. The students felt that BCPD's religious communication, particularly its Christian Living classes and on-campus Christian meditations and recollections, helped bring them closer to God. This not only applied to students who were already actively engaged in religion, but also those who did not identify as religious – as was the case with Student WA:

“Parehas man mi nga dili relihyosa pareha sa uban. Diri ra gyod ko naabot nga na-closer ko ni God” (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: We are the same in that we are not religious like the others. It is only here in BCPD where I became closer to God.

One of the teachers most frequently mentioned by the students was Miss S who taught Christian Living class. The students commended her efforts to help them understand religion on a much deeper level than they were used to despite the language barrier between their Cebuano-Bisaya and Miss S's Tagalog.

“Ma-appreciate pod namo iyang effort ba kay kana ganing kahibaw mi nga unfamiliar siya sa among words, pero kanang mag-effort gyod siya ba nga pasabton gyod mi kon unsa iyang ganahan i-deliver sa amo-a... Ma-appreciate sad namo iyang effort ba the way siya mo-discuss kay ganahan siya para makasabot mi. I-try gyod niya nga i-translate og Bisaya bisan pa’g nagkalisod na siya” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: We appreciate her effort. Even though she is not familiar with our words, she still makes an effort to help us understand what she is trying to deliver to us. We also appreciate the way she manages classroom discussions because she really wants us to understand. She even tries to translate the lessons in Bisaya, even though she is struggling with the language.

BCPD has a positive impact in my life. The students recognized BCPD’s role in helping them achieve their future endeavors. Student YC expressed her gratitude for BCPD’s strategic thrust on poverty alleviation and its positive impact on the future of marginalized young women like her.

“[BCPD] helps women in general to have a better future or to have a higher grade of employment. They’re very firm about teaching the students not only [in terms of] skills but also in religion and manners. I love that their goal [or] focus is also to help unprivileged women, [for] women to be able to earn and to have a fresh start” (Student YC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

On a more personal level, they shared significant improvement in their behavior and attitude. Student MS, a former victim of school bullying, shared how she regained her confidence in BCPD:

“Sa akong previous nga schools kay kanang di ko ingon ani ka-confident...

Like sa class namo kay kanang hilomon ra gyod kaayo ko, then di gani ko maka-express sa akong kaugalingon. Then [BCPD] is a school nga I can only say nga kanang confident gyod ko” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: In my previous schools, I was not this confident. Like in my classes, I just kept quiet and was not able to express myself. BCPD is a school that I can only say I am very confident.

Another student, Student GB who, like most of her classmates, previously attended a co-ed public school, shared that BCPD’s all-girls school system, helped her become more feminine.

“BCPD helps me to be a better woman, or kanang to be an elegant person ba, kay before high school ko kay kuan bugoy kaayo. Kay magkuyog-kuyog man ko og laki sauna high school ko. Unya sauna kay naay manong og bagay kay mosulod mi og eskina nya manan-aw mi. Mao to karon nag-BCPD ko kay morag babae na kaayo ko” (Student GB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: BCPD helps me to be a better woman or to be an elegant person. Before when I was in high school, I was a tomboy who hung out with the boys. At that time, I used to pick fights and head to the streets to

watch fights break out. But now that I am studying in BCPD, it is like I am very feminine now.

BCPD imposes rules for my own good. When asked about what they did not like about BCPD, almost all the students mentioned the school rules. Some of these include surrendering their phones upon entering the school and not being able to use them during class hours, wearing a prescribed school uniform or dress code, not being able to go outside the campus without a lunch pass (limited to two students per class only), monitoring social media activities, and a no boyfriend policy.

On the other hand, the same students who expressed their dislike for school rules which they perceived as “strict” were able to recognize the rationale behind them. Speaking about the no boyfriend policy, Student KO said:

“Sometimes they are super strict when it comes to their students... *Morag mahuna-huna-an ra pod nako nga para ra pod sa kuan mao na strict kaayo sila sa amo.* For example, no boyfriend policy *sila.* And *ganahan ra man pod sila mag-focus pod ilang students sa ilang, para makahuman gyod ba sa diri nga school*” (Student KO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: Sometimes they are super strict when it comes to their students... I have realized that their strict rules are for our own good. For example, the no boyfriend policy is in place, because BCPD wants their students to focus and complete their studies.

In addition, Student KO looked up to the successful graduates of BCPD as a source of inspiration, saying that if following the strict rules were what it took for her to become like them, there was no reason why she should not follow their good example.

“The disciplines and how [BCPD] handles the students *kay okay ra sad, kay* we've seen lots of BCPD products, and they're very great. *Um kuan, wala mi* need *nga i-change kay* all those products are great. So, we must also experience what they experienced for us to be great. So, we must follow *na lang*” (Student KO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: BCPD's style of discipline and managing their students are okay, because we have seen lots of BCPD graduates, and they are very great. There is no need to change the system, because all the BCPD graduates are great. So, we must also experience what they experienced for us to be great. So, we must just follow the school rules.

How Can I Grow My Love for Them?

I bring my family and friends closer to God. In a similar way that their loved ones brought them closer to God, the students themselves also shared how they placed God at the center of their human relationships.

“*Sa akong interview kay gidala nako ang akong whole family diri which is dili ra unta. Pwede ra unta si mama akong kuyog pero ako gyod sila gipugos nga kuyog tang tanan kay para after sa akong interview kanang modiritso mi sa*

Santo Niño. *Bahalag wa pa tay kaon basta atong unahon si God*” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: During my school interview, I brought my whole family along which was not necessary. It could have just been me and my mom, but I *forced* my whole family to come along, so that we would go to the Basilica del Santo Niño right after the interview. It did not matter that we had not eaten yet, so long as we put God first.

I dedicate my studies and work to my family. As vocational students from low-income families, they were keenly aware of the expectation to work and financially support their families after graduating from BCPD.

“I love my family so much. Even though we are poor, I need to be strong because of them... Because I know someday my family needs me... My plan after graduation is to work, because my sister and brother need my support” (Student AB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)

For a handful of students, the role of financial providers was already underway, as they divided their time between their studies and part-time job. For Student MS, the amount she was earning did not matter; even a little went a long way.

“Bahala’g gamay nalang akong suweldo. Ako gihapon ihatag sa akong Mama akong tanang suweldo. Maka-help gihapon bisag gamay” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 14, 2023).

English Translation: It does not matter if my salary is low. I still give my entire income to my mother. It will still help us no matter how small.

Communicating with Oneself

The third theme identified was communicating with oneself which was rooted on the Christian message of love for self in line with a passage from St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians, "Do you not know that you are God's temple, and that God's spirit abides within you? If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him. God's temple is holy, and you are this temple" (1 Cor 3:16-17, Christian Community Bible, 2012). Under the third theme, two sub-themes emerged: How well do I know myself? And how can I grow as a person? (see Table 13)

How Well Do I Know Myself?

I know what I want in life. Majority of the students expressed their desire to work on a cruise ship. They recognized that studying in BCPD would bring them closer to their dream of applying their knowledge and skills, earning a decent income, and supporting their family financially, all while traveling the world.

"I've experienced lots of [jobs] also, but in my mind, I'm really aiming for working on a cruise ship... It's [really] different if you're working in, not your passion. It's against you, but you really have to do it. And it's better you're working with love and passion... I really want to serve and I am really into caring [for] customers" (Student NR, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

Table 13.

Theme 3: Communicating with Oneself

Theme: Love for Self		
Sub-Theme	Code	Quote
How well do I know myself?	I know what I want in life	<p>"I've experienced lots of [jobs] also, but in my mind, I'm really aiming for working in a cruise ship... It's [really] different if you're working in, not your passion. It's against you, but you really have to do it. And it's better you're working with love and passion... I really want to serve and I am really into caring [for] customers." (Student NR, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Akong goal ra gyod kay maka-graduate ko diri in two years nga course. So kanang for example failure ka sa usa ka subject, pwede man nga mobawi nalang ka." (Student KO, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"I really wanted to finish school." (Student NR, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Mao man gyod na akong aim diri mao na ni-ari ko diri kay kasagaran sa mga mo-graduate kay mokuhan man og cruise ship. Like sa akong cousin unya mao gyod na akong goal. Naa na koy clear nga picture of myself na maka-graduate na mag-cruise ship gyod ko after." (Student BB, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Naa na sad koy picture unsay buhaton. Mag-hotel, magtrabaho sa hotel then eventually kay mag-cruise ship ko." (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Kay mao ni ang reason nieskuwela ko sa BCPD kay lagi two years ra then dali ra sad daw makakuha og work then ganahan sad ko mag-cruise ship." (Student ST, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Mag-cruise ship ko. Like bata pa ko, kanang naka-ingon ko sa akong kaugalingon nga ganahan ko motrabaho sa hotel." (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"I really have one goal ra gyod through all the way sa akong path karon. It's to achieve my dreams and goals even though ma-fail ko. I will still strive, I will do my best para gyod sa kana nga goal nga akong gi-set for myself." (Student YC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p>

<p>How well do I know myself?</p>	<p>I know my areas of improvement</p>	<p>"Among problem sad kay walay mosulti sa amo-a nga even gani yes or no [during class discussions] kay mahadlok mi... Mahadlok mi nga basig kasab-an [by the teacher]. Murag nadala namo among batas sa elementary [school] hangtod diri." (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Dali kaayo nako malimtan, basta ma-pressured gani ko. Unya labi na'g naay time limit. Magkasinagol na gyod na akong kuan, hunahuna." (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Kay sauna man gyod, nakaingon gyod ko nga ako sauna, positive ra gyod ko pagkababay pero nagkatiguwang na ko, nakaingon ko, 'Ngano naingon ani naman ko nga di man ta ko ingon ani?' Mao na karon ganahan ko ibalik akong kaugalingon pero mas naa pay improvement." (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"I really want to be a teacher before when I was a kid... I realized that it's not really for me. Because aside from I have a really low temper. Yeah. I realized how hard and how exhausting their work is." (Student YC, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"I can say I don't really have any confidence, so maybe that's why I always draw myself as something small. Because as I grow older, I can always notice that I don't really have any confidence... I can say that there's progress. There's progress because ever since elementary, I don't really participate in any school activities, but now I do. I always try to participate in everything." (Student CA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 15, 2023)</p>
<p>How can I grow as a person?</p>	<p>I look for ways to adjust myself to new experiences</p>	<p>"Nabag-o han pa jud ko ato kay first time pa man nako makasud ug ingon ani kanang Catholic [school] gani then all girls pa gyud. Naanad man ko'g public [school] nga sagol-sagol. So na-pressured ko ato the first few weeks. Pero after ato kay wala na kay... Maka-adjust ra man sad ko after ku-an after a few weeks, so di ra ko ma-pressured." (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Maglisod ko og adjust nga morag, 'Di man ko ingon ani.' Mora ko'g ma-pressure ba nga, unsaon man gyod ni nga di man ko, di kaayo ko. Religious ko, pero naa lay times nga ang things nga kanang... Dili ra gani ka maanad morag ingon ana gani, morag magbaw ka og apas sa gap. Magbaw ka og adjust." (Student BB, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"I feel pressure by the subject sometimes, but I can manage to do better." (Student DS, November 14, 2023)</p> <p>"When I experienced my first OJT, it's a big adjustment for me with the time when I first year, coz that time kay mao pay pag-experience namo og OJT exposure and it's in the restaurant." (Student GB, November 14, 2023)</p>

<p>How can I grow as a person?</p>	<p>I learn from my failures</p>	<p>"Amo na gihinay-hinay nga kanang dapat di-ay mi mangutana [during class]. Communication gyud di-ay ang pinaka-importante para mas makasabot mi... Ni-ana man mi nga bahala'g sayop ni kay bisag sayop kay kung masayop ta kay makat-on man ta." (Student MS, Personal communication, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Pero akong gipaininguhaan gyod karon nga dili ko dapat magpadala kay kanang mo-affect man gyod akong grado, unya ako ra pod ang mag-suffer. Pareha ato pagkagahapon. Kay kanang gamay man kaayo ko'g score sa FBS gahapon ba. Pero kahibaw gyod ko sa akong kaugalingon nga dili to enough akong pag-study." (Student MS, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Like kanang sa FBS sad gahapon kay... Unya gihunahuna gyod to nako gabii. Maypag nagtuon ko'g maayo ato da. Then hangtod karon kay naghunahuna gihapon ko. Ako na gyod tarongon next oy." (Student WA, November 16, 2023)</p> <p>"Ku-an man, from failure, when we fail, we learn. So we keep moving and we keep striving for our goals. So without failure, we cannot achieve what we wanted." (Student NR, November 16, 2023)</p>
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I know my areas of improvement. The students were able to identify aspects of themselves that they still needed to work on. They showed a significant level of self-awareness beyond their years and expressed optimism and a strong desire to become even better versions of themselves.

“Among problem sad kay walay mosulti sa amoa nga even gani yes or no [during class discussions] kay mahadlok mi... Mahadlok mi nga basig kasaban [by the teacher]. Morag nadala namo among batasan sa elementary [school] hangtod diri” (Student MS, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: One of our problems as a class is that nobody responds with even a *yes* or *no* during class discussions, because we are afraid. We are afraid that in case the teacher scolds us. I think we carried over this behavior from elementary school up to now.

How can I grow as a person?

I look for ways to adjust myself to new experiences. The students bonded over their shared new experiences. Several lived outside of Cebu City and came from provinces in Northern and Southern Cebu and even the nearby island of Bohol. They related how they adjusted to living in the city for the first time, studying in a Catholic all-girls school for the first time, and working in the hospitality industry for the first time – all of which helped them discover more about themselves and grow as their own individuals.

“Nabag-ohan pa gyod ko ato kay first time pa man nako makasulod ug ingon ani kanang Catholic [school] gani then all girls pa gyod. Naanad man ko’g

public [school] *nga sagol-sagol*. So *na-pressured ko ato* the first few weeks. *Pero after ato kay wala na kay... Maka-adjust ra man sad ko after kuan* after a few weeks, so *di ra ko ma-pressured*" (Student WA, Personal communication, Focus group discussion, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: I was overwhelmed when I first started in BCPD, because it was my first time to study in a place like this, a Catholic school and an all-girls school as well. I was more used to studying in a public school with mixed students. So, I felt pressured on my first few weeks. But after that, I was able to adjust, so I no longer feel pressured.

I learn from my failures. The students took their failures very seriously but always expressed a strong desire to learn from them. They were capable of processing their experiences, what they did wrong, and how they could do better in the future.

"Amo na gihinay-hinay nga kanang dapat diay mi mangutana [during class]. Communication gyod diay ang kinaimportantehan para mas makasabot mi... Ni-ana man mi nga bahala'g sayop ni kay bisag sayop kay kon masayop ta kay makat-on man ta" (Student MS, Personal communication, November 16, 2023).

English Translation: We are slowly learning to ask questions during class. Communication is truly the most important way to learn... My classmates and I said that it does not matter if what we are saying is wrong, because we can learn from our mistakes.

Three Beneficial Roles of Academic Persistence

After analyzing the three emerging themes, namely: Communicating with God, Communicating with Others, and Communicating with Oneself, the researcher found that the vocational students' everyday lives were heavily influenced by religion – if not at home then certainly in school. Even students who did not identify as “religious” agreed with their classmates that the current religious communication in BCPD played a beneficial role in academic persistence. These roles could be categorized as:

Religious communication inspires. To inspire is “to make someone feel that they want to do something and can do it” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). In the present study, religious communication inspired the vocational students to work hard in their studies (academic persistence) as illustrated in the following codes from the thematic analysis:

- God is at the center of everything.
- God is always close to me.
- Prayer is a source of comfort.
- My family and friends bring me closer to God.
- BCPD brings me closer to God.
- I bring my family and friends closer to God.
- I dedicate my studies and work to my family.
- I know what I want in life.

Some forms of religious communication in BCPD which played the role of inspiration were Daily Mass (Holy Eucharist), Mental Prayer, and Weekly Meditations – a form of guided prayer reflecting on a Gospel passage and Catholic doctrine.

Religious communication empowers. To empower is “to give someone the means to achieve something” (Collins Dictionary, n.d.). Compared to inspiring which is limited to the realm of feelings, empowering is more geared towards concrete actions and practical solutions. In the present study, religious communication empowered the vocational students to continue to higher studies (academic persistence) as illustrated in the following codes from the thematic analysis:

- Time is a gift from God.
- My family made me who I am today.
- My family supports me.
- My teachers and mentor support me.
- I look for ways to adjust myself to new experiences.

Some forms of religious communication in BCPD which played the role of empowerment were Mentoring Chats, Spiritual Direction, and Experiential Instruction. Mentoring Chats are a form of life coaching given by teachers in BCPD or other lay members of Opus Dei. Spiritual Direction is a one-on-one conversation with a priest of Opus Dei usually given during or after the sacrament of confession. Experiential Instruction is an alternative to traditional classroom learning by providing students with active learning opportunities in a real-world setting such as on-the-job training.

Religious communication edifies. To edify is “to instruct and improve [someone] in moral and religious knowledge” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.). In the present study, religious communication edified the vocational students by promoting honest work and strong work ethics (academic persistence) as opposed to illegal or immoral means to achieve wealth and success. This was illustrated in the following codes from the thematic analysis:

- BCPD has a positive impact in my life.
- BCPD imposes rules for my own good.
- I know my areas of improvement.
- I learn from my failures.

Some forms of religious communication in BCPD which played the role of edification were Christian Living Classes, Doctrine Classes, and Spiritual Reading. Christian Living Classes are mandatory religion classes given by a female member of Opus Dei. Doctrine Classes are weekly classes centered on Catholic Doctrine (from the Catechism of the Catholic Church) given by a priest of Opus Dei. Spiritual Reading is “the regular practice of reading Sacred Scripture and other books suitable for nourishing and enlivening the spiritual life” (Martin, 2020).

This finding aligns with Mendoza (2022) who found that high spirituality led to academic success, as well as with Fukofuka (2007) who found that spirituality had a positive effect on academic performance. If spiritual development involves deriving meaning in life (Love and Talbot, 1999), and meaning in life positively and significantly predicted academic persistence (Aruta et. al., 2022), then it could be

surmised that effective religious communication had a significant role in improving academic persistence.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations on the analysis of the role of religious communication needs in improving the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD.

Summary

The researcher explored the following questions:

1. What was the degree of association between the level of academic persistence of the vocational students and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD?
2. How did religious communication improve the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD?

The objectives of the present study were to:

1. Determine the degree of association between the level of academic persistence of the vocational students and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD.
2. Analyze the role of religious communication in improving the academic persistence of vocational students in BCPD.

In order to determine the degree of association between the two variables of the study, the researcher measured the level of academic persistence of the vocational

students and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication in BCPD by administering a survey questionnaire based on the Academic Persistence Scale (Thalib et. al., 2018) and Religious Communication Model (Slabbert, 2022).

Based on the results of the survey, the average level of academic persistence was 72.39/100. This moderately high level indicated that the majority of the vocational students in BCPD were actively engaged in maintaining their education status with the goal to complete their studies. In addition, the average level of satisfaction with the current religious communication was 84.83/100. This significantly high level indicated that for the majority of the students, their religious communication needs were being met.

Following the survey administration, the researcher computed the Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient to determine the degree of association between the two variables of the study. Based on the results of the calculation, there was a moderately positive correlation ($r_s[54] = +.58, p = 0.001$) between the vocational students' level of academic persistence and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication.

To validate the quantitative data, the researcher performed thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) using Slabbert's (2022) Religious Communication Model as the theoretical framework to analyze the role of religious communication in improving the academic persistence.

According to Slabbert, the effectiveness of religious communication is directly proportional to the symbolic shared realities between the individual and him/herself (internal reality), between the individual and other human beings (external reality), and between the individual and God (religious reality). “The more successful the communication, the bigger the identification. The [symbolic shared realities] impact on the effectiveness of the communication and strengthening of the relationship” (Fisher, 1978 in Slabbert, 2022).

Based on the thematic analysis, three distinct themes emerged, namely: Love for God, Love for others, and Love for self. The majority of the students, including those that did not identify as “religious”, agreed that the current religious communication offered in BCPD played a beneficial role in their studies, especially with regards to their academic persistence. These roles can be categorized as: Religious communication inspires, Religious communication empowers, and Religious communication edifies.

Conclusions

The More the Religious Communication Needs Are Met, the Higher the Level of Academic Persistence

Providing support for the research hypothesis, the Spearman’s Rank Correlation Coefficient ($r_{s[54]} = +.58, p = 0.001$) indicated that there was a moderately positive association between the vocational students’ level of satisfaction with the current

religious communication (how much their religious communication needs were being met) and their level of academic persistence.

In the context of the present study, religious communication needs are defined as the need “for sheer knowledge (curiosity) and for understanding (the philosophical, theological, value-system-building explanation need)” (Maslow, 1954). The more these needs are met, the greater the sense of meaning in life, and the higher the level of academic persistence. This aligns with Aruta et. al. (2022) who found that meaning in life is directly proportional to academic persistence.

The three themes, seven sub-themes, and 18 codes which emerged from the present study indicated that the current religious communication in BCPD not only met the vocational students’ religious communication needs but also helped improve their academic persistence.

The most recurring code from the focus group discussions was that God is at the center of everything. When asked to create a simple illustration using three circles to represent themselves, others, and God, all the respondents either drew God as the biggest circle, or at the center of the drawing, or even both as the biggest circle at the center. For majority of the students, their symbolic shared realities were centered on God. They attributed their personal experiences ranging from encounters with the divine at church and miraculous healings to ordinary events such as being granted a scholarship at BCPD and finding time to study, work, and rest as acts of God.

The students' God-centered symbolic realities were in accordance with the school's God-centered religious communication. This aligns with Slabbert's (2022) theory that effectiveness of religious communication is directly proportional to the symbolic shared realities. "The bigger the identification, the more successful the communication." (Fisher, 1978 in Slabbert, 2022).

To conclude, if effective religious communication (Slabbert, 2022) results in high spirituality and better academic success (Fukofuka, 2007 and Mendoza, 2022), and if spiritual development involves deriving meaning in life (Love and Talbot, 1999) and meaning in life positively predicts academic persistence (Aruta et. al., 2022), then it could be surmised that religious communication had a significant role in improving academic persistence.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the researcher offers the following recommendations:

- To analyze the role of religious communication in improving the academic persistence of students in all-boys vocational schools and co-ed vocational schools. Future research may consider adapting the present study in a different school environment in order to examine if gender is a moderating variable in the association between the level of academic persistence and level of satisfaction with religious communication.

- To compare the effectiveness of religious communication in improving the academic persistence of vocational students between all-girls schools, all-boys schools, and co-ed schools. Similar to the first recommendation, future research may consider investigating the role of gender in the association between the level of academic persistence and level of satisfaction with religious communication. This can be done by adapting the present study in two or more vocational schools such as the other all-girls vocational schools under the Foundation for Professional Training, Inc., or its all-boys counterpart, CITE (Center for Industrial Technology and Enterprise) Technical Institute, Inc.) Technical Institute, Inc.
- To further investigate the role of religious communication as an alternative intervention strategy in schools with high dropout and out-of-school youth rates. Due to the cross-sectional nature of the present study, it was not possible to establish a causal inference between the students' level of academic persistence and their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication offered in BCPD. Future research may consider implementing religious communication in critical schools by spearheading partnerships between local churches and schools and assessing the students' academic persistence for an extended period of time.
- To design a social mobilization program in vocational schools with high dropout rates which are not only focused on a singular Godhead but a more universal belief in a higher being. Future researchers may endeavor to design a program that aims to unleash the potential of marginalized and at-risk

students and provide them with the formation to become better, more productive workers in the labor force.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to submit this form, you should open it with Adobe Acrobat Reader.



Survey on Academic Persistence & Religious Communication

Name

Last Name

First Name

Year & Section

Ex. HRS 1 Section 1

Email Address

example@example.com

Today's Date

Month Day Year

The purpose of this survey is to measure the level of academic persistence among vocational students in Banilad Center for Professional Development (BCPD) and to measure their level of satisfaction with the current religious communication being offered in BCPD.

This survey contains 40 statements and will take 30-45 minutes to complete. Read each statement in English and Bisaya. Click on one box for each statement to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement. **Remember, there is no right or wrong answer.**

Ang katuyoan niini nga surbe mao ang pagsukod sa lebel sa akademikong pagpadayon bisan sa kalisod sa bokasyonal nga mga estudyante sa Banilad Center for Professional Development (BCPD) ug sa pagsukod sa ilang lebel sa katagbawan sa kasamtangang relihiyosong komunikasyon nga gitanyag sa BCPD.

*Kini nga surbe adunay 40 ka mga pahayag ug molungtad og 30-45 ka minuto aron makompleto. Basaha ang matag pahayag sa English ug Bisaya. Pag-klik sa usa ka kahon alang sa matag pahayag aron ipakita kung unsa ang imong uyon o dili pag-uyon sa pahayag. **Hinumdomi, walay husto o sayop nga tubag.***

Example

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I love to eat lechon. <i>Ganahan ko mokaon ko og lechon.</i>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Part I. Academic Persistence

Bahin I. Pagpadayon sa Akademiko

Read the following statements carefully. Using the scale below, click on the box that best applies to you.
Basaha pag-ayo ang mosunod nga mga pahayag. Gamit ang sukdanan sa ubos, markahi ang kahon nga labing angay kanimo.

Academic Persistence

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

1. I already have a plan and know which profession to take up after graduation.

Naa na koy plano ug kabalo kung unsa nga propesyon ang akong kuhaon pagkahuman sa gradwasyon.

2. I am confused about how to overcome failures.

Naglibog ko unsaon pagbuntog o pagpildi sa mga kapakyasan.

3. I always focus on what needs to be done until the task is completed.

Kanunay kong nagpokus sa kung unsa ang kinahanglan buhaton hangtod mahuman ang buluhaton.

4. I am able to complete my school assignments on time.

Makahuman nako ang akong mga buluhaton sa eskuylahan sa hustong oras.

5. I do not have a clear plan yet after graduating from BCPD.

Wala pa koy klarong plano paghuman nako sa BCPD.

6. I am able to focus on the goals I set for myself since I first started in BCPD.

Makapokus ko sa mga tumong nga akong gitakda para sa akong kaugalingon sukad pa sa akong pagsugod sa BCPD.

7. I am able to turn down my friends' invitation to have fun when I have school tasks to complete.

Ako makahimo sa pagbalibad sa imbitasyon sa akong mga higala nga maglingaw lingaw kon duna koy mga buluhaton sa eskwelahan nga kinahanglang tapuson.

8. I am determined to complete all the tasks assigned to me.

Determinado ako nga tapuson ang tanan nga buluhaton nga ginhatag sa akoo.

9. Failure only keeps me from achieving success.

Ang kapakyasan nagpugong lamang kanako sa pagkab-ot sa kalampusan.

10. I can balance my time well to study, work (if working), rest and play.

Mabalanse nakog maayo ang akong oras sa pagtuon, pagtrabaho (kon nagtrabaho), pagpahulay ug pagdula.

11. I find it difficult to complete the daily tasks I have planned.

Nalisdan ko sa pagkompleto sa adlaw-adlaw nga mga buluhaton nga akong giplano.

12. Failures often make me think I will never be able to achieve my dreams.

Ang mga kapakyasan kasagaran makapahunahuna nako nga dili nako makab-ot ang akong mga pangandoy.

13. I can find new solutions to unresolved problems.

Makapangita ko og bag-ong mga solusyon sa wala masulbad nga mga problema.

14. My mind becomes easily divided when I think about the many dreams I have not yet achieved.

Dali ra mabahin ang akong hunahuna kung maghunahuna ko sa daghang mga damgo nga wala pa nako makab ot.

15. I prefer to go with the flow without a goal in life.

Mas ganahan ko mopadayon lang ko sa agas sa kinabuhi nga walay katuyoan sa kinabuhi.

16. I tend to forget my original goal when I encounter failures.

Kanunay nakong kalimtan ang akong orihinal o kinaunhang nga tumong kung makasugat ko og mga kapakyasan.

17. I can keep working on a task until achieve the right results.

Makapadayon ko sa pagtrabaho sa usa ka buluhaton hangtod makab ot nako ang husto nga mga resulta.

18. I tend to lose hope when my grades do not match my expectations.

Mawad-an kog paglaom kung ang akong mga gradodili motak do sa akong gipaabot.

19. I will give up on my long-term goals if they become too difficult to achieve.

Mobiya ko sa akong mga long term nga mga tumong kon sila mahimong lisod kaayo nga makab-ot.

20. I plan my daily activities, so that I can achieve my goals in life.

Tigplano ko sa akong adlaw adlaw nga mga kalihokan, aron makab-ot nako ang akong mga tumong sa kinabuhi.

Part II. Religious Communication

Bahin II. Relihiyosong Komunikasyon

Read the following statements carefully. Using the scale below, click on the box that best applies to you. *Basaha pag-ayo ang mosunod nga mga pahayag. Gamit ang sukdanan sa ubos, markahi ang kahon nga labing angay kaniyo.*

Religious Communication

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

1. I am able to apply St. Josemaria's teachings in my studies.

Magamit nako ang mga pagtulon-an ni Santo Josemaria sa akong pagtuon.

2. I did not learn anything new about God in BCPD.

Wala koy nakat-onan nga bag-o bahin sa Diyos sa BCPD.

3. BCPD helps me find meaning between my student life and my prayer life.

Ang BCPD nagtabang kanako sa pagpangita og kahulogan tali sa akong kinabuhing estudyante ug sa akong kinabuhi sa pag-ampo.

4. I enjoy classes that help me find meaningful connections between God and my studies.

Nalingaw ko sa mga klase nga makatabang nako sa pagpangita og makahuluganon nga mga koneksyon tali sa Dios ug sa akong pagtuon.

5. I disagree with several teachings of St. Josemaria.

Dili ko mouyon sa pipila ka pagtulon-an ni Santo Josemaria.

6. Having a mentor in BCPD helps me when I encounter challenges in my life.

Ang pagbaton og "mentor" o nagpamatuto kanako sa BCPD makatabang nako kon makasugat kog mga hagit sa akong kinabuhi.

7. Learning about Christian Living in BCPD helps me to work hard in my studies.

Ang pagkat-on mahitungod sa Kristohanong Pagkinabuhi sa BCPD nakatabang kanako sa pagtrabaho pag-ayo sa akong pagtuon.

8. Learning about God in BCPD is important for me.

Ang pagkat-on bahin sa Diyos sa BCPD hinungdanon alang kanako.

9. I don't see the relationship between religion and the HRS program.

Wala nako makita ang relasyon tali sa relihiyon ug sa programa sa HRS.

10. My classmates inspire me to strengthen my relationship with God.

Ang akong mga klasmet nagdasig kanako sa pagpalig-on sa akong relasyon sa Diyos.

11. I feel pressured to perform religious practices even if I don't want to.

Gibati nako nga gipugos sa pagbuhat sa relihiyosong mga buhat bisan kon dili ko gusto.

12. I find it uncomfortable when my mentor invites me for a mentoring chat with her.

Dili ko komportable sa dihang giimbitar ko sa akong "mentor" alang sa usa ka "mentoring chat" o panag estorya uban niya.

13. Performing religious practices help me to become a better student.

Ang pagbuhat og relihiyosong mga buhat nakatabang kanako nga mahimong mas maayong estudyante.

14. My prayer life is separate from my student life.

Ang akong kinabuhi sa pag-ampo lahi sa akong kinabuhi sa estudyante.

15. My teachers and mentors discourage me from questioning my Faith.

Ang akong mga magtutudlo ug mga tig-giya nagpaluya kanako sa pagpangutana sa akong Pagtuo.

16. Religion only distracts me from my studies.

Ang relihiyon makabalda lang nako sa akong pagtuon.

17. The things I learn about God in BCPD are relevant to my everyday life.

Ang mga butang nga akong nakat-unan mahitungod sa Dios sa BCPD may kalabutan sa akong adlaw-adlaw nga kinabuhi.

18. I prefer to keep my everyday life separate from my spiritual life.

Gipalabi nako nga ibulag ang akong adlaw-adlaw nga kinabuhi gikan sa akong espirituhanong kinabuhi.

19. I think BCPD puts unnecessary focus on religion.

Sa akong hunahuna ang BCPD nagbutang sa wala kinahaglana nga pagtutok sa relihiyon.

20. When I have questions about my Faith, I can easily talk to my teachers and mentors about them.

Kon duna koy mga pangutana mahitungod sa akong Pagtuo, dali kong makigsulti sa akong mga magtutudlo ug mga tig-giya mahitungod kanila.

Thanks for your response! Please provide your Gcash number to receive PHP 100 Gcash load as your research honorarium.

Ex. 09XXXXXXXXX



To view the online survey, visit <https://form.jotform.com/232993276621463>