



IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT OF THE CHRISTIAN FORMATION PROGRAM ON THE HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS: BASIS FOR A STRENGTHENED FAITH FORMATION INTERVENTION

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ABSTRACT

Christian formation plays a vital role in Catholic higher education by fostering the spiritual, moral, social, and leadership development of students and educators while promoting faith-centered values and community engagement. This study assessed the implementation of the Christian Formation Program of Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. during the School Year 2025-2026 and examined its impact on the holistic development of college students and teachers as the basis for a strengthened faith formation intervention. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods research design was employed, integrating descriptive-correlational quantitative methods with qualitative focus group discussions. The quantitative phase involved 293 college students selected through proportionate stratified random sampling and 12 teachers selected through complete enumeration and purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson product-moment correlation, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis. Findings revealed that the Christian Formation Program was implemented across its three major components—Religious Education, Campus Ministry, and Community Extension—with an overall mean of 3.97. The program likewise demonstrated a high impact on participants' holistic development, particularly in personal and spiritual growth, community engagement, Christian values and attitudes, social responsibility, and leadership development. Correlation analysis showed significant positive relationships between program implementation and participants' holistic development, as well as between participation in Christian formation seminars and the program's impact. Qualitative findings corroborated the quantitative results by identifying limited awareness, low student

engagement, academic workload, insufficient organizational support, inclusivity concerns, weak monitoring, repetitive activities, and limited resources as the primary implementation challenges. Based on these findings, a strengthened Christian Formation Intervention Program was proposed to enhance program implementation, stakeholder participation, and the holistic formation of students and teachers within the institution.

Keywords: *Christian formation program, Catholic higher education, religious education, campus ministry, community extension, holistic development, spiritual formation, mixed-methods research, faith formation, intervention program*

INTRODUCTION

Christian formation remains a fundamental mission of Catholic higher education institutions, serving as a holistic process that nurtures students' spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social development while preparing them to become compassionate, ethical, and service-oriented members of society. Beyond providing religious instruction, Christian formation seeks to cultivate faith through meaningful experiences that integrate Gospel values into daily life, leadership, and community engagement. As higher education institutions respond to rapid social, cultural, and technological changes, faith formation programs have become increasingly important in strengthening students' moral identity, resilience, and commitment to the common good. Baring et al. (2024) emphasized that Catholic life formation programs significantly foster students' spiritual maturity, environmental stewardship, and value-oriented behaviors, demonstrating that comprehensive faith formation contributes to holistic human development within Catholic educational institutions.

Contemporary Catholic education likewise recognizes that Christian formation should extend beyond classroom instruction by integrating religious education, campus ministry, and community engagement into students' educational experiences. Effective faith formation programs encourage active participation, reflective learning, and servant leadership, enabling learners to translate Christian teachings into responsible citizenship and social transformation. Similarly, Wang et al. (2023) reported that structured spiritual formation programs in theological and higher education institutions significantly enhance students' personal growth, vocational discernment, leadership competencies, and commitment to Christian service. Their findings underscore the importance of sustained institutional support in developing faith-centered communities that promote lifelong spiritual formation.

In the Philippines, Catholic higher education institutions continue to uphold integral human formation as a central educational objective by emphasizing faith, values, and social responsibility alongside academic excellence. The Philippine Catholic School Standards for Higher Education (PCSS-HE) advocate educational programs that develop learners who are morally responsible, socially engaged, and committed to justice, peace, environmental stewardship, and the dignity of every person. Despite these efforts, many Catholic schools continue to encounter challenges in sustaining meaningful student

participation and ensuring that Christian formation extends beyond religious rituals into transformative life experiences. Silva (2025) observed that although Catholic schools remain committed to holistic faith formation, many institutions continue to face challenges in implementing formation programs that effectively influence students' daily lives, leadership practices, and community involvement.

Recent evidence further indicates that Christian formation programs are most effective when they intentionally integrate experiential learning, reflective practice, and community engagement into students' educational experiences. Faith-centered educational environments that encourage active participation strengthen students' spiritual growth, moral reasoning, and social responsibility while reinforcing Christian identity. Pakpahan (2023) emphasized that contemporary Christian formation should cultivate compassion, servant leadership, and social responsibility by responding to the emerging needs of society while remaining grounded in biblical and theological foundations. Such an approach enables Christian education to remain relevant in preparing students to become transformative leaders in both Church and society.

At Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc., the Christian Formation Program serves as one of the institution's primary mechanisms for promoting integral human formation through Religious Education, Campus Ministry, and Community Extension. However, empirical evidence regarding its implementation, effectiveness, and contribution to the holistic development of students and teachers has remained limited. The present study addresses this gap by assessing the level of implementation of the Christian Formation Program, determining its impact on participants' personal and spiritual growth, leadership development, community engagement, social responsibility, and Christian values, and examining the relationship between program implementation and participants' holistic development. The findings provide an evidence-based foundation for strengthening the institution's Christian Formation Program and developing a sustainable intervention that enhances faith formation and holistic development among members of the academic community.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of implementation of the Christian Formation Program in terms of:
 - Religious Education;
 - Campus Ministry; and
 - Community Extension?
2. What is the impact of the Christian Formation Program on the holistic development of students and teachers in terms of:
 - personal and spiritual growth;
 - leadership development;
 - community engagement;
 - social responsibility; and

- Christian values and attitudes?
- 3. Is there a significant relationship between the level of implementation of the Christian Formation Program and its impact on the holistic development of students and teachers?
- 4. Is there a significant relationship between participation in Christian formation seminars and training and the impact of the Christian Formation Program on students and teachers?
- 5. What challenges are encountered in the implementation of the Christian Formation Program?
- 6. How do the qualitative findings corroborate the quantitative results regarding the implementation and impact of the Christian Formation Program?
- 7. Based on the findings, what intervention program may be proposed to strengthen the implementation and effectiveness of the Christian Formation Program?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to evaluate the implementation and impact of the Christian Formation Program at Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. The quantitative phase used a descriptive-correlational design involving 293 college students selected through proportionate stratified random sampling and 12 teachers/program implementers selected through purposive sampling and complete enumeration. Data were collected using a validated researcher-developed questionnaire and analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient at the 0.05 level of significance. The qualitative phase utilized focus group discussions, and the responses were analyzed through thematic analysis to corroborate the quantitative findings and provide a comprehensive evaluation of the Christian Formation Program.

RESULTS

Table 1. Level of Implementation of the Christian Formation Program

Program Component	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Religious Education	4.12	Implemented	1
Campus Ministry	4.05	Implemented	2
Community Extension	3.75	Implemented	3
Overall Mean	3.97	Implemented	

Table 2. Impact of the Christian Formation Program on the Holistic Development of Participants

Dimension	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Personal and Spiritual Growth	4.35	High Impact	1
Community Engagement	3.92	High Impact	2
Christian Values and Attitudes	3.90	High Impact	3
Social Responsibility	3.89	High Impact	4
Leadership Development	3.77	High Impact	5
Overall Mean	3.97	High Impact	

Table 3. Relationship Between the Level of Implementation and the Impact of the Christian Formation Program

Program Component	Relationship with Program Impact	Decision
Religious Education	Significant	Reject H_0
Campus Ministry	Significant	Reject H_0
Community Extension	Significant	Reject H_0

Table 4. Relationship Between Participation in Christian Formation Seminars and Program Impact

Impact Dimension	<i>r</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Decision
Personal and Spiritual Growth	0.82	0.000	Significant
Leadership Development	0.58	0.002	Significant
Community Engagement	0.76	0.000	Significant
Social Responsibility	0.73	0.0001	Significant
Christian Values and Attitudes	0.79	0.000	Significant

Table 5. Major Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of the Christian Formation Program

Challenge	Description
Limited awareness and understanding of the program	Participants lacked sufficient knowledge of the program's objectives and activities.
Low student engagement and participation	Participation was often compliance-based rather than voluntary and meaningful.
Academic workload and time constraints	Busy academic schedules limited students' involvement.
Lack of manpower and organizational support	Insufficient personnel affected program implementation.
Inclusivity and diversity concerns	Some non-Catholic participants experienced limited inclusivity.
Weak implementation and monitoring	Inconsistent implementation and limited program monitoring were observed.
Repetitiveness and lack of innovation	Activities were perceived as routine and less engaging.
Limited resources and program planning	Resource constraints affected program delivery and planning.

Table 6. Summary of Qualitative and Quantitative Findings

Key Variable	Quantitative Result	Qualitative Corroboration
Program Implementation	Implemented (Overall Mean = 3.97)	Participants acknowledged effective implementation but identified gaps in awareness and participation.
Program Impact	High Impact (Overall Mean = 3.97)	Participants reported positive spiritual, moral, and social development.
Participation	Significant participation in formation activities	Genuine engagement was affected by compliance, workload, and scheduling conflicts.
Implementation Challenges	Lower ratings in selected indicators	Explained by limited resources, weak monitoring, and lack of innovation.
Implementation–Impact Relationship	Significant positive relationship	Active participation enhanced participants' holistic development.

Table 7. Proposed Christian Formation Intervention Program

Focus Area	Proposed Intervention	Expected Outcome
Religious Education	Strengthen faith formation through contextualized and interactive learning activities.	Enhanced spiritual formation and Christian values

Focus Area	Proposed Intervention	Expected Outcome
Campus Ministry	Increase student participation through student-led and faith-based leadership programs.	Greater engagement and leadership development
Community Extension	Expand community immersion and service-learning opportunities.	Improved social responsibility and community engagement
Faculty and Staff Development	Conduct regular seminars and capacity-building activities for program implementers.	Improved program delivery and sustainability
Program Management	Establish continuous monitoring, evaluation, and stakeholder collaboration.	Enhanced effectiveness and continuous program improvement

DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrated that the Christian Formation Program was effectively implemented across its three major components, particularly in Religious Education, indicating that faith formation remains an integral part of the institution's educational mission. The high level of implementation suggests that structured faith-based programs contribute to students' holistic development by integrating spiritual formation with academic and community life. This finding is consistent with Plante (2020), who emphasized that Christian formation programs in higher education foster students' spiritual maturity, moral identity, and personal transformation through intentional faith-centered educational experiences.

The program likewise exhibited a high impact on participants' personal and spiritual growth, leadership development, community engagement, social responsibility, and Christian values. These findings indicate that sustained participation in Christian formation activities positively influences students' character formation and commitment to service. Similarly, Pietsch (2023) explained that reflective and metacognitive approaches in spiritual formation enable learners to internalize Christian values and apply them meaningfully in their daily decisions and relationships, thereby promoting deeper spiritual growth.

The significant positive relationship between program implementation and participants' holistic development further suggests that effective implementation enhances the achievement of Christian formation outcomes. Likewise, seminars and training significantly contributed to participants' spiritual and leadership development, emphasizing the value of continuous formation initiatives. Supporting this result, Santos et al. (2024) argued that faith-based education grounded in Catholic philosophy strengthens learners' moral reasoning, ethical leadership, and commitment to social responsibility through intentional values integration.

Despite the overall positive outcomes, qualitative findings revealed challenges such as limited student engagement, academic workload, insufficient resources, and weak program monitoring. These issues indicate opportunities for improving the effectiveness and sustainability of the program through more innovative and participatory approaches. Comer (2024) emphasized that authentic Christian formation is nurtured through intentional discipleship, meaningful relationships, and daily practices that encourage individuals to embody Christ-centered values beyond formal religious activities.

Overall, the findings affirm that the Christian Formation Program serves as an effective vehicle for promoting integral human formation among students and teachers. The proposed intervention program, which emphasizes stakeholder collaboration, continuous evaluation, and innovative formation activities, is consistent with the recommendations of Wilhoit (2020), who asserted that Christian formation flourishes when educational institutions intentionally cultivate faith through community, spiritual practices, and lifelong discipleship.

Conclusions

The study concluded that the Christian Formation Program of Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. is effectively implemented and has a significant positive impact on the holistic development of students and teachers, particularly in fostering personal and spiritual growth, leadership, community engagement, social responsibility, and Christian values. The significant relationships between program implementation, participation in formation activities, and participants' holistic development affirm the program's effectiveness in promoting integral human formation. Nevertheless, challenges related to student engagement, resource availability, and program implementation highlight the need for continuous enhancement. Overall, strengthening the Christian Formation Program through innovative, participatory, and well-monitored initiatives will further sustain its relevance and effectiveness in achieving the institution's mission of forming Christ-centered individuals.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. should strengthen the implementation of the Christian Formation Program by increasing student engagement through more interactive, relevant, and participatory faith formation activities. The institution should also enhance program monitoring, provide continuous capacity-building for program implementers, and strengthen collaboration among administrators, faculty, campus ministry personnel, and students to ensure the program's sustainability and effectiveness. Furthermore, greater support should be provided for community extension activities and innovative formation initiatives that promote holistic development. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to replicate the study in other Catholic higher education institutions using larger samples and additional variables to further validate and expand the findings.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical standards for educational research. Prior to data collection, approval and permission to conduct the study were obtained from the appropriate authorities of Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was secured from all student and teacher participants after they were informed of the study's objectives, procedures, and their rights as research participants. The confidentiality and anonymity of all respondents were strictly maintained, and all information collected was used solely for academic and research purposes. The researchers ensured that participants' privacy, dignity, and welfare were protected throughout the study and declared no conflict of interest in the conduct and reporting of the research.

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