

INSTITUTE OF SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOUS FORMATION

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**GUIDELINES AND APPROACHES FOR THE INITIAL FORMATION OF THE
FRANCISCAN SISTERS MISSIONARIES OF CHRIST OF THE ETHIOPIAN
DELEGATION**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for a Master of Arts in
Spirituality and Religious Formation**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this research is my original work, achieved through my personal reading, scientific research and personal reflections. It has never been presented to any other institution for academic purposes. All sources used have been duly cited and acknowledged.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AG	Ad Gentes
Can.	Canon Law
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
CDM	Contemplative dimension of Religious Life
Cf.	Confer
Chap.	Chapter
CIVCSVA	Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life
Const.	Constitutions
Col.	Colossians
1Cor.	Corinthians
Eph.	Ephesians
Ex.	Exodus
FF	Franciscan Fonts
FLC	Fraternal Life in Community
FMOC	Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ
Jer.	Jeremiah
Jn.	John
LG	Lumen Gentium
Max.	Maximum
Mk.	Mark
Min.	Minimum
Mt.	Matthew

No.	Number
NB.	Nota bene
No. (s)	Numbers
P.	Page
PC	Perfectae Caritatis
PPF	Program for Priestly Formation
Phil.	Philippians
Ps.	Psalm
RD	Redemptionis Donum
Rm.	Romans
St.	Saint
Std.	Standard
TOR	Third Order Regular
USCCA	United States' Catholic Catechism for Adults
VC	Vita Consecrata

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ABSTRACT

Over the years, formation has been the main tradition used as pedagogy by formators to ensure that desirable values, based on the Catholic religious teachings, are imparted in formees. This promotes the general development and growth of the Church's mission to all the world through the shaping of individual candidates, Christian dogma and concepts. Little emphasis has been placed on the importance of quality formation guidelines. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to research on the guidelines to ensuring quality initial formation in the congregation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation. The research examines the existing approaches to formation, importance of guidelines for quality formation and proposes some ways of implementing guidelines for the quality formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation. The study uses purposive sampling design, and the analysis of the research embraces both quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain some conclusions from the field findings. In addition, it adopts the social identity theory to analyze the initial formation process of candidates. The literature from other scholars presents an in-depth understanding of the religious, it is also used to support or differ with the field findings. Respondents of the study include religious candidates, formators, the regional superior, community superiors and the community members of the Ethiopian delegation. Data from respondents was collected through questionnaires and interview guide research tools. The findings of the study will be used to provide some insights, regarding quality religious formation. Towards the end, suggests some possible approaches which could improve the initial formation of candidates to consecrated life.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of the continuation of the work of salvation, Jesus appointed twelve apostles and admitted them to his school to form them and make them his followers. They needed to be with him to be formed and be sent forth to go and preach and have authority to drive out demons (Cf. Mk. 3: 13-15). By Jesus calling his disciples, he conformed their lives to his own. Those who are chosen by Jesus are called to be formed to live his life and to attract humanity towards the Kingdom of God and share in the same objective of the Son of God.

According to Arbuckle (1987), Jesus chose the twelve disciples to act as agents and catalysts for the building of the Church. And like a good formator, Jesus would personally challenge and correct them in their work (Cf. Mk. 9: 28). He instructed them on how to teach through the use of stories, a method which fitted well with the local cultural situation. In fact, Jesus' formation of the twelve apostles essentially and initially came from God the Father. He passed the formation he got from the Father to the twelve apostles, and was transmitted to the whole Church.

According to International Union of Superior Generals, of 1994, formation is an invitation to undergo a living process, centred on the person of Christ, and to deepen the baptismal commitment to follow him, in a particular form of Gospel life. Religious life is complex and requires adjustment of the newly recruited individuals with the awareness to follow Jesus in his action. This call is for the common purpose, which is the expansion of God's Kingdom. In fact, God needs our minds, ears, hands, legs, eyes and hearts to walk with him and collaborate with him in his Son's mission.

One of the Church documents tells us the following:

For each religious formation is the process of becoming more and more a disciple of Christ, grown in union with and in configuration to Him. It is a matter of taking on increasingly the mind of Christ, of sharing more deeply, his gift of himself to the Father and his brotherly service of the human family, and of doing this according to the founding gift which mediates the Gospel to the members of a given religious institute (Church document essential elements, No.7).

At the onset of the training instructions into consecrated life, based on the Catholic context, religious candidates in formation, actively participate in the programme of human transformation, which includes spiritual, educational, as well as pastoral formation in all phases of life. For successful formation, the formator and the candidate need to be guided by the Church, while also, in such a process, the way formation leaders and candidates relate to one another is essential, keeping in mind always the riches proper to each culture and nation. In regard to this, a lot of value has to be placed on the importance of quality formation guidelines for good initial formation. Lack of proper guidelines, do not only subject those involved in formation to more problems but also thwarts the formation process from taking place effectively.

This study aims at coming up with some guidelines for quality initial formation for the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ (FMOC) in the Ethiopian delegation. Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ were founded by Teresa of the Crucified Jesus in 1885 in Rimini, Italy. The congregation shares in the spirituality of St. Francis in the context of the Third Order Regular, which originated from the Franciscan Third Order Secular. The charism of the FMOC is a continual search for God and a total submission to him, while contemplating and imitating Christ the Crucified, on the foot-steps of St. Francis of Assisi, living the Holy Gospel in fraternity, poverty and minority, in service to the brothers and sisters to be missionaries in the world (Const. 2010, Chap. 1 No. 16).

The study is organized into five main phases, which includes chapter one that gives the general introduction of the problem and the contribution of the investigator, based on her personal experience, regarding the phenomenon under examination. Chapter two presents the views and perceptions of other scholars regarding quality guidelines of religious formation while chapter three presents the study design as well as methodology which is adopted in the collection and data analysis of the study. Chapter four is about data presentation and analysis. This is followed by chapter five, which gives conclusions and recommendations of the study, based on some research findings.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0. Introduction

This chapter provides some background information to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, hypotheses, significance of the study, scope and delimitation, theoretical framework, conceptual framework and operational definitions of terms.

1.1. Background of the Study

Religious formation involves both the community and the individual, who directly interacts with the environment. Generally, religious formation concerns a person's character development, which encompasses the understanding of some personal characteristics or personality, individual behavior, and human maturity, spiritual growth, which helps with the attainment of the total self-giving for the love of God; living the life of Jesus through evangelical counsels and service to humanity (Serrao, 2014). The formation process includes a formator who provides religious value to the formation process and formees who are religious candidates who follow the directives of the Church and congregational charism.

According to Liptak (2009), formation in a religious congregation is defined as the building up of a relationship with God, through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. The point is that every formation process tries to achieve the relationship with God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In reference to the document for formation to priesthood, the Church presents the basic concept of formation as 'a process:' "The foundation and centre

of all human formation is Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh” (PPF, No. 74). As this document explains, Jesus’ coming into this world was to save humanity.

Formation is a process in which mutual exploration and charism of the institution and of an individual take place (Cf. Jn.1: 35-39; Jn. 15:1ff; 1Jn. 1: 3). The formation process could be compared to the food which we all eat and gets into our stomach, in the process of digestion, part of it becomes flesh and blood of our body and we grow healthy. This is also true with the formation given to the religious candidates through training them in different aspects, whereby they obtain spiritual nourishment which helps them grow to full maturity of their faith so that they may live according to the habit of the only Son of God; Jesus Christ (Serrao, 2014).

During the formation period, the formee gets some insights of the process as well as congregational history which assist with the development of their understanding of the religious life. These views are in line with Serrao (2014), who holds that through the process, formation symbolizes supporting religious candidates in obtaining a profound and life-long knowledge on themselves, and at the end, channel all these energies and disposition towards the constructive realization of an ideal vocation.

For the continuity of his mission, Sullivan (1988) explains that Jesus chose the twelve to teach them privately and instruct them more fully (Cf. Mt. 11: 1; 13: 36ff; Mk. 4: 10ff; 8: 31; 9: 30-37; 10: 32; Lk. 18: 31). This indicates that Jesus was preparing them for the future ministry of teaching, to be like “scribes trained for the Kingdom of God” (Cf. Mt. 13: 52). Mabheka (2013), describes the formation and education that Jesus gave to the twelve apostles as that which he himself got from God the Father. He was consecrated by the Father in humility and docility. Likewise, the community of the apostles is to be formed in the same spirit.

Using the example of Jesus, during the formation process, the individual's life is to be integrated in all aspects which capture the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral. As Wynne (1988), describes the term "formation" as the process through which a person is socialized to participate in the religious life, the process of initial formation is a unique characteristic of beginners training and being selected into religious life. The role and importance of religious formation, as noted by Gichuhi (2000), is to promote the student's maturity and stability in growth towards their faith in Jesus Christ and live in accordance with it in conviction in order to accomplish the mission of the Church through a proper religious family and particular charism.

Therefore, as presented by Liptak (2009), a formation guide is the mouthpiece of God, and so a great amount of awareness is required from persons in formation. Persons in formation need to be confronted with the true realities that lie along the way in the initial formation process and at its completion. Looking at formators, their solid grounded way of living, their supernatural call, firmness in what they teach as well as their attitude are things which give light to the journey of their candidates.

The formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ is contemplated in the light of Arbuckle (1987) and the third order regular (TOR) of Franciscans, inspired by the life example and teaching of Saint Francis and all the Franciscan traditions. It should take place always within an atmosphere of joy, hope, simplicity, humility, and with constitutive elements of the Franciscan penitential spirituality, which are penance-conversion, prayer, humble and poor fraternal life and works of mercy (Const. 1982, Chap. 2 No. 24). The Constitutions of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ have the same line of the TOR, for the formation criterion of the Congregation. God invites a person to irradiate and guide

young girls who are selected by himself to help them discern the proper call to follow Jesus Christ for the good of the Church and humanity (Const. 1982, Chap. 6 No. 188).

The Second Vatican Council gave a duty to the Religious Superiors that they should give serious attention, especially to spiritual training to be given to members as well as encourage their further formation (PC No. 11). Later, the Church, following the request of major superiors of religious institutes, has offered Directives on Formation, addressed to the major superiors of religious institutes and to their brothers and sisters charged with formation responsibilities, including monks and nuns. It offers guidance to institutes and helps them to elaborate their own programmes of formation guidelines, as they are obliged to do by the general law of the Church. The document tends to give a solution and be an essential instrument of the present problems of formation (No. 4). So many Congregations following this direction have set up some guidelines for their formation process.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to investigate guidelines for the quality initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ of the Ethiopian delegation. Lack of good guidelines to facilitate the formation process has led to serious problems in the process of forming candidates to the religious life in the congregation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ. Therefore, there is need for the congregational leadership to design a strategy and capture the full meaning of formation and expose the values of the congregation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ. This will give formators some quality guidelines to help them achieve the desired objective of realizing quality religious formation.

Such a formation guideline will equip formators with the ability to form others without struggling with the grey areas of life which are not clearly stipulated in the constitution. It is in this context that the researcher is interested in examining the importance

of formation guidelines to ensure the quality formation of religious candidates. Formation of religious candidates has been the main part of religious congregations' priorities in the past decades (Serrao, 2014).

Formation is the core value of the Church because through it, the wholeness of humanity is realized as well as the sustainability of the institute and the Church. However, it is the task of the congregation to develop their own fashion of the programme with which they believe formators could work with according to the doctrines of the Church to enhance the formation process. The question has been how well formators are informed about issues of formation? To what extent are they qualified to handle complex issues affecting religious communities in this contemporary time?

Each institute designs its own guidelines, which has contributed to high quality formation for its candidates. This is also the principle which the Church stresses to be captured in the humanization of willing individuals who are called by Jesus to join in the development of the call of the Church in serving the community and transforming the world (Wynne, 1988). Through religious formation, humanity comes to be developed; the transformation process is believed to have great powers of changing attitudes of individuals into what the Bible teaches and practices of the Church (Liptak, 2009). But when formation is not correctly carried out by formators due to poor planning and lack of clear guidelines in the formation process, there is the likelihood of the Church losing its focus and compromising the quality which is needed.

1.3. General Objective

The general objective of this study is to evaluate the quality of the formation process of the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian

delegation. In order to respond effectively to the research problem, the research study is guided by the following specific objectives:

1.4. Specific Objectives

The following are the specific objectives of the study:

- i. To propose some ways of implementing guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism.
- ii. To explore the importance of guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism.
- iii. To examine the relationship between the approaches to religious life and initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism.

1.5. Research Questions

The research answers the following specific questions in order to adequately respond to the problem of the study:

- i. What are the ways of implementing guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism?
- ii. What is the importance of guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism?
- iii. What is the relationship between approaches to religious life and the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism?

1.6. Research Hypotheses

I could spell out the hypotheses into two points as follows:

- i. There is a relationship between approaches to religious life and the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism.
- ii. There is a relationship between guidelines and the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism.

1.7. Significance of the Study

In the area of the formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation, little has been done as far as research is concerned to provide guidelines for the formation of candidates to the religious life. Therefore, the findings of this study are helpful for the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation. In particular, the findings are significantly helpful for the aspirants, postulants, novices and junior sisters of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ.

In addition, the study outcomes are of benefit to the formation team as well as communities of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ. Consequently, the study provides some suggestions of implementing formation guidelines for the quality output of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation. Quality guidelines will enable the congregation to have well trained and integrated members of its institutes, which will have a big impact on the coordination of the religious work within their ministries.

The findings of this research are used by the delegation in drawing up guidelines founded on the actual feelings and perceptions of formees and formators as well as whole members of the delegation to develop some effective approaches to the formation process.

For example, quality formation guidelines helps in the training and mentoring of effective religious candidates who could easily adapt to different situations and support the mission and vision of the Church despite the challenges of life in the contemporary context.

Otherwise, if an individual farmer goes to the garden with no adequate gardening tools, he or she will not be in the position of doing his or her work since there will be no tools, and once tools are missing, there will be no actual yield from the farm, so is the delegation, it needs to prepare its candidates effectively to get a good outcome of their product to sustain their Church mandate. The study is hoped to contribute to the body of knowledge within the Catholic Church, it will be relevant to other scholars who may have interest in the search for guidelines for the quality formation of their religious candidates and all other relevant congregational members within the Catholic Church.

1.8. Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study is restricted to guidelines for the quality initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation. Respondents include formators, superiors, aspirants, postulants, novices, junior sisters and community members. The study is conducted among the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation because the delegation is the first in Africa and has the largest number of sisters as well as candidates from diverse backgrounds. Not being able to study all the delegations of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ, focus on the Ethiopian delegation with candidates from diverse backgrounds offers a good sample which could be replicated or generalized to other delegations.

1.9. Theoretical Framework

The study adopted social identity theory as the main framework for the study. This theoretical approach has been utilized to explain the connection between the formation

process and associated guidelines which are essential for the realization of the quality formation of formees. The social theory suggests that groups for instance; social class, family, religious order, workers, which people belong to are important sources of pride and self esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Applying the social identity theory to the context of religious formation, it could be said that the social identity theory emphasizes that congregation members generate inter-group or self-categorization and development in the approaches that favours intra-organization at the expense of outer organization (Tyler, 1999).

The Social Identity Theory begins with the basis that individuals define their own identities with regard to their social group and that such identifications work to protect and strengthen their self-identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Tajfel and Turner (1979) identify three variables whose contribution to the emergence of in-group favoritism or preference is particularly important:

- (a) The extent to which individuals identify with a group to internalize that group's membership as an aspect of their self-concept;
- (b) The extent to which the prevailing context provides the ground for comparison or relationship between groups;
- (c) The perceived relevance of the comparison group, which itself will be shaped by the relative and absolute status of the in-group. Individuals are likely to display or present favoritism when an in-group is central to their self-definition and a given comparison is meaningful or the outcome is contestable.

The Social Identity Theory was developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979). The Theory was originally developed to understand the psychological basis of intergroup discrimination. Tajfel et al. (1971) attempted to identify the minimal conditions that would lead members of

one group to discriminate in favour of the in-group to which they belonged and against another out-group. It asserts that group membership creates in-group/ self-categorization and enhancement in ways which favour the in-group at the expense of the out-group.

The examples (minimal group studies) of Tajfel and Turner (1986) showed that the mere act of individuals categorizing themselves as group members was sufficient to lead them to display in-group favoritism. After being categorized into group membership, individuals seek to achieve positive self-esteem by positively differentiating their in-group from comparison out-groups on some valued dimension. This quest for positive distinctiveness means that people's sense of who they are is defined in terms of 'we' rather than 'I'.

The Social Identity Theory which was developed by (Tyler, 1999), builds on the relational model of authority. The model explains congregation members beneficial behaviours towards the organization based on the relational model of authority and congregation members who feel positive about the organization they identify themselves with, for instance, members feel proud, concentrate by putting more effort and work even harder for the congregation's success in order to maintain their favorable identification with the congregation. Furthermore, the approach argues that a follower may perceive the congregation status and effectiveness as a source of his or her own positive self-identity.

This idea to motivate followers who try to maintain or even enhance the organization's status (Moorman & Byrne, 2005) make them work hard for the success of the organization, conform to the congregation's rules and constitutions and engage in extra role behaviour.

The main notion of committed religious is that they generate their concepts in the pragmatic actions of the Church's mission and vision with collective experiences associated with the congregation so that candidates or members could have an elevated altitude of inspiration or motivation and consequently, a high attitude of commitment to the religious vows.

1.9.1. Strengths of the Social Identity Theory

The Social Identity Theory helps an individual candidate to adopt the existing or demonstrated culture or guideline which offers greater clarity, and because of this, candidates will be more likely to easily adapt to the values it communicates. Therefore, it is important for organizations to introduce guidelines as part of the organizational culture which the group may identify with and contribute to the improvement of self-esteem among members who share a common charism.

Membership to an organization, linked with a certain level of belonging could improve members' self-esteem. When there is a clear guideline that gives clarity to the processes followed in religious formation, it creates a disposition which could boost a sense of belonging associated with membership to the organization. Consequently, this disposition could also enhance a sense of bonding in a group, which is commonly viewed in the fraternities. On the other hand, lack of clear guidelines could lead to confusion and isolation of some individuals. This could lead to the formation of cliques (small groups of people) formed among religious candidates (Brewer, 1991).

1.9.1.1. Support System

Superiors, formators, candidates and community members form the congregation's social system since they all depend on one another in one way or the other; when they work

and share common guidelines they support each other; a social system includes all relevant congregation members who are connected with the Church, they support one another more so in times of difficult situations such as tensions, stress, struggle, they call upon their system to offer them the needed assistance which includes moral support. With regard to the Social Identity Theory, members of an in-group may obtain an increased emotional strength and coping skills connected with congregational members or colleagues. (Ashforth, 1989).

1.9.1.2. Behavioral Influence

The congregation administration and formators introduce the Church's cultural values and norms by teaching the Catholic social teaching and expected behaviour and character formation with the expectation that everybody will follow suit and behave like Jesus did. The theory of social identity, therefore, supports the contention that our organization behaviours is influenced by those with whom we associate with; it is a similar belief that communal life is linked with the formation of the religious life. Our character and attitude may begin to mirror the attitude of our congregation, thus encouraging our acceptance by other associated members of the congregation (Hogg et al, 1995).

1.9.1.3. Social Adjustment

The Social Identity Theory does not require solid or official membership. In order to benefit people, for instance, in a community, members come from diverse cultural backgrounds but are then linked by a common charism, guidelines and culture being practiced day in and day out. This has a strong connection of the bond of a family, and anyone who forms part of the given family develops a strong attachment towards it. And that is how community life has taught us to link with each sister, regardless of their ethnic

background; we are all bound by a common purpose and values such as vows of chastity, poverty and obedience.

The theory holds that people categorize themselves based on the self-concept; how they perceive themselves and identify themselves based on the environment in which they live, when the formation programme has a clear guideline for both formators and candidates; candidates will have interest to follow and keep at it, but when it has no focus, they may lose interest towards it, hence, the programme may collapse.

1.9.2. Weaknesses of the Theory

1.9.2.1. Minimizing the Worth of the Individual

By focusing on the group identity and not on the individual, critics have argued that the Social Identity Theory replaces the notion of individuals with a vague concept of social identity. The interpersonal relation among group members is sometimes associated with their identity (Hogg et al, 1995). This weakness of the Social Identity Theory in its application to the context of religious formation could be overcome with the clarity of guidelines of the religious formation.

1.9.2.2. Culture and History

Complaints raised from researchers have argued that the Social Identity Theory crucially overlooks the contingencies of history and culture based on the argument of sociology and psychology. A scholar in the field of psychology has lamented that identity formation is not simply the product of group designation, but rather depends on the combination of subjective factors (Fraser & Nicholso, 1989).

1.9.2.3. Inter-group Bias

The classic Social Identity Theory conceive correlation between a high level of group identification and group bias which implies that, those who most strongly identify with a group, for example people who are workaholic may perceive their group as superior to others who do not love working (Hewstone et al, 2002).

1.9.3. How to overcome the Weakness of the Theory

Despite limitations which accompany the Social Identity Theory such as not focusing on the individual, inter-group incline and cultural values of individual persons in the group, it has the capability of predicting when such disputes or occurrence could be experienced by group members, the prediction provides a window of opportunities to plan and avoid such occurrence.

In addition, the conflict of interest among group associates provides an opportunity for finding long lasting solutions of the inter-group challenges which may have not been identified without the embracement of the group culture. It also provides some insights into some group dynamics which prepare individuals and groups psychologically in all aspects of life. The theory also argue that a group cannot be identified without the involvement of individual accompaniment, therefore, the individual's worthiness is not lost at any given time, so long as one is considered part and parcel of a group or sub section of a group or family.

1.9.4. Application and Justification of the Social Identity Theory

1.9.4.1. Organizational Socialization

In the context of the congregation, the newly joined religious candidates are always bothered by the building of situational definition (Katz, 2005), of their new life or family, they always critically assess the values of the congregation whether it meets their desires and interest or not. They tend to ask questions of whether they are in the right place or not.

From the beginning, individual religious candidates need to be engaged in the whole process of the congregation through their orientation into the congregational activities, norms, values and life style in order for them to learn and understand what nature of life they are signing for so that they could have a sense of belonging to the newly formed family. Through this way, candidates will be able to follow up on the congregational activities, learn what they value most (charism) and decide to live by it as their new culture or family. The theory could be used by the congregation administration in the development of the culture and candidates' attitudes towards the formation process and general congregation's tradition and beliefs. It is the conviction of this study that new religious candidates are always not sure of their roles and are apprehensive or afraid of their new status. Thus, a clear guideline plays a central role in such circumstances. Subsequently, in order to get the insights of the congregation and act within the values and culture of the congregation, candidates must learn its directives and traditions; the general expectations and behavioral norms, the power and status structures, among other items which would necessitate their recognition (Ashforth, 2006).

1.10. Conceptual Framework

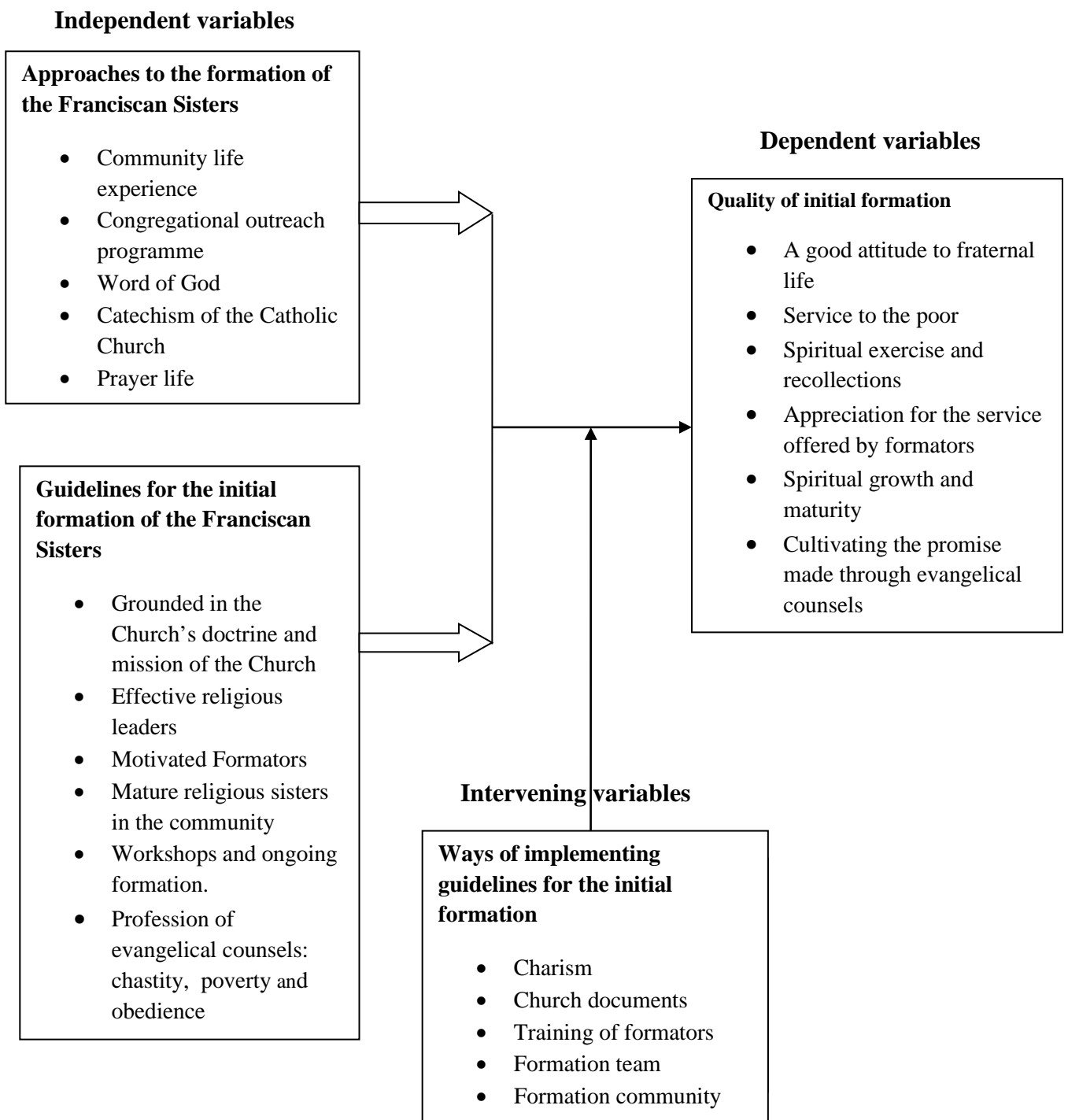


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework incorporates both independent and dependent variables which have been mentioned and identified in the study and how these variables interrelate with each other. The conceptual framework, figure 1 indicates an independent variable on the left, an intervening variable in the middle, and a dependent variable on the right hand side.

The independent variable (Guidelines for quality formation) is the input or cause which affects the dependent variable (Franciscan Sisters) in statistics. An intervening variable is one that occurs between the independent and dependent variables. An intervening variable is a hypothetical variable adopted to highlight the casual connection among other variables. In this study, guidelines for quality formation, which represent the independent variable will be measured using some necessary Church documents and competencies required in the formation process; effective and efficient utilization of the formation resources or materials and responding to the correct application of the Church documents according to the regulations provided by the Church for quality service delivery for both the formees and formators as well as the congregational administration.

In order for the congregation to achieve the desired standard or quality of formation, the administration has to adopt the model with the variables which identifies the intervention plan as part of the development model, whereby candidates need to be fully informed on the congregational charism, activities, and way of life among other items that they may find important. Candidates need to be introduced to congregational constitutions so that they may become aware of the don'ts and does of the institute, they need to embrace a culture of reading, regarding assignments within the ministries in which they shall be assigned, which will enable the work of the leadership team to be efficient and with a positive output or effective community leaders.

1.11. Operational Definition of Terms

Approach: A way of looking at something.

Guidelines: Rules, guiding principles, instructions.

Aspirant: A person who tries to become something; a person who aspires to be or do something.

Postulant: An applicant, especially one seeking admission into a religious order.

Novice: A person who has entered a religious order and is under probation, before taking vows.

Junior sister: A sister with temporary vows.

Formator: A senior professed individual from a congregation, providing directives as regards to the religious life, to formees or religious candidates.

Quality: The standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something.

Formation: The action of forming or process of being formed.

Congregation of sisters: A religious order for women.

Missionaries: Persons sent on a religious mission, especially those who are sent to promote Christianity in a foreign country.

Candidate: A person regarded as suitable for the life of the Franciscan Sisters.

Franciscan Sisters' Delegation: Religious representatives of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ congregation in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia: Country of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

Kombo and Tromp (2006), observe that literature review refers to a job, an investigator is consulted for, for the purpose of finding some insights on a given research topic. This chapter deals with the guidelines for the quality initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ. The study considers some existing approaches to the formation of Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation, the importance of guidelines for quality formation and proposes some ways of implementing guidelines for quality formation. The literature review is done to present various studies; ideas from other scholars and identify some research gaps.

2.1. Literature Review on the Orientation of Formation

The concept of religious formation concerns the behavior, attitudes of the superiors, formators, candidates, and members of a congregation. The practice of consecrated life brings together disciples of Christ who should be supported in accepting the call and gift of the Lord, which the Church has obtained from same Lord and of which by his grace, he will always safeguard. It is for this reason that the forms of adaptation generate some benefits, mainly if they are animated by profound spiritual renewal. The formation of the religious aspirants, postulants, novices and juniors who are called to follow Jesus closely should transmit the value of consecrated life. Through formation, God opens a new way of living for those who are formed and enables in them an awareness of the impact of their attributes as servants of the Lord within the Church. Consequently, religious communities notice the value

of communal life and demonstrate a sense of their religious contribution to the world for the common good of God's people. Members of religious communities experience the presence of the Holy Spirit and embrace it by means of the harmonic union of its apostolic and practical practices (LG No. 43 & PC No. 18).

2.1.1. Initial Formation in Asia

Being the most paramount component of the religious persons' growth, formation is critical and should put emphasis on the initial stages, in which new candidates are introduced and given an opportunity to obtain some basic insights surrounding consecrated life. It is important to bring them to their own individual understanding of the significance of their call to the Christian faith, for them to get to know the supernatural reasons why Jesus Christ offers them the opportunity to serve him.

Despite the decline of the number of young adults entering into the religious life in this contemporary time, there is immense knowledge regarding consecrated life today, namely that initial formation is significant in the responsibility of initiating an individual person into mission, which is the call of the Gospel and the Church. It is the mission which should order the life and formation of any dedicated religious individual. Basically, formation is considered as the reshaping of an individual's self-image and call in relation to Christ's action.

The issue of formation into religious life has become dynamic and complex. There are challenges in the formation to consecrated life; the concept of religion has changed with the introduction of technology which has brought about the emerging of new concepts which include the pedagogical approach to the religious teaching. These alterations of the contemporary times require great and combined efforts to help in the handling of issues of

initial formation into the life of Jesus so as for the institutes to carry on with the values of the Gospel (Gallares, 2004).

Formation into the religious life should be fully integrated, contextualized and inculturated. Therefore, the transformative elements which have been mentioned should be put into consideration in the various concepts of Asia, where the Church's main attitude and approach in carrying out the mission which is founded on dialogue is fast growing. This attitudinal alteration should begin with the initial formation and lived continually in witness to the Gospel of Christ throughout an individual's life (Gallares, 2004).

Today, there is great awareness in the religious life of the fact that the first phase of formation is critical. It is the goal that must guide the life and formation of any religious or committed Christian. Formation is understood primarily as the shaping of a person's self-image and vocation in accordance with that of Christ's religious formation (Directives No. 35). It is a call to locate an individual's personal development and journey of faith into the consecrated life. It offers a framework within which persons are immersed into the experience of God, an immersion which is gradually perfected in their life. It is inclusive of all the processes that would help a person understand, realize and live his or her basic vocation to be human, which forms the basis of his or her call to be Christian and gradually actualize and deepen his or her call to be a religious person.

2.1.2. Initial Formation in Africa

In the African context, becoming a religious person is considered a gift since it demands an individual person to fully give off herself or himself to Christ. This requires devotion. A consecrated person in Africa is considered as being close to God because of his or her nature of praying always. However, it is always a challenge to have young energetic people subscribing to a congregation as members; this is due to the attitude of young ones

towards religious life. This trend of fear has made the Church to suffer at the expense of the newly growing culture that does not consider Jesus' call as vital. These views are also shared by (Marie, 2014) who says that the issue of initial formation in Africa has become uncertain for those people who are in charge of formation activities. All are endeavoring to find methods of formation which are acceptable and practical. A formation which takes into account a candidate's totality, since always, when formation is limited to performance, it degenerates in one way or another in search of power, authority to have more and contrary affections. However, it should rather lead to sharing services and unconditional love which makes the young grow not only as bearers but equally as receivers, (Vermeer & Van der Ven, 2001).

2.1.3. Initial formation in Ethiopia

2.1.3.1. The Population of Catholics Faithful in the Ethiopia

The Catholic Church in Ethiopia is part of the global Church under the spiritual leadership of the Roman Catholic Church. The Oriental Ethiopian Catholic Church, the primary organization of the Catholics in the country, shares some rites with the Orthodox Tewahedo Church. While separated by their understanding of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, the Ethiopian Catholic and Orthodox Churches have similar sacraments and liturgy. Since the year 2010, there were 610,714 members of the Ethiopian Catholic Church as well as Latin-Rite Catholics in the nation, primarily Italian-Ethiopian (Melton & Baumann 2010). According to the report, it is on record that the number of Catholic members in the nation is small compared to other believers, and this therefore, provides the Catholic institution with great opportunities as far as the formation process is concerned in order to help in the bringing of new souls to Catholic doctrines so that they could continue with the work and assignments of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

The question of the proper ordering of formative roles arises from the Church's desire to provide candidates for the priesthood and religious life with the formation which makes them to live together in segments around the teachings and ideas of Jesus Christ. This has encouraged many efforts, particularly following the Second Vatican Council, to develop some educational programmes that are based on an anthropology which embraces a human being as well as the spiritual dimension of human experiences (Manenti & Zollner, 2007).

2.1.4. The Relevance of Formation Guidelines for Religious Institutes

The Pallottine society of the Catholic apostolate realized the importance of guidelines for religious formation from the directives provided by the Church. Through the directives, they decided to develop their own formation guidelines (Ratio institutionis 2004).

According to the Pallottine society, the objective of the Christian life consists in being configured to our Lord Jesus Christ, it is necessary to undertake a path of formation which facilitates the progressive appropriation of Christ's sentiments towards God, the Father. St. Vincent Pallotti was persuaded to action and therefore, he asked his brothers to be happy every time a new candidate entered into the religious community since his coming meant the advent of another imitator of Christ (Ratio 2004).

The understanding of the formation concept and plan in the foundation of the Sons of Divine Providence has given us new hope and concept of thinking on the relevance of the formation process and the associated path that every institutes should adopt in order to realize an effective process of formation among individual candidates who are inspired to join and imitate the likeness of Jesus and practice what he did. The congregation has put more emphasis on the formation programme as witnessed in their document following the subsequent redraft of the document for the purpose of the reliability and accountability of the values of the Church and the congregation. This emphasis was registered when they

demonstrated their values and hopes in the formation process by actively ensuring that their new candidates were able to get an up to-date document by revising its content now and again whenever they feel something may go wrong.

In their mission, they stressed that the plan of formation should therefore, reflect on their charism, in addition, they emphasized that the formation guideline is a real manual which is theoretical and should provide or offer some practical insights concerning consecrated life. The document is full of proposals which could be used by formators to prepare new candidates with the appropriate means of achieving formation goals and objectives (Sons of Divine Providence, 2002).

According to Don Orione (2004), their work has been inspired by two main factors, which include the necessity of adopting formation to the directions, norms and criteria which have come out from the Church in great numbers in the recent years. Their first book was published in 1987, the second was on the need to look at some of the congregational principles, choices and modes of behaviour in view of the changed social and cultural circumstances of our times.

2.2. Review of Literature on the Existing Approaches to Religious Formation

2.2.1. Formation through an Outreach Programme

Candland (2001), says that religious life is complex and does not only concentrate on Church activities but on the community since the purpose of the Church and its origination is then community and therefore religious leaders are always prepared for the main purpose to serve the people of God who may not belong to a religious community but to society. Ordinary people require spiritual mentors to help them walk an earthly tough life. A life without the knowledge and influence of God is very difficult, and in order for the Church and

congregation to develop good servants who could serve the community, they have to adequately prepare them to become men and women of God to answer the call of the Church, of serving marginalized people in the community. Formation takes place in a community where lay persons live as tools of formation, their congregations then send candidates to go and spend their lives with people in the community where they get immersed in the challenges of the local community or society members as a way of preparing them to come to terms with their call of working and serving the poor; their call is about the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

According to Schneiders (2000), the general purpose of religious formation is to help the already willing individuals or persons who have the will and call of Jesus in their lives. The role of a formator and a congregation is to facilitate the formation process and welcome generous hearts which are attracted by various forms of consecrated life, which want to embrace qualities of Jesus, the Son of God in helping him to serve the world by donating themselves to the Church through the wings of a congregation.

2.3. The Importance of Guidelines for the Quality Formation of Religious Congregations

This section presents the significance of guidelines for the quality formation of religious candidates of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian Delegation. It highlights the positive aspect of having guidelines for the purpose of formation within the institute as a strategy for effective and relevant tool for formators; to help them in the realization of formation goals during the formation process of candidates.

Directives on formation in religious institutes gave instructions which were considered important and necessary in addressing the present document to major superiors of religious institutes, and to their brothers and sisters charged with formation responsibilities. It

does so in virtue of its mission of giving guidance to institutes. This could help them to elaborate their own programme of formation as they are obliged to do by the general law of the Church (Can. 659 §2-3). On the other hand, men and women who are religious have the right to know the position of the Holy See on the present problems of formation and resolutions which it suggests for resolving them.

The document has been enriched by the numerous experiences which have been made since the Second Vatican Council, and it treats questions frequently raised by major superiors. It reminds all of us about certain requirements of the law with respect to present circumstances and needs. It hopes, finally, to be of special help to institutes which are coming into experience and to those which at this time have few means of formation and information at their disposal (Cf. Can. 4). A formation guideline is material which helps candidates to understand and depend on their divine call, discern their growth in following Jesus, to mature and integrate the way of their living through: human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral formation. The main goal of formation is to enable candidates to religious life, to absorb and deepen that in which religious identity consists of.

The synod assembly paid special attention to the formation of those who wish to consecrate themselves to the Lord, and recognized its decisive importance. The main goal of the formation process is to prepare people for the total consecration of themselves to God in the following of Christ at the services of the Church's mission. To acknowledge God's call by taking individual responsibility for maturing in one's vocation is the inescapable duty of all who have been invited by the Lord to serve him in a special way.

Formation should therefore have a profound effect on individuals so that their every attitude and action, at important moments as well as in the ordinary events of life, will show that they belong completely and joyfully to God. Formation should therefore involve the whole person; in every aspect of their personality, in behavior and intention. This is because

formation aims at transforming the whole person. It is clear that commitments to formation never end. At every stage of life, consecrated persons must be offered an opportunity to grow in their commitment to the charism and mission of their institute (VC No. 65).

2.4. Provision of the Formation Goal

Through formation guidelines, the administration and candidates will be able to focus on some key objectives which include quality of formation as stipulated in the congregational constitutions. The purpose of the existence of the programme should be outlined in the formation curriculum or plan. The plan will capture all the necessary lessons and time lines needed for each course or activity through which a candidate will be guided and directed by the plan on what is coming in their way.

2.5. Collaboration Learning

Through formation guidelines, the needs of the religious candidates are put into focus and this helps in improving the bond of friendship between the two groups of persons. For example, the curriculum will identify areas which are a priority to students and determine the best approach which is good through which to pass such knowledge to students. In addition, through guidelines, the administration will be able to prepare relevant formation resources, their reliability and availability will be considered by guidelines, this will determine what is needed from both participants.

In the process, participants' strengths, weaknesses and performance could be measured based on the level of the formation process. This provides the concept of collaboration among community members, formators, superiors and religious candidates themselves.

2.6. Ways of Implementing Guidelines for the Quality Formation of Religious Congregations

The conviction of Christians provides us with arrays of hope in times of the difficult situations of our lives as well as the institutional life. The long history of the Church which has been marked along the way reaffirms our faith that the Lord of history does what is best to allow us overcome the worst of human conditions. The essential things that we Christians have to engage ourselves in are to adjust our faith to fall into values through the action of the spirit of the risen Lord in the contemporary society. Christians trust that transforming formation will facilitate adjustment among our colleagues, allowing them to remain faithful to the Lord, who has invited us to serve those he sends to us. In particular, formation gets us fired up from the consuming passions in the religious life.

2.7. Formation of Formators

According to Desrochers et al, (2002), based on the congregation's tradition and regulation, it is believed that formation is declared as a priority among all other great priorities within the congregation's plan. In the author's view, recruitment and continuous growth of formators are key areas or priorities in the formation process of religious candidates. However, it is the most abandoned area with the thought that formators are well to do and therefore, they have some up to-date information required by the Church and congregation. This aspect of formation should be reconsidered as a top mark priority for the formation process.

No tools or equipment for work do not justify production as good, furthermore, lack of adequate preparation always generates confusion in the phase of the process. The poor unprepared souls do find themselves on the crossroads, giving the ministry formation to an oversight. This could create a situation in which success is left upon God's mercy to decide

the fate of the outcome. Accompaniment in formation requires that formation leaders or formators have constant contact with their spiritual growth and possess the capacity and competencies of development in their care; they need to have some up-to-date skills and competencies for the assignment given by institutes. Through this, the long term value of the congregation will be attained, Desrochers et al, (2002).

2.8. Comprehensive and Flexible Holistic Approach

According to Desrochers et al, (2002), transformation is for the common good of the Church and the God who sends persons; the whole person who is influenced by the spirit of transformation and who takes and practices the attributes of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the compassionate healer. Absolute formation must therefore attend to the tasks of incorporating all the required dimensions of the spiritual, affective, moral, intellectual, charismatic, pastoral, and somatic life around the central focus life of Jesus Christ. An absolute approach hopes to re-adjust loose areas and influence the justice of the mystery of the candidates by taking into account all that individual persons should be doing collectively and is present within their reach as articulated by what is within and outside, which is simultaneously present in every situation. This is the reason the interiors world of the person in the process of formation's intention; emotions, is as important as the outer world; habits and behavior. Through the above, a person undergoing the formation process must be considered within the context of collective and shared values and the convictions of the society in general.

2.9. The Inclusion and Introduction of the “process” Approach

The ancient model of formation was merely adaptive to learning ideas. However, the process as an approach involves the procedural sequence with some key factors put under consideration, like how faith and values could be integrated into the lives of the candidates. The basic understanding is that the growth and change of thoughts as an approach to

formation, leaders are offered wrong directions to formation, and the key and main ideas are the assimilation of the values and ideals of the Church and the congregation. In this way, channels are converted from the mere content to the actual process of transfer to ideas and values; therefore, formation should embrace the Gospel of transformation all through (Desrochers et al, 2002).

2.10. Stages of Religious Formation

2.10.1. Pre-Postulancy

An optional additional session of formation for consecrated life, lasting up to one year, is called pre-postulancy. It provides some moments for individual growth through a very personal and less demanding formative relationship with members of a community. This moment in the formation process provides an avenue for candidates to learn more about the congregation and the congregation to learn about them. It is a period in which an individual person tends to develop an effective relationship with the vocation director. At this time, an individual may begin the admission process and do the discernment of their vocation (McAuley, 2006).

2.10.2. Postulancy Phase

According to the Sisters of Mercy' Congregation, the duration of the postulancy period is a twelve months of initial formation. During this moment, candidates begin to live a common spiritual life of the community and the genuineness of their call is mutually discerned. This moment is initiated during the occasion of the ceremony of entrance. As candidates, they begin to live and experience the local community life and share a life of prayer, common life as well as a ministry experience (McAuley, 2006).

Through the process of mutual discernment with the formator, an individual works towards discovering her personal calling into the religious life; she assesses if she has the capacity to live her spiritual calling and live according to the charism of the congregation in which she has enrolled, she needs to be ready to experience the general community life. At this time, the congregation gives the opportunity to candidates to study the congregation history, constitution, direction procedures and statements and to reflect on the congregational values (McAuley, 2006).

2.10.3. Novitiate Phase

According to the Sisters of Mercy Congregation, at the beginning of the two years of novitiate, a sister receives a habit and a religious name, she endeavors to live according to the spirit of the vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and service to the poor, sick and ignorant (McAuley, 2006).

2.10.4. Temporary Vows

The first profession of vows inaugurates a new phase of formation, which is one of the intensifying of the integration of contemplative and apostolic activities. Vows are first taken for a period of three years, after which they are ordinarily renewed for another two years, a sister may then make request for perpetual vows (McAuley, 2006).

In the congregation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ, we live life according to the charism of the foundress, we practice the doctrine of the Church and our charism as documented in our constitutions. Like any other congregation, we follow the formation process as a way of integrating our newly willing and interested candidate to join the charism and help us live Jesus' life as illustrated in the General Church Document. We practice the Catholic tradition, norms and values according to the teachings of the Church.

We live a communal life with our congregational members, enhancing one another's faith through daily common prayer and sharing of our religious experiences and cultures. In our delegation, we are composed of three main community members who include aspirants in Nazareth community and postulants in Addis Ababa. The novitiate house is in Wasera. Sisters with temporary vows live in different communities.

2.11. Phases of Formation according to the Franciscan Sisters of Missionaries of Christ

2.11.1. Aspirancy

In our delegation, the first phase of formation is aspirancy. This process of the first phase begins when young girls are in their 9th class in secondary schools, mostly at the beginning of their secondary education, at which stage the delegation journeys with them for at least two years in order to know them before they join and become part of the aspirants' group. During this time, there is a follow up process of two years when the delegation invites them for "come and see programmes" at which point they are involved in the religious life experience for them to learn the culture of the institute and value of religious life in the context of the Franciscan Sisters. Both the congregation and their potential candidates follow each other in the development of the mutual understanding of their relationship. At the end of the tenth class, after the prospective candidates take their national examination, the congregation then observe the candidates' performance to see if they meet the criteria required. Candidates are expected to score above two points in their national examination. For the successful candidates who score above point two in their national examination papers are then invited to our Franciscan community for further engagement, where they are given some practical experience about religious life. After the practical experience with sisters in the community, if the young women understand and recognize that they have the

supernatural call and are happy to live our life and charism, they are welcomed to be part of the initial formation of aspirancy in the community.

The programme is common for all aspirants; everyone learns about the Catechism of the Catholic Church, language, common culture, attitude formation (character formation) and the general background and history of the congregation. At this phase, there is no determinant period for candidates, since the congregation are more focused on the maturity of individual candidates, some take a long time to mature their call while others take a short time. From mature aspirants, the congregation selects those to proceed to the next phase of the postulancy.

2.11.2. The Postulancy Phase of Formation

At this stage of religious formation, the congregation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ engages its candidates who aspire to community life to experience a new phase of the religious life through the consent of the General Superior in collaboration with the Regional Superior. During this phase, through the direction of the postulant mistress, candidates are left to seek and learn better the congregational charism and tradition. They learn about their vocation in order to become conscious of the spirit of the congregation, they are also able to live in harmony with community members in congregational activities, which include prayer, work and study, among other things which may demand their co-operation.

At the same time, the congregation provides them with the avenue of completing and deepening the human and religious formation so that, they may get to the level of joining the next phase of formation, which is the novitiate stage. In this period of postulancy, the issue of individual intellectual, moral and spiritual attitudes are the key focus of the congregation as well as the right intention and free will. The postulancy period lasts one year, with the

maximum of two years, of which the congregation considers the candidates' psycho-social balance. The duration of the postulancy is not fixed to two years, it may be increased or reduced, depending on the maturity of a postulant and general directives from the congregational administration (Const. 1982, Chap. 6 Nos. 189, 190 & 191).

The congregational constitution borrowed a leaf from Canon Law, which provides the regulation for religious life. According to canon law, only those who have a suitable disposition and have sufficient maturity to undertake the life which is proper to the institute are to be admitted into the novitiate (Can 642). It is the Lord who calls candidates to the religious life (Cf. Rv. 3: 20). So individuals need human, academic, psychological and spiritual maturity to hear the Lord and respond freely to the call (Arbuckle, 1987).

2.11.3. The Novitiate Phase of Formation

According to the congregation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ, candidates are immersed into the deep knowledge of Christianity and charism. Maximum commitment, more diligent care, and more endless zeal of superiors must be efficiently tapped in the Novitiate, on which depends the future of novices (Const. 1982, Chap. 6 No.198).

Postulants who present qualities and attitudes of maturity are admitted to the novitiate by the General Superior, with the consent of her Counsel, having listened from the mistress of the postulants and after the written request of postulants themselves.

The novitiate, with which begins life in our family, is ordered towards the end that novices come to the better awareness of their divine vocation, particularly, the vocation proper of our congregation, that they experience the institute's manner of life and form their minds and hearts in its spirit, and that their resolution and suitability be tested (Can. 646).

During this time, the novice must render herself docile to the internal action of the Holy Spirit and open herself up to the teachings of the mistress in order to be oriented to our form of life, in respect of one's own personality. This time has a particular exigency of formation which deeply involves spiritual growth. It requires therefore, prayer, reflection, exercise of virtues and guidance to arrive at a true encounter with Christ, indispensable condition to embracing our consecrated life with maturity (Const. 1982, Chap. 6 No. 202).

The novice, together with the knowledge of our life, must also be helped to experiment God's actions in their lives. Let her be stimulated to practice with enthusiasm the more typical virtues of our consecration; humility as self continuous availability; ready and joyous sacrifice; poverty as configuration to Christ; sincerity in mutual relations; and active and responsible obedience (Const. 1982, Chap. 6 No. 203).

Having taken into account the character of our congregation, it is necessary to pay attention to the formation of novices, through acknowledging the primary role of the intimate relation with God and lively participation in the liturgy must be harmonized with the apostolic life which awaits them in such a way that the insertion in the external works is conveniently prepared (Const. 1982, Chap. 6 No. 204).

2.11.4. Temporary Vow

This brings us to the close of the novitiate formation phase, it is the end of the novitiate process, after having been sure of the fact that all the conditions for the validity of the profession exist and there is no canonical impediment acknowledged for our form of life, the General Superior, with the consent of her Counsel, may admit those from the novitiate to the temporary profession (Can. 656). The Temporary Profession, accepted by the General

Superior or by her delegates, in the name of the Church, must be preceded by a course of spiritual exercises (Const. 1982, Chap. 6 No. 220).

The period for the temporary vows is five years, however; it could be prolonged by the General Superior. The professed should then wear a religious habit, both inside and outside the house, for grave reasons, exceptionally, the General Superior or in urgent cases, the local superior, could permit that a sister might conditionally use a different habit (Const. 1982, 6 No. 669).

However, except the constitutions of the congregation, the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation do not have guidelines for the formation programme. There are only a few numbers of the constitutions which offer some brief ideas on the initial formation programme. Consequently, the researcher, because of her eight years of experience as a formator, she understands the need to improve the guidelines based on the evidence of the difficulties of working as a formator without clear guidelines of the formation process. This research is aimed at alleviating some challenges and provides directives which could be adopted for the effective formation process of the congregation in question.

2.12. Summary of the Reviewed Literature and Knowledge Gap

The researcher has consulted some views of other scholars on the orientation of the formation of the religious candidates from the perspective of the initial formation in Asia, Africa and East African Ethiopia, it has also revisited the literature on the existing approaches to the formation of the Ethiopian delegation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ as well as the importance of the guidelines for the quality formation of the initial formation. The study has also emphasized values and ways that could be adopted to improve the delegation's guidelines for the quality formation of the candidates aspiring to joining the consecrated community. The question has been how to overcome the challenges faced in the

formation process by the congregation leaders and formators, how to assimilate the new religious candidates into a consecrated community by integrating them into Church norms and culture so that they may come out to the community with adequate knowledge of Church documents and competent capacity which could support transformation as demanded by the Church and congregation. Formees and sisters must be strong in faith, good in moral life and in practices of the Church as well as disciplined members of the congregation with the right and actual idea of both the charism of the congregation and the Church.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses the plan which is followed when gathering data for the study. It describes the research design which is adopted in the investigation of the problem; the specific design, the target population of the study, and its constituting sampling design, the research instrument used, and also deals with the validity and reliability of instruments, data collection and procedure for the process. It finally describes how data is analyzed.

3.1. Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive survey design to determine guidelines for the quality initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation. The purpose of the descriptive research is to describe facts and attributes about individuals, groups or condition (Kothari, 2006). This design only provides descriptions and explanations and identifies and predicts the correlation concerning study variables. The method seeks to identify some contributing factors to lack of quality guidelines for the effective formation of the religious candidates of the congregation, occurrences and conditions of behaviours. The approach is appropriate for the study location, target population and fits into the research challenges or limitation as well as financial limitations concerning the study.

The descriptive survey design is used in this study. In the survey, data is collected by administering some questionnaires to sampled individuals with the aim of studying their attitudes, opinions and habits (Orodho, 2005). In this study, a questionnaire was administered to selected religious candidates (formees): aspirants, postulants, novices, junior sisters,

formators, superiors and community members to collect data in order to assess their opinions and habits on the search for guidelines for the quality formation of the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ of the Ethiopian delegation.

The qualitative data was collected using the interview schedule. The independent variables constitute the search for guidelines for the quality formation of the initial formation such as the materials used in the formation process; the Word of God, the charism practice for formation, the influence of Church documents on the formation process. The research findings are useful in the generation of some concrete recommendations for use by the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the delegation of Ethiopia.

3.2. Target Population

According to Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003) target population is a complete set of individuals, cases or objects to which the researcher wants to generalize the result of the study. The researcher uses a representative sample (or subsets) of the population as the best for the research. The target area is chosen because from the literature no similar study has ever been conducted in the area.

The target population for this study includes aspirants, postulants, novices, junior sisters and the rest of the sisters of the delegation of Ethiopia.

The population of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ constitutes 60 members. Respondents include formators working with candidates at various levels in the religious formation process, candidates, the regional superior, community leaders and community members. So, the sample constitutes 60 members who are directly or indirectly related to formation. The study has adopted purposive sampling to obtain participants as follows: 4 aspirants, 3 postulants, 3 novices, 9 juniors, 8 community leaders, 1 regional superior, 4 formators and 28 community members who were purposively sampled to

contribute their views and perceptions for this study. Senior delegation members were incorporated to bring with them their own formation experience which may contribute to the formation process. Candidates, formators, superiors and community members working directly and indirectly in formation formed the target population. The sample for the research study was drawn from the updated and accurate list of the current congregational members' records.

3.3. Description of the Sample and Sampling Procedure

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), sampling techniques refer to how cases are to be selected for observation, it provides a detailed explanation of the main issues to be taken into consideration for the study and how they are to be selected from the target population. The researcher selected 56 members from the target population as the sample size of the study. 13 respondents were superiors and formators and 19 candidates and 24 community members were selected purposively. The purposive sampling was employed in the selection of respondents in the three categories of the participants who were engaged in the study of the delegation.

The researcher selected a sample as a result of various limitations or challenges which may not have allowed full investigation of the entire population as argued by Gay (2002). Kombo and Tromp (2006) argue that sampling procedures and sample size are significant in establishing the relationship of the sample for generalisation. Gay (2002) identifies purposive sampling as the most effective approach as it allows all the members of the population to have an equal opportunity of being represented in the sample. Therefore, purposive sampling approach is used to select respondents to ensure that all different sub groups are adequately represented.

3.4. Description of Research Instruments

In this study, data is collected using some questionnaires and interview schedule. The questionnaire is used because it is straight forward, less time consuming for respondents and it is also less expensive (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). The questionnaire provides reasonable benefits in the administration; it also presents an even stimulus potential to an enormous number of people simultaneously and offers the investigation with an easy gathering of data.

Questionnaires contain semi - structured questions. Questions include both open ended and closed. This saves time yet gives anticipated outcomes. With some open ended questions, respondents are able to communicate their opinions and give recommendations. Questionnaires give respondents freedom to express their views and also make suggestions because they are anonymous in order to conduct successful interviews.

The researcher involved the one-to-one interview style with the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ' (FMOC); formators and superiors who are stakeholders of the congregation with the help of a pre-prepared interview schedule. Unstructured or free interviews assisted the researcher to understand some preliminary benefits of quality guidelines for the religious formation of candidates, namely the importance of guidelines for the effective formation of religious sisters. Some open-ended questions were asked to candidates and community members to collect information. From the beginning, some data was collected to acquire some perceptions of individual respondents concerning their experiences as religious candidates as well as religious sisters in the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ. Respondents were motivated and encouraged to provide both good and bad experiences as religious candidates and community members as they belong to some formation communities; feelings and perceptions. Information obtained from the interview with respondents was transcribed and subsequently analyzed.

3.4.1. Validity of the Instruments

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), validity of a research instrument is a measure of how well an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. In order to ensure the validity of the instruments, content validity was used where items in the questionnaire and interview guide were checked against the study objectives by some experienced professionals. Advised judgment was also sought from supervisors who assisted in the validation of the instruments. The validity helped in identifying items in the interview schedule which may have needed restating and removing those that are not relevant for the study.

3.4.2. Reliability of the Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003) define reliability as measurements of the degree to which a particular measurement procedure provides a similar outcome over a number of repeated trials. In addition, it also refers to the consistency of an instrument to yield similar results at different times. In order to ensure the reliability of the study, the test and retest method was adopted. This involved the administering of the used instruments for five days to the same category of the respondents that who were sampled to assist in the comparison of the results.

Comparison was made among the results of the reaction (response). An individual's product moment formula for (test - re test) was used to compute the correlation co-efficiency in order to establish the extent to which the contents of the questionnaire were consistent in eliciting the same responses every time the instrument was administered. This was used to determine if the results were consistent to determine the reliability of the instruments used for the study.

3.4.3. Pilot Testing of the Instruments

The pilot study is a distinct pre-liminary research conducted before the actual study is carried out Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003). Before the commencement of the study, a pre-testing of the study instruments was carried out. The purpose of the pre-testing is determining accuracy, clarity as well as suitability of the study instruments and further ascertaining of their validity and reliability. The pilot study was carried out among the students of the Department of Philosophy who were doing trimester courses and had past experiences of formation while some of them were still active formators, candidates or both, since their contribution made meaning to this study.

3.4.4. Description of Data Collection Procedure

The researcher first obtained the essential authorization of documents and permission from the Institutes of Spirituality and Religious Formation administration and research advisors of Tangaza University College to carry out the study, and sought a consent form for respondents to acknowledge as a compulsory code of conduct in order to proceed to the field to conduct the study. The researcher made some appointments with the targeted ministries or departments of the congregation on which day to administer the questionnaires and carry out interviews to the members. Before the actual data collection, the questionnaire was administered to the selected sampled group similar to the actual sample which was included in the study. This allowed the researcher to make some meaningful adjustments to the research instruments and develop the validity of the questionnaire. On the actual day of data collection, research questionnaires were administered personally by the investigator with the help of research assistants and formator. The researcher herself administered the questionnaire to the religious candidates and community members by providing instructions

regarding the allocated time sufficient for them to respond. Towards the conclusion, the researcher collected responses from the religious candidates and relevant stakeholders through their own formator, the same day on completion. After the data collection exercise, every instrument was assembled for data analysis.

3.5. Description of Data Analysis Procedures

Data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data was assessed and analyzed by the use of tables, frequencies, percentages, bar graphs, pie charts and histograms. Qualitative data was evaluated and classified into logical thematic areas based on the research questions and themes. The data was interpreted in connection with the research objectives. The analysis of the items was conducted using the statistical package for the social sciences version 21(SPSS). The unstructured items were analyzed alongside the main concepts and themes and the results were documented. The conclusion and recommendations on the guidelines for the quality initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ were derived from the findings of the study.

3.6. Ethical Consideration

Approval and clearance was obtained from the Institute of Spirituality and Religious Formation and Research Department of Tangaza University College, and permission was also taken from each respondent to conduct the study. Every candidate in the study was given an explanatory form about the study. This form included purposes and benefits of the study, confidentiality of information, the right to refuse or withdraw from the survey and other important information which was necessary for the study was provided.

3.7. Summary of the Chapter

Chapter three presented the research design, target population, description of sample and sampling procedure, description of research instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, description of data analysis procedures and ethical construct of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the data obtained from the questionnaire administered to religious candidates and community members, formators and superiors, with the interview guide administered to the delegation. Responses provided by the respondents were analyzed and the researcher extracted some relevant variables from them. She made use of tables, frequencies, percentages, bar graphs, pie charts and histograms in the data presentation.

4.2. Response Rate

The analysis of the response rate of the questionnaires administered to candidates and community members, formators and superiors was done in order to determine the validity of the results. The analysis was done according to the number of questionnaires returned by the respondents from each category. Table 1 presents the distribution of the results:

Table 1: Response Rate table

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Response Rate	55	98.2%
Missing	1	1.8%
Total	56	100%

Out of the 56 questionnaires which were issued to the members of the delegation, 55 were correctly filled and returned, giving a response rate of 98.2%, which was justified to give a reliable data. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2012), the percentage of the respondents above 50% is adequate for data analysis, and therefore, 98.2% was considered more than adequate, which was inclusive of the target sample size of the study. This is indicated in the table above.

4.2.1. Distribution of the Delegation Members' Responses

The distribution of the delegation members' responses were sought in order for the researcher to clearly distinguish individuals who were directly involved in the study. Delegation members included religious candidates, formators, superiors, and lastly, community members. Table 2 presents this data:

Table 2: Distribution of the Delegation members' responses

Delegation members	Categories	Sample size	Returned	Percentage
A	Candidates	19	19	100%
B	Formators and Superiors	13	13	100%
C	Community Members	24	23	96%

From the table above; delegation members' respondents, candidates sampled for the study were 19, which was equivalent to a 100% return rate, formators and superiors who were directly engaged in the study were 13, who contributed to the 100% participation. 24 community members were also included in the study sampled with only 1 of the members in the category failing to provide any feedback, resulting into the 98.2% of the active members

who were happy to be part and parcel of the study. From this sample matrix, it could be deduced that the majority of the respondents were willing and happy to be engaged in the study as they demonstrated their interest through their full involvement in the answering of the questionnaires as well as participating in the interviews and so contributed to the study knowledge. This shows their great responsibility and enthusiasm, as postulated by Gebreegziabher (2005) who says that enthusiasm serves as a very good lubrication for the mind, and it is a basis for being successful. Generally, based on this report, the participation across the categories was amazing, with the winning overall percentages of 90% and above. This could imply that the candidates, formators, superiors as well as the Ethiopian delegation community members have zeal for guidelines and approaches for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ and how it could be improved for quality formation.

4.3. Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics are also referred to as variables, which include the individual member's years of experience in the service provision to the surrounding community as well as the delegation itself.

4.3.1. Categories of Respondents

Categories of respondents were sought, which included candidates, community members, formators and superiors. The pie chart below presents this data:

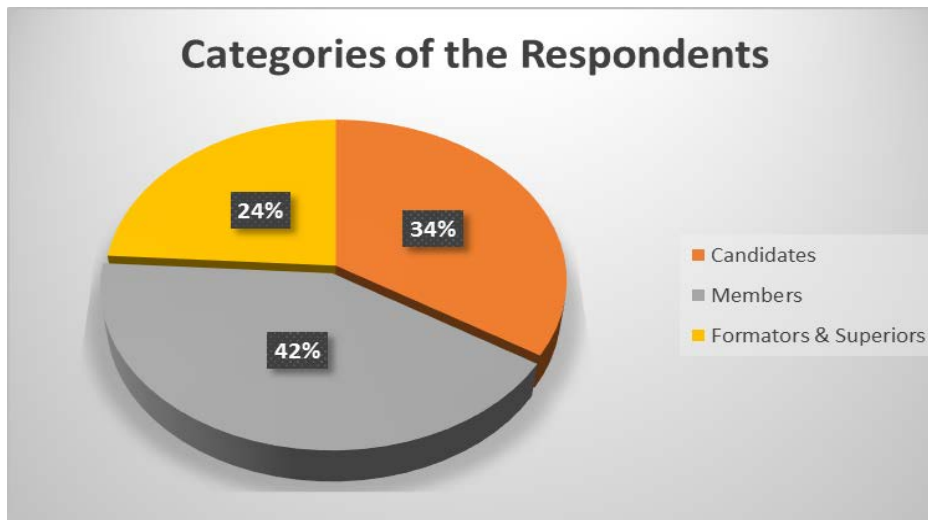


Figure 2: Categories of Respondents

The figure above indicates individual respondents who were directly involved in the study. Data presentation includes; candidates, represented by 34%, community members, represented by 42% and formators and superiors who were in one cluster, represented by 24%. This means that the majority of the respondents were particularly community members of the delegation, followed by candidates, superiors and formators, coming last respectively.

4.3.2. Years of Experience of the Respondents

The years of experience was sought from the respondents. It was important to understand how long members had been in the congregation, as that would indicate their level of experience. Table 3 presents this data:

Table 3: Years of experience

Years of experience	Frequency	Percentages
Candidates (2-10)	19	34.5%
Formators and superiors (5-10)	13	23.6%
Community Members (7-37)	6	10.9%
Above 15 years	17	30.9%
Total	55	100%

Regarding the number of years community members had offered their services to the delegation for the gainful experience, the findings revealed that 19 candidates (34.5%) had existed in the delegation for between 2-10 years, 13 formators and superiors (23.6%) had been in the organization for 5-10 years, 6 community members (10.9%) had been following their formation and also offering their services to the delegation, and ranged between 7-37 years. Those above 15 years of experience, were 17 respondents (30.9%). The majority of the respondents had lived in the delegation for more than 15 years. These findings may imply that superiors and formators had been in the present delegation for a long time and thus were aware of the challenges and perceptions held by the candidates towards formation guidelines and the formation programme in the delegation communities.

Consequently, most of the sisters were rich in the religious life experience, in relationship with the years they spent in formation work in one way or another. Their experience may have had a great contribution to the formation of their attitude towards the formation process. These concepts were shared by J. A. Froude (1818-1894), who is a British historian, when he stressed that experience teaches slowly, and at the cost of mistakes. So the senior sisters embellished their ability through their experience in the religious life as inscribed in their historical book (TA et al 2007).

The superiors' and formators' demographic characteristic information provided above is significant in this study because they were directly engaged in the formation process of the candidates and were the implementers of the initial formation guidelines in the delegation. They therefore, have the mandate and responsibility of nurturing and guiding the candidates towards Jesus who said: "I am the way and the truth and the life" (Jn. 14: 6). They show them how to live their life in the right way, according to the charism of the institute and improve their attitude in order for them to achieve their desired purpose of their call by Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The above findings also indicated that the majority of the sisters of the delegation; individual leaders, community members and superiors, had been in the delegation for more than 15 years, implying that they had vast experience regarding the challenges of the delegation as well as formation processes. The findings further showed clearly that the Ethiopian delegation was headed by some mature leaders, with relevant zeal, who could handle the challenges of initial formation and supervise well the implementation of the initial formation guidelines in the delegation. Besides, superiors could also join the formation team and assist formators on the issues affecting the formation process in general. This could also contribute to self-awareness during the journey of personal growth at different stages of life, as underlined in the ratio of the Pallottine Society (2004).

In addition, the above findings have indicated that the majority of the 23.6% superiors and formators have had the experience of serving the delegation for between 5-10 years. This suggests that various superiors could have extended their stay in their community service, which is advantageous as they could have had sufficient time to accomplish some particular developments in the region, which they may have started, especially in connection with the initial formation guidelines. Furthermore, they themselves would have been in the position to

bear witness to the changes which could have taken place in the individual candidates and taken some relevant measures needed to assist the process, candidates, as well as the delegation as a whole. This as mentioned in the formation plan of the Sons of Divine Providence, when it talks about checking the process of growth and highlighting the change of behavior of the candidates (Don Orione 2004). Besides, superiors in any delegation often play a major role since, they are the main implementers in the key areas of formation, and moderate contents to be included in the formation process.

4.4. Relationship between Approaches to Religious Life and the Initial Formation of the Franciscan Sisters

The researcher explored the correlation of approaches to religious life and initial formation in relation to the guidelines for formation. Table 4 summarizes the responses of the delegation respondents on the relationship between approaches and the initial formation in the delegation:

Table 4: Relationship between Approaches to Religious Life and Initial Formation

Relationship between Approaches to the Religious Life and Initial Formation	Frequency	Percentages
Interactions between sisters and candidates	21	38%
Prayer (communication with God)	15	27%
Following Jesus through His teachings	11	20%
Living the charism of the congregation	8	15%
Total	55	100%

The study has established that 21 (38%) of the respondents mentioned “interactions between sisters and candidates”, 15 (27%) commented on prayer (communication with God),

11 (20%) referred to “following Jesus through His teachings”, 8 (15%) of the rest of the respondents argued about “living the charism of the congregation”. Through these observations, it could be concluded that the majority were aware of the fact that approaches to religious life and initial formation were related directly, and therefore, were part and parcel of formation itself. This also means that all the activities of initial formation have some connection with the guidelines. The importance given to the Word of God regarding the journey of the candidates by Cencini (2015), makes us understand that it helps candidates to organize their call and integrate the image of the self through the process of their formation. This is also a fruit of personal and communal prayer, and is an effect of endless interactions of the candidates with the sisters because the history of the candidates must be transformed into new life in order to celebrate continuously the design of Jesus Christ.

A community is a place where the sisters and candidates live together to realize the goal of their call. For this reason, their interaction is very important. According to Schneiders (2014), by focusing on the community, we could discern more clearly which type of formation for a contemporary community and prepare for diverse lifestyles required. Therefore, the charism of the congregation has to be caught, sensed, and breathed in, through community participation because a charism is a special take on the Gospel, which gives a community a spiritual personality. New members have to discover experientially and prayerfully interiorize this spirit.

4.5. The Importance of Guidelines for the Initial Formation of the Franciscan Sisters

The researcher tested this variable to determine whether there was any need for guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters. In order to address this objective effectively, the study assessed the importance of guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters. The results are outlined in the table below:

Table 5: Importance of Guidelines for Initial Formation

Importance of Guidelines for Initial Formation	Frequency	Percentages
Effective leaders	19	34%
Mature community members	13	24%
Rejuvenated Formators	10	18%
Skilled Formators	8	15%
Through evangelical counsels, witnessing to the life of Jesus	5	9%
Total	55	100%

The findings showed that 19 (34%) of the respondents considered effective leaders as a result of quality guidelines for initial formation, 13 (24%) pointed to mature community members, 10 (18%) referred to rejuvenated formators, 8 (15%) argued in favor of skilled formators, while the rest of the respondents 5(9%) pointed to evangelical counsels; witnessing to the life of Jesus. This implies that the majority were aware of the fact that correlation may offer quality formation in the final analysis. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the term “guidelines,” as a rule; a process of teaching; as well as the act of instructing someone. Therefore, according to the researcher, the act of instructing the candidates’ journey towards the religious life includes attitudes of the whole delegation members (sisters). First of all, through the grace, mature, caring approach of the sisters in the community and the process of formation itself, the candidates’ growth and integrity could easily be facilitated. For example, the sisters’ practice of virtue and faithfulness to their consecration, witnessed by their offering. Liptak (2009) said that a humble service to humanity could encourage candidates to realize their own vocation and live the life of Christ through the charism of the congregation. The Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes (No.6) tell us that the primary end of formation is to permit candidates to the religious life

and young professed, first to discover and later to assimilate and deepen that in which religious identity consists.

Therefore, this life in particular is lived and witnessed through the evangelical counsels. Cencini (2015) emphasized that the aim of formation is to process the sentiment of Christ. Thus the formator's educating effort must explicitly aim at an authentic transformation of the heart, in the biblical and full sense of the term, to let it love as Christ does. The contemplation of the Word and example of the life of the Son of God ought to progressively purify and bring together every thought, motive, attitude, emotion and gesture of the young person, as stressed by Cencini.

Here, the mature approach and consistent guidance of formators could play a big role. The same author stressed that formators are truly cultivators of the Lord's vineyard. Hence a formator must know himself or herself, particularly the weaker and less free areas of his or her personality, so as to avoid harming others. On the other hand, guidelines as a text book provide direction to candidates and formators, as well as the whole process of formation; especially because they contain approaches to the religious life, spirituality of the proper institute and directives for their formation, as also stated in the formation plan of the Sons of Divine Providence (Don Orione, 2004).

4.6. Some Ways of Implementing Guidelines for the Initial Formation of the Franciscan Sisters

The researcher asked respondents to share their ideas on some ways of implementing guidelines for the initial formation, and the results are as summarized in the table below:

Table 6: Some ways of Implementing Guidelines for Initial Formation

Some ways of Implementing Guidelines for Initial Formation	Frequency	Percentages
On-going training of formators	20	36%
Collaborative work	17	31%
Awareness of guidelines	13	24%
Promoting positive attitudes towards guidelines	5	9%
Total	55	100%

According to the field findings, 20 (36%) of the respondents suggested continuous training of formators as one of the ways of improving guidelines for initial formation. 17 (31%) mentioned collaborative ministry among the leadership and candidates as a means of improving guidelines for initial formation, 13 (24%) commented on the awareness of guidelines, 5 (9%) commented on promoting some positive attitudes towards guidelines as effective means of enhancing them for initial formation.

By observing these findings, it is clear that the majority of the respondents who were engaged in the study were aware of the significance of the guidelines for initial formation. Therefore, the researcher too stresses on-going formation and continuous training of formators by borrowing the idea of Vincent Pallotti (2004), who mentioned that, a human person is always in the process of integration, which contributes to the consecrated person's perfectly imitation of the life of Jesus Christ in order to co-operate effectively in the work for His greater glory and the sanctification of souls.

Similarly, to improve the guidelines for initial formation, collaboration of the formators, superiors and community members is very important. The Directives on Religious

Formation in Religious Institutes (No.19) highlights this point when they say; educating candidates patiently is a duty of all the members, which helps them to grasp “the fullness of truth” (Jn. 16:13). Additionally, a readiness of candidates to be advised and directed with the intent of correctly discerning the will of God is a compulsory part of their formation. Consequently, the need to come together is seen as a help for having an awareness on some guidelines and promotion of a positive attitude towards them, which according to Don Orione (2004), contain the abundance of doctrines, principles and depth of the knowledge of formation; not only of conveying some normative guidelines, but above all, of generating some opinions, dwelling on the same subject and presenting them in their diverse aspects.

4.7. The Relationship between Approaches to Religious Life and the Initial Formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ of the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism

This was a very important variable based on the assumption that there is a high correlation between formation guidelines and the nature or quality of candidates produced in the formation programme.

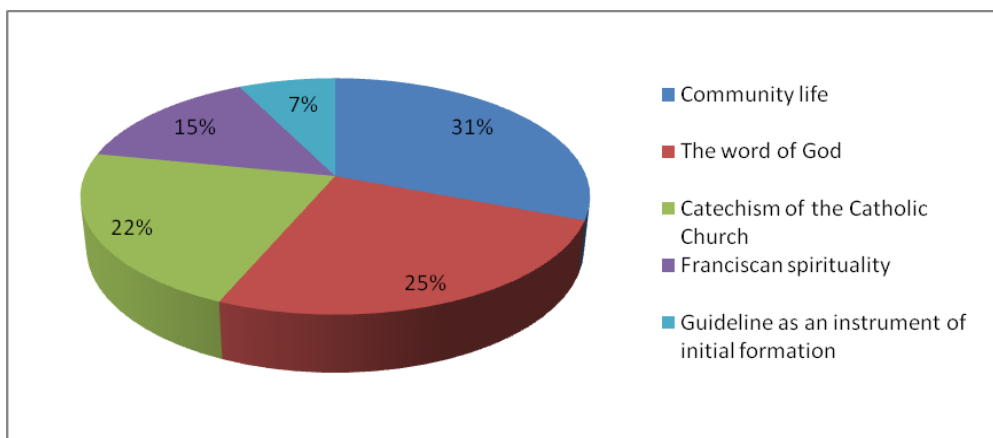


Figure 3: Respondents’ relationship between approaches to the religious life and initial formation

The findings in figure 3 indicates that 17 (31%) of the respondents mentioned community life, 14 (25%) referred to the Word of God while 12 (22%) were of the opinion of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 8 (15%) argued about the Franciscan spirituality, and the remaining 4 (7%) shared about the guidelines as an instrument for initial formation that has a connection with formation itself. This reveals that the majority of the respondents were aware of the importance of formation guidelines as they are key approaches to quality formation in the delegation. Guidelines could affect the quality of candidates after the process has been undertaken. Some candidates would do well in their formation course when structures in the guidelines marry one another well, while others would not because of the improper process and approaches to the religious life. Approaches to the religious life which are in line with the directives of the Church on religious formation; stress that to shape the internal order of institutes and their formation, institutes should always take into consideration the upholding and growth of the religious life (No.94). This could also contribute to more awareness of the sisters called to live the religious life. Therefore, each institute, according to its manner of life, has to follow the directives of the Church.

4.7.1. Respondent's Responses on the Community Life

Candidates need to conform to community life values and main beliefs. The study has shown the mean and standard deviation which regarded the community life and conformity of candidates.

Table 7: Respondents' Responses on Community Life

Statements	Descriptive Statistics		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I give value and importance to community recreation.	42	4.52	.890
I am aware of the necessity of having meals together with sisters.	42	4.48	1.087
Celebrating joyful moments of my sisters in the community strengthens the value of fraternal life and mutual relationship.	42	4.69	.841

Religious community life was considered as a factor which contributes to the preparation of candidates' attitude towards consecrated life or sisterhood, and the general quality of the formation process. Therefore, candidates were requested to indicate by rating in the scale of 1-5, to show how much community life contributes to their relational and personal development as regards to the statements which were given to them. This concept is shared by O'Murchu (2006), who mentioned community life as a place where the relational dimensions of human and spiritual growth are felt. Based on the field result, concerning community life on the above table, results indicated by general percentages that respondents were positive towards the statements.

"I give value and importance to community recreation;" the respondents registered the mean of 4.52 of the liker scale measurements which had a minimum of 1 and maximum of 5 in total. This implies that, the majority of the respondents were positive and happy with the concept of their life in the community. This is because peace and the love of staying together are always signs of the Kingdom of God, as stated in the formation plan of the Sons of the Divine Providence (Don Orione, 2004). On the question under community life, respondents indicated a mean of 4.52 in support of the statement: "I am aware of the necessity of having

meals together with sisters, while the mean of 4.69 was given to the statement: “Celebrating the joyful moments of my sisters in the community strengthens the value of fraternal life and mutual relationship of the sisters and candidates.” This has some common indicators that the majority of the sisters and candidates are happy with community life and therefore accept it as part and parcel of the formation process.

4.7.2. The Word of God

The foundation of religious life is the Word of God (the Gospel). Every institute as a charism, lives one aspect of Jesus’ life visible in the Gospel; like is the case with our own charism, namely that our life is a call to observe the Holy Gospel, in the service of our brothers and sisters in the world (Const. 2010, Chap. 1 No.16). And religious life is directly concerned with the spiritual development of an individual religious and believers living in the Church and involved in the mission of the Church or regarding formation guidelines as well as implementation of the processes in them. St. Francis of Assisi, giving great importance to the Gospel, (Franciscan Fonts Nos. 62; 75; 467; 806), emphasized that we must be familiar with it because what we transmit to others through our words must have a taste of the Words of Jesus Himself, which helps us firmly to observe His Words and also to live it fully. It is therefore, considered important to enquire from respondents about their knowledge on the Gospel or the Word of God in general.

4.7.3. Respondent’s Responses concerning the Word of God

The researcher wanted to establish the knowledge of the respondents concerning the Word of God since it contributed to the individual’s attitude towards formation. Their responses are indicated in the table below:

Table 8: Respondents' Responses on the Word of God

Statements	Descriptive Statistics		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am familiar with the Word of God	42	4.48	0.994
I give attention to the Word of God, especially when the Gospel is proclaimed during Mass as well as outside Mass	42	4.52	1.087
I believe that doing Lectio Divina is an essential means of discovering the will of God	42	4.45	0.916
I am aware and convinced that the meditated and lived Word of God enables me to grow in relationship with the Holy Trinity	42	4.50	1.110

The data in the above table revealed that respondents were aware and familiar with the Word of God, which was justified by the mean figure of 42 as the total population which was directly engaged in the study, to whom was assigned the mean of 4.48, and the standard deviation of .994.

The target population rated a mean of 4.52 and standard deviation of 1.089, and it was able to give attention to the Word of God, especially when the Gospel was proclaimed during Mass as well as outside Mass. They believed that doing Lectio Divina is an essential means of discovering the will of God which was rated by the mean of 4.45 and 0.916. The rest of the respondents with a rated mean of 4.50 and standard deviation of 1.110 were aware and convinced of the fact that the meditated and lived Word of God enables them to grow in relationship with the Holy Trinity. Moreover, it is affirmed in the Gospel of John: “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, by this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples” (Jn. 15:7-8).

On the other hand, the lack of understanding of the Word of God could result into a heavy work load for formators and superiors in the preparation of effective candidates of the delegation. It may as well interfere with the quality of formation itself.

4.7.4. Respondents’ Responses to the Catechism of the Catholic Church

The respondents’ perceptions on the Catechism of the Catholic Church were presented, based on the scale of 1-5, represented by strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. The results are summarized in the table below:

Table 9: Catechism of the Catholic Church

I give value, appreciate and see the necessity of using the Catechism of the Catholic Church in religious communities

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%
Disagree	2	4.8%	4.8%	7.1%
Neutral	1	2.4%	2.4%	9.5%
Agree	9	21.4%	21.4%	31.0%
Strongly Agree	29	69.0%	69.0%	100.0%
Total	42	100.0%	100.0%	

The data in the table above presents a report on the Catechism of the Catholic Church represented by some statements as follows: “I give value, appreciate and see the necessity of using the Catechism of the Catholic Church in religious communities.” Respondents indicated a strong disagreement with a frequency of 1, which translates into 2.4%, a validity of 2.4% and 2.4% cumulative response. Other respondents who mentioned “disagree” with a frequency of 2, 4.8 % and a cumulative frequency of 7.1. Neutral had a frequency of 1 and a cumulative of 9.5%, however, the majority reported on “strongly agree” with the highest frequency of 29, which was the highest percentage of 69, and a cumulative frequency of

100%. The “agree” followed closely with a frequency of 9 and a cumulative of 31%. This concurs with the idea of Wölfe land Heineck (2012), who commented on the position that the majority of the respondents were aware of the significance of the Catechism of the Catholic Church as a great and significant component of the formation process and guidelines. Candidates are the ones who need to understand the doctrines of the Church, respondents were therefore, requested to respond to the question related to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Responses were as shown in the above table.

Based on the above data from the field, the implication could mean that if candidates are under educated in knowing their religion, they cannot love and appreciate the call which they are invited to live in the Church and serve it through a particular institute. If the candidates’ faith is not grounded in the Church’s doctrine, it would be difficult for them to have a profound idea of the mission of the Church while living in a particular institute, and when they may face some difficulties, they would likely leave their vocation easily. This is in line with the, United States’ teaching on the Catechism of the Catholic Church for adults (U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults/ USCCA, (1997), which says that certain ways of acting are more embedded on God’s transcendent law, which is transmitted through catechism, thus human beings are inclined to some understanding, for them to live in society as well as reach their goals.

I notice that the Catechism of the Catholic Church is relevant for the religious formation process

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%
Disagree	2	4.8%	4.8%	9.5%
Neutral	1	2.4%	2.4%	11.9%
Agree	13	31.0%	31.0%	42.9%
Strongly Agree	24	57.1%	57.1%	100.0%
Total	42	100.0%	100.0%	

This was a very vital variable to consider, based on the assumption that it could affect the quality of candidates and the formation programme in the Ethiopian delegation. The data report indicated that “strongly disagree” had a frequency of 2, with a cumulative frequency of 4.8%. “Disagree” also had 2 as frequency, with a cumulative of 9.5%, however, the highest percentage which dominated in the results was “strongly agree” with 57.1% and a 100% cumulative, followed by 31.0% representing people who indicated “merely agree,” with a cumulative of 42.9%. Individual respondents who were neutral were of a marginal percentage, which was reported to be of a single frequency with an accumulation of 11.9%. This means that the majority of the respondents have positive attitudes towards formation, and therefore, could develop into good and quality leaders at the end of the formation process. The already developed attitude could influence the quality and standard of the formation programme. And this could help to transform the life of the candidates in the delegation, agreeing with what Liptak (2009) said, namely that we have come to know Jesus as we never knew Him before. To seek the vision of Christ is the ultimate meaning of all formation, of its beginning, middle and end.

I read it frequently

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%
Disagree	2	4.8%	4.8%	9.5%
Neutral	10	23.8%	23.8%	33.3%
Agree	18	42.9%	42.9%	76.2%
Strongly Agree	10	23.8%	23.8%	100.0%
Total	42	100.0%	100.0%	

For the question regarding the respondents' reading the Catechism frequently, the findings exposed strongly disagreeing at 2 (4.8%), disagreeing at 2 (4.8%), neutral 10 (23.8%), agreeing at 18 (42.9%), the final group who reported on strongly agree; 10 (23.8%). The results showed that a larger population of the respondents were frequent readers of the Catechism, which registered a high cumulative of 42.9%. Respondents tended to agree that the document is compulsory and necessary for the preparation of candidates, and may influence candidates' attitudes positively. This could affect the general quality of candidates at the end of the training. Don Orione (2004) argued that a systematic study of the Catechism of the Catholic Church offers a firmer knowledge and strengthens faith by opening minds to the living experience of the Church. Because the Catechism of the Catholic Church is a very essential document and tool for preparing religious candidates, it provides the basis for the teaching of the Church. Inadequacy of Catechism resources could contribute to the poor quality of the candidates' outcome and eventually affect the mission of the Church, the charism of the congregation and its apostolate later.

4.7.5. Franciscan Spirituality

The researcher understood that there could be other factors which influenced the quality of the candidates, Franciscan spirituality being the foundation of the congregation, it was important to get the insights of the candidates based on its concepts, respondents were requested to share their attitudes and feelings about the charism of the congregation. The researcher thought that the nature of the understanding of Franciscan spirituality could have an impact on the quality formation of candidates, and responses are shown in the table below:

Table 10: Respondent’s Responses on Franciscan Spirituality

Statements	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
I exercise the virtue of justice	42	1	5	4.19	0.917
I witness to the Franciscan joy to my brothers, sisters and creatures	42	1	5	4.50	0.890
I live joyfully Franciscan simplicity and humility.	42	1	5	4.26	1.083
I focus on humble fraternal life and works of mercy	42	1	5	4.38	1.081
I understand and appreciate Franciscan poverty.	42	1	5	4.24	0.906

Statistics in the above table show that at least the majority of the respondents indicated their concept of the Franciscan spirituality, which was rated with a mean of 4.5 and 0.917 of the standard deviation, which justified the question or idea that “I exercise the virtue of justice,” while the idea of “I witness to the Franciscan joy to my brothers, sisters and creatures” got registered with 4.50 as the active mean. The mean of 4.26 went to the phrase: “I live joyfully Franciscan simplicity and humility,” while the rated mean of 4.38 mentioned the statement: “I focus on humble fraternal life and works of mercy.” The rest commented on:

“I understand and appreciate Franciscan poverty,” which registered a mean of 4.24; a total targeted sampled population which was directly engaged in the study. Generally, all the responses; comments were positive, which showed a great commitment among the Ethiopian delegation sisters.

In addition, the researcher wanted to underline the enthusiasm of the respondents’; especially she wished to remind members of the delegation that they must relive it, as Francis and Clare lived. This could be a reality if we follow what William (2004) stressed, by becoming familiar with the founding personalities; Francis and Clare of Assisi, and with the context in which they lived because the basic structure of their spirituality would be outlined, as a foundation for understanding the later Franciscan tradition. Therefore, the findings demonstrate that there is a desire and awareness in these candidates to live the spirituality of St. Francis, and also implies that there is a good and positive coordination of the formation programme within the delegation. These factors reflect the candidates’ role in the following of the formation programme and congregation charism, which affects the quality of formation after the conclusion of the formation programme.

4.7.5.1. Exercise of the Virtue of Justice

The researcher was interested in learning and understanding whether the respondents were exercising the virtue of justice in their lives or not. People living religious life are called upon to engage in issues of justice, and so it was important to know about the life style practiced by the members. Respondents were asked to indicate their feelings by the use of “yes,” “undecided,” “no” and “missing.” Results reporting this information are tabulated below:

Table 11: Exercise of the Virtue of Justice

Exercise of the Virtue of Justice	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	37	67%
Undecided	15	27%
No	2	4%
Missing	1	2%
Total	55	100%

Results in the above table show that 37 (67%) of the respondents commented “yes,” 15 (27%) indicated “undecided,” while 2 (4%) commented “no” and 1 (2%) indicated “missing” about the question concerning whether respondents exercise the virtue of justice or not. According to the findings, it could be deduced that the majority of the respondents were positive, with only few individual respondents indicating “undecided,” which could mean that they are actually soul searching and were not sure of what to report, they were yet to discover whether they were practically practicing Franciscan spirituality or not. This shows that members need to examine their attitude towards the practice of the virtue of justice, since Francis and their foundress focused on the service of marginalized people. Francis followed the example of Jesus, which he learnt from the Gospel and allowed that his life embraces all those who were neglected by society, like lepers, the poor and the sick. This attitude manifests the fact that Francis did not only want to make them feel happy but also wanted them to appreciate and learn about the meaning of their lives by recognizing their dignity (William, 2004).

4.8. Responses of the Respondents on Guidelines as an Instrument

The nature of the available resources for formation, such as guidelines as an instrument used in the formation programme could have a direct impact on the quality of the formation given by the delegation (congregation) at the end of the formation period. A guideline is considered paramount for the development of the foundation of religious candidates; it provides the blue print of what formation entails and its content. Since it gives direction to the candidates' journey, towards growth, unity and integration. The Ratio of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate (2004) underlines the need of guidelines for formation.

The presence of instructional guidelines, also, according to the responses of the respondents, would create an imperative effect on the delegation candidates' quality. Guidelines, as an instrument by themselves, are considered a major variable in this study because they could have a tremendous effect on the formation process, and even the nature of religious leaders who would emanate from the delegation. Responses were interpreted in the table below:

Table 12: Responses of the Respondents on Guidelines as an Instrument

Statements	Descriptive Statistics		
	N.	Mean	Std. Deviation
A guideline is an instrument which helps in realizing formation goals during the formation process of candidates.	42	4.57	.941
Guidelines contribute to growth grounded on the Church’s doctrine and mission.	42	4.50	.890
Guidelines help in forming effective religious leaders.	42	4.62	.882
Guidelines aim at generating motivated future formators.	42	4.60	.939
Guidelines help to prepare mature religious sisters in communities.	42	4.57	.941
Guidelines provide a clear direction for the formation process both to formators and candidates.	42	4.50	.969
I see the need of introducing workshops and ongoing formation programmes about guidelines.	42	4.57	.941
I am aware of the values of the profession of evangelical counsels: chastity, poverty and obedience in the religious life.	42	4.57	.887
There is need for the candidates to be oriented by guidelines.	42	4.57	.887

The findings in the above table were rated with the mean of 4.57, meaning that the delegation respondents were aware of the fact that guidelines as an instrument are important, and help in realizing formation goals during the formation process of candidates. “Guidelines contribute to growth grounded in the Church doctrine and mission”. This statement was given by the respondents with the mean of 4.50. The statement: “Guidelines help to form effective religious leaders in the congregation” was rated with the mean of 4.62; “guidelines aim at generating motivated formators for the future” was rated with the mean of 4.60. “Guidelines help to prepare mature religious sisters in our communities;” the respondents rated this statement with the mean of 4.57; “guidelines provide a clear direction for the formation

process, both for formators and candidates;” this clause was rated by respondents with the mean of 4.50; “I see the need of introducing workshops and ongoing formation programmes about guidelines;” this statement was rated with the mean of 4.57 by the community members and candidates; for the respondents who commented on: “I am aware of the values of the profession of evangelical counsels: chastity, poverty and obedience in the religious life,” the phrase was rated with the mean of 4.57. These respondents also commented saying there is need for the candidates to be oriented by senior sisters, and it was rated at 4.57.

Guidelines as an instrument contain a holistic approach of the formation process; physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual dimensions, as mentioned in the document entitled Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes (No.34); and also as found in the formation plans of different institutes. Therefore, they are very essential for the religious candidates’ journey of growth and maturity. These could have an implication on the candidates’ future life style in the congregation. Hence, guidelines are essential resources for the integral development of candidates because they help them to access a lot of relevant contents needed for them, and lack of this instrument could contribute to the poor quality of religious formation.

Therefore, through the knowledge gained from different literature reviews, responses of the respondents and her personal experience in formation work without guidelines, the researcher believes that, the existence of formation guidelines provides a great and conducive atmosphere. Whereby candidates are able to interact with relevant resources to access a quality content and knowledge, with ease and could advance their skills based on proper guidelines, which help them to have an overview of what is expected of them by their formator. This, by itself helps in the reduction of the heavy workload on the formator, and even superiors of the delegation.

4.9. Guidelines as a Tool of Forming Effective Religious Leaders

The study has found out that the majority (95%) of the respondents were of the opinion that guidelines are a tool of forming effective religious leaders and are critical for the formation programme. The researcher asked respondents whether guidelines could be used as a tool for forming effective religious leaders or not. One of the members of the delegation, when asked, she commented that she believes that it helps to know and to become well aware of what a person is going to be and to do, to pay attention to the signs of the times and become mature at all levels; human, spiritual, intellectual, moral and pastoral; these aspects are required to be embraced in the formation process of the religious candidates in order to form mature religious (No.9). In addition, another member echoed in the similar perspective that guidelines would help to form effective religious leaders since they contain all the aspects which contribute to some qualities of the religious life laid out by the Church, Word of God, Franciscan spirituality and constitutions of the congregation; candidates who are formed through these guidelines are able to perceive the goal of their life and come to love it (No.15).

In another interview with one of the superiors about how guidelines could be useful in forming effective religious leaders, she commented that through them, well-formed candidates may have a vision of the unity of the Church, love of God and salvation of the whole world. This idea is also transmitted by the foundress of the congregation, through her charism (No.1). Regarding the same, a formator echoed saying that when someone is formed through guidelines, he or she may lead his or her life in a mature way. This could also offer an opportunity of leading others in the same way. She emphasized the difficulties encountered in forming a person without a plan (No.4).

The research has further found out that the majority (80%) of the candidates were of the opinion that guidelines are important in the formation of effective religious leaders. When the researcher asked candidates how guidelines could contribute to the formation of effective religious leaders, one of them said that if candidates are formed through guidelines, they are likely to become mature and convinced sisters. And when such candidates would be asked to offer their services, they would manifest themselves responsibly as mature leaders (No.18).

If a formation plan does not contain values of the religious life, or in this case, what we have called approaches for the formation programme of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ, per se, it might not have any significance. Formation guidelines, as believed by many, could give direction to candidates and each institute according to its nature. The different approaches which the researcher want to include would facilitate candidates' growth in formation, by embracing and identifying the true formative points of human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral, as also mentioned in the priestly formation programme (PPF, 1992).

Equally, a basic plan of formation ought to be comprehensive, systematic, practical, and rooted in the Gospel. Through the approaches, guidelines therefore, give an identity to religious persons: who they are and all the process of their integration and goal of focus. Since all the approaches of the religious life (particular institutes) are presented well-structured in the guidelines, there is a good chance of having a good understanding of the life a person is going to lead in the future.

4.10. Respondents' Responses on Quality Initial Formation

Quality initial formation was considered to be a factor that could have a direct implication on the quality of religious leaders from the delegation. According to Cencini (2015), who is an expert in the formation area, the possibility of processing quality initial

formation is in focussing on concrete methodological implications and project of formation; often more theoretically than practically, more statically than dynamically. The study therefore, sought to find out the extent to which initial formation could compromise the standard of formation. Feedbacks are indicated in the table below:

Table 13: Respondents' Responses on Quality Initial Formation

Statements	Descriptive Statistics		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have a virtuous attitude to fraternal life.	42	4.29	1.066
I am committed to serving the poor.	42	4.19	1.065
I value prayer life.	42	4.43	1.107
I consider the value of spiritual exercises and recollections.	42	4.48	1.087
I have the enthusiasm to be engaged in the mission of the Church.	42	4.40	1.083
I understand that pastoral work is part of my duties.	42	4.48	.890
I appreciate and sustain the service offered by formators.	42	4.24	1.100
I take care of my spiritual growth and maturity.	42	4.55	.861
I cultivate my promise made to God through evangelical counsels.	42	4.38	1.103
I fully live the charism of my congregation.	42	4.33	1.097
I have the interest to know and appreciate what the Church documents offer.	42	4.48	.943
I believe that there is need for the training of formators.	42	4.50	1.110
Community formation contributes to the value of religious life for both formators and candidates.	42	4.60	.885

Based on the findings in the above table, respondents rated the need for a virtuous attitude towards fraternal life as a fundamental principle of quality initial formation, as shown by the mean of 4.29. Commitment to serving the poor as part and parcel of the charism of the foundress and adopted by candidates in their practice of the life of the congregation is indicated by the mean of 4.19. The phrase: I value prayer life as a contributor to the main component of the initial quality formation is indicated with the mean of 4.43. The statement:

I consider the value of spiritual exercises and recollections in the quality initial formation was rated by respondents with the mean of 4.48. I have enthusiasm to be engaged in the mission of the Church was given a mean of 4.40. I understand that pastoral work is part of my duties in the quality initial formation was rated by the mean of 4.48. I appreciate and sustain the service offered by formators was rated by the respondents with the mean of 4.24. I take care of my spiritual growth and maturity carried the mean of 4.55.

I cultivate my promise made to God through evangelical counsels as components of the religious life is indicated with the mean of 4.38. I fully live the charism of my congregation was rated as an identity of the congregation with the mean of 4.33. I have the interest of knowing and appreciating what Church documents offer in quality initial formation is indicated with the mean of 4.48. I believe that there is need for the training of formators for better quality initial formation is indicated by the mean of 4.50. The rest of the respondents said that community formation contributes to the value of the religious life for both formators and candidates in the quality initial formation, and is shown with the mean of 4.56. The main issues exposed in the study, and were part of quality initial formation included the value of prayer life, the value of the spiritual exercises and recollections, care of the spiritual growth and maturity, the cultivation of the individual promise made to God through evangelical counsels and fully living the charism of the congregation.

This does not only mean that more commitment is required but also that these individuals should be empowered to receiving appropriate formation before they make vows, and those who already are vowed, should live faithfully their consecration to God. During their formation time, candidates must learn in a proper way, the charism of the congregation and all the traditions of the institute. For this, a special stage would be the novitiate stage; to give focus and interest on what Canon Law underlines, namely that “the novitiate, through

which life in an institute begins, is arranged so that the novices better understand their divine vocation, and one which is proper to the institute, experience the manner of living of the institute, and form their minds and hearts in its spirit, and so that their intention and suitability are tested” (Can. 646). As all the findings in the above table emphasized the importance of the attitude in life, a great weight must be given to it before profession as well as afterwards. This, for the candidates could contribute to quality formation, and the whole congregation achieving the goal of its charism.

4.11. Importance of Guidelines for the Initial Formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism

The researcher sought to understand the importance of guidelines for initial formation, which was paramount for this study because guidelines may affect the quality of formation. Superiors, formators and community members of the delegation, through the practice of their proper charism, contribute to the formation of their candidates. Field results are summarized in the figure below: Figure 4 below indicates the stages of initial formation, including ongoing formation. The diagram shows the distribution of data on the stages of religious formation as well as ongoing formation.

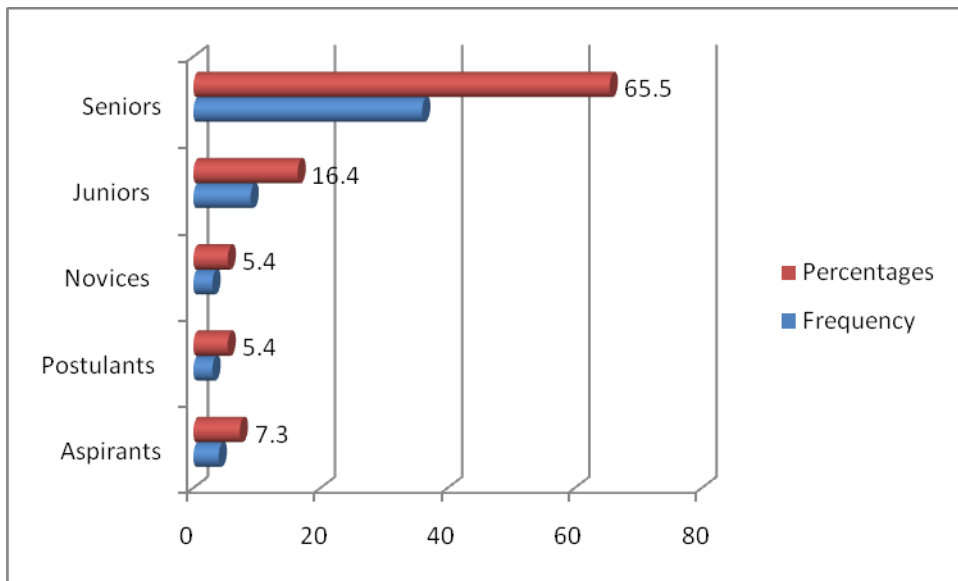


Figure 4: Importance of guidelines for initial formation

The findings in the above bar chart revealed that 4 (7.3%) of the respondents referred to the aspirancy stage of the religious formation while 3 (5.4%) mentioned the postulancy stage as having a direct link with the initial formation, 3 (5.4%) of the respondents indicated the novitiate, 9 (16.4%) commented on the individual formation stage of the juniorate (last stage of the initial formation) and the rest 36 (65.5%) of the respondents (senior sisters) did not mention any specific activity or stage. This may imply that the majority of the respondents have a good and sufficient insight of the formation process.

The main four phases (aspirancy, postulancy, novitiate and juniorate) of formation are very important for the transformation of religious candidates in order to embrace the significant religious life. Therefore, each phase is important and should not be ignored, and all the candidates should demonstrate a high level of understanding of relevant concepts which relate to them, and so failure to undertake lessons as planned may cause poor or low quality formation. Poor observation of the preliminary stages may lead to failure or turnover of candidates before the completion of their formation. Therefore, to give quality formation

to candidates in every stage, it is better to go parallel to what contributed to the stages of initial formation as commented by Cencini (2015), who postulated that the formator and superiors must help candidates to choose freely consecrated life as his or her personal ideal, develop a new position, join the institute of his or her choice and leaving his or her previous life behind. And each time, ascertaining the vocation by both the candidate and the congregation is so important.

4.11.1. Meaning of the Word of God

Candidates, community members, superiors and formators of the delegation were tested on the concept of the Word of God. The researcher sought to find out the ideas these individual people hold towards the meaning and impression of the Word of God. Respondents were asked to bring to light their opinions and perceptions. The table below presents the distribution of their responses in frequencies and percentages on how they responded to the question regarding the meaning of the “Word of God.”

Table 14: Respondents’ Responses on the meaning of the Word of God

Meaning of the Word of God	Frequency	Percentages
Guide and light of life	15	27%
Source and strength of daily life	12	22%
Provides motivation to our call	13	23%
Provides healing to the soul	8	15%
Missing	7	13%
Total	55	100%

Results indicated that 15 (27%) of the respondents were in agreement of the fact that the guide and light of life is the true meaning of the Word of God. 12 (22%) mentioned source and strength of daily life. 13 (23%) said that it provides motivation to our call. 8

(15%) pointed out that it provides healing to the soul. And the rest 7 (13%) of the respondents were missing.

Generally, based on the responses given by the respondents, the Word of God was seen to be very fruitful in their lives. This was demonstrated by their presentation and behavior of words which they used in the provision of the meaning of the Word of God. In addition, this implies that, every one of them was aware of its importance. It was inspiring to get such insights from people living consecrated life since it demonstrated their commitment towards the goal of the charism of their congregation, which originated from the Word of God, and through it, look for the light and guidance of the heavenly Father. What the Psalmist says confirms the idea: “Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path” (Ps. 119: 105). Teaching a young person to read his or her life from the Word of God, as Cencini (2015) stressed, has more value than to reflect on God’s love, providence, protection, or man’s freedom. This helps to involve the heart of a person in all that is God and of God.

4.11.2. Attention to the Word of God

The item of attention to the Word of God was tested by the researcher in order to learn about the attitude of the respondents towards the Word of God. This was based on their call to follow Jesus Christ and offer their mission as they are called to do, so they ought to pay attention to His teachings of the Gospel in order to deepen their call, love Him more, search for His will, do what pleases Him, and serve humanity. To grow deeper, it is necessary to listen attentively to the Word of God. In fact, the first book of Kings (19: 9-18) reminds us of that fact when it says that if we are to draw close to the heart of God, we must be willing to listen to His still and small voice. However, what Ensley (2013) mentioned reminds us that we act on the contrary; that often, we want to read the Word of God, to obtain knowledge and

meaning, but not willing to live in God as He in us. The figure below summarizes the responses of the respondents on the attention to the Word of God.

Respondents' Attention to the Word of God

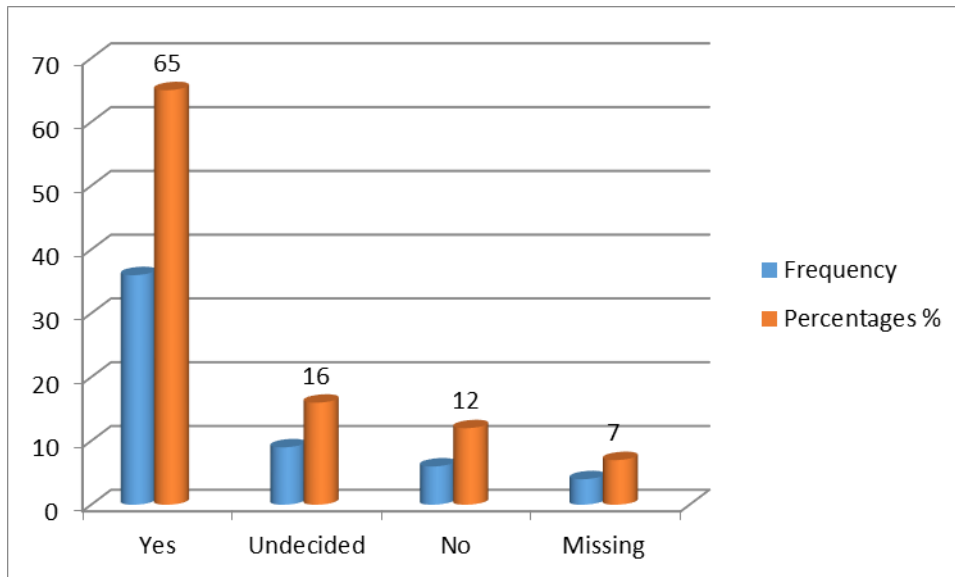


Figure 5: Column chart showing respondents' attention to the Word of God

Following the researcher's seeking responses on the attention attitude to the word of God, results exposed that 36 (65%) of the respondents had node towards the Word of God, this implies a strong faith towards God, 9 (16%) of the respondents were undecided, which may imply that through the examination of themselves, they had not gotten to the point of communicating their true feelings, they might have been soul searching in order to discover themselves. Consequently, they may have reported their true aptitude, 6 (12%) by mentioning 'no;' meaning that they were either in the state of denial or confusion; they did not have what to say candidly. The rest; 4 (7%) mentioned 'missing,' which could have meant that they might have all been in the discerning process to learn whether they were in the right place or in a detrimental environment. Based on a general comment, it could be deduced that the majority of the respondents had a positive attitude towards the Word of God, which could be

a sign of being faithful to the Holy Spirit. It means that the delegation is in the right direction of searching for the true meaning of life as it tried to continue living the true life of Jesus and work out His deeds by transforming and serving humanity in the world.

4.11.3. Focus on Humble Fraternal Life and Works of Mercy

This item was important because the congregation shares in the spirituality of St. Francis, and therefore, was tested by the researcher to learn whether the respondents were aware of this concept of their spirituality, as a means of preparation for the life which the foundress lived; a simple and humble fraternal life. In the first constitution, she stated that for they have Christ, having things or not having does not matter; when superiors assign sisters what they have for them, they must be happy to share with those who do not have: “All the sisters must be happy of what their superior gives them, because they are the poor of Christ” (Const. 1887, Chap. 7 No.2 & 5). With this attitude, she taught how her daughters should live, by following her example and St. Francis’, which help them to be conformed to Christ’s life. The table below shows the distribution of the findings as gotten from the field:

Table 15: Focus on humble fraternal life and works of mercy

Focus on humble fraternal life and works of mercy	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	37	67%
Undecided	14	25%
No	3	6%
Missing	1	2%
Total	55	100%

The findings revealed that 37 (67%) of the respondents commented on 'yes,' which gave it a note that they live humble fraternal life and practice mercy in their communities, 14 (25%) mentioned 'undecided,' meaning that may be they were either truly practicing such kind of a life or not, 3 (6%) said 'no' while the rest 1 (2%) mentioned 'missing.' This means that the category of these people is insecure and therefore, do not know whether they have ever truly lived the charism of the foundress or not. However, in a general perspective, it could be said that a good number of individuals responded that they were aware and practicing that kind of life, which was a positive sign that they were encouraged to live a humble fraternal life and practicing of mercy. This meant that they were embracing and following the charism of their congregation, hence important to learn that they were living that beautiful life experience.

4.11.4. Understanding Franciscan Poverty

Franciscan poverty was put into account because the charism is what unites members of a congregation. This is the life members of the congregation live, which candidates totally embraces in the future and in which the institute's culture manifests itself, with an emphasis on quality formation. This item was important to the researcher because the spirituality of St. Francis is inserted in their charism, and it would be significant to identify whether delegation members were aware of it since it has a strong connection with the identity of the members of the congregation and the formation of candidates. Delegation members were asked to indicate their perception of Franciscan poverty by choosing 'yes,' 'undecided' or 'no.' The table below presents frequencies and percentages of how delegation members responded to the questions on their perception and permissiveness of their spirituality:

Table 16: Understanding of Franciscan Poverty

Understanding of Franciscan poverty	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	28	51%
Undecided	17	31%
No	7	13%
Missing	3	5%
Total	55	100%

The findings indicated that 28 (51%) said yes, which means that they were aware of the Franciscan poverty concept, 17 (31%) commented as undecided, 7 (13%) indicated no and the rest 3 (5%) mentioned missing. This demonstrated that the majority of the individuals who were directly engaged in the study were on the verge of practicing Franciscan poverty, with only a few individuals who reported ‘not certain’ in the practicing of Franciscan poverty. It may mean that a lot needs to be done in order to upscale this threshold for the possible positive return to the origin of Franciscan poverty. According to William (2004), Franciscan poverty in Christian spirituality has been assigned extraordinary importance as integral in the practicing of Christian discipleship.

4.11.5. The Contribution of Guidelines to Religious Formation

The contribution of guidelines was taken into consideration in the study because it could determine the extent to which candidates could be engaged in the institute’s charism through the formation process and life after temporary profession. The table below indicates frequencies and percentages of respondent’s responses on the contribution of guidelines to religious formation.

Table 17: The Contribution of Guidelines to Religious Formation

Contribution of Guidelines to Religious Formation	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	43	78%
Undecided	8	15%
No	3	5%
Missing	1	2%
Total	55	100%

The research found out that 43 (78%) of the respondents commented 'yes,' which gave anode to the contribution of guidelines to religious formation, 8 (15%) indicated 'undecided,' 3 (5%) said 'no' and the rest 1 (2%) mentioned 'missing'. The general observation was that respondents were all positive towards the contribution of guidelines to religious formation as demonstrated by the majority in the frequency rate returned. Superiors and formators incorporated their voice in the study as they stressed that guidelines should be followed to the later, these ideas were also backed up by candidates and community members. It could be therefore, deduced that the contribution of guidelines to religious formation is an important concept which has to be adopted for the common growth and development of the delegation, congregation and Church. And I think that is why the Church gave directives on formation to religious institutes, and some congregations already have guidelines for their own formation.

4.11.6. The need of Introducing Workshops and ongoing formation Programmes about Guidelines

It was important to find out the opinion of the respondents regarding workshops and ongoing formation programmes; it was tested to find out whether delegation members were interested in the additional engagement update of training in order to help them gain more insights on the charism and religious formation in general as part of the formation process.

Table 18: Need for Workshops and Ongoing Formation

Need for Workshops and Ongoing Formation	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	40	72%
Undecided	11	20%
No	3	6%
Missing	1	2%
Total	55	100%

Results revealed that 40 (72%) of the respondents commented ‘yes’ as anode that workshops would be great to have as part of the continuing training, 11 (20%) did mention ‘undecided’ and 3 (6%) indicated ‘no’ and the rest 1 (2%) mentioned ‘missing.’ This could be said to mean that the majority are for the idea of introducing workshops as part of continuous training, which is useful to learning of new methods and skills. Generally, this implies that the use of workshops is a great idea to be used by the delegation as part of improving of formation guidelines. In fact, the definition given to workshops in the Merriam-Webster dictionary, sustains this idea by saying; “a workshop is a class or series of classes in which a small group or people learn the methods and skills used in doing something”.

4.11.7. Having a Virtuous Attitude Contributes to Fraternal Life

The contribution of a virtuous attitude was put into consideration in the study because it was believed that it could establish a good relationship among community members and give light to those who come after them to follow Christ. The good examples which candidates see in the sisters' lives could witness to them Christ's love, goodness, mercy, compassion, and so on and so on. In a special way, this helps them to be engaged in the life of the institute and love their charism through the assistance of their formator. The table below shows the frequencies and percentages of respondents' responses on the contribution of guidelines to religious formation.

Table 19: Virtuous Attitude towards Fraternal Life

Virtuous Attitude towards Fraternal Life	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	39	71%
Undecided	11	20%
No	4	7%
Missing	1	2%
Total	55	100%

The researcher tested attitudes because they play a very important role in forming an individual's personality and behavior. They also contribute to the congregation's culture and so it was paramount to assess the general attitude of the respondents as it may help in the designing of the content of the formation process. Results demonstrated that 39 (71%) of the respondents commented 'yes,' 11 (20%) mentioned 'undecided,' 4 (7%) commented 'no,' and the rest 1 (2%) mentioned 'missing.' This therefore, gives an impression that the majority of the participants have a positive attitude towards fraternal life. Conversely, even if the

majority of the responses were positive, the researcher wanted to give a great focus on it because we cannot expect to reap what we have not sown. For often times, candidates repeat what elder sisters do, both good and bad things. I think what Cencini (2015) mentioned regarding the attitude is worthy reflecting about. He said that today young people are attracted by the “do-it-yourself” school of thought even in the field of spirituality, they are full of expectations in their spiritual pretences. On the other hand, young ones should be helped to free themselves from pretence and false expectations.

4.11.8. Commitment to serving the poor

The study found out that the majority; 96% of the respondents were committed to offering their services to the poor. When the researcher asked respondents whether they were committed to serving the poor or not, one of the formators expressed her feelings that she would have wished and tries to be close to the poor and needy because Jesus told us that it is the unique way of inheriting eternal life (No. 3). This is also in line with the Gospel: “Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine you did for me” (Mt. 25: 32 and 40).

The study has exposed that the majority; 85% of the superiors were committed to serving the poor in the society. When the researcher asked respondents whether they were committed to serving the poor, one of the superiors pointed out that she does not have gold or silver to offer the poor, however, she respects and loves them. She said that the poor were happy to share with her their joy and sad situations (No. 2). In relation to the same question, one of the candidates postulated that she has a great desire to serving the poor, she also expressed that now as a candidate, she could not help them materially. So she prays for them and shows them her love because in them she sees Christ. On the other hand, she underlined

that the community must facilitate possibilities of helping them materially as well as giving them moral support (No.13).

The study has found out that the majority; 72% of the members are committed and willing to offer their services to the poor. When the researcher asked the members whether they were committed to serving the poor or not, one of them echoed that if Christ “who was in the form of God did not count equality with God, a thing to be grasped, and emptied himself, taking the form of servant” (Phil. 2: 6-7) and served humanity, I believe in my turn as a follower of Christ, I must serve the poor joyfully’ (No.15). From the respondents’ views, it is clear that the majority of the candidates had a desire to committing themselves to serving the poor. Therefore, in this particular congregation, the will of serving the poor materially as well as giving them moral support is there.

Love of the poor and service to them was a special gift of our Mother, Teresa Zavagli. She needed the poor in order to discover that hidden strength in her heart, which she was even unaware of. She began to give herself and forget herself. Every day, she went along the road which leads to Borgo St. Giuliano and, unknown to her. As she crossed back and forth over the Tiberio Bridge, the missionary character of the family was taking shape, a potential in the bud which later would reveal its full blossom. Teresa also had compassion for poor young infant girls and welcomed them into her house (Bertolotti, 1995).

This therefore, justifies Franciscan spirituality. In fact, we must identify as closely as possible with our brothers and sisters who are living at the margins of social, cultural, economic, and political life; the modern day powerless. For also the life which St. Francis lived was Christ like. Our call like that of Francis and our foundress Teresa Zavagli is to live the Gospel Poverty; being poor among the poor; and working in a spirit of fidelity and devotion. On the other hand, as the responses are not 100% positive, the researcher wished

that the delegation sisters examine their attitudes towards the Gospel Poverty and charism of the congregation.

4.11.9. The consideration of the value of spiritual exercise and recollection

The study found out that the majority; 90% of the respondents considered the value of spiritual exercise and recollection. She asked the respondents whether they considered the value of spiritual exercise and recollection or not. And one of the formators said that monthly recollections and annual spiritual exercises are very important because they are moments in which she gets refreshment, peace, new life of her spirit and physic, when it is possible or needed, she also desires to take more time even personally (No.3). The study has revealed that a great number of superiors consider the value of prayer life, spiritual exercises and recollections as important parts of religious life. When the researcher asked superiors whether they considered the value of spiritual exercises and recollections, one of them argued that spiritual exercises and recollections are moments which we use to examine our spiritual journey and attitude; we check to see if we are on the right track and whether we are following the will of God or ours (No. 2).

The study has exposed that the majority; 75% of the candidates considered the value of spiritual exercises and recollections as part of religious life. In a similar discussion, one of the candidates commented that “we cannot move a car without fuel from one place to another, as well as we cannot live without prayer; as a car without fuel stops, so our life without God is meaningless. Prayer is a communication with God; unless we communicate with Him, we cannot live consecrated life and be happy. When we pray, we receive the power of God through the Holy Spirit, it is also the moment which we take to praise, adore, glorify and express our love for God and our brothers and sisters. Living without prayer, for religious seems like a fish which tries to live outside water” (No.17).

The study has identified that a good number of the members considered the value of spiritual exercises and recollections. This was reinforced by one of the members who postulated that “as we need food to eat to nourish our physical body, in the same way, it is important to take some time to do an examination of conscience, to reflect on the Word of God and build our relationship with Him who helps us to grow” (No.16).

These ideas are also shared by the Bible, in the words of St. Paul, in a very convincing manner, he recalls that the call of being a Christian is to grasp the fullness of life which comes from Christ: “Until we all attain the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God to a mature manhood, to the extent of the full stature of Christ” (Eph. 4: 13). Similarly, the African Bible comments on the verse in this way: “All men and women are related to Christ as their creator, redeemer and savior. The perfect fulfillment of human-Christian personality cannot be achieved outside Christ. The measure of our stature is the fullness of Christ”.

Antonisamy, (2013) confirms that the discipleship of Jesus Christ necessarily implies the fact that a Christian should be a person of prayer. This concept is also supported by Teresa of Avila who had a profound experience of prayer life and loved Jesus very much. She says: “If we want to make progress on the path and ascend to the place we have longed for, the important thing is not to think much but to love much, and so to do whatever best awakens us to love” (Teresa of Avila, 2003, p. 24). In reference to the views of the respondents and cited authors, it is clear that spiritual exercises and recollections play a critical role in the lives of religious persons. They are instruments of a relationship with the giver of their call to express their love to Him. They do not only enhance their relationship with God but hold a great insight for the future of the candidates in fulfilling their desire of serving God and His creation. Therefore, through this awareness, they want to underline their importance in order to live them fully.

4.11.10. Personal enthusiasm for the mission of the Church

The research has found out that the majority; 81% of the respondents had the enthusiasm for the mission of the Church. The researcher asked the respondents whether they were enthusiastic for the mission of the Church or not, and one of the formators commented that she was joyfully engaged, for that the Church is a home of all humanity because her call was to embrace the mission of the Church; to live in the Church and for the Church. However, she said that some of the religious persons do not take it seriously as communities and individuals (No. 4).

The study also found out that the majority; 74% of the members were enthusiastic for the mission of the Church. When the researcher asked members whether they were enthusiastic for the mission of the Church or not, one of them postulated that she had a good will for the mission of the Church but at the same time she faced a problem regarding pastoral work. Thus she was praying that the good Lord would open the way for her because she desired to serve the Lord according to her talents (No. 13).

The study also exposed that the majority; 96% of the candidates had the enthusiasm for the mission of the Church. The researcher asked candidates whether they were enthusiastic for the mission of the Church or not, and the reaction from one of them was that she was aware of the foundation of the mission of the Church as Jesus Himself, who was sent by the Father to come and save all humanity. Now, in her turn, she wanted to be engaged in that mission through the guidance of the Holy Church to continue with the same mission of Christ (No. 7).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes charisms as the graces of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefits the Church, ordered as they are for her building up, for the good of men and needs of the world (CCC No. 799). According to O' Murchu (2005),

all charisms are primarily for the service of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, we have to be faithful to our charism and mandate of Jesus Christ, who was sent by the Father, as He in turn sends us: “Go out into the whole world; proclaim the Gospel to every creature” (Mk. 16: 15). As by the action of the Holy Spirit who is at the origin of every vocation and charism, consecrated life itself is a mission, as was the whole of Jesus’ life (VC No. 72). St. Francis tells us: “Generate to Christ as a whole people of the faithful” (FF 1058). He urges us to live and cultivate, wherever we are, the missionary dimension of the Church (AG No. 10). Thus our gift to God, in the service of our brothers and sisters, acquired in the power of the Holy Spirit, is the extension and the measure of the love of the Father that reaches every creature (Const. 2010, Chap. 5 No.1).

The idea was also echoed by Antonisamy (2013), who mentioned that, the mission of the religious consists in living a visible form of the essence of the life of Jesus. This means that our mission, first of all, must witness to the presence of Jesus Christ among us and in the world, and whatever we do should help other people to reflect on what Jesus has done for humanity. Thus from the interest seen in the responses of the respondents, the researcher focused on the purpose of charisms as gifts for the mission of the Church, which is the same mission of the Son of God, who was sent to save humanity. The researcher, in a particular way, underlined the goal of the charism of her congregation, which witnesses to the presence of Jesus Christ and His love in the world to respond to the needs of our brothers and sisters. Wherever and whatever situation, whether the pastoral activities of the sisters are facilitated by the superiors or not, the individual should be aware of her mission in the Church because a charism is a gift for service, and not for relaxation or personal purposes.

4.11.11. The Contribution of the Formation Community to the Religious Values of both Formators and Candidates

In the study, the majority; 90% of the respondents agreed unanimously that the formation community's contribution to the religious values of both formators and candidates is real. When the researcher asked respondents whether it was true that the formation community contributed to the value of the religious life of both formators and candidates or not, one of them commented that it did because by sharing their faith, values of religious life, different perceptions and ideas in line with their supernatural call, they could help one another to pass on consecrated life's principles, especially to the candidates who need around them sisters who live exemplary lives (No. 5). However, one of the formators claimed that some members of the formation community are not involved in the formation activities hence, they are in the community just to add to the number of the community. In other ways, members of the formation community do not work as a team, thereby having some differences due to some personal interests. In so doing they cannot contribute anything to religious life since they are not formators or candidates (No. 6).

The study has also established that the majority; 65% of the candidates shared a common understanding on the truth about the formation community's contribution to the religious value of both formators and candidates. In support of this, one of the candidates echoed that she believed that the collaboration of different persons even if it was not in a perfect way, could offer something good to candidates, especially because a community is an essential element of the life of the formation process where candidates take after the example of the sisters. However, she underlined that some sisters are attentive and good to candidates while others are not (No. 2).

The study unearthed that the majority; 72% of the members shared a similar opinion regarding the truth about the formation community's contribution to the religious values of formators and candidates. The researcher asked members whether or not it was true that the formation community contributes to the religious values of formators and candidates. One of the members commented that she saw the formation community as an essential part of the formation work because a formator could observe and help where she was able to. But the rest of the members could help in the process of formation. Since candidates belong to the congregation and the Church, all the members of the community must provide some formation to young ones by being conscious of the fact that they are doing it for the love of God and growth of the body of Christ. She believes that each member of the formation community contributes to the value of religious life, for candidates. The suggestion she gave to superiors was to select carefully sisters to belong to the formation community in order not to confuse the life journey of the young ones, which could sustain and facilitate the formator's assignments (No. 36).

According to Cencini (2015), a community is indispensable to the process of formation to consecrated life. It takes upon itself the task of bringing young candidates to maturity because its primary function is to educate. Also the Document (VC No. 67) stresses the same idea when it says: "The community is the privileged milieu of formation". In a special way, superiors ought to pay attention to who forms part of these communities. They should share in the spiritual journey of the young and be made aware, without violating confidence, of how they are progressing. When all is harmony among educators, the work of formation becomes unequivocal and effective as postulated by Cencini (2015).

In one way or another, the responses of the members explained the contribution and attention given to candidates and formators. The researcher, for her experience as a formator,

had seen that there was a great need of helping one another in forming or educating candidates. Special focus must be given to the growth of candidates. To facilitate the formation process, on the part of superiors, it is better to evaluate who to put in formation communities. The emphasis here is to effectively sustain the journey of candidates, and not to critic the attitudes of the sisters or superiors.

4.11.12. The Importance given to Pastoral Work as an Individual’s Duty

Pastoral work is a collection of activities done by religious organizations in support of humanity. They are often done with nearby villages, they could take different forms, depending on the given context of the setting in which a given community lives. Table 20 below presents this data:

Table 20: Commitment to Pastoral Work

Commitment to Pastoral Work	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	51	92%
Undecided	2	4%
No	1	2%
Missing	1	2%
Total	55	100%

The question whether or not respondents perceived pastoral work as their duty was posed, and responses shows that 51 (92%) indicated ‘yes,’ 2 (4%) mentioned ‘undecided,’ 1 (2%) referred to ‘no’ and the rest; 1 (2%) mentioned ‘missing.’ This implies that respondents were happy and committed to pastoral work. It could also mean that respondents were aware of the values that exist within pastoral work, which are also part of formation for the apostolate of the institute. This is done to give attention and value to the mission of the

Church. Similarly, Antonisamy (2013) emphasized that the religious have been called by God in a special way to make His “presence in some way perceptible through the witness of their charism” (VC No. 68). Therefore, in one way or another, the apostolate of the religious (the mission of the Church) is inserted in their charisms. According to Antonisamy, in special way, the mission of the religious consists in giving a visible form to the essence of the life of Jesus.

4.11.13. Appreciation and Support offered by Formators

Appreciation and support for the services offered by formators was sought. Respondents’ thoughts on these issues were presented in the following table. The ‘yes,’ ‘undecided,’ ‘no’ and ‘missing’ were used to describe the situation.

Table 21: Appreciating and sustaining formation services

Appreciating and sustaining formation services	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	34	62%
Undecided	15	27%
No	5	9%
Missing	1	2%
Total	55	100%

Acknowledgement and sustainability of the service offered by formators is very important since they demonstrate some learning events. Respondents were asked whether or not they appreciated and sustained the service offered by formators. Results showed that 34 (62%) said ‘yes,’ 15 (27%) indicated ‘undecided,’ 5 (9%) said ‘no’ and the rest 1 (2%) mentioned ‘missing.’ According to the findings, it is clear that the majority of the respondents appreciates and sustains formation services. Based on these results, the common

interpretation is that respondents are fully aware of the value of appreciation and sustenance as regards to the service offered by formators. Parallel to this perspective, the formation plan of the Sons of Divine Providence shows that by sharing the responsibility regarding formation work they make visible the importance of sustaining formators and demonstrate that they take responsibility for the formation process (Don Orione, 2004).

4.11.14. Need to take Care of personal Spiritual growth and Maturity

This variable was significant and therefore, was sought. The following expressions were used to highlight the respondent's perception of the issue. 'Yes,' 'undecided,' 'no' and 'missing.' The following table highlights the feelings:

Table 22: Taking Care of personal Spiritual growth and Maturity

Taking Care of personal Spiritual growth and Maturity	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	52	94%
Undecided	1	2%
No	1	2%
Missing	1	2%
Total	55	100%

Respondents were asked whether or not they took care of their personal spiritual growth and maturity. Results showed that 52 (94%) shared a common agreement that they take care of their spiritual growth and maturity, 1 (2%) commented 'undecided,' 1 (2%) indicated 'no' and the rest; 1 (2%) indicated 'missing.' Generally, it could be concluded that the majority of the participants are committed to their call and therefore able to take care of their spiritual growth and maturity. From the responses of the respondents, the researcher perceives that the majority of those who said yes, even if faithfulness in committing

themselves would not be easy, they are trying to take care of their spiritual journey. The rest may be wanted to express its being demanding. Although, the importance of personal spiritual growth and maturity should be underlined, this consists in being aware of one's weaknesses and strengths, having a deep relationship with the Lord as well as our brothers and sisters. In this line, I think what Teresa of Avila has emphasized is important to take into consideration. According to her, the best way of beginning to develop our sense of self, or soul, is by increasingly devoting ourselves to prayer, meditation, study of Scripture and contemplative and mystical literature within a community, group or in solitude, as well as the cultivation of compassion, patience, humility and generosity in as many practical choices and opportunities in life as possible, as echoed by Mc Lean (2003).

4.11.15. Call to living the charism of one's proper congregation

The above item was tested, the researcher wanted to know whether or not respondents were living according to the charism of their congregation, but more so if they were convinced in themselves as that had a direct connection with the initial formation of candidates. The following expressions were used in the description of their thoughts and views: 'Yes,' 'undecided,' 'no' and 'missing.' The following table presents this information.

Table 23: Fully living the charism of the congregation

Fully living the charism of the congregation	Frequency	Percentages %
Yes	42	76%
Undecided	11	20%
No	1	2%
Missing	1	2%
Total	55	100%

Results from the table above indicate that 42 (76%) commented ‘yes,’ 11 (20%) referred to undecided, 1 (2%) said ‘no’ and 1 (2%) commented ‘missing.’ The study has justified that the majority of the respondents were trying to live the charism of the congregation. This may mean that more awareness of their charism is needed as well as encouragement to improve the way of living according to the demand of consecrated life. In concrete, what the charism of the congregation requires is the continual search of God and total submission to Him, contemplation and imitation of Christ the Crucified, following Him in the foot-steps of St. Francis of Assisi, living the Holy Gospel in fraternity, poverty and minority, service to brothers and sisters and to be missionaries in the world (Const. 2010, Chap. 1 No.16). Therefore, since its importance is appreciated, members of the congregation are required to love it, read it and give interest to their charism, which enables them to respond to its demand.

4.12. Some Additional ways of Implementing Guidelines for the Initial Formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism

When the categories of the respondents were asked to suggest some ways of implementing guidelines which the delegation could adopt to make the formation process

more effective and improve the guidelines, they gave some suggestions that have been summarized in the table below:

Table 24: Some ways of Implementing Guidelines

Categories of respondents	ways of Implementing Guidelines	Frequency	Percentages
Candidates	Charism	16	29%
	Documents of the Church	13	24%
Formators and superiors	Training of formators	11	20%
	Formation team	8	14%
Members	Formation community	7	13%
Total Cat 3	5w	55f	100%

A sizeable number of 16 (29%) of candidates felt that if they became active and deeply involved in the learning of the charism as well as adopting the Documents of the Church keenly in their daily activities and interact freely with formators and superiors, the formation process would be good and effective. If candidates interact freely with formators and superiors, they could easily present or just air out their challenges and so receive attention or support before the issue gets out of control. On the second question regarding documents of the Church, some of the candidates; 13 (24%) felt that effective formation could be easily achieved by candidates developing a positive attitude. With a positive attitude, candidates could freely seek attention and service wherever they sense an issue they dislike.

However, formators and superiors; 11 (20%) felt that formation and guidelines could better be improved upon and made effective through the collaboration of formators and

candidates while 8 (14%) felt that through the involvement of the formation team, formation activities could be made effective and relevant by following the direction and instruction given by formators and superiors. This implies that candidates may be served with certain instructions or guidance relating to the challenges or issues that they have. However, if they do not cooperate and follow the instructions provided, then little could be achieved.

The alternative exercise of the candidates' temporary responsibility given to each candidate by superiors or formators may create trust among them, increase their individual self-esteems. It would make the process even more effective when they themselves are involved in the preparation process. When fellow candidates are part of the programme, candidates would become free as they would consider the formator as a mentor, not a mere teacher but a close helper who has the capacity to understand them better. Here, the personal experience of Liptak (2009) is so important to build a good relation between a formator and a candidate. He said that the guide needs to listen. He or she needs to listen even to what is not being directly said. This careful attention implies listening with wisdom. But the guide also needs to be generous in sharing experiences which reinforce the needs of the progress being sown during the session. On the other hand, the rest of the respondents who posed as delegation members; 7 (13%) did mention the formation community as a means of improving the formation process as well as general guidelines.

4.12.1. Respondent's Responses on the ways of Implementing Guidelines for formation

The study sought to find out the mechanisms which could be adopted by delegation members to assist in the improvement of the formation of their candidates. The question was posed to both candidates and members of the delegation to which they gave different reactions. The table below shows the intended sample size which was reached, the mean and standard deviation of the respondents who were directly engaged in the study.

Table 25: Some ways of Implementing Guidelines

Statements	Descriptive Statistics		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is a need for a formation plan in the delegation of Ethiopia.	42	4.38	1.103
Formation plan or guidelines contain the charism of the congregation, directives of the Church on formation and Gospel values, like evangelical counsels.	42	4.52	1.110
I am really committed to the charism of my proper congregation.	42	4.10	1.078
In the charism of the congregation, there is a full identity of each member.	42	4.43	1.039
I respect the charism of my foundress and behave according to it.	42	4.21	1.094
Giving value and paying attention to the proper charism and that of the foundress elevates the Church's mission.	42	4.55	.968
Training of formators contributes to the quality formation of candidates.	42	4.52	.994
I am a well convinced and trained formator.	42	3.79	1.071
I like forming religious candidates for the love of Christ and for the sake of the Church's mission.	42	4.21	1.071
A formation team is necessary for facilitating formation processes.	42	4.26	1.106
The formation team is united and conscious of its mandate.	42	3.88	.916
The formation team passes Gospel values and spirit of the congregation to formees.	42	4.14	1.026
I feel I am responsible and respectful to the formation programme as a formation community.	42	3.98	1.024
The formation community takes care of the young ones.	42	3.74	1.014
My attitude towards candidates is not good.	42	2.60	1.191

The study findings revealed that the majority of the respondents suggested some of the mechanisms of improving guidelines in the delegation and promote the formation process with the potential strength of addressing the challenges that affect candidates during the formation period. Some of the respondents gave various suggestions on how to improve the general guidelines in the delegation. The findings therefore revealed that there is a need of a formation plan in the Ethiopian delegation. According to the report, the formation plan or

guidelines contain the charism of the congregation. The directives of the Church on formation was rated with the mean of 4.38 while Gospel values, like evangelical counsels, were indicated with the mean of 4.52.

I am really committed to the charism of my proper congregation received the mean of 4.10. In the charism of the congregation there is a full identity of each member had a mean of 4.43. I respect the charism of my foundress and behave according to it was rated with the mean of 4.21. Giving value and attention to the proper charism and that of the foundress elevates the Church's mission got a mean of 4.55. Training of formators contributes to the quality of the formation of candidates was rated with a mean of 4.52. I am a well convinced and trained formator was rated with the mean of 3.79. I like, forming religious candidates for the love of Christ and for the sake of the Church's mission was rated with a mean of 4.21.

A formation team is necessary for facilitating the formation process was rated with a mean of 4.26. The formation team is united and conscious of its mandate indicated mean of 3.88. The formation team passes Gospel values and spirit of the congregation to formees was reported with a mean of 4.14, I feel I am responsible and respectful of the formation programme as part of the formation community was indicated with a mean of 3.98. The formation community takes care of young ones was rated with the mean of 3.74 and my attitude towards candidates is not good was reported with the mean of 2.60. According to these findings, it is clear that the stakeholders are aware of the common need of implementing formation guidelines for the delegation in order to assist in the improvement of quality formation, which has a high potential and capacity of answering the call of God and service to humanity in the contemporary society. As directed by St. Vincent Pallotti, a community which welcomes a new arrival should be a second "Bethlehem", symbol of their minimal congregation because it is abounded in the means necessary to acquiring the most

sublime perfection in order to co-operate more and more with the greater glory of God and salvation of souls (Ratio, 2004).

4.12.2. Interest of knowing and appreciating the value offered by Church documents

This was tested by the researcher to learn whether or not delegation members had a common interest of knowing and appreciating the Documents of the Church in relation to their own life and formation of candidates. The table below shows the distribution of the results in frequencies and percentages.

Table 26: Level of interest in Church Documents

Level of interest in Church Documents	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	45	82%
Undecided	8	14%
No	1	2%
Missing	1	2%
Total	55	100%

From the table above, it emerged that 45 (82%) of the respondents indicated ‘yes’ to imply that they were ready to learn more and so were interested in the Documents of the Church. 8 (14%) mentioned ‘undecided.’ 1 (2%) indicated ‘no’ and 1 (2%) mentioned ‘missing.’ This generally justifies that respondents are positive to the value of the Documents of the Church, which is essential for the institute in the preparation of members, based on the life of the Church.

Through the examination of the findings, the researcher was able to discover the eagerness of members to read and know the Documents of the Church which are in line with religious life and its formation. She has also seen the need for introducing some of them. For

example, *Vita Consecrata*, *Perfectae Caritatis*, *Fraternal Life in the Community*, *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, *Essential Elements in the Church's teaching on Religious Life*, and so on and so on. These Documents introduce great knowledge about religious life and give directives on its formation in general. Then each institute, according to the proper charism forms candidates in *sequela Christi* so that they may witness to His life in the community as well as the world, contributing to the mission of the Church; to confirm what we read in (FLC No. 1): "Religious life is a vital part of the Church and lives in the world".

4.12.3. Necessity of conviction and training of formators

This variable was focused on by formators and individual members who had either some experience of formation or those who only paid attention to it; not having any actual practice. Results are shown in the table below:

Table 27: Conviction and training of formators

Conviction and training of Formators	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	47	85%
Undecided	6	11%
No	2	4%
Missing	0	0%
Total	55	100%

The field data indicated that at least 47 (85%) of the respondents were convinced that they have what it takes for formation work, and even in the future training. Among the respondents 6 (11%) mentioned 'undecided.' 2 (4%) said 'no' and none-commented 'missing,' which registered 0% return. Looking at the responses, the majority of the members

had a vast experience as regards to formation and so felt that they had what it takes to carry on with it. This was a good indicator of having individual members of the delegation, who are aware of the need for forming candidates. On the other hand, the term training underlines formation and competence of formators because conviction by itself is not enough to produce quality formation. Instead, Liptak (2009) emphasized the need for having a skilled and trained spiritual guide for new times. It is very important to accomplish the assignment given by superiors with competence.

4.12.4. Collaboration among the regional superior, formation team and formators contribute to the growth of candidates

This above component of the variable was tested as it was relevant for learning if teams were working together. The following expressions were used to describe the feelings: ‘Yes,’ ‘undecided,’ ‘no’ and ‘missing.’ The following table presents the data:

Table 28: Stakeholders’ collaboration

Stakeholders’ collaboration	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	41	75%
Undecided	9	16%
No	5	9%
Missing	0	0%
Total	55	100%

The researcher was seeking to learn whether team work was practiced by the stakeholders in the delegation, and the responses were as follows: 41 (75%) of the respondents shared their common knowledge that ‘yes,’ they were working together in the delegation. 9 (16%) were ‘undecided.’ 5 (9%) said ‘no’ and 0% mentioned ‘missing.’ Based

on these findings, it could be deduced that it is paramount for candidates and the formation team, together with other relevant partners to work collaboratively in the realization of the quality the formation of candidates. According to the Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes (No. 98), the first responsibility of the formation of the religious belongs by law to each institute; it is the major superiors of the institutes, with the help of qualified assistants, who must attend to this important mission.

4.12.5. The Relationship between Approaches to Religious Life and the Initial Formation of the Franciscan sisters

4.12.5.1. Usefulness and necessity of community recreation

The researcher found out that the understanding of community recreation has a connection with initial formation. When participants were asked to share their understanding of community recreation, the majority; 90% of the respondents were positive about the subject. One of the superiors commented that after toiling for the whole day, they are worn out, tired and confused, as such recreation is important for rebuilding their connection by coming together, cheering one another up and recharging their energy as one family of God. It is time for sharing some happy moments, expressing the joy of living for God and one another. For example, celebrating special moments of feasts or anniversaries, getting together to work or watching news and films which could inform and recharge their lives (No. 2).

The research also found out that the majority; 75% of the formators have a positive understanding of necessity of community recreation, most of them showed a positive attitude towards it. In a similar question, one of the formators commented that they pass their days performing different activities in different areas, and at the end of the day, they feel tired, so in the evening, they need to take some time to refresh their minds physically and spiritually. On the other hand, even if they believe that recreation is important, as of today, they are not

faithful to it; maybe they give more time to their tasks. Therefore, they could easily enter into activism and individualism (No. 1).

A great number of the candidates felt that recreation is a moment which they enjoy together with the sisters, creating something pleasant using their different talents, as well as it is a moment during which they share the difficulties of the day with the sisters. During that time, they also feel that they could improve the Franciscan spirit (No. 7). The study further found out that superiors, formators and candidates were happy and shared some common concepts of community recreation. The majority; 95% of the members felt that community recreation is a source of unity, fraternal love and happiness. And where there is love and joy, they believe that trust is built, making it easy to share ideas, especially, the love of Christ will abide in such a community (No. 8). These concepts were articulated by our foundress who focused a lot on the necessity of recreation as a moment lived together among the sisters to manifest their being holy and united among themselves. In fact, she presented recreation as an act of communion; therefore, everybody should enjoy together in the garden; laughing, and singing holy things, always with modesty.

Recreation is ordained for all to get refreshment. The animator of the community, on the feast days of the institute, shall grant the sisters things like a cake and candles or other similar things, and among themselves, they shall recite some sacred comedy (Const. 1887, Chap. 24 Nos. 1, 4 & 5). Therefore, from the findings, what the researcher has understood about community life and recreation is that if this aspect would have been lived in due manner, the stress caused by different trials of life could have been reduced, the interest for one another would have been increased and they could have cultivated fraternal love. In fact, in the constitutions of the congregation, fraternal life is presented as a place where sisters must express the riches of diversity through the encounter of one another, of different ages,

language, culture, and nationality; manifested through loving one another, and serving reciprocally with consistence, humility and trust, which help to obtain self-control and overcome ego-centrism (Cf. Const. 2010, Chap. 3, No. 40).

On the other hand, (VC No. 45) emphasizes that fraternal life plays a fundamental role in the spiritual journey of consecrated persons, both for their constant renewal and full accomplishment of their mission in the world. A religious community is a living organism of fraternal communion, where they live the Trinitarian “Koinonia” aspect in different ways, called to live and animated by the foundational charism. It is a part of the organic communion of the whole Church, which is continuously enriched by the Spirit with a variety of ministries and charism (Cf. FLC No. 2a). Right from the beginning, it is necessary to prepare not to be only consumers of the community, but above all, its builders; to be responsible for one another’s growth; to be open and available to receiving the gift of the other; to be able to help and be helped. A community becomes a “Schola Amoris;” a school of love for both young people and adults, a school in which all learn to love God and brothers and sisters, with whom they live, and to love humanity, which is in great need of God’s mercy and fraternal solidarity (FLC No. 24 & 25).

The same argument by the Church Document is also articulated by Gallagher, who postulated about community life as a place where members share all the aspect of human and religious life. Brothers and sisters share community life regularly through communication, shared meals, prayer, meaningful conversation and support of work or ministries. Breaking bread, sharing meals and good conversation is life-giving and could transform a waning community into a vibrant one, where the blessing of food is a memory jogger for all gifts that have been received. It is living the pattern of the Eucharist-gathering folks, sharing stories and breaking bread. Such a community life is built upon the strengths and gifts of the

members, and not on problems and fears of individuals. Christ shared His life with us; joys, anguish, high expectations and ultimately His death and transformation to new life. The Eucharist makes that present today. When we share our lives, we share our energy, affirmation, hopes, and struggles, as also emphasized by Gallagher (2013).

4.12.5.2. Understanding of the Word of God and Lectio Divina

The study also revealed that the understanding of the Word of God and Lectio Divina have correlation with the initial formation. Participants were asked to discuss their understanding of the Word of God. The majority were optimistic and eager to present their views. One of the superiors commented that the Word of God is the daily bread, the bread of life that sustains their spiritual journey and growth, that it is the light which strengthens and sustains them in the dark and difficult moments of their lives: “Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for refutation, correction and training in righteousness so that one who belongs to God may be competent and occupied for every good work” (2 Tm. 3: 16-17). The study found out that Lectio Divina implies discovering the will of God. Another superior emphasized that Lectio Divina is very essential because it is a method used for reading, meditating, understanding, contemplating and putting into practice the Word of God. Therefore, it is a good means because it makes concrete the Word of God in our daily lives, especially it helps us to understand and do the will of God (No. 4).

In a similar interview, one of the formators stressed that the Word of God is the light and guideline of our life; that it gives us a clear idea about God and creation. She further contributed her knowledge of Lectio Divina as essential saying: “If only we are faithful in doing meditation on the Word of God, we could pass our days peacefully. It helps us to have a good relationship with the Holy Trinity. Thus she tries to be attentive at the moment of meditating on the Word of God” (No. 5). The study also revealed that the majority of the

candidates shared some common concepts of the understanding of the Word of God and Lectio Divina. Same questions were posed to the candidates, where one of them said that “the Word of God is the foundation on which my life stands and light for my every day journey. It is a guide of my life, a Holy Book which transmits ideas and plan of God to humanity and its attitude and journey before God” (No. 7).

The research also found out that most of the members (85% of the delegation) were optimistic to the Word of God and Lectio Divina. One of the members appraised the Word of God as a counselor to congregational members; that “it is the place where we get answers for our questions and solve problems, especially reading the story of those people who are challenged by God, which helps us to accept the difficult situations of our lives”. The research found out that Lectio Divina has different sections and each part has its own value which invites us to deep prayer and helps one to elevate his or her spirit to the creator. The Word of God is a light and mirror which could help us to see our weaknesses and strengths. The Word of God is food which nourishes our spiritual lives, gives growth and develops our personalities (No. 11).

One of the community members also resonated that the Word of God is life giving, light to the spiritual journey on earth, which provides strength, power and capacity to do the will of God. It is a principle of how to guide mission activities which God gave us to offer to humanity. Lectio Divina is essential because it helps us to discover our weaknesses and improve, perceive a new vision and God’s guidance, to grow in the love of God and humanity (No. 12).

Number 9 of the Document *Instrumentum Laboris* gives a powerful and beautiful image of the Word of God, that it is the enduring testament to the love of the Father, work of the salvation by Jesus Christ and fruitful activity of the Holy Spirit: “In the beginning was the

Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made” (Jn. 1: 1-13; Cf. Col. 1: 16); Synod of Bishops, (2008). On the other hand, Liptak stresses that Scripture and scriptural theology courses open the way to a profound understanding of Christ. They are a normal part of the most basic formation programmes everywhere (Liptak, 2009). St. Paul also mentioned that the Word of God assists the religious to discern the will of God (Cf. Rm. 12: 2).

The same Document in number 24 stresses that to become the people of God, human beings need to listen to His Word and obey it, because the Word of God transforms the lives of those who approach it in faith. It never fails and it is renewed every day. This however requires faith in the hearer. In many instances, Scripture attests that hearing is what makes Israel the people of God: “If you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples” (Ex. 19: 5; Cf. Jer. 11: 4). Hearing leads to belonging; hearing creates a bond and permits entrance into a covenant. In the New Testament, we are directed to hear the Person of Jesus, the Son of God: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him” (Mt. 17: 5).

Therefore, *Lectio Divina* is observed as an effective and valuable tool in the Church, education and spiritual formation of the everyday lives of consecrated women and men. And also we find in our constitutions of the Word of God and *Lectio Divina* stated the following: In communion with the entire Church, the humble and daily contact with the Holy Scripture will guide us to the school of the Teacher, who is the Source of the Living water and lead us to encountering God. And to receive the living Word, we must love each other in the fraternal life, united with God and our sisters; because the word is given to us to be listened to, to be scrutinized, shared and lived. Thus the fraternity should be faithful to the community *Lectio*

Divina. In our formation, the study of Sacred Scripture must be contemplated (Const. 2010 Chap. 4 Nos. 66, 68 & 69).

4.12.5.3. The necessity of the Catechism of the Catholic Church to religious communities

The research has found out that the Catechism of the Catholic Church is necessary for religious communities because it is one of the formation tools and hence influences the initial formation of candidates. The majority; 97% of the respondents were in common agreement that it is an essential tool of initial formation. When the researcher asked participants whether or not the Catechism was necessary for religious communities, one of the superiors intervened saying that since the Catechism of the Catholic Church contains some important values like the teaching of Christ Himself (the Gospel) and the sacraments and it is presented in a very clear and simple way, to be understood by each Christian, so it is necessary to be used especially as it contains the doctrine of the Church (No. 1).

In a similar discussion with formators, one of them echoed that she believes the Catechism of the Catholic Church is very important, as it is basic for the teachings of the Church and Christian life, which is the foundation of religious life too. Through it, the Church passes the teaching of Christ to the believers; we live religious life because we had a solid faith through sacraments, doctrinal teachings of the Church and personal conviction (No. 1). The majority; 93% of the candidates shared a common opinion that it is a great tool. One of the candidates echoed that “the Catechism of the Catholic Church is an instrument which we use to know and love our faith as Catholics. Hence before becoming religious, our call is to understand and live according to the teachings of the Church. Then, “on this foundation, religious life is built” (No. 17).

Results of the research further found out that the majority of the members; 76%, were positive to the use of the Catechism as a formation tool. One of them commented that “since the Catechism of the Catholic Church is one of the official teachings of the Church, we need to use it because it helps us to understand our faith and cultivate it, and also before becoming religious, candidates must know the Catholic identity and its beliefs, rules and regulations which are contained in the Catholic Catechism (No. 14).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church refers to a text which contains the fundamentals of the Christian truth, which was formulated in a way that facilitates the understanding of Christians. It contains some teachings on the Catholic faith and provides the ground work for understanding what “we” Catholics believe in. It provides a believing Catholic with what to believe as well as in a special way, gives us an explanation of the meaning of what we believe. It takes on board the Bible, Mass, sacraments, Church traditions, teachings, and the lives of saints. It offers us some insights for our spiritual journey towards transformation. It gives us personal formation and promotes maturity in faith (U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults/ USCCA, 1997). Therefore, all that was underlined about the value and importance of the CCC by the respondents and their beliefs to be utilized in religious life, especially in the formation process as a tool of formation, witness to the fact that our faith is a foundation to religious life.

4.12.5.4. Some ways of Franciscan spirituality

The study has found out that the majority of the respondents appreciated the way of life of Franciscan poverty, minority, joy, simplicity and humility. When the researcher asked participants whether they lived Franciscan joy simplicity, humility and poverty, the majority; 90% responded with a ‘yes.’ They unanimously agreed and were very enthusiastic about their spirituality. One of the formators expressed that the reason why she tries to witness to

Franciscan simplicity, joy, humility, and poverty is because, it is part of the charism. She is aware that our humble approach contributes to real Franciscan joy, and this spirituality attracts her (No. 6).

In the study, it also emerged that the majority; 70% of the candidates had adopted the ways of Franciscan spirituality. When the researcher asked them a question, one of the candidates commented that as she is a candidate, she is learning Franciscan spirituality from the sisters who are simple, poor and humble. Despite some of the sisters seeming to be rich, the respondent elaborated that she believed that the poverty, simplicity, minority and humility of St. Francis assisted her to follow Christ the humble and poor (No. 19). However, one of the members of the delegation did not register the same opinion regarding Franciscan spirituality, and when she was asked about Franciscan simplicity and humility, she explained that the reason she wanted to become a Franciscan from the beginning was to follow Christ through the spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi. Nevertheless, she said that though she tries, she is not fully living the objective of Franciscan spirituality consistently (No. 8).

To understand Franciscan spirituality, we must know *il Poverello*; ‘the little poor man’ of Assisi. Martial Lekeux, in William (2004) presents the life of the *Poverello*, namely that it may seem more cheerful and peaceful than that of some of the other saints. He is the saint with a smile. For him, penance was love, and sorrow perfect joy. He was the message of Christ. For his brothers, he was a living example of what he taught: He edified his listeners by example as well as words; he made his whole body a tongue; more than someone who prayed, he had become prayer itself. Therefore, for him, our Lord Jesus Christ was the ongoing revelation of his whole life; in a more clear way of the Incarnation. The poverty of Jesus was one of the organizing principles of the spirituality of Francis. This way of living is fundamentally to observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. For also, the Gospel

poverty invites us to live without possession, and by being poor in spirit; all that is good belongs to the Most High alone because for Francis, everything was a gift.

Poverty was loved and lived by St. Francis of Assisi, and according to him, it was considered heavenly as a virtue, by which all transitory things are compressed under foot, and every obstacle removed from the soul so that it may freely enter into union with the eternal Lord, God. It is also the virtue which makes the soul, while still here on earth, converse with the angels in heaven. It accompanied the Cross and was buried with Christ in the Tomb, and with Christ it was raised and ascended into heaven, for even in this life, it gives to souls who love it the ability to fly to heaven, and it alone guards the armor of true humility and charity (Francis of Assisi, 2005).

Consistent with the life of the Son of God made man, minority should bring us to live a simple and modest lifestyle, in a personal manner that is humble, peaceful, merciful and concerned with service. For Francis, the Gospel ideal of poverty involved choosing minority. To be lowly is a genuine manifestation of interior poverty, which in the Franciscan life project also expresses itself externally, as the humility of the heart and lack of power (Admonitions 2, 3: 3, 4; 6, 4), and as solidarity with the needy and deprived. Without the aspect of minority, our poverty would have no meaning and would become a source of pride, just as without material poverty, interior poverty would be unreal. On the contrary, for Francis, poverty and minority are not ends in themselves, but help us to put into practice “the highest gift” (Cf. 1 Cor. 12: 31) which is love, expressed for people and creation in the Franciscan brotherhood/ sisterhood. Authors have elevated the spirituality of St. Francis to be extraordinary and attractive. Similarly, the majority of the respondents were enthusiastic about it. However, one of them, while she believes in its high quality, at the same time she

has focused on its demand. Therefore, this awareness must help all the members to live this spirituality in a profound way, since it is their spirituality.

4.12.5.5. Guidelines as directives for formators and candidates

The research found out that guidelines provide a clear direction to both formators and candidates and offers the blue print of the charism of the congregation. The researcher asked all the members of the delegation how guidelines provide a clear direction for formation, and the reaction of the majority; 95% was great and positive. One of the formators commented that for formators, guidelines enable them to be ready by preparing lessons and illustrating proper steps and direction to be followed when training candidates. For the candidates, guidelines create a desire and curiosity to study and understand and get to know what they would do with their formators; both of them become aware of what is expected of them (No.3).

At the same time, the study found out from the superiors that guidelines provide a clear direction to both formators and candidates. When the researcher asked the superiors how guidelines provide a clear direction for formation, one of the superiors commented that lack of a guideline for formation work, inhibits one to carry out their responsibilities effectively as it becomes impossible to have adequate knowledge about the assignment to be given to candidates. On the contrary, if guideline are there, they give light on what to follow; the right direction (No. 5). One of the candidates commented that if there is a guideline, it would be easy for the formators to guide candidates in the process of having enough knowledge about their call and growth of the vocation. If there is a well-organized guideline in the delegation, it would be of great help and give light to both of them as an instrument, in their journey. Guidelines could facilitate the process of formation. In fact, they are believed

to provide clear direction for formation. They are fruits of the directives of the Church and work of the congregation (No. 7).

From this study, there is no doubt that the majority of the members were in support of guidelines. When the researcher asked them how guidelines could provide a clear direction for formation, the reaction from the majority; 83% was good. One of the community members postulated that through guidelines, candidates and formators mutually search for the will of God at the root of their lives through the formation process and daily lives. Through guidelines, candidates could take responsibility of the growth of their vocation (No. 3). In this line, the Document; “Contemplative Dimension of Religious Life” (CDM, No. 12) states that the principal purpose of formation at its various stages; initial and ongoing, is to immerse the religious into the experience of God to help them perfect it gradually (CIVCSVA, 1980).

The idea is also supported by Liptak (2009) who states that every formation programme must accomplish: the building of a relationship with God, through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. In relation to the writer’s comments and views of respondents, formation itself is the tool by which religious persons develop their closeness to God. If there is a safe and true goal in whatever formation process, it ought to be one and one only; Christ the Lord. To lose that vision is to lose their way.

4.12.5.6. Awareness given to the value of the profession of the evangelical counsels: Chastity, poverty and obedience in the religious life

The study found out that the majority; 92% of the respondents were aware of the value of the profession of the evangelical counsels, namely to conform to the life of Jesus Christ who is chaste, poor and obedient to the will of His Father. When the researcher asked the respondents whether they were aware of these values or not, the majority gave their reactions as follows: One of the formators argued that the profession of the evangelical

counsels; chastity, poverty and obedience, help a religious person to understand the love of God and humanity and cultivate the value of the religious life. She underlined evangelical counsels as weighing scales of her love and commitment for God, embraced for the sake of His Kingdom (No. 2).

In a similar discussion with a superior, she commented that all the three evangelical counsels appear with great value. She elaborated that chastity is about loving God above everything else and our brothers and sisters for the love of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, if being chaste is not for the Kingdom of God, it would be useless. Poverty is about detachment from every kind of possession. It reminds us that we are called to leave everything behind and rely on God as we read in the Beatitudes (Mt. 5: 1-12). Obedience is a sign that the Kingdom of God is present among us because Christ has come on earth obeying the will of His Father. He invited us to say 'yes' to salvation and to be available to continuing His mission up to the end of the world. On the parallel, one of the candidates postulated that even if she is a beginner, in the life of the sisters who already have some professed religious vows, she sees the manifestation of the life of Christ who is poor, chaste and obedient to the will of His Father. And those who are called to follow Christ in the consecrated life must profess these, with their free will in order to be able to continue with the mission of Christ (No. 4).

The study also found out that the majority; 75% of the members were aware of the three evangelical counsels. And during a discussion with the researcher, one of them commented that Jesus wanted to live a chaste, poor and obedient life according to the will of His Father. She also said that He would have liked to establish evangelical counsels as instruments of the salvation of the world. Evangelical counsels' profession tend to call up the threefold lust together; the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and pride of life. According to the respondent, these are hidden within man as the inheritance of original sin, as a result of which

the relationship with the world created by God and given to man to be ruled by him, was disfigured in the human heart in various ways (No. 1). Thus, as we are followers of Christ, we must practice these evangelical counsels in our daily life.

4.12.5.7. Evangelical Counsels

The profession of the evangelical counsels is considered a great value for those who are called to follow Christ; for it is impossible to live without values. Life cannot be neutral, as was said by Cencini and Manenti, (2010). Vatican II and John Paul II consider chastity to be primary, as motivation for consecrated life because it is through the vow of chastity that consecrated persons become spouses of God and thus renounce all worldly goods to live with Him in poverty and thus choose to obey Him (Conner & Cole 1997).

4.12.5.7.1. Chastity

Celibacy “for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven,” which the religious profess should be counted as an exceptional gift of grace. It frees the heart of man in a unique fashion so that it may be more inflamed with love for God and all men (Cf. PC No. 12). By embracing chastity, religious persons display their own pure love for Christ and proclaim to the world that He is the only begotten Son who is one with the Father (Cf. Jn. 10: 30, 14:11; VC No. 16). This view also goes hand in hand with O' Murchu, (1991), who mentioned celibacy as a profoundly human reality and potentially, a touching social catalyst. It is a radical call to that intimacy which empowers us to love God and our neighbor as ourselves (Cf. Mk. 12: 33). There is an emotional capacity in human beings which could only be nurtured by warmth, friendship, openness and a touching kiss, it is precisely when this dimension is neglected that sexual problems surface. A celibacy which denies basic human needs neglects the incarnational dignity of human life. Antonisamy (2013), explains celibacy, that humility is

its source and those who live this value must approach it by acknowledging their weaknesses and stand humbly before the Lord and work out His salvation with earnestness and live a balanced life.

4.12.5.7.2. Poverty

Religious poverty should diligently be practiced and also needs to be expressed in new forms like in voluntary poverty which is recognized and highly esteemed, especially in today's world, as an expression of the following of Christ. By it, the religious share in the poverty of Christ who for our sake became poor, even though he was rich, so that by His poverty, we might become rich (Cf. 2 Cor. 8: 9; Mt. 8: 20; PC No.13). By imitating Christ's poverty, the religious profess that He is the Son who receives everything from the Father and gives everything back to Him in love (Cf. Jn. 17: 7, 10). O'Murchu, (2005) explains that it is through the deprived, suffering, and marginalized people that Jesus gives concrete expression to His liberating mission; without these people, the radical nature of God's new reign would remain undisclosed. Therefore, evangelical poverty enters into the structure of the redemptive grace of Jesus Christ and reveals to the eyes of the human soul the perspective of the whole mystery, hidden for ages in God. Only those who are "poor" in this way, are also interiorly capable of understanding the poverty of the one who is infinitely rich, this idea is also shared by (RD, No. 12).

4.12.5.7.3. Obedience

By accepting Christ's filial Obedience, the religious profess that He is infinitely beloved and loving, as the one who delights only in the will of the Father (Cf. Jn. 4: 34), to whom He is perfectly united and on whom He depends for everything (VC, No. 16). Fleming (1986), asserts that obedience is openness to God's designs and plans for the world. We do

not have a blue print of His will and therefore, it cannot simply be freedom to conform to what is already decided. It is not a passive acceptance of the way things are, but an enthusiastic search for discovering the decision of the Spirit at work in hearts, relationships and institutional structures. In professing obedience, the religious surrender their own will as a sacrifice of themselves to God, and so are united permanently and securely to God's salvific will. In the spirit of faith and love for the divine will, they are expected to humbly obey their superiors and live according to their congregation's rules and constitutions, realizing that they are contributing to the building up of the body of Christ according to God's plan. Additionally, they should use both the forces of their intellect and will as well as gifts of nature and grace to execute the commands and accomplish duties entrusted to them, which also is a fruit of their maturity (PC, No. 14).

The researcher's understanding of evangelical counsels is that the religious are enabled to live their consecration through grace. From the respondents, it also emerged that the large percentage of the delegation members are aware of the value of the evangelical counsels. It is true that this life must always be sustained by faith and love. It is a life that is chosen by free will, a life which has values and a goal. However, they need to be motivated in making decisions, every day and always to live the gift of God fully through faithfulness to the commitment made to God. If they are attentive to the voice of the Holy Spirit, keeping their promises to God becomes possible. The choice is also made for the up building of the body of Christ. Therefore, in whatever circumstance they find themselves, focusing on values and goal of the religious life might motivate and give growth to the individual vocation. Without a cross, there would be no journey of faith and conformity to the life of Christ.

4.12.5.8. Need for a Formation Plan in the Delegation of Ethiopia

The study found out from 97% of the respondents that there is a need for a formation plan in the Ethiopian delegation. One of the superiors commented that if formation guidelines are well prepared on the delegation level or congregational level, it could bring uniformity in the preparation process of formation (No. 1). Also, the majority of the formators were for the opinion of having a formation plan in the delegation. In the same perspective, one of the formators argued that for the delegation to facilitate its mission, purpose, goal and dreams effectively, it must have a formation plan, adding that for effective results, it was important for a formation plan to be put in place (No. 3).

The study also found out that the majority of the candidates are in support of the need for a formation plan in the Ethiopian delegation. Responding to the question about the need for a formation plan, one of the candidates echoed that “without a plan, it is difficult to achieve the goal” (No. 1). In a similar discussion, another candidate expressed how she sympathized with formators for having to work without a formation guideline (No. 18). From the views, it is clear that lack of a formation guideline proved to be a major challenge for formators in carrying out their duties.

Due to challenges incurred because of lack of a formation plan, the study found out that a great number of members are supporting the formulation of a formation plan in the delegation. The researcher posed a question to the members seeking their views on whether or not there was a need for some formation guidelines, of which the majority supported the idea. One of the members commented that there was a need to have a formation plan at every moment in order to establish a formation programme. She was convinced that it helps to build religious life in a proper way and form new guidelines accordingly (No. 21).

According to Don Orione (2004), through the subject matter of the guidelines, the formation plan contains an authentic manual and a sound help for the formation trainers. It contains norms, advices, canonical directives, examples of forms, ideas for meditation and anything that may assist the work of the trainers. A guideline (a formation plan) indicates the way of passing on the spirit of the Institutes so that it may be lived authentically. It illustrates to consecrated persons the means to live the same spirit in different phases of their lives. From the perspective of the responses of the respondents, the need for guidelines was underlined highly, not just for the sake of having them, but their necessity was examined by all the members of the delegation. The researcher took some time to reflect on the experience of her formation work of 8 years without guidelines, and how she felt challenged in the administration of her duties. She critically analysed the responses of her sisters, especially she was touched by what Don Orione described a formation plan; that it contributes to materials for the process of the formation of candidates, thereby facilitating their growth. Therefore, all these ideas bring to light the need for guidelines in the formation work of the delegation and provinces.

4.12.5.9. Training of Formators Contributes to the Quality Formation of Candidates

The study reported that the majority; 85% of the sisters felt that training of formators contributes to the general quality of the candidates' formation. When the researcher sought to find out from the respondents how the training of formators contributed to the quality of the formation of candidates, one of the formators explained that trained formators were able to carry out their duties professionally and responsibly, as such a formator who is not well trained might form unqualified religious sisters. Thus she sees the training of formators as very important for the growth of candidates (No. 1). Again, superiors who were engaged in the study felt that the training of formators contributes to the quality formation of candidates.

Some individuals from the formation team postulated that they believed that the quality of formation is a fruit of having trained formators. It is also a fruit of having convinced, faithful and committed candidates, for the love of God and humanity (No. 7).

In the study, various candidates were of the opinion that training of formators contributes to the quality formation of candidates. One of the candidates felt that it is impossible to expect quality formation from an individual who is not properly trained because it is not easy to guide or assist a person without prior experience in the line of formation. But somebody who is trained could offer a lot (No. 13). The study found out that a huge percentage of community members are in support of the idea that training of formators contributes to the quality formation of candidates. When asked, one of the community members commented that if the formator is not trained, she cannot be familiar with what she teaches candidates. And she emphasized saying: “NB: if we want to form good religious, the selection of formators must be serious, otherwise there is a risk of losing candidates” (No. 4).

Taking us back to the root of religious vocation and its purpose “Vita Consecrata” states that the true author of formation is the Trinity; the Father moulds the young person into the image of the Son through the action of the Holy Spirit. However, He uses human mediation as an instrument, even if he or she may be weak and limited, for to educate or form means to participate in the creative work of God. The educator is like a farmer, who respects and waits for nature’s timing (Cf. VC No. 66). Therefore, a formator’s responsibility must be competent, well prepared and qualified. She/he should not be burdened with other demanding offices as articulated by Cencini, (2015). The training of suitable directors of formation, who will fulfill their task in the spirit of communion with the whole Church, is very important (VC, No. 66).

Similarly, the Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes, (No. 30) emphasizes that the role of formators is to discern the authenticity of the call to the religious life in the initial phase of formation and assist the religious towards a successful personal dialogue with God while they are discovering the ways in which God seems to wish them to advance. In support of the statement, Liptak (2009) says that time changes, therefore we need a skilled and trained spiritual guide for the new times. This idea is also seen as central for the quality formation of candidates in the formation plan or *Ratio Institutionis* of the society of the Catholic Apostolate, (2004), which states that formation of formators requires new educators who are themselves integrated and able to walk compassionately with those in formation, be able to orient them towards self-discovery and move them towards the values of Christ. In support of the authors, the majority of the respondents observed that training of formators underlines the origin and purpose of the religious vocation. Training also enhances the quality of the formation of candidates, improves the charism of the congregation and enriches the mission of the Church. Hence it must be taken as one of the prior focuses of the congregation.

4.12.5.10. Necessity of a Formation Team to Facilitate the Formation Process

From the findings, a formation team is necessary in the facilitation of the formation process. When asked by the researcher, the majority; 79% of the respondents expressed the need for a formation team. One of the formators commented that putting together different ideas could help to discover the beauty of various qualities which may strengthen the journey of candidates and work for the good of the congregation and the Church (No. 2). In a similar interview with superiors, they also supported the idea of having a formation team. One of them indicated its necessity, in her remarks she said that togetherness facilitates formation work and animates those who come afterwards (No. 1). In the same discussion with candidates, one of them commented that a formation team was significant. Especially

involving different sisters coming from different cultural backgrounds, could provide a spirit of communion and may add value or importance to each candidate (No. 17). Regarding the same question posed to community members, the study found out from the majority; 74% of the members, who had an unanimous feeling that it is necessary to have a formation team to facilitate the formation process. The comment which was articulated from one of the members was that unity is strength. There is an exchange of opinions, knowledge and experiences in the journey of the formation of candidates in the quality of life. Like in different congregations, a formation team exists, well organized to offer these services, equally in the case of our congregation, one of the participants expressed her desire to see coming up a well-constructed and organized formation team in order to generate mature and convinced religious sisters (No. 8).

According to Cencini (2015), the two approaches benefit each other. The inner harmony in an educative community is very important, especially within a formation team. Even if not immediately involved in formation; every member of the community has by that very fact a formative function. The author underlines that the most powerful formative influence is the testimony of fraternity among members of a community. Equally, the formation plan of the Sons of Divine Providence supports what Cencini said; that the constitution of a formation team must be one of the priorities of the central and provincial governments. All formation houses must be able to rely on an authentic team of people. Its essential and constitutive element lies precisely in communication and dialogue among its members, in a constant and sincere manner, so that it may be an expression of true communion as echoed by Don Orione, (2004).

The respondents' views corresponded with the authors' thoughts, which underscored the importance of the formation of candidates, and seen in the formation team as a significant

part for their transformation in the journey of embracing religious life. Therefore, in order to establish a strong formation programme in the delegation, individual community members, who include candidates, formators and superiors, need to be formulated. They have to be able to cooperate and collaborate with one another in the process of discovering the beauty of their calling; planning and forming process of candidates. This implies that the leadership team should appoint committed formators who will be willing and ready to invest their time in service provision, that way, formation will be more effective and relevant to the candidates who will then develop the right intention towards their vocation and its goal.

4.12.5.11. Sisters' Attitude towards Candidates

The study found out that the majority; 96% of the respondents have a positive attitude towards candidates. When asked on her attitude towards candidates, one of the formators commented that she was trying to show them love and attention in order to help them discover the will of God, especially by trying to appear simple, humble and happy or joyful (No. 3). In a similar interview with one of the superiors, she expressed that she had a good attitude towards them because she believes that they are the future sisters who will continue with the charism of the congregation and mission of the Church. The respondent added that she respects them and their vocation because they are followers of Christ like herself. Thus, she shows them love, care and attention so that they could discover the will of God (No. 3).

On the same perspective, another superior felt that sometimes her attitude towards candidates is good and some other time not good, especially when she does not respect the values of religious life, she knows she could affect their journey negatively (No. 2). The study also found out that the majority have a positive attitude towards candidates in general. Most of the responses were positive, however, one of the candidates gave a different insight when asked a question regarding the attitude towards candidates, she commented that she is a

candidate (not a professed sister), however; she underlined that in the group of candidates, they love and respect one another (No. 18).

The study also found out that 75% of the members had a positive attitude towards candidates. When asked, one member commented about her attitude towards candidates, she explained that she held candidates in high esteem, with the belief that how she related or viewed candidates was important since it displayed the true image of the congregation. Therefore, showing a positive attitude, could lead candidates to get attracted to the congregation and complete their mission of becoming confessed sisters. The respondent further explained that when she sees candidates, she notices that there is growth in the congregation, but all the same, laborers are few in the vineyard of the Lord: “We need more so as to help one another in serving God through our pastoral work” (No. 23).

According to Schneiders et al (1994), in the modern world, there is a growing personalism among the religious, and more attention is being given to personal journeys and needs. This obviously creates a new tension with communal demands and expectations. What authors described has been stressed through the responses of the majority of the sisters of the delegation who mentioned that they were trying to focus on the common goal of their call in journeying with candidates, evidently, by taking care of them and loving them, which helps them to be aware of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. However, despite the majority of the members expressing how they saw the need of showing a positive attitude towards candidates, one of the sisters confessed that she was not always attentive to giving a good example to candidates who were trying to discern their vocation. Here, the researcher urges all the members to pay attention by bringing on board the question regarding the spirituality of St. Francis and his attitude towards his brothes. Why St. Francis’ attitude was so attractive, and still it is continuing attracting many people in our days? In fact, as the author

emphasized, the harmony of simplicity, poverty and humility were for Francis, stamped on the whole life of Jesus, a life He wished to follow. At every celebrated Mass, Francis saw the choice of the Incarnation reaffirmed; the humility of God, not only to be admired, but also to be imitated; to humble ourselves and be like God (William, 2004). Therefore, the exemplary life of the sisters may enlighten and encourage the journey of candidates, as they are also called to embrace the same objective of life, through the grace of God. And by following the living example of St. Francis, they must love one another and help one another. This would enable them to live fruitful lives and attract others to follow Christ like Francis did, which would guarantee the continuation of the charism of the congregation.

4.12.6. Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, data analysis approaches and interpretation of the results of the study, which offered comprehensive insights on the guidelines and approaches for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation have been presented. The analysis was presented in both quantitative and qualitative research design. It discussed the findings based on the study objectives and questions in answering to the problem of the research, which were; to examine the relationship between approaches and initial formation, the relationship between guidelines and initial formation and to propose some ways of implementing guidelines for initial formation. In addition, the impact of the various demographic information of the respondents concerning initial formation guidelines have been explored. The result extracted from the respondents' opinions were described as correlations to the research variables and presented in the form of tables, pie charts, frequencies and percentages.

In the following chapter, the implications of the study findings will be emphasized and also the conclusion of the study will be deliberated on.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

Chapter five provides the summary and conclusions drawn from the research findings. It also highlights some of the recommendations to be adopted by the study. Lastly, it gives some suggestions for some future studies.

5.2. Response Rate

The response rate for this study was sought. 56 questionnaires were issued to the members of the delegation, 55 questionnaires were correctly filled in and returned, giving a response rate of 98.2%, which was used for data analysis.

5.3. Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics were sought for the study taking into consideration member's years of experience in the service provision to the surrounding community, formation area, as well as the delegation itself. These were relevant for this study since they live religious life and offer good directions to the study.

5.4. Research Design and Methodology

The researcher adopted the descriptive survey design and mixed approach which was used in gathering data and analyzing the content gotten from the field. The descriptive approach was good for this analysis because it was able to present individual feelings and

views, regarding the importance of guidelines for initial formation in the religious congregation.

5.5. Summary of the Findings

The purpose of the study was to investigate guidelines and approaches for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ of the Ethiopian delegation. The research was necessary since the formation process is a prior duty of the institute. However, there was inadequate experiential evidence of the impact of formation guidelines on the candidate's formation process in the delegation. The study was based on the theoretical identity theory; the theory is founded on some individual personal identities in relation with the social group and identification works in favor of the given social group or identity. The descriptive or evocative research design and correlation was adapted to this study because it sought to gather information from respondents concerning their ideologies, feelings and opinions on the status of formation guidelines. The target population consisted of the Ethiopian delegation, which had focused on religious candidates, formators, superiors and community members living within the delegation.

The target population was the whole cluster of the Ethiopian delegation which was 60 in total, out of which 13 were superiors and formators, 19 candidates and 24 purposively selected delegation members. The purposive sampling was employed in the selection of the respondents in the three categories of participants who were engaged in the study, in the delegation. Respondents in the delegation included candidates, superiors, formators and community members who were selected purposively.

A sample size of 56 respondents was selected and interviewed. Raw data was collected from 55 respondents by the use of some instruments. The research instruments used

to gather data from the respondents were questionnaires with some open ended and closed questions which were administered to the respondents, and an interview schedule for the discussion focus group, which was done by the researcher for superiors and formators of the delegation in the cluster. The questionnaire had two sections: Section one gathered demographic information while section two gathered data which was related to the study objectives, geared towards formation guidelines. The candidates' and community members' questionnaire covered the general overview of the formation guidelines. The interview schedule for the superiors and formators consisted of a similar idea related to formation guidelines. The data was analyzed with the use of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS), version 21; a computer software programme.

5.5.1. Findings on the Relationship between Approaches to Religious Life and the Initial Formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism

This objective aimed at revealing the respondents' perceptions and attitude towards the relationship between approaches to the religious life and initial formation. The data obtained indicated that the majority of the respondents perceived community life and the Word of God as being correlated. Respondents considered the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Franciscan Spirituality and Lectio Divina to have a common relationship with the initial formation. The understanding of community recreation has a connection with community life, which also contributes to initial formation. This was indicated by the majority (90%) of the respondents who shared a positive response about the subject.

5.5.2. Findings on the Importance of Guidelines for the Initial Formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ of the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism

The study was set to expose the respondents' perception of the importance of guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan sisters. According to the results, guidelines were found to be in correlation with the initial formation of the candidates. Respondents indicated high acceptance, encouragement and responsiveness of the formation responsibility as contributors to the effective formation process, and therefore, as having some elements of connectivity. It also emerged that guidelines provide a clear direction to both formators and candidates in offering the blue print of the charism of the congregation. The Catechism of the Catholic Church is necessary for religious communities because it is one of the formation tools, and hence influences the initial formation of candidates. Candidates shared a common understanding on the truth about the formation community's contribution to the religious values of formators and candidates. In addition, respondents considered the value of spiritual exercises and recollections as very paramount in the lives of consecrated persons.

5.5.3. Findings on the ways of Implementing Guidelines for the Initial Formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ of the Ethiopian delegation mediated by their charism

Regarding the above objective, the sisters' and candidates' perceptions, attitudes and feelings on some ways of implementing guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ were well captured in the study. Therefore, respondents viewed guidelines for initial formation as a significant and useful tool of enhancing the quality of formation for the holistic growth of the candidates. Results have pointed out that it is

necessary to have a formation team to facilitate the formation process. The formation team also is considered as a form of unity which might bring strength and quality in the initial formation process, knowledge through sharing opinions and experiences in the journey of their service to forming the candidates in the quality of life. Respondents considered guidelines to be important because they encouraged them to develop a positive attitude towards formation, which in turn enhanced their self-esteem in the delegation. Results have further shown that “putting together different ideas to discovering the beauty and various qualities may enlighten us towards helping candidates and working for the good of the congregation and the Church” (Formator No. 2). Training contributes to the general quality of the candidates’ formation. The need for a formation plan, values of the profession of evangelical counsels; chastity, poverty and obedience in the religious life, founded on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, who is chaste, poor and obedient to the will of the Father, were considered paramount.

5.6. Conclusion

The study concludes that formation guidelines for religious candidates are very important in all religious congregations in general, that is even why the Church gave some directives on religious formation. Consequently, there is need for the adoption of the Church’s directives by individual congregations. Therefore, the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian delegation need to introduce the Church’s directives through the constituting of some formation guidelines.

Formation of religious candidates include human, spiritual, intellectual, pastoral as well as social aspects. Through guidelines, a comprehensive content is developed and given to candidates. There are serious issues which come up, with the absence of formation

guidelines. There are some common omissions of relevant contents which need to be covered during the formation process.

This research found out that candidates' inventory, delegation handbooks for various formation opportunities, resources and other Church Documents were not available for the immediate formation process' usage. In addition, it was concluded that formators did not offer sufficient instructional supervision, which could have deeply influenced the candidate's quality after the formation process was concluded. The findings have further exposed that there was no close monitoring of the work of formators by the delegation superiors, regarding the content which was given to the candidates since the structural guideline was not in place, and therefore, superiors only availed a bit or inadequate materials needed for formation purposes. It was discovered that formators were the ones using their experiential strength to prepare candidates with unprepared resources.

The trend should be changed so as to improve the candidates' quality. Sufficient time should be allocated to candidates' formation programme in order to enable them get enough time for learning and absorbing all that is needed of them by the delegation. The availability of training resources for the delegation candidates will assist in the reduction of formators' workload and create more time to work directly with individual candidates to offer them the required attention they deserve. Both candidates and formators are called to follow Christ by listening to His Words attentively in order to discover His will and sentiments for them; Christ who emptied Himself (Cf. Phil. 2: 6-11) to enrich us all through His humility and poverty. By being faithful to our charism, we inherit the spirituality of St. Francis who is the true imitator of Christ, the poor and humble.

The Ethiopian delegation did not have adequate formation resources, such as reference materials designed for formation work which were indicated as missing essentials,

and therefore need to be given priority by the delegation. This affected the candidates' general outcome, in terms of the quality of what was expected by the delegation (congregation). The delegation did suffer due to inadequate formation resources such as guidelines; candidates indicated that there was lack of good directives to be adopted by all. Superiors and formators argued that they were in the forefront of designing and implementing the said guidelines for the formation process.

All the members of the delegation were of the opinion that proper guidelines should be designed as soon as possible to help in the sustaining of the Franciscan spirituality as well as the charism of the congregation, otherwise, the inadequacy of the formation training, guidelines, poor coordination of the formation work and poor selection of formators contributed to the present condition of the formation programme, which has compromised the quality of the past and present candidates of the Ethiopian delegation. Through this research, the least expected voice is brought to light since communication could bring a lot of effects and impact; it is the energy which propels an individual's passion and provides an opportunity to standing out in a large group and bring change which we all want to see. Through valid training with some relevant materials, candidates may get inspired to becoming extraordinary and perform well in the community.

5.7. Recommendations forwarded

From the study, the broad spectrum impression is that guidelines and approaches for initial formation affect the quality of formation positively in the delegation. Therefore, every formator and superior in the delegation needs to understand in-depth the concept of guidelines and formation approaches in the delegation setting and how they could be disseminated to improve the quality of formation.

The paper recommends the following:

- I. Superiors should play their role all the time in the supervision of the formation programme by checking formators' level of qualification, experience, as well as the availability of necessary materials for accurate contents to be delivered to the candidates.
- II. Based on the study's findings, the delegation formation team should be created by superiors to provide some opportunities for capacity building and furthering of education for both superiors and formators to enable them enhance their knowledge and skills so as to improve the quality of their service to the delegation and other relevant stakeholders, especially in the provision of quality religious leaders from prospective candidates.
- III. The regional superior and community animators supported by major superiors should offer adequate formation resources; this will improve the quality of service delivery by formators and enhance the knowledge of religious candidates.
- IV. The congregation should train enough formators for all the delegations in order to optimize the workload in formation. This will increase formators' effectiveness and efficiency and elevate the importance of consecrated life.
- V. Superiors should improve instructional supervision strategies to ensure that formators, moderators and formation communities attend to the needs of candidates appropriately and willingly without any pressure. The formation team of the delegation should ensure that all the required resources for formation activities are made available to all formation houses.

- VI. For adequate sharing of the Franciscan spirituality in the delegation, there is need for the delegation to encourage common meal sharing, storytelling and watching movies and films for the purpose of the growth of the family and development of both candidates and members of the delegation.
- VII. For adequate provision of proper formation to candidates as well as ongoing formation of the members, there ought to be a well-developed budget for the same, in line with resources such as finances and time respectively.
- VIII. There is need for inviting other formators and superiors from other delegations for experience sharing to help in the enhancement of the formation process.
- IX. By living exemplary religious life, sisters should witness to Christ's love, compassion, care and forgiveness to candidates so that they could realize their own vocation and live the life of Christ through the charism of the congregation.
- X. Candidates should interact with sisters, because they are called to follow Christ through the charism of the institute. Therefore, their life must be transformed into a new life in order to celebrate continuously the design of Christ.
- XI. There is also need to have an open formation where lay individuals with interest in a particular charism could be absorbed and adopted to learn the charism and help in the mitigation of contemporary times and respond to the immediate needs of the Church for the common good of citizens in the service of humanity, which we are called to serve.
- XII. Major Superiors and the regional superior, together, should come to the awareness of the importance of formation guidelines and help formators and the formation team in implementing guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters, which will

inspire and motivate candidates to cultivate their vocation within the process of their formation.

5.8. Suggestions for further research

The researcher recommends some future studies as follows:

- I. A similar research should be conducted in the delegation with focus on the formators' competence of service delivery in the region regardless of the outcome of this study.
- II. A study should be conducted to establish challenges facing local superiors in the implementation of the formation process across the delegation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO THE RESPONDENTS



TANGAZA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa

P.O. Box 15055-00509 Langata Nairobi
Tell: 020-2379048/0722-204724



INSTITUTE OF SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOUS FORMATION

30th May 2016.

To whom it may concern.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH ON RELIGIOUS FORMATION

Tochallo Lujina Gebrewold with the Registration No. 15044F is a student of Tangaza University College, in the Institute of Spirituality and Religious Formation pursuing a Master of Art in Spirituality and Religious Formation.

According to the policy of Tangaza University College, every student in the Institute must conduct a research study in partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of Master of Art in Spirituality and Religious Formation.

Tochallo Lujina Gebrewold wishes to carry out an in-depth study on:

“Guidelines and approaches for initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ in the Ethiopian Delegation.”

In this regard the Institute of Spirituality and Religious Formation kindly requests you to grant her permission to carry out research on the topic cited above. We believe that the findings and recommendations from her research project will contribute to the improvement of the practice and experience of Religious Formation.

Yours Sincerely,

Fr. Remigius Ikpe OCD,

Director,

Institute of Spirituality and Religious Formation.

INSTITUTE OF SPIRITUALITY
AND RELIGIOUS FORMATION
TANGAZA COLLEGE
The Catholic University of Eastern Africa
P. O. Box 15055, NAIROBI - Kenya.

**APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CANDIDATES AND COMMUNITY
MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION**

Topic: guidelines and approaches for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters

Missionaries of Chris of the Ethiopian Delegation

This questionnaire is administered to you by Sr. Lujina Gebrewold on 15th June 2016, in the investigation of guidelines and approaches for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters Missionaries of Christ of the Ethiopian Delegation, strictly for academic purposes, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Spirituality and Religious Formation. Please, note that the information given will be treated as confidential.

The following are the statements concerning guidelines and approaches for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters in the Ethiopian Delegation. Please, tick the appropriate response to show your level of agreement to the stated phrases. Statements were designed to the scale of between 1 and 5.

SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), N (Neutral), DA (Disagree) and SDA (Strongly Disagree). Please, tick . Thank you.

Community Life	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
a. I give value and importance to community recreation					
b. I am aware of the necessity of having meals together with the sisters					
c. Celebrating joyful moments of my sisters in the community strengthens the value of fraternal life and mutual relationship					

Word of God	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
a. I am familiar with the Word of God					

b. I pay attention to the Word of God, especially when the Gospel is proclaimed during Mass as well as outside Mass					
c. I believe that doing Lectio Divina is an essential means of discovering the will of God					
d. I am aware and convinced that the meditated and lived Word of God enables me to grow in relationship with the Holy Trinity					

Catechism of Catholic Church	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
a. I give value, appreciate and see the necessity of using the Catechism of Catholic Church in religious communities					
b. I notice that the Catechism of the Catholic Church is relevant for the religious formation process					
c. I read it frequently					

Franciscan Spirituality	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
a. I exercise the virtue of justice					
b. I witness to the Franciscan joy to my brothers, sisters and creatures					
c. I live joyfully Franciscan simplicity and humility					
d. I focus on humble fraternal life and works of mercy					
e. I understand and appreciate Franciscan poverty					

Guidelines as an instrument	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
a. A guideline is an instrument which helps in the realization of formation goals during the formation process of candidates					
b. Guidelines contribute to growth grounded in the Church's doctrine and mission					
c. Guidelines help in the formation of effective religious leaders					
d. Guidelines aim at generating motivated future formators					
e. Guidelines help in the preparation of mature religious sisters in our communities					
f. Guidelines provide a clear direction to the formation process, both for formators and candidates					
g. I see the need of introducing workshops and ongoing formation programmes about guidelines					
h. I am aware of the values of the profession of evangelical counsels: Chastity, poverty and obedience in the religious life					

i. There is need for candidates to be oriented by evangelical counsels					
--	--	--	--	--	--

Quality initial formation	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
a. I have a virtuous attitude to fraternal life					
b. I am committed to serving the poor					
c. I value prayer life					
d. I value spiritual exercises and recollections					
e. I have enthusiasm for the mission of the Church					
f. I understand that pastoral work is part of my duties					
g. I appreciate and sustain the service offered by formators					
h. I take care of my spiritual growth and maturity					
i. I cultivate the promise I made to God through evangelical counsels					
j. I fully live the charism of my congregation					
k. I have the interest to know and appreciate what Church documents offer					
l. I believe that there is need for the training of formators					
m. Community formation contributes to the value of religious life for both formators and candidates					

Some ways of implementing guidelines	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
a. There is need for a formation plan in the delegation of Ethiopia					
b. A formation plan or guideline contains the charism of the congregation, directives of the Church on formation, and Gospel values, like the evangelical counsels					
c. I am committed to the charism of my congregation					
d. In the charism of the congregation there is full identity of each member					
e. I respect the charism of my foundress and behave according to it					

f. Giving value and attention to the proper charism and that of the foundress elevates the Church's mission					
g. Training of formators contributes to the quality formation of candidates					
h. I am a well convinced and trained formator					
i. I like forming religious candidates for the love of Christ and Church's mission					
j. A formation team is necessary for the facilitation of the formation processes					
k. A formation team is united and conscious of its mandate					
l. A formation team passes on Gospel values and spirit of the congregation to the formees					
m. I feel I am responsible and respectful to the formation programme and formation community					
n. The formation Community takes care of the young ones					
o. My attitude towards candidates is not good					

APPENDIX 3: Candidates' Questionnaire

Kindly fill in this questionnaire. The information will be handled with a high level of confidentiality. Please, fill it in appropriately.

Thank you for your co-operation.

A. Approaches to the formation of the Franciscan Sisters

1. Community life

a. What do you understand by community recreation?

b. Do you believe in the necessity of having meals together with the sisters?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please explain your answer.

c. Do you celebrate joyful moments of your sisters in the community? Like birthdays and others. Please give your opinion.

2. The Word of God

a. What is the definition you could give to the Word of God?

b. Do you pay attention to the Word of God, especially when the Gospel is proclaimed during and outside Mass?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please explain how.

c. Do you believe Lectio Divina is an essential means of discovering the will of God?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

How? Explain your answer please.

d. Are you aware and convinced that the meditated and lived Word of God enables you to grow in relationship with the Holy Trinity?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

3. Catechism of the Catholic Church

a. Do you think that the Catechism of the Catholic Church is necessary to be used in religious communities?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please explain your answer briefly.

b. Do you see the Catechism of the Catholic Church relevant to the religious formation process?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, state your motivation.

4. Are you sincerely faithful to personal and community prayer times?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

If no, what is the reason?

5. Franciscan Spirituality

a. Do you exercise the virtue of justice?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Explain please.

b. Do you witness to the Franciscan joy to your brothers, sisters and creatures?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss.

c. Do you live joyfully the Franciscan simplicity and humility?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

What is your motivation?

d. Do you focus on humble fraternal life and works of mercy?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Explain your answer.

e. What is your understanding of Franciscan poverty?

Please, discuss.

B. Guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters

Guidelines as an instrument:

a. How could guidelines be an instrument of realizing formation goals during the formation process of candidates?

Please, explain.

b. What is the contribution of guidelines to growth grounded in the doctrine and mission of the Church?

Please, discuss.

c. How do guidelines help to form effective religious leaders?
Your opinion:

d. How do guidelines aim at generating motivated future formators?
Please mention and explain some points.

e. How do guidelines help to prepare mature religious sisters in our communities?
Explain.

f. How do guidelines provide a clear direction for the formation process both to formators and candidates?

g. Do you see the need of introducing workshops and ongoing formation programmes about guidelines?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Explain your answer?

h. Are you aware of the values of the profession of evangelical counsels: Chastity, poverty and obedience in the religious life?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your reason.

i. Is there a need for candidates to be oriented by evangelical counsels?

Please, discuss.

C. Guidelines enhancing the level and quality of the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters

Quality of the initial formation

a. Do you have a virtuous attitude towards fraternal life?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer.

b. Are you committed to serving the poor?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Explain your answer.

c. Do you value prayer life?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Explain your answer.

d. Do you consider the value of spiritual exercises and recollections?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer.

e. Are you enthusiastic for the mission of the Church?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Explain your answer please.

f. Do you perceive pastoral work as part of your duties?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss your answer.

g. Do you appreciate and sustain the service offered by formators?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer.

h. Do you take care of your spiritual growth and maturity?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

i. Are you cultivating the promise you made to God through evangelical counsels?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please explain.

j. Are you fully living the charism of your congregation?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

k. Do you have any interest in knowing and appreciating the value there is in the Church documents?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer.

l. Do you believe that there is need for the training of formators?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Give your motivation please.

m. Is it true that the formation community contributes to the value of the religious life, both for formators and candidates?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please explain.

D. Some ways of implementing guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters

a. Is there any need for a formation plan in the delegation of Ethiopia?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Give your opinion please.

b. Is it true that the formation plan or guidelines contain the charism of the congregation, directives of the Church on formation, and Gospel values, like evangelical counsels?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss.

c. Are you really committed to the charism of your proper congregation?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, give your opinion.

d. Is there a full identity of each member in the charism of the congregation?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss.

e. Do you respect the charism of your foundress and behave according to it?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

f. Do you give value and attention to the personal charism and that of the foundress, which could elevate the Church's mission?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please discuss.

g. Do you think that training of formators contributes to the quality formation of candidates?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please explain.

h. Would you like to form religious candidates for the love of Christ and Church's future mission?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please discuss.

i. Do you think that the formation team is necessary for the facilitation of the formation processes?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please give your opinion.

j. Do you see that the formation team is united and conscious of its mandate?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer.

k. Does the formation team pass on Gospel values and spirit of the congregation to formees?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

l. Do you feel responsible and respectful for the formation programme as a formation community?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

m. Is there a formation Community taking care of young ones?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, give your opinion

n. What is your attitude towards candidates (your companions)?

o. Is there collaboration among the Regional Superior, formation team and formators for your growth (candidates)?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please add your opinion, suggestions and wishes in relation to quality initial formation in the Ethiopian delegation.

Thank you so much for your collaboration.

APPENDIX 4: Community members' Questionnaire

Kindly fill in this questionnaire. The information will be handled with a high level of confidentiality. Please, fill it in appropriately.

Thank you in anticipation.

A. Approaches to the formation of Franciscan Sisters

1. Community life

a. What do you understand by community recreation?

b. Do you believe in the necessity of having meals together with the sisters?

A. Yes

B. Undecided

C. No

Please explain.

c. Do you celebrate joyful moments of your sisters in the community? Like birthdays and others?

Please, explain your answer.

2. The Word of God

a. What definition could you give to the Word of God?

b. Do you pay attention to the Word of God, especially when the Gospel is proclaimed during and outside Mass?

A. Yes

B. Undecided

C. No

Please, explain.

c. Do you believe Lectio Divina is as essential means of discovering the will of God?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain

d. Are you aware and convinced that the meditated and lived Word of God enables you to grow in relationship with the Holy Trinity?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

3. Catechism of Catholic Church

a. Do you think that the Catechism of the Catholic Church is necessary to be used in religious communities?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, briefly explain your answer.

b. Do you see the Catechism of the Catholic Church relevant to the religious formation process?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer

4. Are you sincerely faithful to personal and community prayer times?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

If no, explain your answer.

5. Franciscan spirituality

a. Do you exercise the virtue of justice?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer.

b. Do you witness to the Franciscan joy to your brothers, sisters and creatures?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer.

c. Do you live joyfully Franciscan simplicity and humility?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

What is your motivation?

d. Do you focus on humble fraternal life and works of mercy?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer.

e. What is your understanding of Franciscan poverty?

Please, discuss.

B. Guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters

Guidelines as an instrument

a. How could guidelines be an instrument for realizing formation goals during the formation process of candidates?

Please, explain.

b. What is the contribution of guidelines to growth grounded in the Church's doctrine and its mission?

Please, discuss.

c. How do guidelines help to form effective religious leaders?

Please, explain your answer.

d. How do guidelines aim at generating future motivated formators?

Please, mention some points.

e. How do guidelines help to prepare mature religious sisters in our communities?

Please, explain.

f. How do guidelines provide a clear direction for the formation process, both for formators and candidates?

g. Do you see any need of introducing workshops and ongoing formation programmes about guidelines?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

What is your motivation?

h. Are you aware of the values of the profession of evangelical counsels; chastity, poverty and obedience in the religious life?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer.

i. Is there any need for candidates to be oriented by guidelines?

Please, discuss.

C. Guidelines enhance the level and quality of initial formation for the Franciscan Sisters

Quality of initial formation

a. Do you have a virtuous attitude towards fraternal life?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

b. Are you committed to serving the poor?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

c. Do you value prayer life?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

d. Do you consider the value of spiritual exercises and recollections?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

e. Are you enthusiastic for the mission of the Church?

- A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

f. Do you perceive that pastoral work is part of your duties?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss.

g. Do you appreciate and sustain the service offered by formators?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

h. Do you take care of your spiritual growth and maturity?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

i. Are you cultivating the promise made to God through the evangelical counsels?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss.

j. Are you fully living the charism of your congregation?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, give your opinion.

k. Do you have interest in knowing and appreciating the value offered by the Church documents?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain your answer.

l. Do you believe that there is need for the training of formators?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, give your motivation.

m. Is it true that the formation community contributes to the value of the religious life, for both formators and candidates?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

D. Some ways of implementing guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters

a. Is there any need for a formation plan in the delegation of Ethiopia?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, give your opinion.

b. Is it true that the formation plan or guidelines contain the charism of the congregation, directives of the Church on formation and Gospel values, like evangelical counsels?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss.

c. Are you really committed to the charism of your proper congregation?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, give your opinion.

d. Is there a full identity of each member in the charism of the congregation?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss.

e. Do you respect the charism of your foundress and behave according to it?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

f. Do you give value and attention to the personal charism and that of the foundress, which could elevate the Church's mission?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss.

g. Do you think that training of formators contributes to the quality formation of candidates?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

h. Are you a well convinced and trained formator?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, give your opinion.

i. Do you like forming religious candidates for the love of Christ and Church's mission?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss.

j. Do you think that the formation team is necessary for the facilitation of the formation processes?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, give your opinion.

k. Do you see the formation team united and conscious of its mandate?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, give your opinion.

l. Does the formation team pass on Gospel values and spirit of the congregation to the formees?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, discuss.

m. Do you feel responsible and respectful to the formation programme as a formation community?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, explain.

n. Does the formation Community take care of the young ones?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, give your opinion.

o. What is your attitude towards candidates?

p. Is there collaboration among the Regional Superior, formation Team and formators, for the growth of candidates?

A. Yes B. Undecided C. No

Please, add your opinion, suggestions and wishes in relation to the quality initial formation of the Ethiopian delegation.

Thank you so much for your collaboration.

APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SUPERIORS AND FORMATORS

Vocational years ____; Experience in formation work ____ Years; Community animation experience ____ Years

A. Approaches to the formation of the Franciscan Sisters

1. Community life

- a. What do you understand by community recreation?
- b. Do you believe in the necessity of having meals together with the sisters?
- c. Do you celebrate joyful moments of your sisters in the community? Like birthdays and others.

2. Word of God

- a. What definition could you give to the Word of God?
- b. Do you pay attention to the Word of God, especially when the Gospel is proclaimed during and outside Mass?
- c. Do you believe that Lectio Divina is an essential means of discovering the will of God?
- d. Are you aware and convinced that the meditated and lived Word of God enables you to grow in relationship with the Holy Trinity?

3. Catechism of Catholic Church

- a. Do you think that the Catechism of the Catholic Church is necessary for religious communities?
- b. Do you see the Catechism of the Catholic Church relevant to the religious formation process?

4. Are you sincerely faithful to personal and community prayer times?

5. Franciscan Spirituality

- a. Do you exercise the virtue of justice?

- b. Do you witness to the Franciscan joy to your brothers, sisters and creatures?
- c. Do you live joyfully Franciscan simplicity and humility?
- d. Do you focus on humble fraternal life and works of mercy?
- e. What is your understanding of Franciscan poverty?

B. Guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters
Guidelines as an instrument

- a. How could guidelines be an instrument of realizing formation goals during the formation process of candidates?
- b. What is the contribution of guidelines to growth grounded in the Church's doctrine and mission?
- c. How do guidelines help to form effective religious leaders?
- d. How do guidelines aim at generating motivated future formators?
- e. How do guidelines help to prepare mature religious sisters in our communities?
- f. How do guidelines provide a clear direction for the formation process, both to formators and candidates?
- g. Do you see the need of introducing workshops and ongoing formation programmes about guidelines?
- h. Are you aware of the values of the profession of evangelical counsels; chastity, poverty and obedience in the religious life?
- i. Is there any need for candidates to be oriented by guidelines?

C. Guidelines enhance the level and quality of initial formation for the Franciscan Sisters
Quality of initial formation

- a. Do you have a virtuous attitude to fraternal life?
- b. Are you committed to serving the poor?
- c. Do you value prayer life?

- d. Do you consider the value of spiritual exercises and recollections?
- e. Are you enthusiastic for the mission of the Church?
- f. Do you perceive that pastoral work is part of your duties?
- g. Do you appreciate and sustain the service offered by formators?
- h. Do you take care of your spiritual growth and maturity?
- i. Are you cultivating the promise you made to God through evangelical counsels?
- j. Are you fully living the charism of your congregation?
- k. Do you have interest in knowing and appreciating the value offered by the Church documents?
- l. Do you believe that there is need for the training of formators?
- m. Is it true that the formation community contributes to the value of the religious life, for both formators and candidates?

D. Some ways of implementing guidelines for the initial formation of the Franciscan Sisters

- a. Is there any need for a formation plan in the delegation of Ethiopia?
- b. Is it true that the formation plan or guidelines contain the charism of the congregation, directives of the Church on formation and Gospel values, like evangelical counsels?
- c. Are you really committed to the charism of your proper congregation?
- d. Is there a full identity of each member in the charism of the congregation?
- e. Do you respect the charism of your foundress and behave according to it?
- f. Do you give value and attention to the personal charism and that of the foundress, which could elevate the Church's mission?
- g. Do you think that training of formators contributes to the quality formation of candidates?

- h.** Are you a well convinced and trained formator?
- i.** Do you like forming religious candidates for the love of Christ and Church's mission?
- j.** Do you think that the formation team is necessary for the facilitation of the formation processes?
- k.** Do you see the formation team united and conscious of its mandate?
- l.** Does the formation team pass on Gospel values and spirit of the congregation to the formees?
- m.** Do you feel responsible and respectful of the formation programme as a formation community?
- n.** Is the formation Community taking care of the young ones?
- o.** What is your attitude towards candidates?
- p.** Is there collaboration among the Regional Superior, formation team and formators, for the growth of candidates?

What is your opinion, suggestions and wishes in relation to the quality initial formation of the Ethiopian delegation?