

**FAITH-BASED LEADERSHIP AND STUDENTS' CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT  
AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN COTABATO CITY:**

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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**Abstract**

The paper provides a description on the ways in which two faith-based institutions an Islamic schools maybe distinguish from Catholic schools. It identifies the extent of faith-based leadership manifested among students in terms of faith, social awareness, love, and obedience; determine the extent of the students' character formation demonstrated by students when grouped according to schools in terms of compassion, communion, contemplation, and love for creation. The study adapts the four attributes of faith leaders of Sweeney and Fry's model on the essence of developing students' character which are anchored on the four core values of the O.P., Dominican Sisters. The paper uses descriptive-comparative design and a modified survey questionnaire. In total, 200 participants are involved in the study. The results show that most of the students developed the characteristics aimed to be instilled by the faith leaders. However; faith leaders need to have more programs on love, social awareness and obedience to develop student's characters like contemplative, building a closer relationship with God and others, and being compassionate. These findings assert statements in the literature concerning the integrated nature of spirituality and its positive involvement to leader resilience. Henceforth, faith-based schools of higher institutions in Cotabato City may find spirituality useful as learning means through which they can critically examine their teaching practices. Secondly, faith leader promotes the physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual well-being of learners. Faith-leaders recognition of faith and the importance of spirituality in human life is an essential perspective that represents service to members of the community. The paper suggests a further study be conducted on investigating the meaning of teachers' spirituality and the effect this might have on their professional contributions.

*Keywords:* Faith-Based Leadership, Student's Development Character, Higher Education Institution, Cotabato City

## INTRODUCTION

Today constantly there is a working to improve on forming students with morals, values and ethics and knows the benefits to society. Further, character formation gained significant interest from the academia, different organizations and mainstream society across the globe. Although, the primary concern of education is academic excellence, however; Nelson Mandela was right when he said, "Education is the most powerful weapon through which you can change the world", nonetheless; it focus on developing a well-balanced individual with a strong character and value ( De Villiers, 2015).

As recognized, the school is considered influential in the character development of a student. It is a place where students learn and shape their standards. But the ways of character only become appropriate when school leaders can successfully connect the concepts to individual lives. Such that DEPED (2003), requires the need to increase the character development in the restructured Basic Education Curriculum, especially that technology forms demands, changes where ideas greatly affect ideologies and character development of students' principles and performances in the ethical and pro-social grounds (Goswami, 2008). Thus, it calls the stability of leadership both on emotion and spiritual sides, as well as, highly ethical whose concern must not only on the legal matters but also on the moral and spiritual aspects of the schools (Nawi, 2014).

In the process of education, the interaction of approaches and traits of leadership is indispensable. Leadership is about affecting and holding the faith of others. One approach that embodies such running patterns is spiritual or faith leadership, which considers vision, faith, and humane love to inspire one's self and others to bring out a wisdom of spiritual existence (Fry, 2003). Faith is one trait of leadership that establish heavily on the viability of character formation and appropriate spiritual relationships with individuals based on humanity. Leaders need to have faith and influence the character of his members. Leaders with faith have always the desire to serve others, above and beyond one's self - compassion, awareness, love and care of people. Faith leads to having visions and actions to foster character formation and sustainability of the school. Thus, faith-based leadership is a style that practice of seeing leadership in the light of one's religious, spiritual, or faith-related beliefs (Fry, 2009). These leaders are well developed and have a heart in shaping the basic character traits and values of individuals according to Barbuor, et. al.,(2008).

Although, fostering character development is challenging and requires an extra amount of determination, time, planning, training, mentoring, and refinement. However, Maslow (1970) in his book suggested the psychological aspect of faith leaders in the development of character; as in the Catholic and Islamic which are closely related are exceptional and great examples of

leadership. Their charms are indispensable throughout history and are needed to provide a philosophical anchoring on how their leadership styles are so contagious (Christensen, 2015). Therefore, comparing and contrasting these positions will explore the strengths and weaknesses of the institutions and may suggest selections of solutions to situations that school leaders are faced with in their everyday activities.

Thus, the present thesis' in consideration of students in faith-based school leadership constitutes an attempt to look into whether their character development is influenced when spiritual or faith-based leadership defines the institutional settings. This prompted the researcher to determine the overall performance of faith-based school leadership on the character development activities of the school among higher institutions in Cotabato City.

## METHODS

The study utilized the descriptive-comparative design. On the most basic level, descriptive-comparative research design involves the comparison and description of differences and similarities of 2 variables which are not manipulated, and establish a formal process to conclude that one is better than the other.

This study was to explore and to establish the comparison between the faith-based leadership between two schools - the Islamic and Catholic schools - on the students' character formation among higher education institutions in Cotabato City.

The qualitative data were the description of the character developed among students and faith leadership in identified areas using survey questionnaire. The comparative method was done only with the determination in students' character development according to Catholic and Islamic leadership.

There were different groups of participants in this study: the students coming from Catholic schools and Islamic schools. The selection of the respondents comprises the 50 percent of the total population of enrollees. There were 70 students from NDHSM; 50 students from Notre Dame-RVM College; 30 from Kutawato Darussalam College; 50 from Sultan Kudarat Islamic Academy. The total population of students who participated in the study was 200. The students are enrolled in school year 2017-2018.

The study used a random sampling in selecting the students as respondents. Random sampling is one of the simplest forms of collecting data from the total population. Each member of the subset carries an equal opportunity of being chosen as a part of the sampling process. It does not guarantee that all important student characteristics are represented in the sample. (Shadish, Cook, and Campbell, 2002)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data gathered from the respondents utilizing the use of questionnaires. The interpretation and descriptive-comparative analyses were discussed as a result of the statistical applications made used for the study.

In a way, education is one of the factors in the efficiency and speedy formation of character. It presents social value for itself because processes of improvement and changing of social relations depend on most people's intellect and education. More so, the school is to provide students with the type of involvement inside and outside the classroom that has a positive shaping influence on students' attitudes and values; and widen students' logical capacity and widen their knowledge of the world. Every school's main goal is on the side of character: their religious heritage, beliefs, and values. Schools may have differences but they have their resemblance by means of having visions and missions to achieve. The establishment of character formation through the religion's perspectives is the solution a group, no reference to deific efforts.

The succeeding tables present the practices and programs by faith leaders such as faith, social awareness, love and obedience as ways to the formation of student's character on the trait of being compassionate, contemplative, communication and love for creation.

## Faith-based Leadership in terms of Faith

Table 1 presents the different programs and practices by faith-based institutions in terms of faith.

Table 1  
 Faith-based leadership in terms of faith  
 n=200

Indicator	Catholic		Islamic	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Students are encouraged to develop a closer relationship with God.	3.38	Evident	3.39	Evident
2. Our school is a Community that prays together.	3.37	Evident	3.30	Evident
3. Our school makes Jesus/ Prophet Mohammad and the teachings of the Church known to all students.	3.36	Evident	3.16	Evident
4. Symbols of our faith are displayed throughout our school.	3.19	Evident	3.01	Evident
5. Everyone connected with our school works together, respecting each other's gifts to build a strong, faith-filled learning community.	3.32	Evident	3.17	Evident
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.32</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>Evident</b>

Table 1 shows that schools encourage students to develop a closer relationship with God as it got the highest mean of 3.38 for Catholic and 3.39

for Islamic school. The results relate that activities conducted by the school are in line with building a stronger faith leading to better linkage with the Divinity and practice of spiritual life. These activities are ways where students build and deepen their relationship with God and learn about each religion principles, values and traditions. These are important in the formation of the character grounded in faith that will help individuals see into who they are, where they find meaning in life their revelation for creating a life that has effect and the significance of the influences they are making according to Fry (2003). Similarly, respondents got the lowest mean of 3.19 (Catholic) and 3.01 (Islamic) on item 4 states that symbols of faith are displayed throughout the school. It signifies or only indicates that schools show respect to other students with different religions. According to Articles of Faith 1:11 (2010) , respecting others' religions is a belief of privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of one's conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, allowing individuals to worship how, where, or what they may. However, any schools can commence symbols whenever they want (Redden, 2009).

The grand mean of Catholic schools is 3.32 and Islamic school is 3.21 indicating that leadership on faith is demonstrated or evident in every aspects of the school curriculum. The over-all mean infers that faith-based leaders impart knowledge of faith, in which schools provide students an opportunity to experience the living faith: like praying together, making known to everyone the teachings of the church in accordance to their religion, fostering and recognizing the rights of every religion. In addition, the purpose of spiritual leadership is to have a creative vision in which leaders and followers experience a sense of meaning leading to a stronger faith with the Supreme Being.

Morton (2004) contends that integration of education and knowledge about God are essential for developing behavior which changes the life of an individual and become a better and responsible citizen. He added that education is a cliché word, however; it is evident that the primary aim of education is to build well-developed individuals with strong values. As Schwadel (2011) reveals in his study that school had a strong and positive effect on the religious involvement of students; yet, only 15 percent of the students attends religious services in each additional year of education.

Bryant, Choi, and Yasuno (2003 cited in Doherty, 2011) assumes the importance of spirituality and religiosity when they have studied 3,680 first-year students which concentrated on the effect of spirituality and religiosity on individuals. Participants came from those who completed the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey and the follow-up survey, Your First College Year (YFCY). As found out, students demonstrated a decrease in religious activity in the first year of college, however; more students affirmed the importance of spirituality in their lives during the next years. It shows that there is a high correlation among religious traditions, and spirituality and religious engagement and predictive of each other. The study provides a view on the significance of spirituality as a factor in the development of students' performance and achievements. While, Harvey (2019) writes in his article on Integrating Faith into learning as, "where faith is incorporated into

into students' learning experiences, definitely, the aim is to cultivate men and women who have well-founded characters and illustrate strong values such as integrity, compassion, emotional strength, honesty, honor, humility, discipline, and moral firmness". Thus, students finished school not only with complete grades and course but with commendable character strengths.

Moreover, literatures show that faith leaders in education used the Holy Book on teaching character through community worship at the heart of their approach to character formation and flourishing. This has ensured that character education is not simply a morally-neutral pursuit, but rather one with a clear faith source. By developing and enhancing critical and creative programs, trainings and daily activities, help foster a new generation of informed students, workers, as well, as policy or decision makers. Higher education, usually find time and seminars to send faculty and staff to learn how to effectively integrate faith with learning. School administrators commit on programs like professional-development training sessions, small-group collaboration, or even in campus seminar that provides resources and assistance as faculty develop their competency. Leaders who are trained to integrate faith in their work can meaningfully share learnings and will fully benefit students.

### **Faith Leadership in terms of Vision and Social Awareness**

Table 2 presents the vision and social awareness as practiced by the faith leaders as incorporated in their activities.

Table 2  
 Faith-based leadership in terms of vision and social awareness  
 n=200

Indicators	Catholic		Islamic	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Our school instils in students the responsibility to promote Gospel/ Injil values and social justice in the world.	3.27	Evident	3.15	Evident
2. Administrators understand, accept, and model the teachings of the Catholic / Islamic Church.	3.31	Evident	3.13	Evident
3. Students are lead to seek wisdom and truth, with clear understanding of right and wrong.	3.41	Evident	3.19	Evident
4. The school upholds high standards of excellence in all it offers	3.12	Evident	2.80	Evident
5. In addition to academics and faith formation, our school offers Liberal arts, athletics, and service opportunities that contribute to the education of the whole child.	3.29	Evident	3.29	Evident
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>3.11</b>	<b>Evident</b>

In table 2 the data on students are lead to seek wisdom and truth with clear



understanding of right and wrong has the highest mean score of 3.41 given by students from Catholic schools. The responses reveal that faith leaders demonstrate visions for the highest purpose of the school.

The institution ensures that they inspire, arouse, and empower individuals to develop well and morale. It's the Catholic leadership role to bring faith infused curriculum by fostering love for wisdom and truth and integration of faith, culture and life. The results affirm with the views of Greenleaf (2015) that faith leaders are like servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first." as quoted, "each member of the school community should participate in carrying out clear, God-centered objectives for the school.

While, students from Islamic Schools have marked the highest mean of

3.29 the item 5 that in addition to academics and faith formation, the school offers Liberal arts, athletics, and service opportunities that contribute to the education of the whole child. It directs that the schools' program focus on providing students with settings and manages services that ensure the growth of the totality of each student. Activities like offering programs to support individual and addressing the needs and concerns of each. Educating is part of Islamic leadership which is a sacred duty and a trust (amanah) to guide humans to knowledge according to Shah (2016). Obviously, it is the desire of the Islamic leadership that children become professionals with moral values. Consequently, the results on the vision and social awareness practices grand mean are 3.28 and 3.11. School leaders evidently denote conscious awareness and practice community services as being part of an interrelated community of others. It fosters a positive future of the students.

Nevertheless, faith leaders always look forward for the betterment of the each by promoting values and seeking the truth to have healthy and just community. Faith-based schools promote philosophy and set of practices that enriches the lives, and ultimately creates a more just and caring world.

## Faith-Based Leadership in terms of Love

Table 3 upholds activities on leading with love, knowing and caring which inspires and empowers individuals.

Table 3  
Faith-based leadership in terms of love  
n=200

Indicators	Catholic		Islamic	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Our school is a community that lives the Gospel message through service to the poor and to those in need.	3.28	Evident	3.12	Evident
2. Our school holds masses to promote understanding of love and unity.	2.99	Evident	3.03	Evident
		Evident	3.39	Evident
3. Our school promotes activities to seek the welfares of others.	3.40			
4. Our school is involved in public services like extending help to the needy especially during calamities.	3.27	Evident	3.39	Evident
5. Our school is involved in volunteerism like visiting homes for the aged.	3.02	Evident	3.26	Evident
Grand Mean	3.19	Evident	3.24	Evident

Data in table 3 shows the highest mean of 3.40 for Catholic on the promotion of activities to seek the welfare of other. The results present that faith leaders grow in love and services to others to ensure character formation as loving and caring individuals. Leading with love is the key to leadership success. To lead effectively, a leader must love the people he/she is leading. Brown (2015) mentions that leaders who established an approach to leadership which concentrates on love pursuing the sake of others first creates a strong culture of giving and respect, making all members of the community to flourish together.

On the other hand, the Islamic schools have the highest mean of 3.99 where school promotes activities to seek the welfares of others, as well as, the school is involved in public services like extending help to the needy especially during calamities. This stresses on the programs of the faith leaders are based on making the individuals live positively, humble, and humane. It means leading with love is knowing and caring about what inspires and empowers people. It's about caring enough to know what is important to them and helping them succeed. Islamic educational leadership needs good counsel (nasiha) which requires leaders to be knowledgeable, well informed, seek the best course of action, and act in consideration of others and treat others with respect, empathy, and kindness (Shapiro, et. al., 2016).

On both sides, they have the lowest mean of 2.99 for Catholic schools and

3.02 for Islamic schools on the celebration of masses to promote understanding of love and unity. This indicates that faith leaders need to encourage and

plan more of a whole school mass celebration comprise of both practicing and non- practicing member of other membership, and other faith communities in understanding of self and others and not of promoting the beliefs of one religion or tradition over another. It is setting the primary means by which we participate in communal worship. Kouzes and Posner (2012), according to John Robbins about developing leaders, stresses the value in giving financial support to good causes, but he emphasizes the importance of providing time for spiritual development. Faith leaders, according to Sweeney (2009) believe that activities done in love and showing services to others strengthen an individual's character sense of commitment to live and lead based on all- encompassing core values that promote the common good.

The data on love has an overall mean of 3.19 for Catholic schools and

3.24 for Islamic schools. It indicates that faith-based institutions promote activities in serving and seeking the welfare of others that leads into understanding of love and unity. Leadership grown from love creates a culture where leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for self and others according to Fry (2003). Love puts the needs and well-being of others at the forefront. Leaders must be open and honest leading in love to find the higher meaning and stressing the need to serve others for the common good. As a review, Islamic leadership posits on service to others, as written ... - and to practice regular charity; and that is the Religion Right and Straight." -- Sura 98 (98:5), of the Holy Quran (Mustafa, 2015). Catholic schools have a long tradition of fostering character through service like peer tutorials and then extension outward to the church and to the whole human community (Catholiceducation.org.net, 2016). Programs and practices rooted in love instilled by the schools are vital in producing loving individuals.

## Faith-Based Leadership in terms of Obedience

Table 4 shows the data on respect to different individuals and compliance to the Highest Authority.

Table 4  
Faith-based leadership in terms of obedience  
n=200

Indicators	Catholic		Islamic	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Our school supports the spiritual growth of every student of any religion.	3.04	Evident	3.09	Evident
2. Our school operates with the expressed approval and support of the Bishop / Grand Mufti.	3.34	Evident	3.08	Evident
3. Our school recognizes the rights of every students of any religion.				
	3.35	Evident	3.15	Evident
4. Our school offers subject in respect to different religions.				
	3.34	Evident	3.32	Evident
5. Our school follows the teachings of Catholic/ Islamic education.				
	3.38	Evident	3.35	Evident
Grand Mean	3.39	Evident	3.20	Evident

The results in table 4 reveals the highest mean of 3.38 for Catholic schools on the practice of following the teachings of Catholic. As known, Catholic leadership has a clear mission as to foster Christian character or Christ-like traits in students. Christ-like serves only as an indicator that certain attributes or attitudes are expected. Nonetheless, leaders of the Catholic organization still provide the students with clear sense of their identity and support to lead their students and organizations in difficult times (Catholic.org.net, 2016). These behaviors promote and enhance spiritual growth through knowing the rights of every students of any religion in a manner that they could understand.

On the same item, the Islamic schools also marked it as the highest mean of 3.35 on the practice of following the teachings of Islam. It reveals that leaders have internalized and promoted the Islamic core values and realize them in their course curriculum. Islamic leadership is a sacred position, it is either a person or group of people who will guide and lead the followers. Islamic leadership emphasizes on holistic concept in the teaching and willing submission to the Creator; doing the positive actions for the sake of Allah (Mustafa, 2014).

Both schools differ on the items that got the lowest mean. The school supports the spiritual growth of every student of any religion of 3.04 is the lowest mean for Catholic schools. As faith leaders, they have to be sensible on the needs of students when it comes to spiritual growth, plans must determine the content of education that includes all religions and should support individuals to become increasingly more able to understand and make informed, mature responses to God's invitation to relationship. Belief and obedience in spirituality and God is an effective way in promoting higher performance among individuals in an organization (Kouzes and Posner, 2007).

While, the Islamic school has the lowest mean of 3.08 on item 2 the school operates with the expressed approval and support of the Grand Mufti. As known, it is the scholars and educated elites who generally operate the school activities. The Islamic (Madrasah) school operates as an integrated system in the Philippines since it is a secular nation, its style follow the western way and is dictated by the different policies and laws of the government.

With the overall grand mean score of 3.39 for Catholic schools and 3.20 for Islamic schools. It consistently indicates that leaders evidently practice and impose obedience in most of the programs of the school. According to Aristotle words, "He who has never learned to obey cannot be a good commander." The words hold true pointing on the characteristics of a good leader and the significance of obedience in individuals' growth. The responses suggest that even each school has differences, it still manifest that leaders impose acceptance, reverence of faith from various religions and obedience that is proficient in the highest level. Obedience is a power that supervises human behaviors and supports humans in achieving goals. Kouzes and Posner (2007) in their study believe that a leader must recognize a higher power supervising his work. Leaders are at their best when they exhibited the practices of

modeling the way through an inspired and shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart to motivate and inspire (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). The compelling research posits that excellent things happened when leaders set examples of doing the best; thereby, inspiring a shared vision that recognized and encouraged others to do the like. People follow the person first, then the plan. Obedience is constrained by motivation to introduce good values among individuals to be a better and caring citizen of the community.

### Students' Character Formation in terms of Compassion

Table 5 presents the many acts of compassion developed in students.

Table 5  
Students' Character Development in terms of Compassion  
n=200

Indicators	Catholic		Islamic	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. I help others without expecting anything in return.	3.67	Highly Developed	3.77	Highly Developed
2. I respect the privacy of others all the time.	3.79	Highly Developed	3.56	Highly Developed
3. I listen.	3.64	Highly Developed	3.48	Developed
4. I think before I speak	3.34	Developed	3.17	Developed
5. I accept disagreement and differing opinions.	3.36	Developed	3.34	Developed
Grand Mean	3.56	Highly Developed	3.46	Developed

Table 5 shows respecting the privacy of others all the time has the highest

mean of 3.79 from Catholic schools. It shows that students have the ability to feel genuine empathy and concern for those who suffer distressing physical, mental, or emotional problems, and to tolerate it. It demonstrates compassion by considering others. Compassion is one trait that is emphasized to be developed among Christian schools. Being compassionate includes deep caring and understanding the needs and welfare of others (Fry, 2008). In Catholic Schools, compassion mirrors the Divine's love, as well as, inspires others to help. This is a prime trait of the Spiritual Gift of Mercy; however, not having that gift is no reason or excuse to not act on it. (Matthew 9:35,36 Mark 9:41; Romans 12:1; 1 Thess. 5:14). Compassion is an essence of life's ability.

On the other hand, students from Islamic schools marked a 3.77 as the highest mean on the practices of helping others without expecting something in return. The responses expose a genuine character developed among the students such as care and respect - a habit of being sympathetic to the needs of others. It shows that respondents all the time align their practices, activities, and interactions to being compassionate or being sensitive with the needs of others. The results on compassion are traits which are very evident in Islam as written ... -and to practice regular charity; and that is the Religion Right and Straight." -- Sura 98 (98:5), of the Holy Quran. Through service, students learn empathy, kindness, and respect for others and oneself, the ability to good lives and become a positive force in the world. Both respondents has the lowest mean of 3.34 (Catholic) and 3.17 (Islamic) in terms of thinking before speaking. It is a behavior that needs to be developed so as to avoid conflict. It implies that the person in question has not given enough thought to the consequences of his spoken words. The contemporary understanding of compassion tends to assume that it is both feeling and action, although it has certainly not always been understood in that way (Borsay, 2012). Thus, there must be activities on strengthening the habit of respect that helps individuals to be more tactful. Being tactful is being compassionate.

Nevertheless, the data show that compassion is highly developed as it has the grand mean of 3.56 among students in Catholic Schools. This confirms and highlighted the mission-vision of the two Catholic Schools to truly dedicate to academic rigor, high standards of personal behavior, outstanding pastoral care, high quality teaching and every other aspect of a fully rounded, creative and inclusive education. Being aware and respectful of feelings, owning their mistakes and using them to learn, being kind to everybody, actively listening to their peers, showing appreciation, nurturing uniqueness, recognizing others' strengths and building their learning experience from there. Mc Conell (2015) mentions compassion as human experience of deep significance to students and needs understanding in the context of school environments dominated by discourses of efficiency and rationalization.

On the other hand, the Islamic schools have a grand mean of 3.46 which means that compassion is developed among students. The results encourage that activities conducted both inside and outside of the classroom, schools have cultivated a lifelong commitment of being compassionate - serving others, particularly the less fortunate. Compassion is the most frequently occurring word in the Qur'an. Each of its 114 chapters, with the exception of the 9th, begins with the invocation 'In the name of God, the Compassionate, the

Merciful...' The great mystical writers of Islam, the Sufis, wrote constantly of

love and compassion as essential to the spiritual path of the Muslim. Thus, compassionate and positive school environment strengthens mental abilities

Generally, compassion gives students to be confident of any selections chosen and for the teachers to have faith from students. Data explains that understanding of emotions is related to social experiences. Socio-affective experience is the acquisition of social skills and the awakening of moral awareness and the reasons for the development of compassion according to the theory of mind and socio-affective by Dennis (2013). In other words, compassionate and positive school environments help all children succeed and they turn a potential learning deficit into an asset. Compassion is a sense of unity, coherence, and well-being which is caused by caution, worry, and gratitude for both the self and others. Compassionate individuals make sure that all feel belonged in every important and influential action each does. They have a deep concern on emotions – an ability to understand a situation and how each benefited from their works. They do all they can to inspire others to give their best.

### Students' Character Formation in terms of Communion

In table 6 both faith-based schools have evidently instilled among students a depth of understanding of deep communion, and have internalized spirituality.

Table 6  
 Students' character development in terms of communion  
 n=200

Indicators	Catholic		Islamic	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. I have strong faith in God.	3.72	Highly Developed	3.71	Highly Developed
2. I make an effort to help other lost soul to get back in church.	3.41	Developed	3.04	Developed
3. I join in any prayer session with my	3.17	Developed	3.11	Developed



mates.

4. I engage in civic activities initiated by various groups.	3.17	Developed	2.88	Developed
5. I make it a habit to have a Holy hour every day.	2.97	Developed	2.90	Developed

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Grand Mean	3.29	Developed	3.13	Developed
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The results of table 6 support the sense of strong faith in God among students from the both schools which show the highest means of 3.72 (Catholic) and 3.71 (Islamic); which means it streams in their behavior and leads them in constant communication with the Divinity and with others . As



recognized, schools have looked into the essentiality of communion or praying all the times together – as the act of bringing the people closer to Divinity which serves as a bridge into the life of the worshipping community.

As confirm for Islam believers; "And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being true (in faith); to establish regular prayer; and to practice regular charity; and that is the Religion Right and Straight." -- Sura 98 (98:5), The Holy Quran. Being prescribed by their religion, many regularly do so five times each day, from the early morning hours until evening (The role of Prayer in Islamic World.net, 2012). Undoubtedly, in Islam, regular prayer is a clear obligation.

While in Catholic schools, though it is clear that prayers shape a person, prayer in daily routine is evident and has to be performed and practice; yet, it's not too clear just how and when prayers should be said. However, regular prayer should be accorded the same importance as the regular bodily nourishment that sustains a child's life (Catholic Culture org.net, 2017).

Kennedy (2010) discloses in his research that schools generally agreed that praying always is one of the most effective ways to improve the behavior of young people. He even mentioned the importance of spirituality in guiding students such as praying extends the depth of feelings for freedom and illumination. All are founded on the freedom to publicly acknowledge God's existence. As such, praying together in schools allows students to have a divine unity with other creations in the universe. Praying has a power of creating a pious atmosphere that helps instill certain values such as humility and discipline in the students. This helps individuals realize the essence of the ethical values. Praying in school encourages unity, beliefs in the value system of the school and acknowledges the existence of someone greater than man.

And both schools gained the lowest mean on the habit of praying all the time. These means are 2.97 (Catholic) and 2.90 (Islamic). It implies that students need to keep an attitude of honoring and praising God -- and to make God the first person to contact with; to nurture relationship with the Divine and moves each deeper into the love of God. Thus, institutions must find ways to cultivate and instill the significance of the habit of praying among students. According to El-Guindi (2008) praying retentively ordering of life in and through prayer, a religious self is cultivated and formed. Hereby an important focus on the disciplining aspects of prayers comes into view.

Predominantly, the results gained a grand mean of 3.29 for Catholic schools and 3.13 for Islamic schools indicating that students have developed a closer relationship with the Supreme Being and other individuals while practicing the importance of praying. Mauss (2003) explains that prayer is a religious rite which is oral and bears directly on the sacred. He says, prayers are repetitive or ritualized actions and as an innate part of divine life and needs to be expressed orally. Furthermore, prayers according to Mauss (2003) proposes a change in sacred beings as they are the primary object of the prayer and also affect the persons praying. Prayer sets a standard of personal conduct for people to follow. Prayers, reveal the hopes and desires not merely of individuals but of larger communities, too. It is a way of passing the morals

and values to the student. The essence of communion or praying as part of education is a means of faith schools in bringing individuals closer to God

### Students' Character Formation in terms of Contemplation

Table 7 displays the developed character of mindfulness or contemplation among students.

Table 7  
 Students' character development in terms of contemplation  
 n=200

Indicators	Catholic		Islamic	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. I pray together with the family.	3.14	Developed	3.05	Developed
2. I read devotional books.	2.77	Developed	2.75	Developed
3. I reflect about my lessons at the end of the day.	3.18	Developed	3.06	Developed
4. I participate in school retreat/ recollection	3.45	Developed	3.22	Developed
5. I attend seminars/ symposiums on spiritual enhancement	3.00	Developed	2.91	Developed
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>Developed</b>	<b>2.99</b>	<b>Developed</b>

As shown in table 7 both school marked number 4 as I participate in school retreat/ recollection the highest mean of 3.45 for Catholic schools and 3.22 for Islamic schools. It signifies that students have developed the sense of participating in all school recollection or retreat given and even in most of the mind calling or spiritual activities. Students have seen the importance of contemplation; contemplation in education can raise the growth of confidence in a child required for academic achievement and emotional well-being. Data

supports the suggestions of Shapiro S. et. al.,(2014) in their study that contemplative practice leads to moral development. Further, their research with adults suggests different benefits of meditation such as improved attention to reduced stress. Thus, regular practices of contemplation have a great effect on the moral development among students. It fosters moral maturity which is of great benefits psychologically, socially and globally (Shapiro, 2014).

The grand mean of both schools are 3.10 (Catholic) and 2.99 (Islamic) where students clearly developed the character of being contemplative or students practice meditation and prayerful life. Contemplation encourages students a feeling of peace and calmness in the midst of disturbed and stressful life; bringing contemplation among students foster reconciliation among diversity. The practice of meditations stresses the increase of moral maturity which is important for contemplation activities that can enhance ethical motivation and behavior through several mechanisms. According to Walsh and Shapiro (2006) contemplation include sensitizing awareness to the costs of unethical acts, reducing problematic motives and emotions, strengthening morality supporting emotions (such as love and compassion), cultivating altruism, and enhanced identification with others. As such, results of the study encourage the essentiality of contemplative practices to students as a way to foster character formation for ethical decision-making.

### Students' Character Formation in terms of Love for Creation

Table 8 clearly states the traits of showing dominion of love and care for environment as part of character formation.

Table 8

Student' character development in terms of love for creation  
 n=200

Indicators	Catholic		Islamic	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
1. I volunteer for a greater purpose.	3.34	Developed	3.21	Developed
2. I recycle or pick up trashes.	3.45	Developed	3.37	Developed
3. I take responsibility of my own trash.	3.69	Highly Developed	3.64	Highly Developed
4. I do not harm any living creatures.	3.45	Developed	3.27	Developed

5. I read some facts about the earth and energy and what I can do. 3.36 Developed 3.33 Developed

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Grand Mean 3.46 Developed 3.36 Developed

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For table 8 students from different schools marked the statement, "I take responsibility of my own trash" essential as it got the highest mean of 3.69 for Catholic respondents and 3.64 for Muslim respondents. It is clear that students developed character which is in accordance of being protective of the other creation that demands control and containment and dominance of the virtue love. By being responsible on ones' action and doing physical activities for the physical environment in groups improve students' spatial abilities as



teamwork. As Heifetz and Linsky (2002) contests that love is what provides deep meaning to our lives, and can provide deep meaning to our work as well and so creates an environment sensibility of self and others. Is it obvious that faith-based institutions nurture love that lends itself to creating a community of sensitivity, as well as, preservation of natural environment, development conscience and recognition of the Earth as a unique, indispensable environment. Thus, result in the increased of tolerance and solidarity among themselves; improves quality of living, and eventually affect the quality of living in the society

While; item no. 1 states, "I volunteer for a greater purpose" has the lowest mean of 3.34 for Catholic schools and 3.21 for Islamic school. Although, volunteerism has positive effects for on many aspects of well-being, especially on their psychological well-being; however, a deeper understanding on volunteerism is really important. Like what makes volunteers participate in volunteering activities and who are more likely to volunteer. Morrow-Howell (2010) says that sometimes in life, about 70% of adults engaged in volunteering, and the rate of volunteering increases with age until middle age (31%) then decreases at older ages (24%). Volunteerism is a long-term, planned, prosocial behaviors were strangers usually benefits and is done within structural setting (Penner, 2002). It is important that school administration has to include in their plans and programs activities that will engaged students in volunteerism. Apparently, students foster sensitivity, appreciation, and respect for the environment, which could be seen in the overall means for both schools of 3.46 (Catholic) and 3.36 (Islamic). Thus, the different results of means of both schools imply of their consciousness on the importance of environment, of showing love for creation and the different actions to take to improve and sustain it. Students have developed the feeling of love of creation. It builds among students a feeling of belongingness and valued for themselves and for their contribution. The practices of such behaviors bring students to be mindful of the surroundings. Fry stated that spiritual leadership establishes "a social/organizational culture whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others" (Fry, 2003). The assertion of Panea, M., and Patriana, R. (2016) in one of their studies, reveals that 91% of students agreed to the holding of courses that include environmental contents and awareness as part of character formation. Furthermore, fostering awareness among students could lead to the individual's increased of spatial ability. It is a fact and believed by all men that all beings came from the same Creator and are ordered to glory and worship of the Creator.

Catholic teachings emphasizes that individuals are entitled to tend the earth; yet, this does not mean to abuse, but to nurture and be responsible for God's creation for the common good; human beings have been given the responsibility of representing God in the midst of God's creation. In an Islamic belief, "Allah is unity, and His unity is reflected in the unity of humanity and nature." Because of that, it is the responsibility of humans to strive for harmony in our relations with the natural world. As such, individuals are just

care taker and not an owner. Taking care of other creatures allow individuals as participants in God’s creation, as well as, nourishing the world.

**Difference Between the Faith-Based Leadership when analyzed according to Catholic and Islamic schools**

Table 9 reveals a no difference between the faith-based leadership when analyzed according to Catholic and Islamic schools.

Table 9

Difference between the faith-based leadership when analyzed according to Catholic and Islamic schools

Faith-based leadership	Mean	df	t-value	sig
Catholic	3.32	99	-1.024	.308
Islamic	3.23			

The difference between the faith-based leadership when analyzed according to schools is compared and shown in table 9. The means of 3.32 for Catholic schools and 3.23 for Islamic schools has the degree of freedom of 99; where the t-value is -1.324 and the significance value is .308. This is not significant at alpha level of 0.05. In effect, no significance difference in the faith-based leadership when analyzed according to schools. It implies that both Catholic and Islamic faith leadership have the ability to stimulate and arouse influences among students.

Ray (2012) affirms that characteristics commonly attributed to a competent and successful leader include the ability to inspire and motivate people. Faith leaders form relationships based on mutual trust are able to form connections with workers who then develop a desire to emulate the leader and follow direction. As Fry (2003) stresses that spiritual leadership is significant factor for the transformation and sustained accomplishments of learning organizations. Fry and Nisiewicz (2013) suggests that spiritual leadership attends to the fundamental needs of people by facilitating the intrinsic motivation needed to increase commitment and levels of productivity.

**Difference Between the Students’ Character Formation when grouped according to Catholic and Islamic schools**

Table 10 reveals the acceptance of the null hypothesis of no significance difference in the students' character development when analyzed according to schools.

Table 10

Difference between the students' character development when analyzed according to Catholic and Islamic schools

Students' Character Development	Mean	df	t-value	Sig
Catholic				
Islamic	3.46	99	1.324	.188
	3.37			

Data on table 10 shows the means of 3.46 for Catholic schools and 3.37 for Islamic schools has the degree of freedom of 99; where the t-value is 1.324 and the significance value is .188 at significant of alpha level of 0.05. The null Hypothesis of no significance difference in the student's character development

when analyzed according to schools was accepted. The desire to build the character of students have poured into the strategic planning and program design in a systematic and integrated. Results from this program do not directly alter the character of the students, but it is expected to give a positive color in an atmosphere of learning. Therefore, formation of character considers different societal factors like teachers, classroom, peers, the government and other non-governmental factors. According to an African Proverb and as mentioned by Hillary Clinton in her book, "it takes a village to raise a child.

Furthermore, results only confirm the article of PACE (2016) that education systems are not the same and each school has its own ideologies and beliefs on how to carry each teaching to develop a child. These philosophies and practices are the reasons why above all faith-based schools are labelled as standard both in academic and character development of a child because of the different perspectives shared on 1. Spirituality of the world ; 2. Inspired vision of the scriptures; 3. Civic Responsibility And Engagement; 4. Value Of Service;

5. Discipline; 6. Arts And Culture; 7. Goal Setting; 8. Safe Environment; 9.

Passionate Instructors; and 10. Minority-friendly Atmosphere. These characteristics are the core of a relationship which support in shaping the character of an individual, as well as, help people communicate comprehensively.

In general, various studies and researches have pointed out that leaders will always leave an impact to their follower. Islamic and Catholic leaders



stressed the spiritual connection among students whenever they religiously follow the teachings and learnings on a regular basis, and engaged in religious activities. These experimental results supported by several researches that the counting of blessing is positively related to similar measures of subjective well-being, pro-social behavior, and spirituality (Cullough,2003). Moreover, applications of faith-based leadership though sometimes contradict with other principles of leadership styles, supports character formation among students.

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