

The Effects of Family Issues on the Process of Formation of Young Missionaries among the Yarumal Missionaries

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study was to find out the effects of family issues on the process of formation of young missionaries in the formation house of the Yarumal Missionaries. The study adopted the quantitative method using cross sectional survey. Data was collected through questionnaire. The findings indicate that every family issue has got positive and negative effects on the young religious at every level of formation. However, it can be asserted that the more stable a family is the more focus and stable the young missionaries could be during their formation process. The findings show that 15.38% of the young Yarumal missionaries are in propaedeutic, 30.77% in philosophy, 25.64% in Noviciate (spiritual year), 17.95% in theology and 10.26% in pastoral year. 69.2% of the young missionaries have their mothers alive, 25.6% have lost their mothers and 5.1% have no idea if their alive or dead. 71.8% have their fathers alive, 25.6% have lost their fathers whereas 2.6% have no idea about them. The parents of 48.7% are still together while 51.3% have their parents separated. 84.6% have their parents neither rich nor poor; the parents of 10.3% are poor and 5.1% are rich. The families of 92.3% of the young Yarumal missionaries have ever experienced domestic violence, 7.7% have never. 66.6% have experienced abuses and 33.3% have never. 92.3% agreed that family issues disturb their formation process while 5.1% asserted that they do not; 2.6% neither agree nor disagree. 84.6% know other religious whose family issues disturb their process and 15.6% do not. Furthermore, there is strong positive significance between family issues and the formation process of the Young Yarumal Missionaries. There is no significant difference across the stages of formation regarding how the issues affect them.

Keywords: family issues, process of formation, young religious, formation house, Yarumal missionaries, propaedeutic, philosophy, noviciate, theology, pastoral

I. BACKGROUND

Family is the first place of security and upbringing for every person especially the young people. But it can also be a set-up of discomfort, distress and challenges for the youth. Families can absorb many things that can make their children suffer or undergo painful experience(s) and disorientation. They can also be areas where the youth can find many disappointments leading them to go astray or be unstable. All families go through difficulties, and the ups and downs of family life can have very huge effect on young people in their studies, employment, and relationship.

According to Mackova et al (2019), the family is a very important institution that provides relationships and contexts in which adolescents are included and where the trajectory of positive development can be activated in order to have good communities and societies where adults are able to found, build and form effective and efficient livelihood. This in a way means that a family history, story and experience is crucial in the life of every adult including young missionaries in the process of formation. Therefore, a family crisis can also endanger any process in the life of a person.

Ellison et al (2011) asserted that divorce rates in the US increased considerably in the 1960s and it even augmented much more in the early-mid 1980s. Hence, it has raised concerns among researchers, policymakers and the public about the implications of parental divorce. However, although many of these researches have been centered on out-comes during childhood and adolescence. But some studies have as well stated that this patterns can have significant impacts on adults. There could be some evidences that children raised in intact

two-parent families including adolescents who grow in such environments tend to fare better on psychologically, socially, emotionally among others.

Budayova (2020) stated that family is an institution that has an irreplaceable position for the proper development of a person. Moreover a family can be identified as a small or large social group comprises of parents, spouses, children and other blood or bloodless relatives. However, divorce can be one of the issues that couple can be faced with; and whenever there is divorce, discomfort can occur and that can manifest itself in the young age, adult age of children who are parent's divorce survivors. Furthermore, each family can go through several stressful situations. "We encounter families in which several problems have developed at the same time, which leads to a multiple-faceted burden on all family members, or a serious problem affects the family for a long time it is a so-called a generational problem that family members pass on from one generation to generation" (Budayova, 2020, 26). The dysfunction of every family therefore affects all members of the family. She asserted that families can have problems in areas such as housing, finance, raising children, partnership with extended family members, relations with institutions, conflicts with the law, diseases, and addictions. But she mentioned that in general the most common problems faced by families are: immature family, family in divorce, a family with an unemployed member, a family with a member using addictive substances, a family with a disabled member, a family with a sick member, a family neglecting, abusing their member.

It is argued that the performance of some high school students considerably went down and one of the reasons was certain family issues. However, there are those who despite the family issues they usually excel in their studies.

Bangura S. (2021) mentioned family issues such as death, divorce, impotence, children problems/behavior, adolescent mood, single family, violent marriage/physical, drinking or tempered, domestic violence and differing standards and rules. Pangilinan (2022) said that any kind of conflict in a family has an impact on children and by extension on the adult since the child of today is the adult of tomorrow. It can be argued that many studies have been done on effects of family issues on children and adolescents but few have focused on adults especially concerning religious people and more specifically among the Yarumal missionaries. The Yarumal missionaries are an Institute of apostolic life for the evangelization of people (the poorest among the poor) in the Roman Catholic Church. Their members are from different parts of the world especially from Africa and Latin America. They follow doctrines and norms prescribed for the universal Roman Catholic Church while adapting to every local church, in places where they do their missions and formation.

Moreover, the *ratio fundamentalis* (2016) subdivided the formation process in four principal stages: the propaedeutic stage (introductory stage), the stage of philosophical studies or discipleship stage, the stage of theological studies or configuration stage, and the pastoral stage or stage of vocational synthesis. Looking at these main stages given in the *ratio fundamentalis* and the charism of the Institute, the Yarumal missionaries in the directory of formation divided the process of formation in six stages namely preselection (come and see), propaedeutic stage, philosophical stage, spiritual year, theological stage, and pastoral year.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aims at finding out the effects of family issues such as divorce, death, domestic violence, poverty, and abuses on young missionaries in the process of formation in the Yarumal Missionaries formation house from propaedeutic to pastoral year.

HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis are the following:

There is significant relationship between family issues such as death, divorce/separation, poverty, domestic violence and abuses/neglect and the formation process of the young religious among the Yarumal Missionaries.

There is significant relationship between a stable family and a young missionary successful formation process.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It often happens that some people say that their family issues are big disturbances to them to the point that they are unable to succeed in their life endeavors. Many people can lose concentration and get distracted whenever their families are undergoing some challenges. The young Yarumal Missionaries come from different background and from families that live several and different life situations. Every family has its own problems which can affect the young missionaries in any way.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study can benefit many religious congregations, seminaries/houses of formation, yarumal Missionaries, the young missionaries, many other young people in different trainings, institutions/organizations that work for the best interest of the youth, families among others.

SCOPE OF DELIMITATION

This study is done among 39 young Yarumal Missionaries in their different formation houses across the world especially in Kenya, Ivory Coast, Colombia, and Angola. All of them are between 19 years old to 30 years. Six (6) students of propaedeutic, 12 philosophical students, 10 students in the spiritual year, 7 students of theology, 4 students in pastoral year.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the number of students whose family have gone through the mentioned family issues
2. To investigate the effects of family issues on the formation process of young missionaries of the Yarumal Missionaries

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted quantitative method and cross sectional survey design. According Iskandar () quantitative research methods are research methods dealing with numbers and anything that is measurable in a systematic way of investigation of phenomena and their relationships. It is used to answer questions on relationships within measurable variables with an intention to explain predict and control a phenomena. Cross-sectional survey is a study in which the researcher collects data from a sample drawn from a population. It involves collecting data at one point of time. 39 participants took part in the answering of the questionnaire which was analyzed using SPSS.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework consists of concepts, their definitions and references to relevant scholarly literature in relation to a given research topic. It tries to establish an understanding of theories and concepts that are relevant to the topic of a research paper which relate to the broader areas of knowledge being considered (Creswell, 2014). System theory (initiated by Ludwig von Bertalanffy) is used in this study since it helps in deepening the fact that family systems and members are interconnected. The system behavior affects the environment and Vis versa.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

According to Kasomo (2006) conceptual frameworks are organized from a set of expansive ideas and theories and help researchers to accurately detect the problem they are looking at, identify the independent and dependent variables as they frame their questions and find suitable literature. For the purpose of this research, a

conceptual framework will be developed showing the connection between the independent and dependent variables. The conceptual framework for the present the study is presented in figure 1.1:

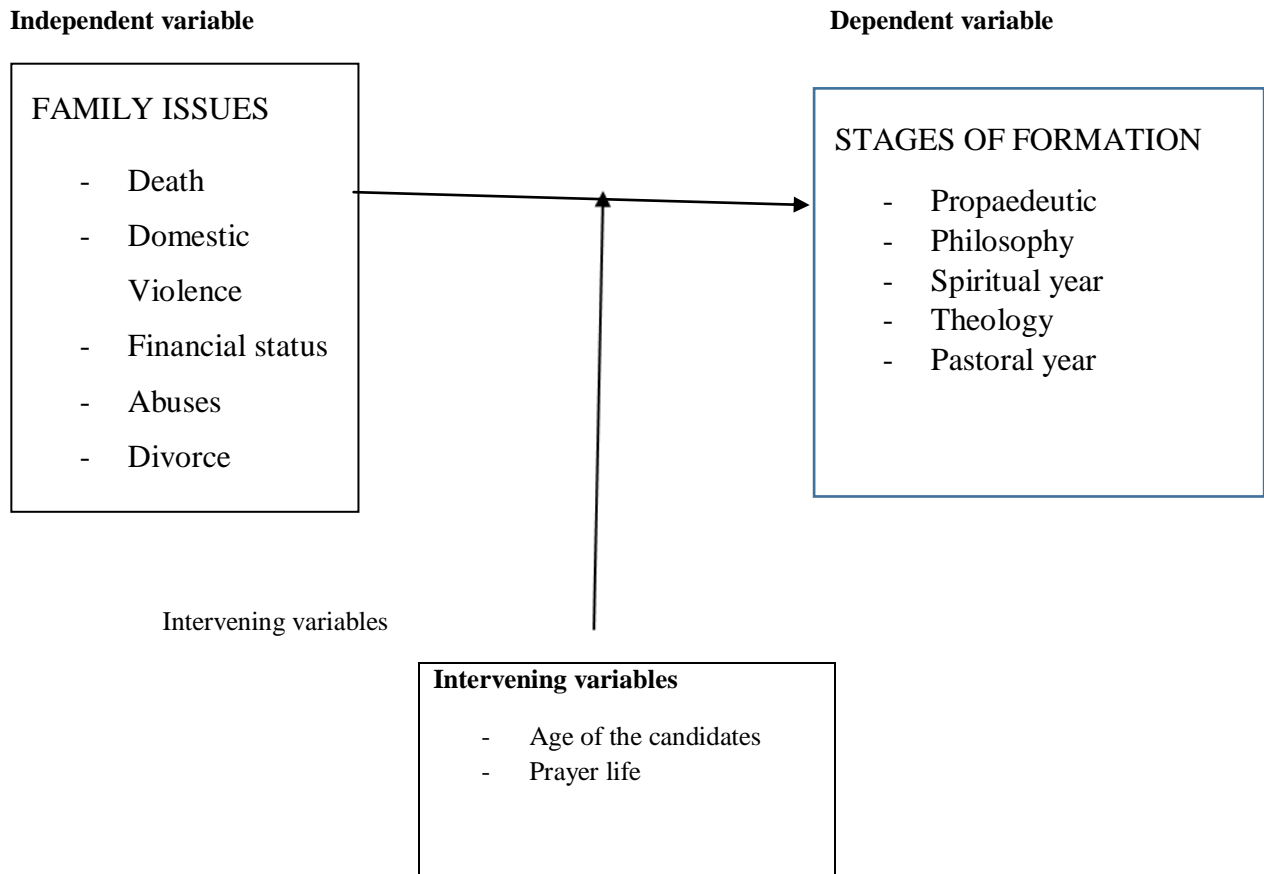


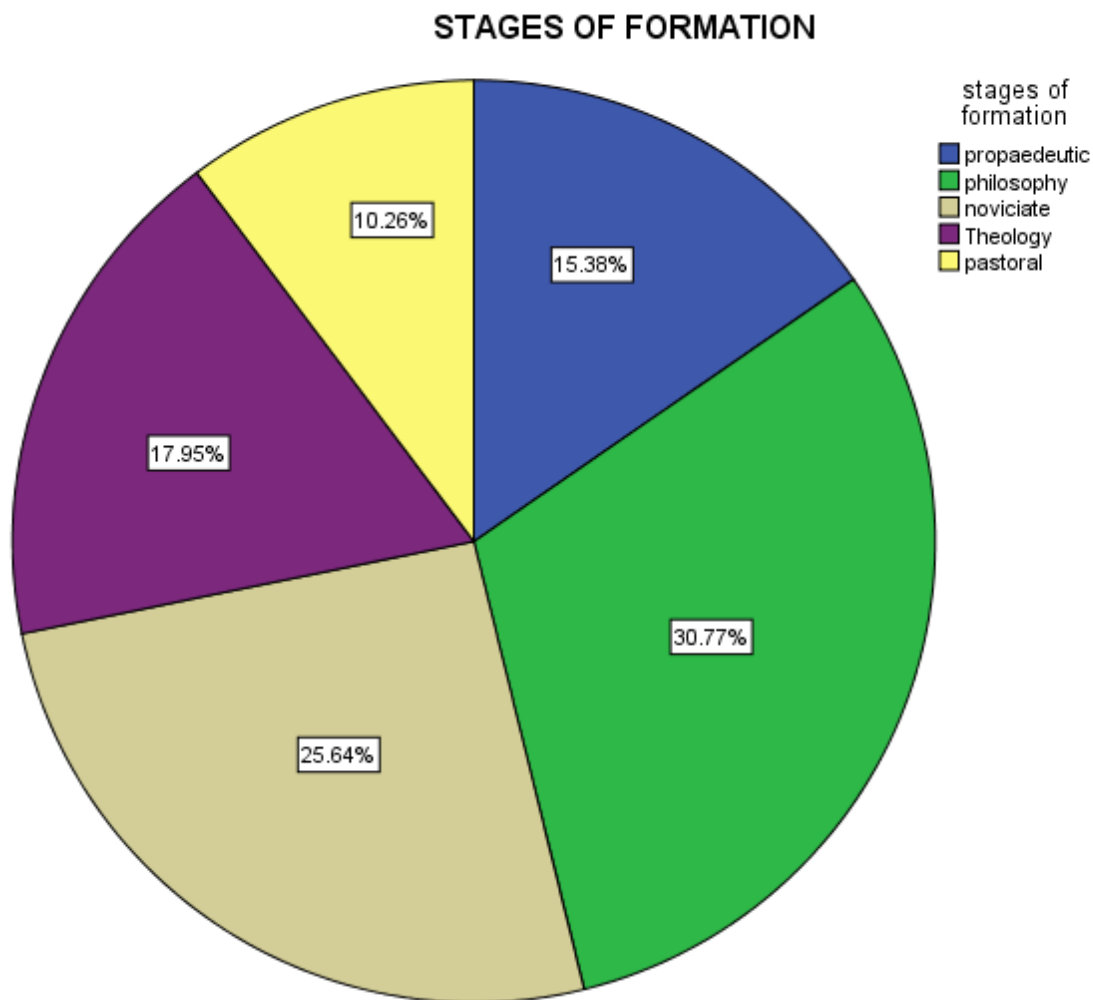
Figure 1.1: A conceptual framework showing relationship among variables (Source; Researcher, 2023).

The above diagrammatic representation shows how family issues can affect the formation process of the Yarumal young missionaries at every level of formation. As portrayed in the independent variable above, family issues in this study are such as death, domestic violence, financial status, abuses and divorce/separation. These mentioned issues can produce considerable impacts on the young missionaries. The age and prayer life of the young missionaries are also underlined as intervening variables which can also play a significant role at any stage of formation (identified as dependent variable).

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

1. Frequency and percentage

Description of the percentage of young missionaries at every level of formation



The propaedeutic represents the initial stage at which the young missionaries integrate officially the system of formation. The percentage in the diagram shows that there are still young men who feel called and wish to pursue their vocation following the charism and spirituality of the Yarumal Missionaries. But this percentage also shows that there could be decrease of vocation in the formation houses of the Institute.

The philosophical stage is the level whereby the students are challenged with different aspect in the formation process including university studies. It has the biggest percentage, portraying that at this level the young missionaries are in the process of knowing more and more the vocation and the institute to which they wish to belong. The percentage seems to be more because it is composed of students of three different stages (first, second and third year). At the end of the third year, the students are either allowed to proceed to the next stage, go for another experience of discernment or asked to leave for another life experience.

At the noviciate (spiritual year) year, the percentage has reduced comparing with the philosophical year. This could be due to the fact that some of the young missionaries in the process drop or are requested to leave after some moments of discernment.

Not everyone is allowed to end the noviciate process, profess and join the theological program. This justifies the decrease of the percentage of theology students. The noviciate being a deep period of personal and communitarian discernment, some candidates may have decided not to continue the formation process or the formation team after times of observation of the candidate and prayerful discernment can tell a candidate that he is not admitted to make the first sown promise of obedience which makes him a temporal member of the

Institute and therefore allows him to start the theological studies. This year is also a year of preparation to live the evangelical counsels (poverty, chastity and obedience).

The number of students of theology has decreased comparing with those in the noviciate. This could signify that some young missionaries from noviciate do not continue to the next stage.

The percentage of the young missionaries in pastoral year is lower than all the other stages. This could be due to the fact that the young missionaries continue dropping from the formation process as time goes on. This means that many can join the process of formation but not all will manage to complete it. This is in line with the words “many are called but few are chosen” (Mt 22:14). It can therefore be said that currently the number of young missionaries in the Yarumal Institute at the philosophical level is more than all the other level and the number starts decreasing from the said stage up to the last stage of the initial formation.

Mother alive

	Frequency	Percent
No idea	2	5.1
Valid yes	27	69.2
No	10	25.6
Total	39	100.0

According to the statistics, more than half of the young missionaries have their mothers alive. Less than 1/3 have experienced the death of their mothers. This means that in the formation house we have young missionaries might be struggling with the loss of their mothers. Hence, they could be disturb and their formation process jeopardized.

Father alive

	Frequency	Percent
No idea	1	2.6
Valid Yes	28	71.8
No	10	25.6
Total	39	100.0

The statistics show that more than half of the young missionaries have their fathers alive. Less than 1/3 have suffered the loss of their fathers. This means that in the formation house we have young missionaries might be struggling with the loss of their fathers. Hence, they could be disturb and their formation process jeopardized.

Parents are together or separated

	Frequency	Percent
Valid together	19	48.7
separated	20	51.3
Total	39	100.0

The statistics show that there is almost balance between the number of young missionaries who have their parents staying together and those whose parents are separated. Though those who have their parents separated are slightly higher than those with their parents still together. Separation being a factor of stress to some people it may be said and agreed upon that some young missionaries among those who have their parents separated may be living with that challenge, and therefore have their formation process in critical situation.

Financial status of the parents

	Frequency	Percent
Valid rich	2	5.1
Valid neither rich nor poor	33	84.6
Valid poor	4	10.3
Total	39	100.0

The highest number of young missionaries comes from background that are neither rich or nor poor. Very few come from rich or poor families. This could mean that they come from families whose basic needs may be more or less catered for. The implication here is that in case of any family crucial need the young missionaries can find incapacitation in helping their parents. Therefore, it can be a moment of distress for them.

Domestic violence in the family

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Always	2	5.1
Valid Oftentimes	4	10.3
Valid Sometimes	30	76.9
Valid Never	3	7.7
Total	39	100.0

According to the statistics, almost all the families of the young missionaries have ever gone through domestic violence. The number of those whose family have never gone through domestic violence is insignificant comparing with those who have gone through it. Knowing what could be some of the consequences of domestic violence, it can be asserted that almost all the young missionaries' formation process could be negatively affected by this phenomenon.

Abuses within the family

	Frequency	Percent
Valid always	2	5.1
Valid oftentimes	5	12.8
Valid sometimes	19	48.7
Valid never	13	33.3
Total	39	100.0

2/3 of the families of the young missionaries have ever gone through abuses; some severely, others frequently and some others from time to time. This may mean that many young missionaries have suffered or are still suffering from issues of abuses which their families are faced with. Like domestic violence, any abuses can also have negative impact on the formation process of the young missionaries.

Family difficulties affects the formation process

	Frequency	Percent
Valid strongly agree	22	56.4
Valid agree	14	35.9
Valid neither agree nor disagree	1	2.6
Valid disagree	2	5.1
Total	39	100.0

Almost all the young missionaries agree that anytime their parents are living a difficult situation, it disturbs them, hence having a negative impact on their formation process. This could lead some to drop or fail to fulfil the requirement of the formation making the formators decide to dismiss them. Xing (2023) agreed that some family factors can have direct impacts on students such as financial status and others affect indirectly namely family structure and family relationship. Adetutu and Adebayo (2021) agreed on the same.

Issues never affected the formation process

	Frequency	Percent
neither agree nor disagree	1	2.6
disagree	20	51.3
strongly disagree	18	46.2
Total	39	100.0

The question was reframed to verify the answers of the young missionaries in the former question. But the result is highly the same. Almost all of them have ever been negatively affected by family issues whenever they occur. Hence, their formation process could be jeopardized.

The Yarumal young missionaries know Any young religious negatively affected by families issues

	Frequency	Percent
yes	33	84.6
no	6	15.4
Total	39	100.0

Majority of the Yarumal young missionaries know other religious persons whose families' problems have disturbed their life and religious formation process. This means that it is not only the young Yarumal missionaries who are struggling with this phenomena. Hence, some other formation houses of other religious congregations could be facing similar issues.

INFERENCIAL STATISTICS

1. Correlations

Correlations between family issues and formation process

		stages of formation	Family issues
stages of formation	Pearson Correlation	1	.029
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.862
	N	39	39
Family issues	Pearson Correlation	.029	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.862	
	N	39	39

There is strong positive significant relationship between the level of formation and family issues experienced by young missionaries. Hence, there is significant relationship between the two variables: family issues and stages of formation of Yarumal young missionaries.

2. One way Anover

The way family issues affect young missionaries at different stages of formation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.441	4	3.860	.970	.437
Within Groups	135.374	34	3.982		
Total	150.815	38			

There is no significant difference across the groups. Hence, what the students experienced during their formation process affects them more or less in the same way at every level.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion we can say that family issues affect the formation process of the young missionaries in the Yarumal missionaries Institute. Most of the young missionaries agreed that their families have been and/or are still going through many challenges such as death, divorce/separation, domestic violence, abuses and poverty. These problems affect the young missionaries in formation almost in the same way; meaning that the students of every stage starting from propaedeutic to pastoral year through philosophy, noviciate and theology live the issues experienced by their families and feel them more or less in the same way. Majority among them recognized that their process can in one way or the other be affected by what their parents are going through. Moreover, the number of young missionaries starts decreasing progressively until the end of the formation process. Though it may not be a guaranty, it can be asserted that the more stable, peaceful a family may be the smoother the young missionaries may live their process of formation. But they can be more disturbed and deconcentrated in their formation process when their families are faced with all sorts of difficulties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Measures should be taken by the Yarumal missionaries in charge of formation process for proper accompaniment of the young Missionaries regarding how to deal with issues that could disturb them and affect their formation process including family issues. There should be good and non-judgmental forum for the young missionaries to express what they are going through. This implies having internal and external personnel that can help them deal, cope with and accept some life situations.

The young missionaries should be open enough and seek assistance from experienced missionaries and other people. They should not think that they can carry and/or solve all the problems of their families. There should be advocacy in the families of young missionaries about the effects of the family issues on their sons in the process of formation. There should also be family apostolate for the families of the young missionaries. Those families should also be involved in the formation process of their children in the formation process. Further research should be done examine how family issues affect other members of the Yarumal Missionaries Institute in order to find adequate ways out to assist them.

QUESTIONNAIRE

What is your level of formation?

Propaedeutic (1)

Philosophy (2)

Noviciate (spiritual year) (3)

Theology (5)

Pastoral (6)

Is your mother alive?

No idea (0)

Yes (1)

No (2)

Is your father alive?

No idea (0)

Yes (1)

No (2)

Are you parents together or separated?

Together (1)

Separated (2)

What is the financial status of your parents?

Very rich (1)

Rich (2)

Neither rich nor poor (3)

Poor (4)

Very poor (5)

There is violence in my family

Always (1)

Most of the times (2)

Oftentimes (3)

Sometimes (4)

Never (5)

I experienced abuses in my family

Always (1)

Most of the times (2)

Oftentimes (3)

Sometimes (4)

Never (5)

Anytime my family is living a difficult situation it disturbs me and negatively affects my formation process

Strongly agree (1)

Agree (2)

Neither agree nor disagree (3)

Disagree (4)

Strongly disagree (5)

Family issues have never affected my formation process

Strongly agree (1)

Agree (2)

Neither agree nor disagree (3)

Disagree (4)

Strongly disagree (5)

Have you ever come across any young religious whose family issues have negatively affected him/her?

Yes (1)

No (2)

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