

**PASTORAL ORDINATION AND THE PURSUIT OF HIGHER
EDUCATION AMONG WOMEN GRADUATES OF THE
COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY, CENTRAL
PHILIPPINE UNIVERSITY**

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ABSTRACT

This research study was conducted to determine the status of pastoral ordination and the pursuit for higher education among women graduates of the College of Theology at Central Philippine University. The used the descriptive research design taking all the 198 graduates from 1950 to 2000. Interview guide and self administered questionnaires were developed by the researchers and sent to the target respondents, however, only 136 women graduates were able to respond. Results of this study revealed that the women graduates of the College of Theology from the school years 1950 to 2000 were in their late forties, mostly single, in active service for 10 years or less and with monthly income of P5, 000 or less. Nine in ten women graduates are not yet ordained. Their major reasons for not applying for ordination were: they feel they need not be recognized through ordination, they are not yet ready for it nor do they have the time or the opportunity to apply. Those who are currently applying for ordination gave the following major reasons: personal advancement, felt need and self - fulfillment, which are also the same motivations cited by those who are currently pursuing higher education. While those who are not pursuing higher education cited financial limitations, some felt they have no need for it now and still others felt they were currently satisfied with their present status. A little more than half of the women graduates perceived that the Ordination Council is male dominated and few perceived that it is gender fair.

INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale

Two great women missionaries, Miss Anna B. Johnson and Miss Celia Sainz were instrumental in founding the then Baptist Missionary Training School which started as a simple Bible study group in the home of the Rev. and Mrs. William O. Valentine. Twelve boys attended that bible study but a few women were there as auditors. That paved the way for women to be admitted later to the Jaro Industrial School. The Baptist Missionary Training School first turn out of graduates was in 1921.

A Junior College was opened in 1923 when the two schools merged and became Central Philippine College. In 1936, a Senior College was established and in 1940 five degrees were offered, namely: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Theology and Bachelor of Religious Education, a program offered to women.

In 1958, the last batch of students of the Bachelor of Science in Religious Education graduated. Since female students were already admitted to the Bachelor program in the College of Theology and Bachelor of Arts major in Religion, in 1982, the Master of Divinity program was opened to both male and female students.

The purpose of the college is to provide quality theological education to those who have deep conviction of being called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry. Students are expected to develop pastoral identity that reflects the dignity of their calling and their strong commitment to God in Jesus Christ. As a Christian Minister, they are required to submit to pastoral ordination in order to perform pastoral functions.

Records show that from school year 1950-2000, 198 women theologians were honed and molded by the college. However, there is a need to conduct a research study to find out how many of these women had been ordained and had not yet been ordained, what were the reasons for pursuing and not pursuing pastoral ordination, and whether or not they are pursuing higher education. The results of the study will be useful to other women graduates who draw inspiration from it and make sound career decisions later.

Objectives of the Study

This study was conducted to determine the status of pastoral ordination and the pursuit for higher education among women graduates of the College of Theology at Central Philippine University. Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. to draw the profile of the women graduates of the CPU College of Theology in terms of age, civil status, length of service, and monthly income;
2. to determine the pastoral ordination status of women graduates of the CPU College of Theology and know their reasons for applying or not applying for pastoral ordination;
3. to determine the percentage of women graduates of the CPU College of Theology pursuing higher education and know their reasons for pursuing or not pursuing higher education; and,
4. to determine their perception on the composition of the pastoral ordination council and their perception on the chances of women theologians to be ordained.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used the descriptive research design with the aid of a one-shot population survey.

The Study Respondents

Of the total 198 women graduates of the College of Theology at CPU for school year 1950-2000 only 136 responded to this study.

Data Gathering Instrument

A self-administered questionnaire and guide questions were developed and submitted for validation to the research director of the University Research and Outreach Center (UROC) and after some necessary modification, a final copy was reproduced and utilized.

Data Processing and Analysis

The data gathered were coded, encoded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Frequency tables together with measures of central tendency were generated to describe the profile of respondents.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The mean age of women theologians is 48.22 where the highest proportion of them is in the age of 40-49 and 60 years old and above (both at 27.2 percent). This means that only 30.2 percent of women theologians fall in the age of 30 years old and below (Table 1). The majority (64.0 percent) of women theologians are single; a little more than one-fourth (27.2 percent) are married while a few (8.8 percent) are widowed or separated from their spouse.

In terms of length of service with the institution where they are currently connected, the highest proportion of women theologians (58.8 percent) had rendered service for 5 years or less; a little more than one-tenth (13.2 percent) had already served from 6-10 years; and some others had been in the service for more than 10 years. Two thirds (66.8 percent) of women theologians receive a monthly income of P5,000 or less while about one fourth (24.3 percent) receive a monthly income from P5,001.00 to P10,000.00. A smaller percentage (8.9 percent) receive a monthly income that is more than P10,000.00.

Data in Table 2 shows that only 9.5 percent of the 136 respondents are already ordained or presently applying for ordination, and 90.5 percent are not ordained or not applying for ordination. This means that there are only ten in a hundred women theologians who are ordained or wanted to be ordained while a very large number are not interested to be ordained. This finding is not congruent with the findings in other countries like Sweden where a relatively large number of women are ordained church ministers.

When 13 respondents who were already ordained or presently applying for ordination were asked about their major reasons for ordination or applying for ordination, results in Table 3 shows that most of them (38.5 percent) did it for personal advancement and felt need, and for self-fulfillment (30.8 percent). This means that these women were motivated to be ordained because they feel they need to and for self-advancement and fulfillment.

Table 1. Distribution of Women Theologians When Grouped According to their Personal Profile such as Age, Civil Status, Length of Service, and Monthly Income (N=136).

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
<u><i>Age</i></u>		
29 and below	19	14.0
30-39	22	16.2
40-49	37	27.2
50-59	19	14.0
60 and above	37	27.2
no answer	2	1.5
Total	136	100.0
Mean Age		
48.22		
<u><i>Civil Status</i></u>		
Single	87	64.0
Married	37	27.2
Widow / Separated	12	8.8
Total	136	100.0
<u><i>Length of Service</i></u>		
5 years or less	80	58.8
6-10	18	13.2
11-15	12	8.8
16-20	8	5.9
21-25	8	5.9
Above 25 years	10	7.4
Total	136	100.0
<u><i>Monthly Income (in PhP)</i></u>		
5000 or below	91	66.8
5001-10,000	33	24.3
10,001-15,000	8	5.9
15,001-20,000	2	1.5
Above 20,000	2	1.5
Total	136	100.0

Table 2. Distribution of Women Theologians When Grouped According to Pastoral Ordination Status (N=136).

Pastoral Ordination Status	f	%	Ordained /
Applying for Ordination	13	9.5	Not
Ordained / Not Applying for Ordination	123	90.5	
Total	136	100.0	

Table 3. Distribution of Women Theologians When Grouped According to Their Reasons for Ordination or Applying for Ordination. (Multiple Response, N=13).

Reasons for Ordination / Applying for Ordination	f	%
Personal Advancement	5	38.5
Pressure of Work	1	7.7
Felt Need	5	38.5
Self-fulfillment	4	30.8

For those who were not ordained or not applying for ordination, all of them (100.0 percent) feel they need not be recognized through ordination. About two fifths (39.8 percent) also feel they are not yet ready for it, while about one-fifth (19.5 percent) have no time or opportunity to apply for ordination (Table 4). It seems that, for these women, ordination is a way of recognizing one's achievement and they do not need to be recognized through ordination.

Table 4. Distribution of Women Theologians When Grouped According to Their Reasons for Not Applying for Ordination (Multiple Response, n=123).

Reasons for Not Applying for Ordination	f	%
Need not recognized	123	100.0
No time or opportunity	24	19.5
No support from church	11	8.9
Not ready yet	49	39.8
Other reasons	37	30.1

As shown in Table 5, a little more than half of the respondents (54.4 percent) are not pursuing advance education while the rest (45.6 percent) indicated that they have pursued or are still pursuing advance education.

When those who are pursuing advance education were asked of their reasons for doing so, the majority (64.5 percent) did it for personal advancement. About half of them (46.8 percent) also cited self-fulfillment and more than one-third

(37.1 percent) claimed that it is a felt need (Table 6). It could be noted that these are also the three major reasons of those who were ordained or are currently applying for ordination. This means that these women are mostly motivated, either for ordination or advance education, by personal advancement, self-fulfillment and felt need.

Table 5. Distribution of Women Theologians When Grouped According to Whether or Not They Have Pursued or Currently Pursuing Advance Education (N=136).

Pursued / Pursuing Advance Education	f	%
Yes	62	45.6
No	74	54.4
Total	136	100.0

Table 6. Distribution of Women Theologians When Grouped According to Their Reasons for Pursuing Advance Education (Multiple Response, n=62).

Reasons for Pursuing Advance Education	f	%
DECS / CHED Requirement	12	19.4
Personal Achievement	40	64.5
Felt Need	23	37.1
Self-fulfillment	29	46.8
Other Reasons	16	25.8

Of the 74 women theologians who are not currently pursuing advance education (Table 7), the highest proportion (45.9 percent) indicated that they are financially limited; a little more than one fourth (25.7 percent) said that they have no felt need at the moment and a considerable percentage (16.2 percent) indicated that they are satisfied with their present status. A few (9.5 percent) declared that long years of service maybe considered by DECS/CHED for higher or teaching positions.

Table 7. Distribution of Women Theologians When Grouped According to Their Reasons of Not Pursuing Advance Education (Multiple Response, n=74).

Reasons for Not Pursuing Advance Education	f	%
Satisfied with Present Status	12	16.2
No felt need at the moment	19	25.7
Long years of Service maybe considered by DECS / CHED	7	9.5
Financially limited	34	45.9
Other Reasons	8	10.8

The perception of women theologians in terms of the composition of the ordination council is shown in Table 8. A little more than half of these women theologians (53.7 percent) believed that the ordination council is male dominated, whereas a little less than one fifth (19.1 percent) perceived that the council is gender fair. There are more than one-fourth (27.2 percent) however, who did not give any answer. The data imply that the majority perceived that the composition of the ordination council is male dominated.

Table 8. Distribution of Women Theologians According to Their Perception on The Composition of the Ordination Council Among Women Theologians (N=136).

<i>Perceptions</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Male dominated council</i>	73	53.7
<i>Gender fair council</i>	26	19.1
<i>No answer</i>	37	27.2
Total	136	100.0

Eight in ten respondents (78.7 percent) perceived that women theologians have equal chances of getting ordained as men theologians. Only two in ten (20.6 percent) perceived that women has no equal chance of getting ordained as compared to men. The result shows that majority of these women perceived that the ordination council gives equal chances to both men and women.

Table 9. Distribution of Women Theologians According to Their Perception on The Chances of Women to be Ordained (N=136).

<i>Perceptions</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Equal chances	107	78.7
No equal chances	28	20.6
No answer	1	0.7
Total	136	100.0

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based from the results and findings of the study the following conclusions were generated:

1. Women graduates of the College of Theology at CPU for school year 1950-2000 were in their late forties, mostly single, some were married and very few were widowed and separated. Majority of them were in active service for ten years or less with monthly income of P5000 or less.
2. Nine in ten women graduates are not yet ordained or did not apply for ordination and only one in ten was ordained. This figure is quite alarming since they are expected to be serving as full pledge church ministers.
3. Their major reasons for not applying for ordination were: they feel they do not need to be recognized through ordination, they are not yet ready for it, and have no time or opportunity to apply for ordination. For ordained women or those who are currently applying for ordination, their major reasons were: for personal advancement, felt need and self-fulfillment.
4. A little more than half of the women are currently not pursuing higher education because they are financially limited, some feel no need for it at the moment, and others were currently satisfied with their present status. For those who are pursuing higher education, they were motivated for personal advancement; self-fulfillment and they feel they need it.
5. A little more than half of them perceived that the composition of the ordination council is male dominated and few perceived that it is gender fair. However, majority of them perceived that the ordination council gives equal chances to both men and women to be ordained.

On the basis of the results and conclusions, the following recommendations are given:

1. The CPBC should convene all women graduates of the College of Theology of CPU and dialogue with them and present the results of this research.
2. The College of Theology of CPU must examine the CPBC ecclesiology and other pertinent documents, policies and politics that inhibit women theology graduates from ordination into the Christian Ministry.

3. There should be more women ordained ministers in the Ordination Council.
4. Empowerment of women theology graduates through various educational exposures either formal education or through seminars.
5. A further study should be conducted to know other factors that hinder women theology graduates from ordination.

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