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ATTAINING DESIRED OUTCOMES IN CATHOLIC PARISHES:

THE MEANING OF PARISH COMPETENCE

presented by

AUGUSTO VENANCIO COLLADO LEGASPI

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph. D. degree in PSYCHOLOGY

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Major professor

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**ATTAINING DESIRED OUTCOMES IN CATHOLIC PARISHES:
THE MEANING OF PARISH COMPETENCE**

By

Augusto Venancio Collado Legaspi

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Psychology

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ABSTRACT

ATTAINING DESIRED OUTCOMES IN CATHOLIC PARISHES: THE MEANING OF PARISH COMPETENCE

By

Augusto Venancio Collado Legaspi

This research provided clarity to two theoretical issues arising from a review of community competence (CC). The first issue was a lack of a clear definition of CC. The second was a lack of information on the elements and components that constituted CC (i.e., its component structure).

The study addressed these issues through two interviews and a questionnaire measure of CC conducted in four Roman Catholic parishes. Open-ended interviews were conducted with five key respondents who worked with parishes. The key respondents helped identify the four parish communities and provided input in the preliminary definition of parish competence. A second round of open-ended interviews was conducted with 22 parish priests, leaders, and active members to determine the definition and the component structure of parish competence. From the results of the parish interviews, a questionnaire measure of parish competence was developed and distributed to parishioners of the same four parishes.

The interview results revealed that parish competence could be defined in terms of both outcome-attainment and process. Outcomes were specifically related to worship and education. Process was evident in participatory leadership and collaboration in determining parish vision and goals. The interview results likewise revealed a component structure of parish competence that had 12 elements falling under three components. The

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Mission component included the elements Worship, Education, Parish Life, Participation, and Christian Service. The Leadership component included the elements Priest Characteristics, Leader Characteristics, Participatory Leadership, and Communication. The Organization component included the elements Programs, Resources, and Open to Change. This three-component and twelve-element structure was tested using data from 266 parishioners who answered a questionnaire measure of parish competence. An exploratory principal component analysis on one part of the survey revealed that the component structure of parish competence had two components and 11 elements. A confirmatory factor analysis using another part of the survey provided support for this component structure of CC.

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PASASALAMAT
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I would like to acknowledge MSU faculty members, both present and former faculty, Bill Davidson, Pennie Foster-Fishman, Ralph Levine, Marilyn Aronoff, and Tom Reischl who helped me start and complete my study. Their different ideas and perspectives helped me gain greater appreciation of the various areas of personal and professional growth. I appreciate your generosity in time and ideas.

Thanks too to a lot of people who helped me with the dissertation. Staff in the Diocese of Lansing, other key contacts in the Church community, and contacts in the parishes who helped me conceptualize the research and collect the data. Thanks to David Lounsbury and David Loveland who were very patient with my questions on statistics. Thanks to Jeannete Gassaway for allowing me to use some of her items for the survey. I am thankful to Cecilia Samonte, Aileen Soriano, Angie Wolf, and Tim Cefai who were very patient in reading over the manuscript.

Thanks to everyone who had been very supportive and encouraging throughout my stay here. The students and faculty in the Ecological-Community program who support one another in times of need and celebrate as a group in times of achievement.

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INTRODUCTION

Churches have formed an important sector which community psychologists take note for two reasons. One, churches and religious organizations have been agents of change. Churches and religious leaders have played central roles in empowering social movements such as the struggle for civil rights (Shinn, 1987). In fact, many religious organizations have had a tradition of promoting personal and social change (Maton & Pargament, 1987) and have provided services that empower recipients and their communities (Shinn). For example, the Roman Catholic Church has performed education and service in addition to worship (Diocese of Lansing Communications, no year). Education involves teaching Catholics about Catholic principles of social justice. Service involves expanding awareness and action consistent with the principles of social justice. Another important reason for studying churches is that people have likewise been able to influence society through their participation and influence on the agenda of their churches (Berger & Neuhaus, 1977).

There has been a need to include religious organizations and settings in community psychology research. There has been a lack of attention given to the special mission of churches and synagogues, and to the special roles, structures, and processes these institutions develop to achieve their goals (Pargament, Silverman, Johnson, Echemendia, & Snyder, 1983). Community psychology has typically worked in only a small subset of the environments that affect people's mental health and well-being. This restriction has been unfortunate considering community psychology's twin goals of prevention and empowerment (Shinn, 1987). Given these important functions of churches

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in promoting social change, it is necessary to assist them in functioning as effectively as they can.

One perspective that has been used to study effective community functioning is community competence (CC). However, beyond the seminal writings of Cottrell (1976) and Iscoe (1974), not much attention was given to the concept of CC resulting in gaps in the literature. The first gap was a lack of clarity in the definition of CC. Second was the lack of clarity in the elements that comprise CC and how these elements grouped into larger components (i.e., the component structure). Filling these two gaps was the basic objective of this research. Specifically, this study addressed the issues regarding the clarity in the definition of CC and the component structure of CC.

This objective was addressed through a three-step process. First was a review of the literature on CC and related constructs (e.g., empowerment). This literature review provided a working framework for the second step, which involved interviews with key respondents who work with parishes, as well as interviews with leaders and active parishioners from four parishes. Results of the interviews formed the basis of the third step, which was a questionnaire survey of parishioners from the same four parishes included in the interview. The questionnaire, which was specifically constructed for this study, assessed parishioners' evaluation of what elements constituted parish competence.

This study examined the varying ways Roman Catholic parishes exhibited effective community functioning using the CC perspective. The focus was on parishioners' definitions of parish competence and their ideas on what elements constituted parish competence. In addition, the study examined both the common and unique manifestations of competence across parishes.

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I divided the introduction of this paper into five parts. In the first part, I reviewed the literature surrounding the meaning and definition of CC. In the second part, I reviewed the empirical work previously done on CC to identify what components constituted CC. In the third part, I stated the purpose of the study. The fourth part contained a brief review of the definitions of communities and parishes. Lastly, I included a description on the nature of Catholic parishes.

Literature Review

Community Competence and Related Concepts

The study of effective community functioning has made use of several concepts or perspectives such as community competence, community empowerment, and sustainable development. Works written on CC and brief reviews on related concepts are presented in this section. Issues with regard to the definitions of these concepts and the unresolved issue particular to CC are presented at the end.

Definitions of Community Competence

The idea of community competence appeared in the 1970s. Cottrell (1976) and Iscoe (1974) thought of CC as a positive and strength-based evaluation in which communities addressed issues and problems, and managed their own affairs.

Definitions of CC emphasized several aspects of effective community functioning (see Appendix A). Some definitions described competent communities as collaborative problem solvers (Cottrell, 1976; Gatz, et al., 1982; Goeppinger, Lassiter, & Wilcox, 1982; Israel, 1985; Johnson & Mullins, 1990). This description included gaining control over decision-making (Hurley, 1977). According to this perspective, a community is competent when its component parts (a) collaborate in identifying community problems

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and needs, (b) achieve a consensus on goals and priorities, (c) agree on ways to implement goals, and (d) collaborate in the necessary actions. A community that provides the conditions and creates the abilities necessary in meeting the four performance criteria above competently copes with problems it encountered (Cottrell, 1976).

Other definitions of CC emphasized the acquisition and use of resources (Gatz, et al., 1982; Iscoe, 1974; Johnson & Mullins, 1990) and the ability to gain control over the means of production and resources (Hurley, 1977). From a resource mobilization perspective, a competent community is one that (a) develops and utilizes resources, (b) copes with problems, (c) has a feeling of hopefulness and power, and (d) acquires power (Iscoe).

Still other definitions focused on community needs and on creating change. Community competence is the ability to respond to the needs of the different groups in a community (Barbarin, 1981a; Hurley, Barbarin, & Mitchell, 1981). Similarly, a competent community has the ability to assess and generate the conditions necessary to execute change (Eng & Parker, 1994) such as pressuring social systems to be more responsive to community needs (Barbarin, 1981a).

The definitions cited above refer to CC within the confines of a community. However, a broader definition of CC may also refer to beyond a community's boundary. This broader definition includes the social system's ability to respond to the different needs of various groups and populations it serves (Barbarin, 1981a). The larger community in this case includes government and non-government agencies that deal with the community in various ways. This broader definition has an advantage. By including more groups and associations within the sphere of the community, communities are able

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to mobilize a wider range of resources required to effect sustainable change (Clark, Baker, Chawla, & Maru, 1993), and associations have more associations they can depend on in times of need (McKnight; 1987).

Definitions of Empowerment

The study of effective community functioning has included other related ideas and perspectives such as empowerment. Rappaport (1987) defined empowerment as the mechanism by which people and communities gain mastery over their affairs. An empowered community is one that initiates efforts to improve the community, responds to threats to the quality of life, provides opportunities for participation, and applies skills and resources in a collective effort (Israel, Checkoway, Schulz, & Zimmerman, 1994).

Empowerment has both subjective and objective elements. A community's belief in possessing greater control over its situation is as important as its actual capability to change its conditions (Rissel, 1994). To a certain degree, both the subjective and objective elements have made empowerment difficult to define because of the unique contexts of the various people, organizations, and settings considered (Rappaport, 1987; Rissel, 1994).

Definitions of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development and community development perspectives have also provided insights into the definition of effective community functioning. The literature on these two perspectives presented effective community functioning along the same themes as CC such as (a) mobilization of resources, (b) generation of membership commitment, (c) maintenance of a satisfying environment, (d) expansion of community resources that allow people to develop their potentials, and (e) using social action processes to enact

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change and to influence the future. These outcomes and processes in part or as a whole describe community development (Bryant & White, 1982; Christenson, Findley, & Robinson, 1989); community organizing (Blackwell, 1954; Minkler, 1990); sustainable development (Nozick, 1992); self-controlling communities (Meyers, Meyers, & Craighead, 1981); active organizations (Prestby & Wandersman, 1985); and healthy communities (Chavis & Newbrough, 1986). Thus, community development is the means by which a community becomes empowered (Rissel, 1994), and by which community health achieves its goals (Lackey, Burke, & Preston, 1987). Community organizing likewise helps in attaining sustainable communities by modifying the social organization to meet individual needs (Blackwell, 1954) and by increasing the ability to problem-solve. The common theme of these underlying community development concepts is that the community meets its needs and realizes the fruits of development only by taking control of its situation.

Summary of Definitional Issues

Although CC, community empowerment, sustainable development, and community development all describe a community that meets its needs and improves its quality of life, the literature does not clearly address the relationship between these perspectives. Community competence can be considered as a more encompassing idea than community empowerment. This is true if one believes that the empowerment of people and groups through mediating structures such as neighborhoods and churches lead to community competence as Chavis and Newbrough (1986) argued. However, community development and community competence may be measures of the more

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abstract process of community empowerment (Eng and Parker, 1994). It is likewise possible that CC is one process involved in attaining community empowerment.

The similarities and differences between the concepts were likewise unclear. For example, Barbarin (1981b) used CC, community effectiveness, and viable community interchangeably. Lackey, et al. (1987) equated a healthy community with a good community, competent community, community well being, and a viable neighborhood. In spite of this unclear use of the terms, it became evident that the concepts of CC, community empowerment, and community development have close similarities and are all useful in understanding how communities attain desired outcomes.

The CC perspective is an alternative to the study of community functioning because it offers several strong points over the other perspectives. One strength is that CC simultaneously encompasses the community, group, and the individual levels (see Cottrell, 1976). Analyses at all three levels provide a more complete picture of the community because it considers how the dynamics in one level affect that of another. Another strong point is that CC makes use of both the perceptions of community life (e.g., sense of community, feeling of hope) and tangible outcomes (e.g., solving problems). Community competence likewise goes beyond the focus on individual perceptions, which is a limitation of empowerment studies (Riger, 1993). The idea of CC also acknowledges the importance of the external environment of the community. Consideration of the external environment is necessary in the process of attaining power (Iscoe, 1974) and in managing relations within society (Barbarin, 1981a; Cottrell, 1976).

Based on the review of literature on CC (see Legaspi, 1996 for a more extensive review), I present a working definition of CC that describes a community that reaches

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desired outcomes through the use of its broad membership and community assets (e.g., strong leadership) to engage in collaborative action. The process of collaborative action may include problem solving and resource mobilization. Specific outcomes depend on the issues confronting the community but these may include the acquisition of a resource or finding a concrete solution to a problem.

Unresolved Issues

Although there have been a number of studies written on CC since the idea first came out in the 1970s, attention has been sporadic. Gaps in the literature have revealed several areas that need investigating. One weakness in the CC literature has been the lack of a clear operational definition of CC (Eng & Parker, 1994). A reason for this is that previous studies assessed CC with little theory and definitions beyond the seminal works. Also as a result of the recent attention given to CC, it has become necessary to study CC in specific settings and tasks in order to broaden our knowledge of how CC is manifested (Goeppinger & Baglioni, 1985).

There is likewise a secondary issue with regard to how CC applies to hierarchical organizations. Cottrell (1976) conceptualized the idea of CC in a democratic context. However, there are communities that do not follow a completely democratic system. For example, priests of Roman Catholic parishes have held most of the important responsibilities and decision-making in the parish (Johnson & Mullins, 1990). Except for the study by Johnson and Mullins, the literature on CC does not provide much insight as to how a community within a hierarchical structure, such as a Catholic parish, attains and exhibits competence.

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Contribution of the Study

This study aimed to address the need to provide theoretical clarification to the meaning of CC especially in the context of Catholic parishes. Aside from its theoretical contribution, it also provided information on how community psychologists can assist parishes in functioning more effectively and in becoming more potent agents of social change.

Elements and Components that Constitute Community Competence

I present two methods of identifying the elements and components that constitute CC. The first is a review of studies that empirically derived the components of CC and which specifically used the CC perspective. The second method is a review of theoretical and empirical works, which identified community characteristics that facilitate the creation and maintenance of CC. This second review method centers on the elements identified by Cottrell (1976) and Iscoe (1974). Studies are presented to show how an element contributes to the creation and maintenance of CC primarily in the context of religious congregations. Both methods of reviewing the literature resulted in significant similarities.

Empirically Derived Components of Community Competence

There have been only a few studies that empirically derived the dimensions of CC (Legaspi, 1996). A list of the components derived from these studies appears in Table 1. Most of the studies were based on the elements identified by Cottrell (1976) that included 1) commitment to the community; 2) clarity of identity and position in issues; 3) the ability to articulate the community's views; 4) development of communicative skills and facilities; 5) conflict containment and accommodation; 6) participation; 7) management

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of relations with the larger society; and 8) machinery for facilitating participant interaction and decision making. It is important to note that Cottrell admitted that his eight dimensions had significant overlap and may likewise be incomplete.

To facilitate comparison across the studies, both components and elements are presented in Table 1. Some authors used Cottrell's terms to label components while others used the same terms to label elements and then labeled the more general components differently.

The few studies on CC that derived its elements and components empirically generated different results. Goeppinger and Baglioni (1985) used a confirmatory factor analysis with an oblique rotation on items written based on Cottrell's eight dimensions. They came up with four factors that they claimed were still consistent with Cottrell's eight dimensions. Factor one was democratic participation style that included machinery for facilitating participant interaction and decision-making, management relations with the large society, and self-other awareness and clarity of situational definitions. Factor two reflected crime or specifically conflict containment and accommodation with a community. The third was resource adequacy and use that included commitment, participation, machinery for facilitating participant interaction, and self-other awareness. The final factor was decision-making interactions that also reflected conflict containment and accommodation that the authors interpret as the ability to successfully solve problems.

Table 1
Comparisons

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(1990)

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Table 1
Comparison of CC Components and Elements From Empirical Studies

Authors	Area of Study	Components and Elements Derived	
		Components	Elements under each Component
Goeppinger and Baglioni (1985)	Health promotion	Democratic Participation Style	
		Crime (conflict containment and accommodation)	
		Resource Adequacy and Use	
		Decision-making Interactions	
Johnson and Mullins (1990)	Religious congregations	Communication, Cooperation, and Problem-solving	
		Psychological Sense of Community	
		Lay Involvement and Leadership	
		Less Directive Clergy	
		Evaluation of Efforts	
Anderson (1993)	Health promotion	Problem-solving/Formal Resources	Management of Relations with the Larger Society
			Machinery for Decisions
			Articulateness
		Intangible/Informal Resources	Commitment
			Self-other Awareness
			Participation
			Social Support
Eng and Parker (1994)	Health promotion	Internal Social Interaction	Articulateness and Communication
			Participation
			Social Support
			Commitment
		External Social Interaction	Machinery for Decision-making
			Management of Relations with Wider Society
			Self-other Awareness
			Conflict Containment

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Johnson and Mullins (1990) did a principal components factor analysis on items assessing congregational community competence based on Iscoe's resource mobilization perspective on CC. Data from 12 congregations representing six denominations revealed five factors. These components were 1) communication, cooperation, and problem solving; 2) psychological sense of community; 3) lay involvement and leadership; 4) less directive clergy; and 5) evaluation of efforts. Had the authors only included components which accounted for at least ten percent of the variance, then the first component would have been the only one retained.

Anderson (1993) conducted separate factor analyses on items originally reflecting Cottrell's eight dimensions. The first analysis, using an unrotated exploratory factor analysis, resulted in 13 factors. In another analysis, Anderson conducted a confirmatory factor analysis with an oblique rotation that resulted in two factors accounting for 24% of the variance. The first factor, problem-solving/formal resources that accounted for 19% of the variance, reflected articulateness (e.g., able to speak with outsiders), machinery for decisions (e.g., extent of actual voting), and management of relations with the larger society (e.g., county influences state). The second factor, intangible/informal resources that accounted for 5% of the variance, reflected commitment (i.e., people care how county looks), self-other awareness (e.g., people aware of services), participation, and social support (e.g., emotional support). Seven of the original eight factors were represented in these two factors leaving out conflict containment. Finally, she did a one-factor solution. This accounted for 19.3% of the variance with all eight original dimensions represented. From all these analyses, Anderson concluded that there was strong evidence that CC was either a unitary construct or a two-factor construct.

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In a study by Eng and Parker (1994), participants in a series of workshops identified characteristics of a community that ‘can get it together.’ From the list of 23 characteristics, the participants came up with four clusters, three of which were part of Cottrell’s original eight dimensions and the new one being social support. They grouped these eight dimensions according to the degree of internal and external social interaction expressed in the terms used by key informants to define each dimension. The internal social interaction factor included articulateness and communication, participation, social support, and commitment. The external social interaction factor included machinery for decision-making, management of relations with wider society, self-other awareness, and conflict containment. Although the authors provided evidence for reliability of the scales reflecting the dimensions of CC, they did not perform any analysis to support the suggested two factors. Moreover, their decision to include dimensions that did not appear in the original clusters seemed arbitrary and with little empirical reason. This opens to question the validity of the factors.

I made a comparison between the elements identified by Cottrell (1976) and by the empirical studies on CC (see Table 2). I combined the empirically derived elements into groups of similar themes only for illustrative purposes and for easier comparison. The overlaps in the elements across the studies were not surprising given that most of the empirical studies were based on Cottrell's ideas. In the following sections, a series of tables tracing the development of the list of elements of CC are presented. In these tables, an attempt was made to place similar elements on the same row. However, different elements and labels precluded perfect comparisons.

Table 2

Comparison

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Table 2

Comparison of CC Elements by Cottrell and Empirical Studies on CC

Elements Identified by Cottrell (1976)	Empirically-derived Elements
Commitment to the community	Commitment
Clarity of identity and position in issues	Self-other awareness
Participation	Participation
Conflict containment and accommodation	Conflict containment and accommodation
Development of communicative skills and facilities	Communication and articulateness
Machinery for facilitating participant interaction and decision-making.	Lay involvement and leadership, Less directive clergy; Cooperation; Democratic participation style
Management of relations with the larger society	Management of relations with the larger society
Ability to articulate the community's views	--
	Psychological sense of community, Social support Resource adequacy and use Evaluation of efforts

The review above points to evidence that CC may be a unitary concept, or a concept with two, four or five components. In spite of the uncertainty in the number of components constituting CC, there is congruence in the elements that constitute the components. The following section, which presents community characteristics influencing CC, further strengthens this observation of congruence in the elements.

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Community Characteristics that Influence CC Creation and Maintenance

The community characteristics or elements that influence the creation and maintenance of community competence are reviewed in this section. These elements are those that appeared in the literature of effective community functioning. Each community characteristic is defined, and then discussed according to how it generally aids CC and how it applies to religious congregations and organizations.

Community characteristics are those that need to be in place for the process of attaining outcomes to work. In this study, the term community characteristics is used to refer to stable community traits, conditions, attitudes, and resources that can either hinder or aid competent community functioning depending on the presence, absence, or use of such characteristics.

The literature revealed a number of these community characteristics. However, the literature on CC did not present a clear and unanimous listing of these community characteristics, nor did it offer unified definitions. A review of the literature on effective community functioning provided a tentative list of community characteristics that may affect CC (see Legaspi, 1996).

These characteristics are conceptualized in terms of individual perceptions (e.g., achievement orientation), individual characteristics (e.g., characteristics of leaders), community factors (e.g., participation), and tangible resources (e.g., links with other communities). Use of these different levels was not exclusive in that some factors may cover more than one level. A summary of definitions for each of these characteristics is presented in Appendix B.

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Leadership. Competent leadership has been necessary in creating and maintaining CC because it makes effective use of member and community capacity and resources. Effective leadership has been operationalized at both the community and individual levels. Leadership at the community level needs to be democratic and broad based in that members have many opportunities to perform leadership roles (Lackey et al., 1987; Levine, 1986; Maton & Rappaport, 1984; Meyers, et al., 1981; Warren, 1970).

Further, at the individual level, a leader needs to be innovative, to involve people in democratic participation, and have a community-wide vision (Lackey et al., 1987; Cottrell, 1976). An effective leader of a religious organization needs to have both vision (i.e., ability to project an ideal image of what the congregation could be or could do) and calling (i.e., ability to communicate to each member to use his or her talents to contribute to the church and society) (Maton & Pargament, 1987). Ministers must also have an influence on the insights, understanding, attitude and behavior of those ministered to (Malony, 1984). However, it is a mistake to assume leadership qualities are everything in the church. For example, leadership qualities cannot influence church attendance and participation in youth programs (Hoge & Petrillo, 1978).

The increasing active role of lay leaders has provided hope for increased collaborative action that may positively influence parish competence. Although the sole responsibility in a Roman Catholic parish has rested on the pastor, 83% of the identified leaders within the parish have been lay people (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987). The increase in the number of lay leaders has resulted from the Second Vatican Council's encouragement of parish councils as a venue for the greater role of the laity in shared leadership (Castelli & Gremillion; Dolan, 1985). Lay leadership is manifested in the

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parish council that assists and advises the pastor in managing parish affairs (Dolan, 1985, Shaw, 1987). Lay leadership is also evidenced in parish committees that function as supervisory or advisory bodies (Haase, 1996).

It is essential for parish competence that the pastor and other leaders have desirable characteristics. These characteristics include being respected by parishioners and having the ability to understand them (Shaw, 1987). Since the pastor is the crucial person in leadership, he should be decisive but not dictatorial; adopt a pluralistic model of leadership; and invite staff, volunteer leaders, and ordinary parishioners to participate in decision-making that will affect the life of the parish (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987). The pastor should be strong and willing to implement the changes of Vatican II; otherwise the parish will remain stagnant and dormant (Shaw, 1987).

Catholic parishes present an interesting and fertile ground for the study of CC in relation to leadership. Community competence has been defined within the framework of participatory democracy. One area of future research is to determine if there is another kind of CC that thrives in a non-democratic setting (Cottrell, 1976). In the Roman Catholic Church, the bishop delegates the priest to handle the affairs of the parish. Parishioners do not get to choose their pastor according to his leadership qualities or any other criteria. With the pastor in command, he makes or breaks the parish (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987; Shaw, 1987). It is noteworthy that the more the clergy is in control of the church, the less competent the congregation is (Johnson & Mullins, 1990).

Homogeneity and heterogeneity. The degree of homogeneity and heterogeneity in a community is the second community characteristic that influences competence. The literature covered a range of characteristics by which to assess the degree of homogeneity

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and heterogeneity including ethnicity, identity, values, commitment to norms, education, and socio-economic status.

The empirical studies in the area of general community functioning showed that homogeneity favors competence (see Eisen, 1994; Stoecker, 1995). In the area of utopian religious communities, Kanter (1968) found that successful communities, defined as enduring for at least 25 years, had a stronger commitment to norms than unsuccessful ones. She likewise concluded that similarity of religious, economic, educational, and ethnic backgrounds among members also aided the communities' success. The different methods used in creating group norms included the use of a broad-based decision-making process (Prestby & Wandersman, 1985), and of group sanctions for non-cooperative behaviors and approval of selected behaviors (Buckley, Burns, & Meeker, 1974; Serrano-Garcia, 1984).

However, homogeneity can likewise lead to incompetence. Forcing homogeneity erodes distinct local identities and cultural diversity, which in turn contributes to the breakdown of a community (Nozick, 1992), and results in service programs ill suited for minorities (Barbarin, 1981a). On the contrary, diversity can be conducive to competence. Recognition of a community's diversity allows utilization of different information, influence, and resources (Hurley, 1977). Therefore diversity in the community can be a positive influence on CC. The literature shows that differences just like similarities contribute towards creating and maintaining CC.

Catholic parishes have been more homogeneous than heterogeneous with regard to ethnicity. In their report based on the Notre Dame study of Catholic Parish life, Castelli and Gremillion (1987) cited that pastors and parish administrators of 1,099 parishes they

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surveyed named one dominant ethnic group. The authors also cited that eleven percent of United States parishes were still national parishes (i.e., the majority of its members come from one nationality group and it may have services in their vernacular), which they considered a significant number even if it has declined from a few decades ago.

Given that parishes tend to have a dominant ethnicity, it is not clear if parishes focus on members' similarities, differences, or both as parishes strive to be competent. Considering that the idea of competence involves collaborative action to pursue common goals, it is necessary to determine how parishes address the needs and concerns of groups in minority and if they include those in the minority in these attempts.

Sense of community. A set of specific traits defined the third characteristic, sense of community. These traits appeared in the literature either as separate factors or as a unitary concept of sense of community. Sense of community is the experience of being part of a network of relationships wherein people expressed the need for intimacy, diversity, usefulness, and belongingness (Sarason, 1974). It is also the shared faith that members' commitment to one another will result in the fulfillment of their needs (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

Sense of community is important because it is integral to community well being and functioning (Riger, 1993) and because it stimulates the healthy development of the environment and its inhabitants (Chavis & Newbrough, 1986). This is so because a sense of community addresses the alienation felt by people who do not feel needed by their community and who hardly think of contributing to it (Sarason, 1974). By having a high level of sense of community, community members may feel the need to assist in collective action to ensure the community achieves its goals. Promoting a sense of

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community involves different strategies such as facilitating communication, collective decision making, and promoting a social cooperative ideology (Buckley et al., 1974). Another strategy is collective celebration in which residents develop a region-wide identity and social relationships (Aronoff, 1993).

The literature identified three traits of sense of community namely esprit de corps, nurturance, and commitment. Esprit de corps means that members are proud of their community and hold it in high esteem (Lackey et al., 1987); are satisfied with the community (Giamartino & Wandersman, 1983); and see problems as challenges and not as threats (Johnson & Mullins, 1990). Giamartino and Wandersman (1983) linked esprit de corps with greater involvement in the organization. However, Tilly (1974) cautioned against expecting a very close connection between the extent of a group's solidarity and the extent of its collective action.

The studies presented above showed that organizations have used sense of community to attain goals, acquire resources, and maintain membership. These outcomes present great promise for parish competence as about half of the active Catholics perceive a real sense of community in their parishes (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987).

Participation. The fourth community characteristic is the high degree of member participation. Participation among local members allows voluntary organizations and communities to produce collective goals (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990; Lackey et al., 1987). Participation helps in the creation and maintenance of CC by providing support, an increased control over community life and programs (Israel, et al., 1994; Woelk, 1992), and a sense of belonging and community identity (Thursz, 1972).

Participation can be viewed in different ways. Participation may be a community goal. It may also be a means to attain a goal since participation entails joining in some task. As a community characteristic, participation refers to a stable high rate of member participation in community endeavors as revealed by its recent history. Although it is difficult to quantify, a high rate of participation means there is a consistent pool of people the community can tap. Participation means it is not difficult to look for people who can and who are willing to pitch in parish endeavors.

Some studies have shown that participation influences the competence of church congregations. Congregations with the greatest laity involvement had the highest level of competence compared with those that allocated most responsibilities to the clergy (Johnson & Mullins, 1990). Participation ranked at the top of reasons pastors and administrators cited for the presence of vitality in the parish (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987). A high level of participation in church activities contributed to other indices of growth (e.g., number of members) of conservative churches (Bibby, 1978), and allowed the elderly to use their resources to meet their own needs and those of the community (Breien, 1986).

Religious organizations have used several strategies to increase participation. Castelli and Gremillion (1987) reported that certain elements of a Catholic mass increased participation in it. These included planning, a greeting before the mass, rapport between the priest and the congregation, a moving and celebratory homily, a balance between congregational and solo singing, a balance between the sacred and the concrete life situations of the parishioners, and a gathering after mass. Kanter (1968) found that utopian communities increased participation with the use of more sacrifice (i.e., different

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forms of abstinence) and investment strategies (e.g., devote money, energy) in order for members to realize that the profit in continuing was greater than the cost of leaving the community.

The nature of the activity either facilitates or hampers the success of any parish endeavor that relies heavily on participation. Parishes goals somehow related with social activities may invite more participation as compared with social action and social justice issues. Castelli and Gremillion (1987) reported that 22% of Catholics who took part in parish activities beyond religious rites preferred participating in social activities such as bingo. In decreasing percentage of involvement, other activities included liturgy and music, education, parish governance and administration, personal and devotional renewal, and social action and justice issues wherein only four percent participated in.

It appears that creating a strong history of participation in religious organizations presents a unique challenge for any church community. By identifying the factors that influence participation, religious communities can identify activities that they can focus on to build a stable and high participation climate.

Structures for resolving and containing conflicts. This characteristic refers to individuals, committees, or protocol that assists the community to discuss and resolve conflicts. Conflicts may arise from differences in values, aspirations, perspectives, and abilities. Addressing conflicts is necessary because it allows the pursuit of common goals and the execution of a common plan of action. However, conflict is not necessarily detrimental for the community. The presence of conflict and of controversy in the broader parish or in its leadership may be a productive means to change and creativity (Castelli &

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Gremillion, 1987; Haase, 1966). The literature on CC is not specific as to what kinds of conflict are useful in a competent community (Warren, 1970).

Depending on the issue, responses to conflict differ and may also evolve over time. For example, facing the issue of feminism that challenged traditional teachings, a church's response across the years evolved from an original rejection to an accommodation (Iannaccone & Miles, 1990). This shift implies that the state of CC may fluctuate across time depending on the issues and on how these issues are addressed over time. However, regardless of the responses to conflict, there are relevant community strengths that aid conflict resolution. These include sensitivity to parishioners' needs, good teamwork, and the resource to hire outside consultants (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987).

Communication structures. Before members make any meaningful contribution to the community, the community must be able to clearly communicate its expectations (Hurley, 1977). Effective communication is the ability to express the experiences, needs, and intentions of oneself and that of one's group in order to facilitate a clearer understanding and productive discussion of issues (Cottrell, 1976). To this end, it is important that the community provide the structure that facilitates understanding. However, the CC literature does not elaborate on what community structures help in making sure communication is effective.

Effective communication assists in collaborative problem solving and in attaining goals. Effective communication has been aided by the presence of a norm of communication, training, and similar experiences. Some articles focused on how creating a norm of interagency communication is an important prerequisite for community

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planning. Clark et al. (1993) found that the use of strategies like the creation of formal communication channels, the use of existing informal lines of communication, and the maintenance of information flow existed in most cases of successful collaborative problem solving. The provision of information about a juvenile delinquency law and its implications on the locality was a successful strategy in enticing participation among the concerned residents (Morris & Frisman, 1987). Compared with residents, trained community health workers had significantly more sources of information such as friends and town meetings ($N = 92$, $t = 3.20$, $p < .01$) (Gatz, et al., 1982). Lastly, sharing information among victims of toxic exposure helped in finding out how victims' lives were in danger and if government agencies were doing enough (Edelstein, 1988). It becomes clear that communication, particularly that of information provision helps the community attain competence by its effect on planning, participation, and exchange of resource.

Achievement orientation. Achievement orientation is the belief that members can resolve community problems through the community's knowledge and abilities (Breton, 1994; Lackey et al., 1987). This belief is important because it influences the amount of effort spent on the action (Bandura, 1982). Beyond a belief, both a track record of success and a real ability to pressure institutions reinforce achievement orientation (Breton, 1994; Prestby & Wandersman, 1985). For example, a successful protest movement can transform people's consciousness to believe they have the capacity to change their situation (Piven & Cloward, 1979). On the other hand, the lack of success or actual loss of local control over the community and the marginalization of people could lead to the community's breakdown (Nozick, 1992).

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Previous studies have shown that an achievement orientation was important in the study of CC. These studies pointed out the positive effects perceived achievement, actual achievement, and actual control over community affairs had on local action and on CC (see Chavis & Wandersman, 1990; Clark et al., 1993; Cuoto, 1989; Gatz et al., 1982; Israel et al., 1994; Levine, 1986; Prestby & Wandersman, 1985). Clark et al. (1993) found that an achievement orientation allowed the use of previous success as a benchmark to motivate participants to accomplish higher goals. This motivation strategy helped a collaborative problem-solving endeavor succeed in creating an alternative energy source for rural communities. Similarly, the change of locus of control helped in the success of a primary prevention program (Gatz et al., 1982), and an actual control of the neighborhood resulted in increased confidence in a community's future (Levine, 1986).

Links with other communities and agencies. The presence of a community's network with government and non-government agencies, churches, and associations enhances a community's competence. Power, resource, and influence increase as other entities join a community's effort. Networking refers to the community's present links and the community's ability to establish future links with other entities within and outside the community.

Networking with government, non-government agencies, and other community entities have facilitated the success of the community and of collective action (see Barbarin, 1981a; Israel, 1985; Klandermans, 1993; Minkler, 1990; Steuart, 1993). Examples of these initiatives have included fighting off resettlement (O'Sullivan, Waugh, Espeland, 1984); pressuring local and national governments (Clark et al., 1993); and using petitions and ensuring public officials attend block meetings (Prestby &

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Wandersman, 1985). Having a personal or professional link with offices in the local and even national governments can help communities encourage favorable laws and ordinances or block disadvantageous ones. The community's participation in the political scene makes this influence possible (Breton, 1994).

However, parishes have not taken many concrete steps to advocate at the different levels of government nor have they taken advantage of the assistance provided by them. In addition, pastors and parish administrators ranked social action programs near the bottom of parish activities as sources of parish vitality (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987). This is noteworthy considering that the Catholic Church puts social action as one of its thrusts. Persuading legislators has been a component of the social action efforts of the Catholic Church to create more just social structures and institutions (Castelli & Gremillion). However, the same authors found that only 20% of the parishes in their survey had social action programs even if 69% of active Catholics agreed that religious organizations should try to persuade legislators.

There is a question of whether or not parishes really desire or see the need to link with other entities. Although core Catholics want greater emphasis on improving contacts with non-Catholic churches within their neighborhoods, this is low on their priority (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987). The diocese is a minimally acknowledged resource for the parish. The pastors and staff members know of the assistance the diocese offers. However it is unfortunate that almost one-half of parish volunteer leaders do not know (Castelli & Gremillion). Knowledge of diocese assistance projects does not necessarily mean parishes make use of them.

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In summary, the presence and use of linkages with government and other community groups and agencies can assist communities in attaining goals. It is however unfortunate that Catholic parishes have neither actively created nor cultivated these links. It may be that parishes have most of the resources necessary in attaining their goals. It may also mean that most of the parish goals are defined in a manner that does not require much help from the outside to attain said goals. If neither social action nor the improvement of relationships with other churches is a priority, there is little need for these links. A third possibility is that for some reason, parishes do not seek outside assistance even if doing so may facilitate goal attainment. If this is so, it is important to know the reasons behind this.

Summary of the Literature on CC Elements

The previous pages presented the studies that empirically derived elements that constituted CC and studies that identified community characteristics that facilitated effective community functioning. An inspection of the results revealed that the elements that emerged from these separate literature reviews were similar (see Table 3). The elements that predominantly appeared in the empirical studies of CC were sense of community (including commitment, social support), participation, leadership, communication, conflict resolution, and ability to influence the larger society. The skills involved in the problem solving process were present (i.e., evaluation, use of resources) but not as prominent as the previous elements. Items that reflected other skills involved in problem solving were found under other elements (e.g., self-other awareness, participation). The fact that these elements grouped with other elements to form different components across studies; that the same element was found in different components

Table 3

Comparison of CC Elements by Cottrell, Empirical Studies on CC, and Non-Empirical Studies on CC

Table 3

Comparison of CC Elements by Cottrell, Empirical Studies on CC, and Non-Empirical Studies on CC

Elements Identified by Cottrell (1976)	Empirically-derived Elements	Elements Identified from Non-Empirical Studies of CC
Commitment to the community	Commitment	--
Clarity of identity and position in issues	Self-other awareness	--
Participation	Participation	Participation
Conflict containment and accommodation	Conflict containment and accommodation	Structures for resolving and containing conflicts; Homogeneity and heterogeneity
Development of communicative skills and facilities	Communication and articulateness	Communication structures
Machinery for facilitating participant interaction and decision-making.	Lay involvement and leadership, Less directive clergy; Cooperation; Democratic participation style	Leadership
Management of relations with the larger society	Management of relations with the larger society	Links with other communities and agencies
Ability to articulate the community's views	--	--
	Psychological sense of community, Social support	Sense of community
	Resource adequacy and use	--
	Evaluation of efforts	--
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across studies; and that the eight elements resulted in one component may suggest that the elements were not yet well defined.

Unresolved Issues

From the review of literature on studies that empirically derived the elements of CC and the review on community characteristics that influence effective community functioning, several issues emerged. The review of empirical studies that derived the elements and components of CC revealed a lack of consensus, especially with the number and types of components. One reason for this may have been the lack of a clear operational definition of CC (Eng & Parker, 1994). Another reason may have been that these studies used Cottrell's list of elements, which he acknowledged were broadly defined, overlapped, and incomplete (Cottrell, 1976).

Another issue is with regard to the items used in the empirical studies. A cursory review of the survey items revealed that some items with the same theme were used under different elements and components. In addition other elements were given little attention. For example, items for some elements, such as self-other awareness and participation, included items reflecting other skills involved in problem solving. Items that could have reflected achievement orientation and homogeneity were few and were likewise placed under other dimensions. The conflict containment element contained items related with homogeneity. This indicated that the level of heterogeneity was not as important as how a community handled differences. Also, the empirical studies originally did not consider the importance of levels of homogeneity and heterogeneity. Thus, this characteristic had no items specifically written for them. Therefore, the empirical derivation of elements still had some questions regarding significant overlaps of the

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elements, conflicting results, appropriate labeling of the elements, and underrepresented elements. It seemed the studies assessed CC with little theory and grounded research outside the seminal works. It was probably due to the recent empirical attention given to CC that there was much uncertainty as to CC's operational definition and what its elements were.

The second part of the literature review above revealed numerous community characteristics that influence CC creation and maintenance. It is however still unclear whether all these characteristics are important in all types of communities. There may likewise be elements of CC applicable to communities with a hierarchical set-up that were not covered in the literature. Finally, the literature was not clear whether some community characteristics had more significant functions than others depending on the nature of the community.

Contribution of the Study

Given these issues in the literature, this study identified the dimensions that comprise parish competence. This information added clarification to the theoretical issues surrounding CC identified above. By having parishioners identify and assess the community characteristics they felt were important in influencing their parish's competence, two benefits were gained. First, the study was grounded on the experience of the community. Second, the study had the practical significance of aiding parishes identify community characteristics that were strong assets and characteristics that parishes needed to work on.

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Purpose and Rationale

Given these gaps in the literature on CC, there was a need for further study of how parish communities create and maintain competence. The overall objective of the research was to determine how parish communities differently exhibited competence. One specific purpose of the study was to determine both the unique and the common definitions of CC across different parish communities. The second purpose was to determine what elements comprised CC and how these elements grouped into larger components. To these ends, two strategies were used. The first was to conduct open-ended interviews to find out more about the nature of CC especially as it applied to parishes. The second strategy was to develop a questionnaire measure of CC used to empirically derive the elements of CC.

The combined use of methods reflecting both the constructivist and positivist paradigms was in the best position to address these research objectives. An open-ended interview reflecting a constructivist paradigm was used to determine the credibility of a proposition through a consensus of a group of individuals most competent to form a conclusion about parish competence (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). In this cooperative inquiry, the interaction between the participants and investigator had important contributions to the topic of study (Heron, 1981) such as identifying sites and forming construct definitions. This approach fitted well with the suggestion that in the study of CC, community residents themselves needed to define what CC was and what its indicators were (Eng & Parker, 1994).

The type of research I did used methods between the extremes of a tight and prestructured design, and a loose and emergent one (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The

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literature review gave me ideas about the phenomenon but not enough to form a theory. I had ideas about the phenomenon that was not fully understood. Likewise, I had a starting conceptual framework, a set of general research questions, and an idea about how to gather information. Similar to what Eng and Parker (1994) suggested, this type of study allowed me to make discoveries in the field that led to a more concrete definition of CC and a clearer list of its elements. Using a positivist paradigm, I created a questionnaire measure for parish competence. I used the questionnaire to empirically test the credibility of the propositions about competence I gathered from the interview.

I combined these two paradigms in this research. One component was an initial exploratory and inductive phase that clarified the phenomenon by identifying what important questions to ask and what variables to look into. The deductive phase that followed confirmed the hypotheses based on the exploratory findings (Patton, 1990). There were advantages in using both paradigms (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Conducting the inquiry in a more natural setting with less control increased external validity and relevance. Empirical testing of the propositions however provided rigor to this study. A second advantage was that the qualitative phase provided depth and meaning to the discussion whereas the empirical testing phase provided precision. The third advantage of this mixed paradigm was that it allowed both discovery and verification, each of which provided important clues in understanding the idea of CC.

I conducted the study in Roman Catholic parishes. A brief description of communities and parishes is presented in the next section in order to better appreciate the context of this study.

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Definitions of Community and Parish

There have been different ways of defining a community. Communities have been defined as space, as people, as shared institutions and values, as interactions, as a distribution of power, and as a social system (Warren, 1978). Communities have been either self-contained or as part of a larger social structure (Effrat, 1974). Although important, common values, desires, and sense of commitment and community are not prerequisites in defining a community. Rather they are factors that influence a community's competence. An advantage of defining a community as space is that it does not preclude the presence of common values, power, interactions, and links with the larger system. Depending on the specific geographical community, values and institutions may or may not be shared, and the quantity and quality of interactions within the community may be different across groups. Another advantage of a geographically defined community is it can host a number of social structures such as churches, families, and neighborhoods that serve as medium for people to exercise their power (Berger & Neuhaus, 1977).

For the purposes of studying parish competence, a parish community is defined as a territorial unit. Canon Law defines a parish as a community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a diocese. The bishop, who is the head of the diocese, appoints and entrusts the pastor with the care of the parish. Around 87% of parishes in the United States are territorial (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987). Other parishes are non-territorial magnet parishes established after Vatican II by some dioceses to attract Catholics disaffected by the liturgy in their home parishes. The parish is the place where

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people manifest their beliefs and demonstrate their commitment to the Roman Catholic tradition (Dolan, 1987).

Description of Roman Catholic Parishes

As of 1997, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States had an inclusive membership of about 60 million with a slight increase of 0.15% from the 1996 to the 1997 yearbook reports (Bedell, 1997). According to the same yearbook, there were 19,726 churches with the number of clergy totaling 49,009 as of 1995. In the late 70s, there were 185 dioceses in the United States (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987).

Events within the church have influenced the ability of a parish to be competent. As a result of the Second Vatican Council that began in 1962, parishes throughout the world have been in a process of reform (Castelli and Gremillion, 1987). Even if it did not focus on the parish, the council's questions of the nature, life, and ministry of the church had, and continue to have, substantial influence on Catholic parishes. A major change in parish life resulting from Vatican II has been a greater acceptance of pluralistic piety that emphasized there is not one Catholic way to pray (Castelli & Gremillion; Dolan, 1985). There has also been a renewed sense of ownership of the church; an empowerment of the church to play a more active and visible role in shaping the local, national, and world community; and an explosion of new programs and activities within the parish (Castelli & Gremillion). The changes from Vatican II imposed from the top initially caught many clergy with little preparation and left people confused. By the late 1970s however, people better understood the new style of liturgy (Dolan).

The past social environment likewise influenced the church. The same social changes that reshaped the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s also affected religion (Dolan,

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1985). Traditional churches suffered a credibility gap in the face of war, poverty, and racism. The disintegration of urban life led to a new type of urban ministry. City pastors became more political and involved in community organizations. In those decades, a greater percentage of clergy than laity agreed on the parish taking an active, although limited, involvement in public policy issues. The clergy emphasized providing guidance and direction to the people in becoming involved in social action rather than having the parish itself becoming directly involved (Sweetser, 1974).

Parishes have been organizationally complex and large (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987). Besides the pastor and other full time priests, a parish has a parish council, lay leaders, parish organizations, and probably a deacon or a sister. The same authors likewise asserted that there was no such thing as a typical post-Vatican II American parish since the differences in geography, size, ethnicity, and leadership shaped parish life.

Parishes have had a wide range of activities. The Notre Dame study of parish life indicated that the central parish activities involved religious education, liturgical planning, parish governance, and specialized ministries (e.g., youth ministry). In addition, about half of the 1,099 parishes surveyed had at least one of the following programs: social services, music and cultural, marriage and family, and a grade school. Fewer parishes had training programs for ministry and service, social action program, and ministry for the divorced (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987). However, there were different priorities for these programs. According to the same authors, people felt that their parishes should prioritize religious education and help for poor people within the parish. The two programs on the bottom of the priority list were help for the poor outside the

parish and social change even if core Catholics believed that parishes should focus more on these two areas.

There have been different opinions as to the purpose of the parish. Castelli and Gremillion (1987) found that 42% referred to the parish as the people of God, community, and fellowship of believers. Thirty-three percent emphasized charitable works, and 32% referred to the parish as a place for religious activity. Other references to parishes included an emphasis on the parish as a place for worship and sacrament, personal religious growth, religious formation, and a place for the preservation and propagation of the Catholic faith. Likewise, the authors cited a variety of reasons why active Catholics attended a particular parish. The most cited reason was the quality of pastoral care provided by the parish priests, followed by the friendliness and concern among parish members. Other reasons included the style of worship, quality of preaching, friends and relatives belonging in the same parish, and the atmosphere of the church building.

Different Social Realities Churches Face

Differences in social realities church communities face may suggest that community competence is context specific. As mentioned earlier by Eng and Parker (1994), CC needs to be studied in different communities. Different churches and even churches of the same faith in different locations may operate in different realities. For example, there are several important differences in the social realities the Catholic Church and parishes in the United States and the Philippines operate in. In the Philippines, there is much less obvious separation between the Church and State as compared with the United States. Priests and Cardinals talk about elections and provide guidelines on whom

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to vote for; castigate the government for widespread corruption; and criticize government policies and programs especially those dealing with poverty alleviation, birth control, and divorce which is not legal in the Philippines. The revolution of 1986 and the subsequent change in government became successful because of the public appeal by the Cardinal of Metro Manila for the people to surround the camps and protect the small group of military mutineers holed in two military camps. One salient similarity between the Catholic Church in these two countries is its involvement in social justice issues. There are programs that attempt to provide basic human needs, education, legal services, and other needs to those in need. However, one difference is the extent of need. With a lower standard of living and a greater percentage of the population under the poverty line, the Catholic Church in the Philippines is faced with a more demanding task of coming up with the means to provide for the needs of those in need.

Framework

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between CC and the community characteristics. This initial conceptual framework shows that a number of community characteristics (e.g., leadership, resources) influence the community's ability to attain desired outcomes. This framework guided the initial interview of key respondents who gave the researcher a better understanding of parish competence.

Although not included in the study, I have noted in the framework the ability of external conditions in the larger environment to either facilitate or hinder parish competence. In some cases community skills have not been enough to either offset the pressure from the external environment or respond to changes in the environment. For example, changes in the job market, natural calamities, and government policies have had

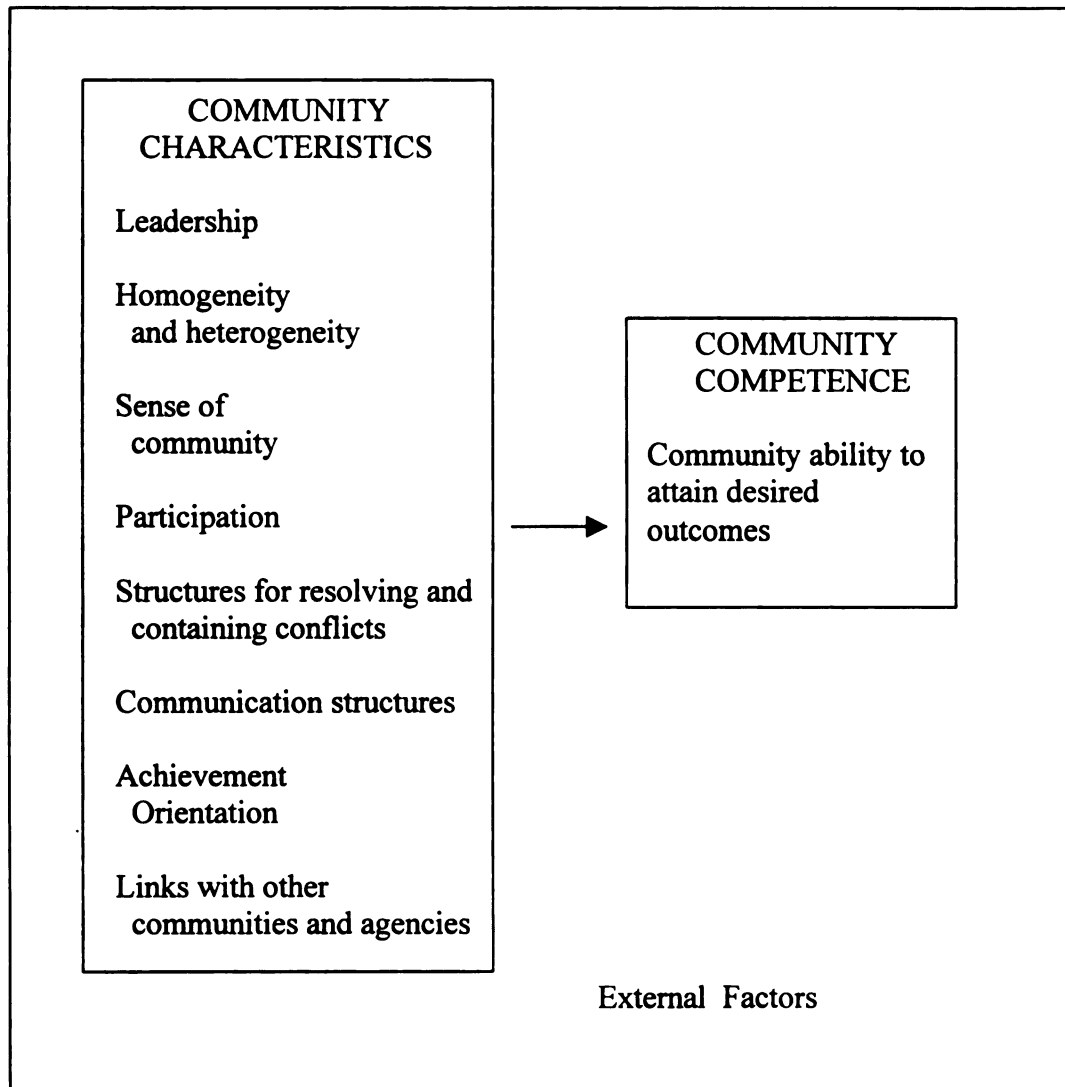


Figure 1. Initial conceptual framework.

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direct consequences on a community. For instance, changes in policies have altered the condition of urban areas over fifty years (Forrester, 1969).

Research Questions

With the given objectives, the study asked the following questions:

- a. What is the definition of parish competence?, and
- b. What are the elements and components (i.e., component structure) of parish competence?

The first question was addressed through open-ended interviews. The second question was answered by both open-ended interviews and a questionnaire measure of CC specifically developed for this research. The open-ended interviews, which identified the elements and general components (i.e., component structure) of parish competence, created the foundation for the questionnaire. The questionnaire, on the other hand, was used to empirically derive the component structure of parish competence.

METHODS

Site and Participant Selection

Research sites. In choosing the parishes in a medium-sized city in the Midwest, I interviewed five key informants who worked with numerous parishes. This procedure of identifying communities using the assessments of key informants followed the suggestion of Eng and Parker (1994). Due to the nature of their jobs, the key informants had significant familiarity with parishes within the two counties included in this study. They were likewise involved in several committees and ministries in their own parishes. The key informants included three men and two women whose ages ranged from 35 to 64. Three had masters degrees, one had a doctorate, and one was working on a masters degree.

The interview proceeded in a conversational manner. We did not go over the questions in order but I made sure I covered all the topics. In the interview, we talked about their ideas of what a competent parish should be (see Appendix C). The use of an open-ended interview allowed the key informants to describe what was meaningful and salient about CC without precategorization (Patton, 1990). The informants ranked or picked parishes that they perceived to be in the high and low ends of the competence continuum and then explained the reasons for their choices. This procedure further enriched my understanding of CC with concrete descriptions of what a competent parish is and what it is not.

All key respondents were ill at ease with the term competence. They thought competence was very judgmental. They offered several alternative terms such as faith-filled and healthy. They stated effectiveness the most. Based on this feedback, two

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dissertation committee members and I decided that the term effective indeed captured the essence of competence without being as value- and judgment-laden as competence.

Two dissertation committee members and myself reviewed the summary of responses. In choosing the parishes, we decided on a purposive sample of four parishes. We chose information-rich cases or those cases we believed would lead to a better understanding of CC (Patton, 1990; Stake, 1994). Of the thirteen parishes in the area, we chose four that represented a variety in terms of level of CC, location, and ethnicity. The parishes deemed competent by key informants that we originally chose included an urban parish that was predominantly White middle-class (Parish A), a predominantly White middle-class parish in a small town (Parish B), and an urban parish predominantly composed of a middle-class ethnic minority. The latter, however, declined the request to be part of the study. After discussing this with two committee members, we substituted this with a predominantly White and middle-class urban parish with a significant young adult population (Parish C). The parish that key informants judged low in competence was a predominantly White middle-class urban parish (Parish D).

I invited the prospective parishes with an initial phone call to the parish priest. I briefly introduced the study and myself. I stated that the study would focus on how parishes effectively provided services for its constituents and that I was in the process of looking for four to five parishes around the city. After this brief introduction, I set a meeting with the priest to further discuss the study. In our meeting, I once again introduced the study as focusing on the different ways parishes effectively provide services. I also gave my personal background. I informed the priest that I was a Filipino Catholic interested in studying Catholic parishes in this city. I explained that my interest

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in parishes arose from my observations that a lot of churches in the Philippines provide social services and social action advocacy to their constituents. One exceptionally effective parish I am familiar with was where I did my masters thesis research. I mentioned my interest in finding out how parishes in another country and context effectively provided services. I said the knowledge I will be gathering would provide new insights and options in providing parish services.

I informed the priest that I was looking for a variety of parishes within the city and the surrounding area and that I would like to include his parish. I briefed him on the projected timeline of the interview and survey phases of the study. I also said that I would inform him when the study will begin.

To allay concerns on confidentiality, I assured the priest that I would not include parish and respondent names, and other identifying characteristics on the written document. I also said that the written manuscript would only contain summaries of responses. I likewise mentioned I would not inform parish leaders or members what other parishes were included in the study.

The priests of Parishes A and B accepted the request and agreed to be part of the study during my meeting with them. The priest of Parish C agreed to a meeting but also added that the final decision would come from the parish council. I gave priest C a printed description of the study (see Appendix D) that he in turn gave out during the parish council meeting. The council agreed to my request. Priest C indicated his interest in having the parish council go over the interview questions and possibly make suggestions (see Appendix E). Similarly, I gave out copies of the study description and interview schedule to the other priests.

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The priest of Parish D asked me how the other parishes decided. After I informed him of what happened with the other three parishes, he decided that it was best that I spoke to members of the parish council and hand out copies of the interview questions. A week after my meeting with the priest, I addressed the parish council of Parish D and presented my request. I went through the main points outlined in my handout (Appendices D and E) and answered their questions. Five people asked questions such as how I planned to choose the interview and survey respondents, whether I had read a particular program report they were using, and if I could give them the survey results from their parish. In my presence, they discussed what the parish stood to gain from the study. After a brief discussion, they accepted my request. All in all I got agreements for four parishes to be part of the study by December 1, 1997.

It was unfortunate though that a reorganization in the diocese at the end of 1997 affected Parish A. The diocese scheduled a transfer of the Parish A priest. This priest said it was going to be a difficult transition for the parish because there would be no parish priest for several months. Although there would be an interim priest, he would not be able to decide on my request to include the parish in the study.

An attempt to invite a substitute effective parish within the city did not succeed. I spoke with the pastor of a prospective substitute parish but found out he was retiring in around three months. This priest also said the diocese would transfer the assistant priest at the same time, and that the diocese had not yet identified who the incoming priests were.

Two committee members and I decided to contact a parish from outside the original geographic limit of the study. A key informant mentioned this parish, which is predominantly White and middle to upper class, as a highly competent parish. I spoke

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with two other key informants to get their views on this parish. Both agreed that this parish was highly competent. I spoke with the pastor and pastoral associate and they agreed to be a part of the study.

The final four parishes in the study included three parishes considered effective (Parishes A, B, and C) and one parish considered one of the least effective (Parish D) in the area. Parish A was located in a middle-sized city. It had around 2200 families most of whom were White middle to upper class. The parish had a parochial school. Parish B was located in a town of around 5000 families. This town had been growing as a result of expansion of a nearby city. The parish had around 800 families most of whom were White middle class. It also had a parochial school. Parish C was located in a middle-sized city close to a university. This parish had around 800 families but also had a significant number of university students. Parish C had a majority of White middle class and did not have a parochial school. Parish D was located in a middle-sized city. It had around 2000 families comprised mostly of White middle class. Parish D had a parochial school.

The process involved in identifying the parishes is described in this section. Details on the selection of interview and survey participants are presented in the following sections.

Interview participants. In phase one, I interviewed five to six key respondents from each of the four parishes for a total of 22 respondents. These respondents included the parish priest and associate pastor; two to three actively involved parishioners (e.g., heads of ministries); and two to three active, knowledgeable, and long-time parishioners who were neither in the parish hierarchy nor in the roster of parish leaders. I selected respondents who typified the social make-up of the active group of parishioners.

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However, in making my selection, I was likewise sensitive to factors such as age, class, ethnicity, and gender and tried to incorporate diversity. I attempted to use heterogeneity as a strength in the small sample so that any common pattern that emerged from the variation revealed central aspects of the phenomenon (Patton, 1990) as well as unique experiences. From the information I got from the priest, staff, and parish bulletin, I chose respondents who represented differences as much as they appeared in the list of possible respondents. Some of the differences I used included the length of active participation in the parish, responsibilities in the parish, ways in which they were active, age, gender, and attitudes towards the parish. I relied on the priest in acquiring this information. I asked them why they chose these particular parishioners and if they could describe these parishioners according to the above characteristics.

In identifying the two to three parishioners actively involved in parish leadership, I asked the priest or a pastoral associate for names of around eight to ten actively involved parishioners (i.e., has been working or volunteering as a leader in one or more committees and ministries). Besides the priest's input, I also went over the list of staff and volunteer leaders for possible names the priest missed and yet whose job descriptions indicated that he/she might be very knowledgeable about the parish. This additional information of parish leaders came from the parish bulletin and newsletter. I chose those who had been in the parish for at least three years, and who were knowledgeable about the challenges, issues, and significant events the parish went through the past several years. I likewise considered interviewees who had divergent responsibilities in the parish (i.e., members of different ministries or committees), those who were involved in committees that provided services (e.g., liturgical, social action), and those who held

perspectives different from others based on information volunteered by other respondents.

In choosing the two long-time active parishioners (i.e., active for at least five years) who were not as involved in parish leadership, I asked the priest and the parish leaders for several names of potential respondents. I likewise asked why they thought the people they recommended were good sources of information, how long they had been active in the parish, and how knowledgeable they were of the parish. I chose those who had been very active for a long time and who knew the recent history of the parish.

The sample consisted of 22 respondents from four parishes. There were eleven males and eleven females (see Table 4). The age range was 23-83 with a mean age of 50.1. All except one were White. Thirteen or 59.1% were married, seven or 31.8% had never been married, and two were widowed.

Table 4

Demographic Characteristics of Interview Respondents

Demographic characteristics	PARISH				Overall
	A	B	C	D	
Percentage male	50	50	40	60	50
Percentage female	50	50	60	40	50
Mean age in years	46.8	51.0	44.2	58.8	50.1
Age range in years	38-69	39-71	23-65	47-83	23-83
Length of stay in parish – mean (years)	18.8	15.8	18.4	27.6	20.2
Length of stay in parish – range (years)	2-38	7-30	5-38	13-61	2-61
Ethnicity/Race	All White	5 White 1 Black	All White	All White	20 White 1 Black

The mean age across the parishes ranged from 46.8 to 58.8. Parish C had the youngest age range and Parish D had the oldest. The duration of stay in the city ranged from 2 to 64 years with a mean of 24.9. The person with a two-year stay in Parish A had a very important role in the parish and was therefore included. Duration of membership in their respective parishes ranged from 2 to 61 with a mean of 20.2. The mean duration of membership in the parish was comparable for Parishes A, B, and C while quite high for Parish D.

Four pastors were included in the interview as well as eleven who were active in the parish leadership, and seven who were active in parish activities but not included in the leadership. Twenty respondents were involved in the parish in different capacities including serving as Eucharistic ministers or lectors, serving in the Parish Council and other committees and ministries, or being a member of organizations. Two respondents had a doctorate, eleven had a masters degree, one finished law, five either started or finished college, and two finished high school. Thirteen or 59.1% have full time jobs, six had part-time jobs, one was a full-time homemaker, and two were retired. In terms of occupation, eight respondents were parish staff, while three worked for the parochial schools of the parish they attended. Thus half worked for the parish. Other occupations included attorney, secretary, social worker, maintenance planner, graduate student, researcher, teacher, and homemaker.

Survey participants. In phase two, I administered a survey to parishioners of the four parishes. The minimum requirement for survey was that respondents were adult parishioners of the parish.

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There were a total of 266 surveys returned from around 1200 distributed. The return rate was about 22%. Out of the 266 surveys returned, 82 (30.8%) were mailed to the respondents while 178 (66.9%) were handed out. Close to 40% of the returned surveys came from Parish C while 22.9%, 19.9%, and 17.3% came from Parishes A, D, and B respectively. Eighty-two of the 300 or 27.3% surveys mailed out were returned. Out of approximately 900 surveys handed out, 178 or 19.8% were returned. The distribution method for six surveys could not be determined because either the identifying mark on the return envelope was torn or the survey was returned in another envelope. Table 5 shows some demographic data of survey respondents (see Appendix F for the complete demographic data). Females accounted for 64.7% of the sample while 34.2% were males. The ratio between males and females was similar across the four parishes. Among the American respondents, majority (87.6%) was White while there were small percentages of Asian/Pacific Islander (4.1%), Black (1.1%), multiracial (1.1%), and Native American (0.8%). A few respondents (2.6%) were not American citizens. The four parishes reflected a similarly high proportion of White respondents. Close to 67% of the respondents was married and 54.5% had no children. The mean age was 50.1 with a range of 19 to 85. There was a range from 1 to 84 years respondents have lived within their respective cities with a mean of 22.9 years. The mean number of years respondents have continually attended the parish was 17.7 with a range of five months to 77 years. Parish C had considerably a younger population than the other three parishes. It had a younger mean age, a lower mean length of stay in the city, and lower mean length of continuous attendance in the parish. Parish C also had a considerably lower proportion of married respondents. Close to 61% said that the parish they answered for was the closest parish to

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Table 5

Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Demographic Characteristic	Parish A (%) ^{a b}	Parish B (%)	Parish C (%)	Parish D (%)	Combined (%)
Proportion of respondents from parish	22.9 (N = 61)	17.3 (N = 46)	39.8 (N = 106)	19.9 (N = 53)	100.0 (N = 266)
Age mean (years)	56.3	51.9	43.8	54.4	50.2
Age range (years)	26 - 84	25 - 80	19 - 75	29 - 85	19 - 85
Mean length of stay in the city (years)	31.5	17.4	14.5	34.1	22.9
Mean length of continuous attendance in the parish (years)	24.8	14.0	11.3	25.8	17.73
Mean length of time have been a Catholic (years)	52.1	49.3	38.5	52.0	46.27
Proportion Female	63.9	60.9	67.9	62.3	64.7
Proportion Male	36.1	34.8	31.1	37.7	34.2
Proportion White	91.8	91.3	85.8	83.0	87.6
Proportion married	86.9	73.9	50.0	71.7	66.9
Participation level:	32.8	30.4	24.5	18.9	26.3
Leader/staff					
Participation level: Active non-leader	37.7	43.5	48.1	39.6	43.2
Participation level: Not active	29.5	26.1	27.4	41.5	30.5
Education: Grade School	1.6	2.2	0.0	3.8	1.5
Education: High School	19.7	19.6	12.3	24.5	17.7
Education: Vocation or Technical	13.1	15.2	1.9	5.7	7.5
Education: College degree	41.0	23.9	26.4	43.4	32.7
Education: Graduate degree	18.0	32.6	54.7	19.8	35.3
Employment: Working full-time	39.3	50.0	47.2	43.4	45.1
Employment: Working part-time	16.4	15.2	19.8	17.0	17.7
Employment: Full-time homemaker	14.8	6.5	3.8	9.4	7.9
Employment: In school	0.0	2.2	12.3	1.9	5.6
Employment: Retired	26.2	17.4	12.3	26.4	19.2
Unemployed	1.6	2.2	1.9	0.0	1.5
Survey distribution: mail	31.1	32.6	23.6	43.4	30.8
Survey distribution: hand-out	65.6	60.9	76.4	54.7	66.9

^a Percentage does not consider missing values (i.e., percentage is not the valid percent).

^b All values, except for demographic characteristics measured in years, are in percentages.

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where they lived while 36.8% said it was not. However, Parish C, which had a lot of transient members, pulled up the latter percentage.

The greatest proportion of respondents was considered active non-leaders (43.2%) (i.e., those who indicated membership in any committee) followed by those who were not active (30.5%) (i.e., those who did not indicate membership in any committee), and leaders/staff (26.3%) (i.e., those who indicated being part of the planning board of any committee or working for the parish). Thus the majority of the respondents were active in the parish. Majority of the respondents (58.6%) attended church once a week, then followed by those who attended several times a week (25.6%). This trend was true for all Parishes B, C, and D. In Parish A, more respondents attended church several times a week. Most respondents (48.5%) prayed at least twice a day followed by those who prayed once a day (31.2%). Except for Parish C, more people from the three parishes prayed at least twice a day than once a day.

More than a third (35.3%) of the total had graduate degrees and 32.7% had college degrees. A high proportion (45.1%) worked full-time while 17.7% worked part-time, 7.9% were full-time homemakers, and 5.6% were in school. Close to a fifth (19.2%) of the respondents were retired.

The survey respondents did not approximate the 1990 Catholic population characteristics of the two counties (National Catholic Rural Life Conference, no year) involved in the study (see Appendix G). The age range for this study is older than the county median. This study reflected the high proportion of White population of the counties. However, this study had a low proportion of African-Americans and a high

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proportion of Asian and Pacific Islanders compared with the county statistics. Parish A had a much greater percentage of respondents with a college education compared with County 2, whereas the other three parishes had a percentage closer to the county value.

Apparatus

Two interview schedules and one questionnaire measure were used for the research. The three data collection methods were used in a sequential order with one instrument based on the results of the previous instrument.

Key respondent interview schedule. The first interview schedule (see Appendix C) had mostly open-ended questions and probe questions, which elicited ideas regarding the definition and elements of a competent parish and the degree of competence of the parishes in the area. I asked respondents what they imagined an ideal competent parish to be. I gave a general working definition of community competence that they used as a starting point. However, I stressed that they could go beyond this working definition and suggest other labels aside from competent. I also asked respondents to identify elements of what they thought an ideal competent parish should possess. After going over the illustrations and elements of a competent parish, I asked how these elements were either evidenced or not evidenced by parishes in the city. I showed respondents a list of the parishes. They then ranked the parishes according to each of the elements they mentioned. I also asked them to state the weaknesses of the parishes that appeared most competent as well as for the strengths of the parishes that appeared least competent.

Parish interview schedule. The second interview schedule was for the leaders, staff, and active members of each of the four selected parishes (see Appendix H). In general, the questions centered on what the definition and elements of parish

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effectiveness are, how the parishes showed its effectiveness, and how the parish could be more effective. Demographic questions included length of parish involvement, level of responsibility in the parish, ethnicity, gender, and employment. The interview questions were open-ended and included probe and follow-up questions. The first part focused on challenges the parish recently experienced that significantly related to how the parish effectively operated.

In the second part of the interview, I asked for a description of what an effective parish was. I gave a working definition for the respondent to start with, although I stressed that he/she could go beyond this. The third part contained questions that asked about the effectiveness of the respondent's parish. I first asked for a rating then for an elaboration behind the rating of effectiveness. I then asked what and who may have contributed to the parish's current level of effectiveness. Finally, I posed questions on how the parish's effectiveness could be improved (see Appendix I for a more detailed description of the interview schedule).

For the pre-test, I asked several persons to go over the initial set of interview questions. They commented on the clarity and sequence of the questions. I made the corresponding changes based on their input. I then conducted a pilot test of the revised interview schedule with three leaders from a different parish and made the corresponding changes based on the feedback.

Questionnaire survey. I developed a questionnaire survey specifically for this research. The general purpose of the survey was to empirically derive the elements of CC and to determine how the elements grouped into general components (i.e., determine the component structure). The development and description of the survey are described in

this section. Although Johnson and Mullins (1990) constructed a measure of congregational community conference, I decided not to use it. I decided to create a survey measure based on the experiences of community members to whom the survey was administered.

I created the survey items based on the themes that emerged from the second round of interviews (i.e., interview of parishioners). From each theme, I pulled out verbatim responses (i.e., phrase and sentences) making sure that I covered a wide range of ideas. Some of these ideas were common to most, if not all the parishes. This meant that at least one respondent from each parish mentioned the idea (e.g., the idea that parishioners should contribute more time, talent, and finances). Some of these ideas were unique in that they came from only one parish (e.g., the idea that the priest should have a business sense in running the parish). Survey development went through several iterations of pilot testing of wording, content, length, and format until I arrived at the items I thought best represented the themes evident from the interviews. Although most survey items were verbatim responses from the interview, I made changes in the wording of some items based on feedback from the pilot tests.

The questionnaire survey contained three parts (see Appendix J). Part A, the heart of the survey, focused on what elements respondents thought were essential for a parish to be effective. Respondents rated whether or not they agreed that an item was essential for the effectiveness of a parish. The choices for the rating were from 1 (i.e., strongly disagree) to 8 (i.e., strongly agree). For easier reading, the 73 items were broken down into four broad categories of parish goals, parish organization, leadership, and communication.

Part B focused on the present state of the parish. Respondents were instructed to rate whether or not they agreed that the item reflected their observations of the parish. The choices for rating were similar to that of Part A and the items followed the same four broad categories. There were 82 items in this part. All 73 items from Part A were included in Part B. Part B had additional items that either did not apply for Part A (i.e., item 33 of Part B in Appendix J) or were predicted to give very low variability for Part A (see items 35, 36, 58, 61, 64, 67, 68, and 72 of Part B in Appendix J). Comments from the pre-test included suggestions of removing these items from Part A because of the perceived obviousness of their essentiality (e.g., the priest should have a healthy spiritual life). In addition, the demand to shorten the survey resulted in removing these eight items from Part A.

Part C contained items that asked for demographic information, level of involvement in the parish, and personal experience with the parish. Finally, respondents were given the option to write comments regarding their parish at the end of the survey.

The positive or negative nature of the survey item was decided on depending on the context in which the idea was mentioned. For example, the use of the parish bulletin as the main source of information (items 69 of Part A and 81 of Part B) was not desirable in the context of the interviews. Therefore, these two items were reverse-scored [see other items in Appendix J with (R) at the end that indicates reverse scoring].

Procedure and Data Analysis

Interview. The interview process proceeded in the following manner. Once I identified a potential interviewee, I made a phone call and introduced myself, the manner in which I got his or her name, and the study. Once I got permission to interview, I set an

appointment for an in person interview. I audiotaped the interviews with the respondents' permission. I assured each respondent of the confidentiality of the tape contents and the transcript. I likewise informed them that they may refuse tape-recording in all or any part of the interview and two respondents did ask me to turn off the recorder in certain parts of the interview.

I transcribed each interview verbatim and used a thematic analysis for the interview questions. For each open-ended question, I read over the pertinent parts from several verbatim transcripts to identify, label, and describe common themes as they related to the interview question and the research question. Using this initial list of themes, I then went back to all the transcripts and beside each response segment (i.e., a break in the response such as a paragraph), I marked the theme or themes the segment reflected. I made changes in the labels and descriptions of the themes as I gathered more details and insights from the transcripts. All relevant information in the verbatim transcript was encoded.

Once I marked all the transcripts with the relevant themes, I created separate files containing the themes and sub-themes, the definitions of the themes, and the verbatim segment reflecting the theme. I used a word processor macro program to pull out all paragraphs marked by the same theme code. I counted the themes according to the number of persons who mentioned a particular theme. The outcome was a set of themes regarding the definitions and elements of an effective parish. With the guidance of a committee member, I organized the constructs to form second-order constructs. I analyzed the transcripts per parish to arrive at a set of results for each parish. I then

compared the results across the four parishes and identified both the common and the unique themes (see Appendix I for additional description of the interview analysis).

Questionnaire survey. I used several methods of giving out surveys. The first involved handing out surveys after Sunday liturgy. In three parishes, I spoke near the end of the liturgy and described the survey. At the end of the mass, I stood at the main exit of the church and handed out the surveys to those willing to take them. In one parish, the parish priest spoke and appealed to the parishioners. A second method involved handing out surveys to committee leaders for them to hand to their members. A third method was random mailing to 75 parishioners per parish using the parishes' mailing lists. I likewise left surveys at the parish office. All these methods of survey distribution were done for each parish. For two parishes, I was able to distribute surveys to those whom I knew went to those parishes and also solicited the help of parishioners to distribute the survey to other parishioners. Survey distribution was done in the months of April through July of 1999.

I assured the respondents of the confidentiality of their responses. Although I may have known to whom I gave the surveys, it did not have any identifying information. The survey however, asked what parish the respondents were from. Respondents were not asked to write their names on the surveys or the return envelopes. Respondents returned the surveys through stamped and addressed return envelopes. After around three weeks, I mailed postcards to respondents who were previously mailed surveys to remind them to fill up and return the survey.

For the analysis, I used a principal components factor analysis for Part A to determine the elements that constitute parish effectiveness. Although Part B was

originally included just for the benefit of the parishes, I decided to analyze the data using a confirmatory factor analysis using the components that emerged from the analysis of Part A. SPSS was used in both analyses.

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RESULTS

The results are presented according to the research question and the method through which the question was answered. The definition and component structure (i.e., the elements and components) of parish competence determined through the interview are presented first. This is followed by the survey results that empirically determined the component structure.

Research Questions 1 and 2 Answered Through the Interviews:

What is the definition and what are the elements
and components of parish competence?

Results from the interview of key respondents and the interview of parish leaders and active members are presented in this section. Results from the key respondent interview were used to revise the original conceptual framework found in Figure 1. This revised framework was then used to guide the analysis of the interview with parish leaders and active members.

Interview of Key Respondents

The five key respondents who helped the researcher identify the parishes for this study listed five elements as comprising parish competence. The first element identified was Visionary. This meant that leaders not just maintain the basic services, but take the next step such as seeking out other services parishioners need and determining how existing services may be provided in a better manner.

The second element was Healthy Faith Development. A healthy faith development meant that a parish had a lot of opportunities for prayer and spiritual growth, had good preaching, had good worship, and had a vibrant and well-attended

mass. Faith development was important to consider for parish competence because it created interest and motivation in ministering to the needs of the community.

Third, a parish needed to have an active Education of adults and children. Education referred to providing everyone with the opportunity to grow in faith and to learn about social issues such as poverty and peace. Competent parishes provided more opportunities for learning such as seminars, homilies, and contemplation groups.

The fourth element was Christian Service. This was defined as a set of programs and activities that served the needs of Catholics and non-Catholics alike within the parish and beyond its boundary. Preference was given to the poor and other marginalized members of society. A competent parish was one that had a social ministry that served the poor and the oppressed. Service was described not only in terms of providing material needs but also in terms of actively advocating the Church's position on social justice issues.

The fifth element identified was the existence of many Programs as opposed to having just the basic services such as the sacraments. The sixth element was Participatory Leadership as opposed to an authoritarian leadership. Respondents pointed out that even if the priest had the final say on how to run the parish, there was always room for the priest to take into consideration other opinion. Although the parish priest had the final decision, there could be equal input from among all the leaders.

Comparison of CC Elements From the Literature and Key Respondent Interview

A comparison of the elements of CC identified in the literature and those identified by key respondent interviewees showed significant differences (see Table 6). First, key respondents mentioned three additional elements (i.e., Healthy Faith

Table 6

Comparison of CC Elements Across Studies and Key Respondent Interviews

Elements Identified by Cottrell (1976)	Empirically-derived Elements	Elements Identified from Non-Empirical Studies of CC	Elements Identified from Key Respondent Interviews
Commitment to the community	Commitment	--	--
Clarity of identity and position in issues	Self-other awareness	--	--
Participation	Participation	Participation	--
Conflict containment and accommodation	Conflict containment and accommodation	Structures for resolving and containing conflicts; Homogeneity and heterogeneity	--
Development of communicative skills and facilities	Communication and articulateness	Communication structures	--
Machinery for facilitating participant interaction and decision-making.	Lay involvement and leadership, Less directive clergy; Cooperation; Democratic participation style	Leadership	Participatory leadership; Visionary leadership
Management of relations with the larger society	Management of relations with the larger society	Links with other communities and agencies	Christian service
Ability to articulate the community's views	--	--	--
	Psychological sense of community, Social support	Sense of community	--

Table 6 (continuation)

Comparison of CC Elements Across Studies and Key Respondent Interviews

Elements Identified by Cottrell (1976)	Empirically-derived Elements	Elements Identified from Non-Empirical Studies of CC	Elements Identified from Key Respondent Interviews
	Resource adequacy and use	--	--
	Evaluation of efforts	--	--
		Achievement orientation	--
			Healthy faith development
			Education
			Programs

Development, Education, and Christian Service) which were specific to the setting and which did not appear in the literature. However, Christian Service was placed alongside links with other communities (see Table 6) because some programs under Christian Service had references to establishing links with community agencies (i.e., a local soup kitchen). Second, some elements that appeared in the literature did not emerge prominently from the interviews. These elements included Sense of Community, Achievement Orientation, Participation, and Communication.

Three elements of CC not found in the literature emerged from the interviews. Healthy Faith Development, Education, and Christian Service were thus added to the original framework resulting in a revised conceptual framework (see Figure 2). On the other hand, although Programs appeared in the interview, reference to it cut across other elements such as programs for Christian Service and programs for Education. For this reason, it was not included as a separate element. The same reasoning applied for Participatory Leadership. Although this element was likewise mentioned in the interview, its essence was captured by Leadership and to some extent by Participation. Therefore, both Programs and Participatory Leadership were not included as separate elements in the revised conceptual framework. This revised framework was used to analyze the interview of parish leaders and active members.

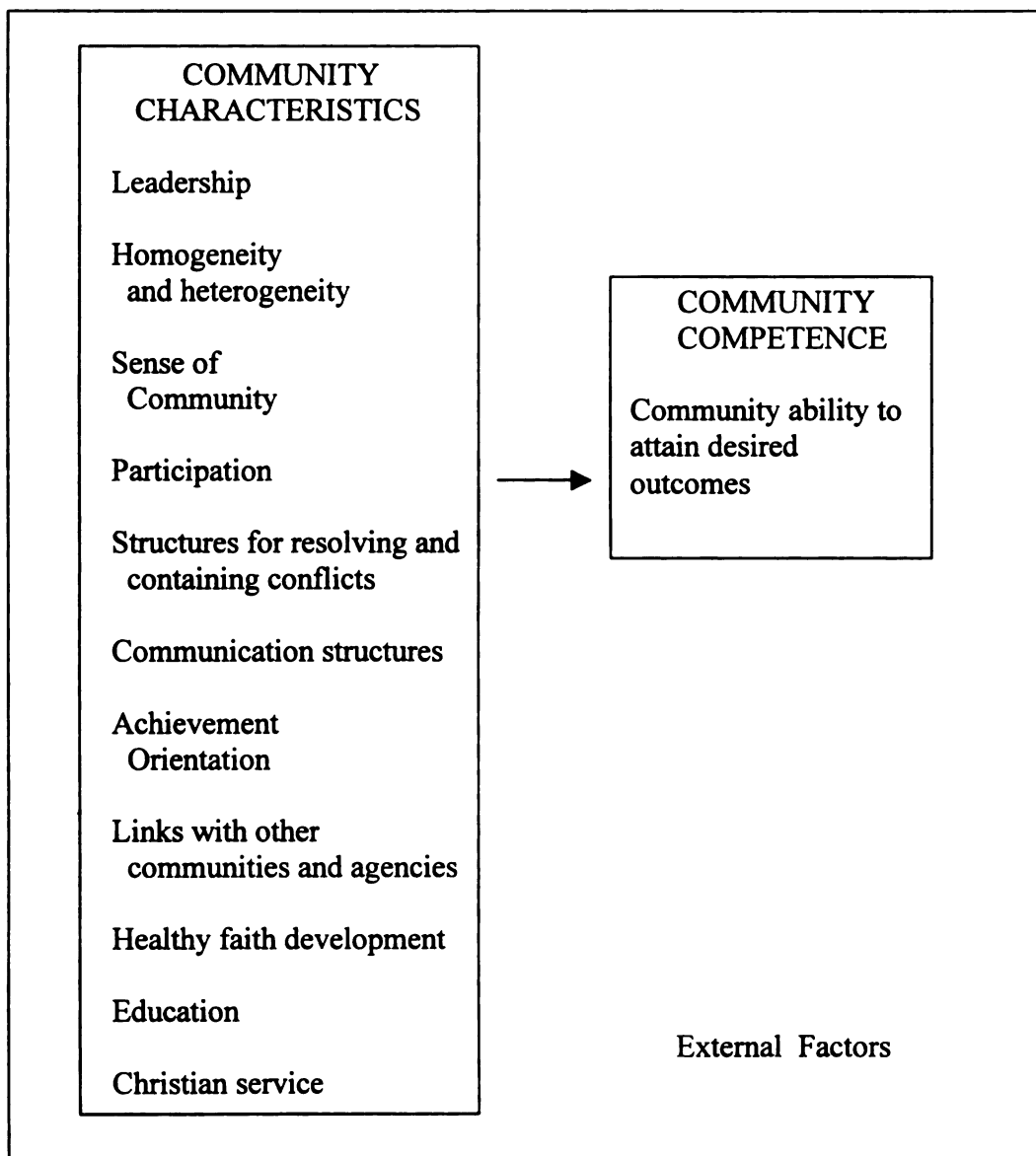


Figure 2. Revised conceptual framework.

Interview of Parish Leaders and Active Members

Definition and Component Structure of Parish Competence

The common idea behind respondents' definition of parish competence revolved around the ability of the parish to fulfill its mission, especially that of providing good worship and strengthening faith. Given the nature of a parish community, this was expected. Although interviewees gave general statements of the definition of a competent parish, they found it easier to define the concept by citing elements that they looked for in a competent parish. These parish respondents revealed responses similar to those given by the five key respondents and with the literature cited. However, some parishes differed with respect to the specific elements they emphasized. The elements of a competent parish and the extent to which parishes differed or agreed in these elements are presented in this section.

Responses were categorized into 12 elements of parish competence with each element reflecting a theme. With the help of one dissertation committee member, these elements were then grouped into three general components. This organization of elements and components (i.e., the component structure) is presented in Table 7. This component structure was later used as the framework of the questionnaire survey.

Table 7

Elements and Components of Parish Competence: Comparison of Parishes

General Component of CC	Element of CC	Parish (total number of respondents)					
		A	B	C	D	Total	
		(6) ^a	(5)	(5)	(6)	(22)	%
Mission	Worship	6 ^b	5	5	2	18	81.8
	Christian service	5	5	5	1	16	72.7
	Participation	3	5	3	4	15	68.2
	Parish life	4	4	3	3	14	63.6
	Education	4	3	4	2	13	59.1
Leadership	Participatory Leadership	2	5	3	4	14	63.6
	Communication	1	3	1	3	8	36.4
	Priest Characteristics	2	5	0	0	7	31.8
	Leader Characteristics	0	2	1	1	4	18.2
Organization	Programs	4	4	1	2	11	50.0
	Resources	3	3	2	3	11	50.0
	Open to Changes	2	2	0	3	7	31.8

Note. ^a = Total number of respondents per parish.

^b = Number of respondents who had a response under the element.

The first general component of parish competence was Mission, which referred to the goals of the parish. This component had five elements consisting of Worship, Christian Service, Participation, Parish Life, and Education. With the exception of Participation, the elements in this component were common parish committees. Participation or increasing participation, on the other hand, was not a committee although respondents saw it as a continuous goal like the other four. The second component, Leadership, had four elements namely Participatory Leadership, Communication, Priest Characteristics, and Leader Characteristics. The third component, Organization, included

the elements Programs, Resources, and Open to Changes. The following sections elaborate on each of these 12 elements.

Worship. An effective parish needed good worship. Given the nature of the community, it was not surprising that the element Worship was mentioned by 81.8% of the respondents. Respondents had a range of descriptions for good worship including joyful celebration, wonderful music, numerous worship opportunities, good preaching, and church attire and demeanor.

Respondents wanted many opportunities to adore and praise God in ways that invited enthusiasm and participation from parishioners. These opportunities included perpetual adoration, year-round worship opportunities, small worship groups, and devotions (e.g., devotion to the Virgin Mary). Small worship groups provided opportunities for more intense sharing of faith and the creation of intimate relationships.

Good preaching was also mentioned as part of Worship. Preaching aimed to teach people to live out the gospel. Good preaching brought to parishioners an awareness of how parish activities showed love of God, and likewise taught people how to apply their faith to their daily lives.

Wonderful music played a significant role in worship. For a few respondents, music as a part of joyful celebrations of faith revealed the extent of parish effectiveness. Music was cited as one reason why people liked a parish. As one pastor said:

I just think that the center of the whole parish community is the worship. Music is an essential part of the worship, and it touches people so deeply it becomes a part of their prayer, spiritual opening to God.... We have an awesome music program. I think people love our parish because of our music.

However, a music ministry needed to balance the goal of creating beautiful music and openly welcoming any parishioner who wants to join regardless of musical ability.

Another concern mentioned regarding music was that at times the choir tended to give a concert to the people instead of giving glory to God.

Christian service. The second element of Mission, Christian Service, was mentioned by 72.7% of the respondents. This referred to outreach services that reflected a gospel mandate to love God and neighbor as one's self. It was considered a concrete way of applying the faith to make the lives of others better. One leader described the task under Christian Service as follows:

Then that the Christian service commission ultimately that is our goal, is to go out to others. The great commandment, to love God and love your neighbor as yourself. Others will refer to everyone around the world. That we are supposed to go out and serve everyone. And we are to give particular service to the poor and oppressed because that is what Jesus did.... And it is not limited to the people that are within our parish, it is not limited to Catholics nor Christians. So an effective parish is one that can come together to support each other in community, worship together, learn together but ultimately to go out and bring the gospel to others.

Respondents were united in emphasizing that Christian Service should not be limited to the people within one's own parish; nor should it be limited to Catholics or Christians.

Also, in order for Christian Service to succeed, respondents expected their priests and lay leaders to be in touch with the needs of the community.

Respondents mentioned the St. Vincent de Paul missions found in all of the four parishes as a concrete example of service. Depending upon the parish, the mission

provided emergency funds, a food cupboard, or helped in soup kitchens. Aside from direct provision of material goods, Christian Service included bringing awareness and taking action on issues ranging from divorce, HIV, and justice issues (e.g., racism, poverty) at the local, national, and even global level. Several respondents mentioned that service also benefited parishioners by learning about social conditions and likewise learning the meaning of charity, both in terms of giving and understanding.

Respondents mentioned concerns with respect to how their parish fared in Christian Service. A respondent from Parish B cited the lack of personal involvement among parishioners in service. Not having salient signs of poverty in their community, parishioners from Parish B did not have many opportunities to engage in the giving aspect of Christian Service. A second issue mentioned was that social justice concerns were not clearly stated in parish goals because of the feeling that the parish could not simultaneously engage all the issues. Another reason was that Christian Service, especially that which goes beyond giving food and money, was new to parishioners.

Participation. Participation, the third element under Mission, was mentioned by 68.2% of the respondents. Respondents defined participation as having more people attend parish liturgy and programs instead of having the same people attend. Respondents acknowledged the difficulty in getting everyone involved such that a more realistic goal was getting more participants instead of getting everyone to participate.

One suggestion of promoting participation was creating many programs and activities in order to attract parishioners with varied interests. Another method mentioned was personally inviting parishioners to either help out in planning or joining activities. Respondents believed that through personal invitations, one could sell the activity better

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and exert greater persuasion on a parishioner. Indeed, several lay leaders mentioned that they became involved through the personal invitation of the priest, staff, or another lay leader. One respondent shared the method he used in convincing parishioners to participate:

I think a little bit of coercion. Finding out people's interest level. Just because you are a builder, you want to work on a building project. Maybe you have a desire to do something else like work with children. Finding where that interest lies and helping that person see or find that interest and move them in that direction.

Parish life. Parish Life, the fourth element of Mission, referred to having a sense of community and fellowship among parishioners. This element was mentioned by 63.6% of the respondents. As a parish commission, parish life coordinated social activities in order to create fellowship among parishioners. Respondents emphasized that good Parish Life referred to having a welcoming, friendly, and inclusive atmosphere. Differences among parishioners (e.g., desired type of liturgy, cultural background, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and political ideology) did not appear to be hindrances in achieving fellowship. A good Parish Life also included a sense of community where parishioners, both involved and the non-active, felt connected to the parish. Although one could assume that parishioners who are actively involved in parish activities have a feeling of connection to the parish, it is not necessarily so. As one active parishioner explained, being a transient member of the community made her feel distant in spite of her involvement. The reason was the lack of interaction between transient members and members who have been in the community for years.

Who initiated the process of inviting people to parish events and giving them opportunities to know the community and belong in it? Most respondents who mentioned sense of community thought it was up to the leaders and parishioners to make sure they welcomed, invited, and talked with other parishioners, especially the new ones. However one respondent said that waiting to be invited was unrealistic. She mentioned that her family's feeling of community with the parish was based on a conscious effort to belong. She described her experience in the following manner:

The first five years of our belonging to the parish...we went to mass but we were not active and it was not until the realization that we quit having the expectation that somebody should reach out to us and invite us to be there. We realized that we had to change how we thought about church and once we started making the effort to belong, then it became a community to us. So I don't think it is as much community to everyone as it is to those of us who take time to belong.

Pride in the parish was another area mentioned under Parish Life. One respondent felt that parishioners had great pride in their parish in that they worked hard to sustain it. Another source of their pride was an annual festival that the parish has celebrated for more than seven decades.

Loyalty to the parish also described Parish Life. Loyalty was evidenced by a great number of parishioners who stayed in the community for a long time, even spanning several generations. In addition, good Parish Life was evidenced by a parish's reputation. One respondent observed that being labeled a liberal and alternative parish had its advantages of communicating the parish's openness and inclusiveness, and of attracting people who desired such an image.

In contrast to the positive aspects of Parish Life, there were concerns. One commonly cited problem regarding sense of community was that people felt it more on special occasions rather than all year-round. Several respondents suggested that having more opportunities to know other parishioners would create greater fellowship. However it seemed all year round opportunities for knowing other parishioners better had not always been possible. As one priest said, summer was that time of year when there was a natural lull in parish activities because many families went out on vacations.

Another issue that affected sense of community was the parish's population and demographics. Two respondents of Parish A thought their parish was too big for it to have a good sense of community because people hardly knew a good number of fellow parishioners. On the other hand, the continuity or stability of parishioners positively affected Parish Life. As pointed out by several respondents, a low population turnover was one strength of Parish D. As a result of families and generations of families staying in the area, parishioners get to know each other more.

Education. Education, the fifth element of Mission, was mentioned by 59.1% of the respondents. Education referred to the provision of adequate opportunities for learning more about the Catholic faith. Respondents mentioned the following as the means to further education: parish school, religious education programs for those not enrolled in the parish school, and adult education programs. A few respondents were biased towards focusing religious education to either children or adults. Some felt the focus should be on children because faith learning should start young. On the other hand, some felt that education should focus on adults who could better understand the faith and its demands.

To show how important education was, one parish centered a yearly theme under education. One respondent from that parish said:

Our theme of all last year was 'Religious education is not just for children anymore.' That is a huge step to say that. Whether anyone comes or not. For the parish to begin to say that and act that way is a huge successful step.... It was a success because we began to nourish a lot of people who had a real hunger to know about their faith. To have some help in teaching with the issues of how do we answer the question about assisted suicide or divorce or abortion or whatever. Now we can come and talk about those things and do that with a Catholic perspective. Instead of letting other people to be the only word our parishioners hear.

In parishes with a parochial school, respondents also wanted a priest who actively supported the school instead of a priest who looked at the school as an added burden to his duties. One respondent from another parish emphasized the importance of a school to parish effectiveness by saying:

We were talking about what makes the optimum parish, we said meeting the needs of its people. To my mind, a thriving parish, a sustainable parish is one that has a school. So that you are essentially generating the next generation of parishioners. So you are not only assisting parents in their duty to educate their children in the faith but you are also.... I can't tell you what proportion off hand but it is a very large percentage of our parishioners, and I would say of our active parishioners, who are second generation in this parish. Their parents were among the first families in this parish. They went through this parish school.

Participatory leadership. Participatory Leadership, the first element under the Leadership component, meant involving people in running the parish. This element was mentioned by 63.6% of the respondents. Respondents mentioned an increasing awareness among leaders that the priest cannot do everything in the parish and parishioners needed to step in. Most respondents who mentioned the topic of Participatory Leadership referred to it as parishioners joining in parish governance while a couple of respondents focused on the sharing of leadership between priests and lay leaders.

There was an obvious desire to have more people join in running the parish. The catch terms used by the respondents included collaborative ministry and parish ownership although they were not necessarily interchangeable. As one respondent said, parishioners gained ownership of the parish through collaborative ministry and collaborative decision-making. Increasingly vocal parishioners and old-timers allowing newcomers to take over were two developments mentioned as signs of increasing participation in leadership.

Participatory Leadership also referred to collaborative decision-making between the priest, staff, and lay leaders. Collaboration meant that the decision-makers decided on something everyone could live with. There was recognition among the priests that although they were solely responsible for the parish, they neither owned the parish nor did they have the sole voice in the parish. According to one respondent, parish ownership among leaders meant that they had a common sense of direction as to where the parish was headed, but that not all opinions would be the same. Another respondent mentioned that a parish planning process was a very good opportunity to have a shared vision through collaborative planning. In response to the question of how such a planning process could help parish effectiveness, the respondent stated:

One, it involves parishioners. I think that is the essential thing. This is not just one person's vision. It is the collective wisdom of the community as much as you can solicit it. I would suspect that a very small percentage of the parish actually knows or care anything about the Tomorrow's Parish. But you are going to have that anyway. So you have got community involvement which I think is absolutely important.

However, the move to include more people in running the parish was not always smooth. According to one active parishioner, there had been times when people who joined in parish governance felt that they were not listened to and therefore quit. As he elaborated:

...if I could separate participation in sponsored activities from participation in governance. I think we do amazingly well in terms of participation in sponsored activities.... But this participation that I perceive is a big gap in the governance. It goes back to the 'no one ever listened to us before. I've been burned so many times. I'm not going to invest time in something in which I don't feel will come to much. I'd rather serve on a committee that will do whatever for the school children or do something that has a beginning, a middle, and an end.' In and out cleanly. We get participation on those activities based things. It is the governance part where we always work in a transient shift.

Communication. Communication was the second element identified under Leadership. This was mentioned by 36.4% of the respondents. Although Communication may be thought of as falling under the Organization component, respondents focused on how leaders communicated with parishioners and vice versa. One respondent summed the idea behind communication in the following manner:

An effective parish is where people of the parish all contribute to the things that are important and necessary that makes a parish. I feel that this is important and keeping a good communication with your parish family. To be able to sit down and talk. If the parish family is having a problem, they should be able to go and discuss it with the priest. And he in turn should be able to connect them with other people with greater means or even more knowledge in the parish to help this particular family that is having this problem.

Respondents likewise connected Communication with collaborative leadership and characteristics of priests and leaders. Good communication referred to the ability to inform parishioners about what was happening in the parish community. This included informing parishioners of activities, changes in the administration of the parish (e.g., staff changes), and discussing controversial issues surrounding the parish instead of keeping quiet about them. Good communication also warranted that leaders solicited and heard all opinions from parishioners. This included using information the parish gathered from the time and talent surveys, and for leaders to take the initiative to ask parishioners about their feelings rather than wait for the latter to volunteer their thoughts.

Priest and leader characteristics. The last two elements that emerged under Leadership were Priest Characteristics and Leader Characteristics. There was great similarity between what respondents expected from priests and from lay leaders and thus these were combined in this section. However there were additional expectations from priests. More respondents (31.8%) mentioned Priest Characteristics than Leader Characteristics (18.2%) as elements of CC.

Respondents expected priests and lay leaders to be role models in faith and service for people to follow. Aside from this, respondents focused on the ability of priests and lay leaders to manage the parish. For a parish to be effective, respondents expected their priests and lay leaders to be visionary as opposed to maintenance-oriented. Being visionary meant leaders continually envisioned what the parish could be and what it could do. Having a vision is crucial. As one priest said:

I don't know if any minister is successful unless they have a vision. Don't tell me what things are like, help me to understand what they are like but then help me to envision what they should be like or could be like. You have to have some fundamental foundational principle that is going to guide the decisions to make. Why do we have Family Life Nights? Because we have this vision that what it means to be parish is not to go to church together only. What means to be parish is that we are a community that supports one another, prays with one another, cries with one another. All of those things.

Being visionary also meant that the leadership did not just react to situations as they arose but rather made plans to improve the different aspects of the parish. Examples given included planning new programs to increase participation, identifying new populations for outreach programs, improving celebrations of worship and the sacraments, providing new means to educate parishioners on faith, and encouraging parishioners to join in the stewardship of the parish (i.e., donate their time and resources). As opposed to a visionary orientation, maintenance orientation meant the leadership was content with doing things as they have been done before. In connection with this, respondents expected the leadership to be good at finding out what the needs of the community were. This included

the ability to take advantage of the information the parish received from the time and talent surveys.

Aside from the characteristics mentioned above, there were additional expectations from priests, especially the pastor. Overall, there were numerous demands on the pastor and he was expected to be good at everything. Most respondents cited the ability of the pastor to manage a parish although a few focused on the personality and faith aspects. This did not mean that respondents considered the managerial skills of the priest as more important than the spiritual aspects. Barring any egregious sign, the pastor's spirituality seemed to be a given and most respondents did praise their pastors for this.

The pastor was expected to be good at empowering parishioners and delegating responsibility. As the pastor of Parish B emphasized, he could not afford to be dictatorial since he was only one mind in the parish. However, for decision-making to be empowering and not hierarchical, communication needed to be non-hierarchical as well. In this respect, one respondent was thankful that with the change in pastors, leaders in her parish now had staff meetings where issues and vision were discussed.

The pastor was also expected to be a good office manager. One respondent emphasized that pastors should be required to take management classes to learn how corporate executives managed private organizations because there were similarities with parishes. Some of these similarities included the sense of a team running the parish, networking between people who needed help and who provided help, responsibility delegation, needs assessment, and the proper use of resources. As the manager of the

parish, the priest provided leadership and also took on the challenges posed by the demands of parishioners. As one priest said:

Too often I find I get ineffective because I have lost sense of my vision. I'm just doing what needs to be done or dealing with a crisis or something. It is up to me to provide leadership too. It is up to me to be inspired by maybe the challenge that...someone was in here yesterday in my office with a 57 year old brother with a learning capability of a second grader who asked me what does the church offer to him? What that should inspire and challenge me to say gosh nothing but maybe we need to look at that. So it is kind of a two way street where I'm here to lead them and they are here to push me on.

On the personal side, the pastor needed to be emphatic, understanding, and have the charisma to spur people on to be active in running the parish. On the spiritual side, the pastor was expected to be very spiritual and to deliver great homilies that challenged parishioners' faith. Challenging homilies were those that went beyond teachings about the faith. Respondents praised priests who spoke about social justice issues such as racism, homophobia, and poverty. Respondents also recognized how raising these issues in the homilies presented challenges to parishioners who would otherwise not be confronted with the issues.

Programs. Programs, the first element under Organization, referred to having many opportunities for people to be involved in worship, education, social, and outreach activities. This was mentioned by half of the respondents. In addition to the existence of programs, several respondents pointed out the importance of coming up with programs that addressed the changing needs of the parish, which the leadership should be keen in

identifying and continually assessing. As several respondents from Parish B pointed out, a good example of a program based on a need was a newly created program for families once a week. This program came about after the leadership decided to halt another program that was not popular. According to a few respondents, for programs to be successful they should be the responsibility of the whole parish and not just the committee in charge. Likewise, a welcoming atmosphere should accompany each program.

Resources. The second element identified under Organization was Resources, specifically resource availability and use. This element was mentioned by half of the respondents. Resources included money, time, and talent. Respondents expected their parishes to be financially sound. Money was tied to many of the parish's operations including renovation and expansion of existing structures, support of the school, handicap accessibility of programs and structures, support of outreach services, support of various programs, and competitive staff salaries.

Although the parishes did not have a lot of money, respondents looked for a viable financial plan as a sign of effectiveness. This meant that even if the parish was in debt, mostly due to renovation and construction, there was a well-laid plan to pay off the debt. A viable plan reflected the commitment of parishioners to monetarily support expansion projects of the parish. However, coming up with ways to encourage parishioners to generously give financial assistance to the parish was a problem for all the parishes.

Time and talent were two more resources respondents identified. There was a common observation that parishioners wanted to share their talents. However, the

concern was the lack of an organizational structure that effectively taps into parishioners' skills. A respondent also pointed out that the lack of networking between the parish committees resulted in less than optimal use of parish talent. However, there were examples of use of home-grown talent such as when Parish D utilized the services of a resident parishioner as the architect for their hall, and a parishioner accountant for the finance committee. Still respondents felt an established parish structure could do more to tap into their parish's talent pool.

With respect to the use of resources, respondents focused more on how resources could be better harnessed for parish use. In connection with Christian service however, there were a few respondents who mentioned the need for the parish to either share the resource or be a resource for other communities. One respondent thought the parish could be a resource of ideas and volunteers for community organizations. Another respondent elaborated on the idea of sharing financial resources in the following manner:

I think so much of our resources are poured back into our own self-concerns – the operations of the school, the keeping the physical plants open. We are just getting enough money to meet our own interior needs met. I think we need to develop a sense of discipleship in which we see ourselves in having a responsibility beyond our own parish boundary lines. Did I mention this? The Bishop who was discussing with a group of Catholics the need to support a mission in foreign countries. And one of the people at the end of the talk looked at him and said ‘those people out there are not Catholics, why are we doing this for them.’ And he said we don’t do this for them because they are Catholics, we do it because we are Catholics. In other words, there is something that we owe to God’s people that

gets us beyond our own immediate interests. And I think Father would love to have a part of the resources of the parish given over to something other than specific Catholic charities or our own personal needs.

Open to changes. The third element identified under Organization was Open to Changes which was mentioned by 31.8% of the respondents. This referred more to the parishioners or the parish culture than to the priest or lay leaders. This meant that parishioners were open to trying new things and willing to take risks and fail along the way. One priest described how the failure of one parish program related to parish effectiveness:

An effective parish is not always successful. But an effective parish continues to try new things, to be creative, to be willing to take risks and fail or to be successful. An effective parish is where a parish can be honest, not only with its staff but with its parishioners.

Being open to change encompassed a host of areas including the acceptance of the lay as leaders, greater volunteering for tasks, greater responsibility for parish stewardship, serving the parish community and beyond, and acceptance of diversity in all its forms. This openness seemed to be more of a challenge for some parishes than others. Parish C, with a significant young population, seemed to have parishioners more open to new ideas and new programs.

Summary of the Elements of Parish Competence

Based on the parish interviews, it became clear that the elements of a competent parish covered a wide area. Twelve elements of parish competence emerged. These elements fell under three general components namely Mission, Leadership, and

Organization. Although most of these elements were mentioned in each parish, there were differences in focus as discussed in the following section. The component structure of parish competence resulting from the interview is shown in Figure 3.

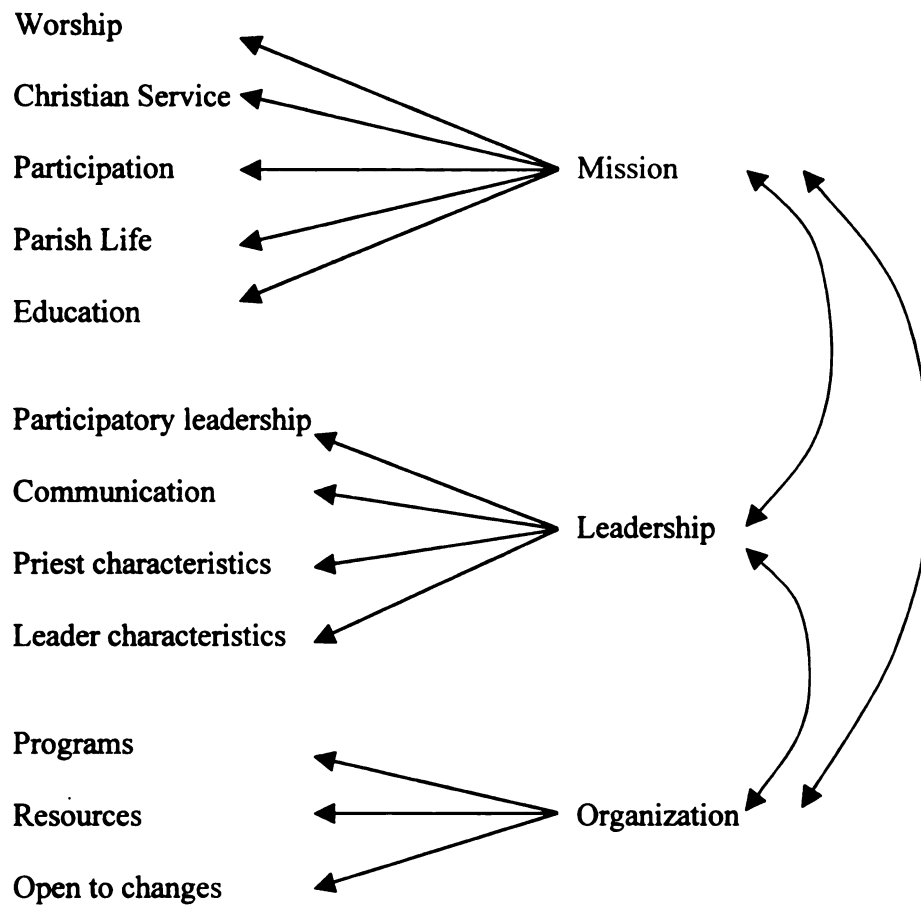


Figure 3. Component structure of parish competence resulting from the interview.

Similarities and Differences in Element Focus Among Parishes

There were both similarities and differences in the elements emphasized by respondents from each parish (see Table 7 above). The top five elements most mentioned across the four parishes were Worship, Christian Service, Participation, Parish Life, and Participatory Leadership. The first four were included in the parishes' mission and thus were not surprising. Participatory leadership was not a total surprise given the desire to have priests more open to input. However the emphasis given to it was unexpected given the hierarchical nature of the parish.

Elements of parish effectiveness in common across the four parishes were those elements mentioned by almost the same proportion of respondents and in which not one parish stood out with regard to the element. These elements included Participation, Parish Life, Education, Participatory Leadership, Communication, Leader Characteristics, and Resources.

There were elements that were not given equal emphasis across parishes. Parish C identified Resources and Participation the least. Parish D identified Worship and Christian Service the least. Parish B identified Priest Characteristics the most. Parish D identified Open to Changes the most. A comparison between the parishes identified as effective (i.e., Parishes A, B, and C) and the parish identified least effective (i.e., Parish D) revealed that responses from the first three parishes emphasized on the component Mission and its elements Worship and Christian Service. Responses from Parish D were more evenly spread across the three general components Mission, Leadership, and Organization.

Comparison of CC Elements From the Literature, Key Respondent Interviews, and Parish Interviews

There was congruence between most of the elements identified in the literature and those emphasized by parish leaders (see Table 8). Leadership appeared in the literature and in both interviews. However, Leadership figured so prominently in the parish leader interviews that it was subdivided into three elements namely Participatory Leadership, Priest Characteristics, and Leader Characteristics. Structures for resolving and containing conflicts, sense of community, and homogeneity and heterogeneity likewise appeared in both the literature and interviews. However these elements were subsumed under Parish Life in the interviews. Another similarity was with the element Resources, which appeared in the empirical studies of CC. Links with other communities likewise appeared in the interviews although under the elements Christian Service and Resources.

There were elements that were missing from either the literature or the interviews. For example, Worship/Faith, Education, Christian Service, Programs, and Open to Change all emerged from the interviews but did not appear in the literature. Achievement orientation, which appeared in the literature, did not emerge from the interviews as a significant element of parish competence.

Table 8

Comparison of CC Elements Across Studies and Two Interviews

Elements Identified by Cottrell (1976)	Empirically-derived Elements	Elements from Non-Empirical Studies of CC	Elements from Key Respondent Interviews	Parish Leader Interviews
Commitment to the community	Commitment	--	--	--
Clarity of identity and position in issues	Self-other awareness	--	--	--
Participation	Participation	Participation	--	Participation
Conflict containment and accommodation	Conflict containment and accommodation	Structures for resolving and containing conflicts; Homogeneity and heterogeneity	--	Parish Life
Development of communicative skills and facilities	Communication and articulateness	Communication structures	--	Communication
Machinery for facilitating participant interaction and decision-making.	Lay involvement and leadership, Less directive clergy; Cooperation; Democratic participation style	Leadership	Participatory leadership; Visionary leadership	Participatory leadership; Priest characteristics; Leader characteristics
Management of relations with the larger society	Management of relations with the larger society	Links with other communities and agencies	Christian service	Christian service; Resources
Ability to articulate the community's views	--	--	--	--

Table 8 (continuation)

Comparison of CC Elements Across Studies and Two Interviews

Elements Identified by Cottrell (1976)	Empirically-derived Elements	Elements from Non-Empirical Studies of CC	Elements from Key Respondent Interviews	Parish Leader Interviews
	Psychological sense of community, Social support	Sense of community	--	Parish life
	Resource adequacy and use	--	--	Resources
	Evaluation of efforts	--	--	--
		Achievement orientation	Healthy faith development	Worship
			Education Programs	Education Programs
				Open to changes

Section Summary

This section presented the elements of CC that emerged from the interviews. A thematic analysis of the interviews resulted in a component structure of CC comprising of 12 elements that grouped into three components. This component structure was tested using data from the survey given to parishioners. Results of this test are presented in the next section.

Research Question 2 Answered Through the Survey:

What are the elements and components

(i.e., component structure) of parish competence?

As presented in the previous section, 12 elements emerged from the interviews. These 12 elements were grouped under three general components. This revised conceptualization of CC as illustrated in Figure 3, was empirically tested using data from the survey. Specifically four separate analyses were used. First, a test was conducted to determine if the 12 elements formed 12 reliable scales. Second, an exploratory principal components analysis was used to determine if the 12 elements indeed grouped into the three general components as conceptualized in Figure 3. The third test determined if the general components resulting from the exploratory principal components analysis were significantly correlated with each other (this relationship is indicated by the curved arrows in Figure 3). These three tests used the data for Part A of the survey that contained respondents' agreements to whether or not the items were essential for a parish to be effective. After this, a fourth test was conducted. The component structure resulting from the analysis of Part A was tested using a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on the data

from Part B of the survey. In Part B, respondents assessed their parish according to the same items found in Part A.

With regard to the second test mentioned above, several analyses were actually conducted before finally deciding to use an exploratory principal components analysis using the 12 elements although not all of these analyses are presented here. First, an exploratory principal components analysis and an exploratory principal axis analysis were done using all 73 items. Both analyses however failed to converge in 25 iterations. It was then decided to do a factor analysis using the 12 elements instead of pooling all 73 items at once. Although an exploratory principal components analysis made sense given the nature and assumptions of the research with regard to the weights of each element, an exploratory principal axis analysis was attempted and it resulted in two components as did the exploratory principal components analysis. Given that the scree plots of both exploratory analyses hinted at a possible third factor, an analysis specifying the number of factors was done for both principal components and principal axis analyses. The results however showed that this possible third factor/component was marginal. Given the results of these additional tests, it was decided to use the exploratory principal components analysis using the 12 elements.

Part A Analysis: The Component Structure of Parish Competence

There were two steps involved in determining the component structure of parish competence. The first step entailed computing the internal reliability of the scales. The results indicated that the 12 elements from the interview did form 12 reliable scales. The second step involved using an exploratory principal components factor analysis to test the component structure that arose from the interviews. The results suggest that the

component structure of parish competence is comprised of two components with 11 scales.

Establishing Scale Reliability

The initial step in establishing reliability was to go over the survey items and reassess the original assignment of items to elements (which from now on will be referred to as scales). A few modifications were made such as transferring items from one scale to another. A test of internal consistency using item correlations for each of the 12 scales followed. This involved computing Cronbach's alphas for the scales and comparing correlations between items and scales. After the initial reliability run, decisions were made regarding whether or not to keep an item for a scale. The guidelines used in keeping an item were a) an item-scale correlation was significant at $p < .05$, b) an item's correlation was within a .30 range of the highest item-total correlation within the scale, and c) an item correlated with its respective scale more than with other scales. Borderline cases were evaluated with the committee chair to determine whether or not their addition would benefit the analysis. Once item inclusion was established, a second reliability analysis was conducted for each scale. The data presented in the following tables contain the results of the second reliability analysis. Alphas for the 12 scales ranged from .57 to .79.

Worship scale. The psychometric properties for the six items of the Worship scale are presented in Table 9. Out of the original seven items, six were kept. One item (item 9 in Part A of the questionnaire in Appendix J) was removed from this scale and transferred because it correlated higher with the Participation scale. Content-wise, it also made sense to transfer this item.

Table 9

Psychometric Properties of Worship Scale

Scale Items (item numbers denote the item number in the questionnaire)	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
2. Everyone in attendance enthusiastically participates in celebrations of faith.	5.25	1.84	.25
6. Parishioners know when and how to genuflect (e.g., kneel) in church.	4.14	2.19	.44
7. A parish creates guidelines on proper Church attire.	3.75	2.08	.41
11. A parish has all year round worship opportunities (e.g., devotions, small worship groups) beyond the weekend and weekday masses.	6.45	1.19	.27
13. People are taught how to apply God's good news in their day-to-day lives.	7.16	1.01	.27
15. Participants in any parish activities (including devotions, social activities) are made aware of how the activity is connected to love of God.	6.38	1.28	.44
Alpha = .60	Scale Mean = 33.13	Scale SD = 5.76	

Parish Life scale. Out of the original 11 items comprising the Parish Life scale, only eight remained after the initial reliability run (see Table 10). Three items were removed because of either a low corrected item-total correlation or a high correlation with another scale. The remaining eight items still represented the broad idea of parish life including welcoming, absence of conflict, pride, and sense of community.

Table 10

Psychometric Properties of Parish Life Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
8. Everyone (including parishioners, staff, and priests) feels welcome regardless of how different his/her political views are from the majority of a parish.	6.79	1.57	.42
14. A parish celebrates diversity in race and ethnicity of parishioners.	6.00	1.91	.51
16. A parish offers different styles of liturgy that appeal to different tastes.	5.02	1.78	.40
19. A parish has no conflict among members of the parish.	3.92	2.01	.23
22. A parish celebrates diversity in sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, etc.) of parishioners.	3.91	2.36	.44
23. A parish has a good reputation in its town/city.	6.13	1.50	.37
25. Parishioners have a sense of pride in being members of their parish.	6.51	1.24	.45
27. There are year round opportunities for parishioners to know each other.	6.23	1.17	.40
Alpha = .70	Scale Mean = 44.50	Scale SD = 7.85	

Participation scale. The five items comprising the Participation scale are shown in Table 11. One item was removed from the original set because of a negative correlation with the scale. The corrected item-total correlations of the remaining five items were within a narrow range. With the removal of one item from the original scale and the transfer of one item (item 9) from the Worship scale to this scale, alpha increased from .47 to .66.

Table 11

Psychometric Properties of Participation Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
9. Liturgical music generates enthusiasm in parishioners to sing.	6.41	1.52	.37
10. Parishioners are encouraged to participate in parish activities through personal invitations (e.g., someone talking to parishioners after mass).	5.83	1.44	.45
21. High proportions of parishioners attend parish social events such as a parish dinner and parish picnic.	5.09	1.54	.42
28. High proportions of parishioners attend a parish's own masses.	6.27	1.17	.43
30. Parishioners act as a parish's representatives to the local community.	5.63	1.46	.39
Alpha = .66	Scale Mean = 29.23	Scale SD = 4.65	

Education scale. From the original four items, one was removed due to a low corrected item-total correlation. By removing this item, the alpha increased from .47 to .57 (see Table 12).

Table 12

Psychometric Properties of Education Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
3. A parish has a parochial school.	4.48	2.41	.46
4. A resident priest is involved in the operations of the parochial school if a parish has one.	5.92	2.02	.48
5. Religious education is focused on children.	5.89	1.86	.22
Alpha = .57	Scale Mean = 16.29	Scale SD = 4.63	

Christian Service scale. All five original items of the scale were retained (Table 13). All corrected item-total correlations were moderately high and the scale alpha was the highest among the 12 scales.

Table 13

Psychometric Properties of Christian Service Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
17. A parish is involved in social issues affecting the town/city it is located in.	5.92	1.52	.58
18. A parish is involved in social issues affecting the world.	5.96	1.49	.68
24. The ultimate goal of a parish should be to provide Christian service programs (e.g., support groups, food cupboard).	5.00	1.73	.43
31. A parish has Christian service programs (e.g., food cupboard, support groups) that serve the local community.	6.20	1.39	.50
32. A parish is involved in social issues affecting the nation.	5.64	1.60	.67
Alpha = .79	Scale Mean = 28.71	Scale SD = 5.71	

Participatory Leadership scale. Three items were removed from the original 11 items due to either a low corrected item-total correlation or a high correlation with another scale. The psychometric properties of the remaining eight items are presented in Table 14. Items 54 and 66, which referred to diversity among leaders, were included in this scale to reflect the context in which these items were mentioned in the interview. According to respondents, participatory leadership also involved having people of different backgrounds serve as leaders.

Table 14

Psychometric Properties of Participatory Leadership Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
38. Parishioners not involved in parish leadership are included in planning parish programs.	5.64	1.48	.33
52. Lay leaders make decisions within their job description independent of a pastor.	4.21	1.82	.26
54. Lay leaders represent the diversity in sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, etc.) of a parish.	3.50	2.08	.46
57. An increasing number of parishioners join in running the parish (e.g., heads of committees, parish council member).	6.06	1.17	.34
66. Lay leaders represent the racial and ethnic diversity of a parish.	5.78	1.78	.45
Alpha = .60	Scale Mean = 25.18		Scale SD = 5.27

Communication scale. Items comprising the Communication scale are presented in Table 15. From the original seven items, two were removed because the corrected item-total correlation was either negative or beyond the .30 range. The alpha for this scale went up from .53 to .69 after removing the two items.

Table 15

Psychometric Properties of Communication Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
67. Parishioners can openly discuss their concerns with the parish leadership.	6.93	1.13	.45
68. Parish leadership informs parishioners of parish issues through personal means (e.g., talking to parishioners after mass as they leave).	5.41	1.61	.36
71. Parish leadership communicates with parishioners who do not attend church.	5.39	1.45	.42
72. Parish leadership asks parishioners what their concerns are instead of waiting for parishioners to come forward.	6.16	1.17	.65
73. A parish uses the talents of all parishioners who answer time and talent surveys.	6.34	1.23	.44
Alpha = .69	Scale Mean = 330.23	Scale SD = 4.47	

Priest Characteristics scale. The six items in the Priest Characteristics scale are presented in Table 16. All items were kept, including item 63, even if the corrected item-total correlation was relatively low. This was because the total alpha was not different with or without this item (all items alpha = .61; alpha without item 63 = .61). Ultimately, there was a gain of one more item in the analysis without sacrificing total alpha.

Although the item's corrected item-total correlation was beyond the .30 range, it was just barely so. The item's correlations with other scales were likewise lower than that of the correlation with the Priest Characteristics scale. With all of these considerations, the decision was made to keep the item.

Table 16

Psychometric Properties of Priest Characteristics Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
55. A pastor manages the parish in a manner that a businessperson manages the resources of a corporation.	4.48	1.84	.30
56. A resident priest is involved with the happenings in the local community.	5.75	1.34	.52
60. A resident priest continually tries new programs.	5.07	1.53	.40
63. A resident priest's homilies challenge the spiritual lives of parishioners.	6.80	1.32	.20
64. A resident priest is quick in making decisions that affect the whole parish.	4.13	1.78	.27
65. A resident priest's enthusiasm is contagious.	6.69	1.28	.42
Alpha = .61	Scale Mean = 32.92	Scale SD = 5.32	

Leader Characteristics scale. All four items comprising the Leader Characteristics scale were kept in the analysis (Table 17). The corrected item-total correlations were moderate to moderately high and within the .30 range.

Table 17

Psychometric Properties of Leader Characteristics Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
53. Lay leaders of a parish are sociable.	5.73	1.33	.51
59. Lay leaders continually try new programs.	5.11	1.48	.44
61. Lay leaders' enthusiasm is contagious.	6.09	1.33	.59
62. Lay leaders are involved with the happenings of the local community.	5.87	1.26	.67
Alpha = .75	Scale Mean = 22.81	Scale SD = 4.09	

Programs scale. Out of the original six items, one was removed due to a negative corrected item-total correlation. The properties of the final Programs scale are presented in Table 18. With the removal of one item, alpha increased from .52 to .63. Item 44 was included in this scale as opposed to the Participatory Leadership scale where a similar item was included (i.e., item 38: Parishioners not involved in parish leadership are included in planning parish programs). In the context of the interviews, planning was given great emphasis in terms of participatory leadership. However, evaluation was given in the context of programs such as getting feedback from parishioners about programs. This decision was strengthened by the corrected item-total correlations. Item 44 had an $r = .56$ with Programs and $r = .32$ with Participatory Leadership.

Table 18

Psychometric Properties of Programs Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
34. A parish offers programs catering to varied social interests.	5.62	1.37	.51
35. A parish spends whatever amount is necessary to make all programs handicap accessible (e.g., Braille materials, sign interpreter for the deaf).	5.13	1.74	.32
41. Program schedules are convenient for everyone interested in joining them.	5.25	1.39	.32
43. Aside from the priest, there is a person who can answer all questions about parish programs.	5.88	1.40	.50
44. Parishioners not involved in parish leadership are included in evaluating parish programs.	5.90	1.49	.31
Alpha = .63	Scale Mean = 27.78	Scale SD = 4.72	

Resources scale. The items in the Resources scale are presented in Table 19. One item was removed from the original eight items due to a low item corrected item-total correlation.

Table 19

Psychometric Properties of Resources Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
36. A parish seeks assistance from the Diocese.	5.31	1.60	.48
37. A parish explicitly encourages parishioners to give more of their time.	5.55	1.26	.38
39. A parish creates space to accommodate parish activities regardless of cost.	3.77	1.55	.25
45. A parish explicitly encourages parishioners to give more of their financial resources.	5.18	1.31	.37
46. A parish seeks assistance from other parishes.	4.29	1.51	.44
47. A parish seeks assistance from non-profits agencies.	4.28	1.57	.41
48. A parish spends whatever amount is necessary to make all buildings and offices handicap accessible (e.g., for those using wheelchairs).	5.34	1.87	.29
Alpha = .66	Scale Mean = 33.72	Scale SD = 6.15	

Open to change scale. There were only two items (i.e., item 42: Parishioners are open to changes introduced by the resident priest; item 49: Parishioners are open to changes introduced by lay leaders) for this scale. Since an internal consistency test could not be computed, it was decided to check the inter-item correlation. The correlation between the two items was significant, $r = .48$, $p < .01$ (see Table 20). Another check to determine the consistency of the two items was a correlation of the two items with the other 11 scales. The correlations in Table 20 showed that both items had the same trend in significant and positive correlations with the scales.

Table 20

Correlation Between Open to Changes Items and the Other Scales

Item/Scale	Item 42: Parishioners are open to changes introduced by the resident priest.	Item 49: Parishioners are open to changes introduced by lay leaders.
Item 42	1.00	.48*
Item 49	.48*	1.00
Worship	.11	-.04
Parish Life	.27*	.43*
Participation	.22*	.32*
Education	.01	-.18
Christian Service	.25*	.34*
Participatory	.26*	.51*
Leadership		
Communication	.21*	.32*
Priest	.35*	.33*
Characteristics		
Leader	.37*	.48*
Characteristics		
Programs	.40*	.49*
Resources	.33*	.37*

Note. * $p < .01$.

This section presented the final reliability analyses for the 12 scales. From the original 73 items comprising the 12 scales, 12 items were removed leaving 61 items for the next analysis. The range of alphas for the final scales was from .57 to .79 as compared to .47 to .79 in the original scales. Results of the exploratory principal components analysis using the final set of items and scales are presented in the following section. This analysis determined if and how the scales grouped together to form components.

Exploratory Principal Components Analysis

Determining the components. Once the final set of items for each scale was decided upon, mean scores for each scale were computed. A mean score for each respondent was computed only if the respondent answered at least half of the items for each scale (or variable as they are referred to from now on). These scale or variable mean scores were analyzed using exploratory principal components analysis (PCA) with a promax rotation. A PCA was used for these data because of the high correlations among the variables (see Table 21). With high intercorrelations among variables, a PCA rather than a common factors analysis is better used (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The same authors suggested an orthogonal rotation if variables correlated less than .30. Considering that a great number of the variable correlations in Table 21 were higher than .30, it was decided to use an oblique rotation, specifically a promax rotation. Just like varimax for an orthogonal solution, a promax rotation maximizes the variance of the pattern elements on a factor. A final rationale for using a PCA was the research assumption that all variables in the analysis had equal weights. In a common factor analysis, more emphasis is given to variables that have the highest correlations with other variables (Nunnally & Bernstein).

Table 21

Correlations among Variables

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Worship (1)	.60	.34	.73	.69	.16	.04	.41	.38	.34	.33	.42	.07
Parish Life (2)	.22	.70	.66	-.12	.76	.89	.44	.49	.61	.70	.34	.60
Participation (3)	.46	.45	.66	.29	.53	.49	.72	.46	.66	.65	.54	.49
Education (4)	.40	-.08	.18	.57	-.21	-.44	.27	.25	.06	.02	.28	-.17
Christian Service (5)	.11	.56	.38	-.14	.79	.67	.38	.48	.57	.62	.33	.47
Participatory Leadership (6)	.03	.57	.31	-.26	.46	.60	.57	.52	.77	.91	.41	.71
Communication (7)	.26	.31	.49	.17	.28	.37	.69	.54	.64	.73	.61	.47
Priest Characteristics (8)	.23	.32	.29	.14	.33	.31	.35	.61	1.01	.63	.49	.62
Leader Characteristics (9)	.23	.44	.47	.04	.44	.52	.46	.68	.75	.79	.49	.70
Programs (10)	.21	.46	.42	.01	.44	.56	.48	.39	.54	.63	.73	.80
Resources (11)	.24	.32	.37	.11	.31	.34	.42	.32	.38	.55	.66	.55
Open to Changes (12)	.04	.41	.32	-.11	.33	.44	.32	.39	.49	.51	.41	--

Note. Correlations above the diagonal are corrected for attenuation. Correlations below the diagonal are raw correlations. Diagonals contain scale alphas.

Table 22 shows the communalities, pattern matrix, and structure matrix resulting from the exploratory PCA. With the use of an oblique solution, the loading matrix becomes the pattern matrix. The pattern matrix contains values representing the unique contribution of each component to the variance in the variables, whereas the structure matrix presents the correlation between the variables and components (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996).

The exploratory PCA resulted in two components with eigenvalues above 1.0. The first component accounted for 40.95% of the variance while the second component

accounted for 14.51%, for a total of 55.46%. Although the scree plot hinted at a possible third component,

Table 22

Communalities, Pattern and Structure Matrices from the PCA

Variable (scale)	Communalities		Pattern Matrix ^a		Structure Matrix ^a	
	Initial	Extraction	Component		Component	
	1	1	1	2	1	2
Worship **	1.00	.60	.02	.77	.23	.78
Parish Life *	1.00	.53	.75	-.08	.72	.12
Participation	1.00	.55	.47	.47	.59	.59
Education **	1.00	.69	-.34	.86	-.11	.76
Christian Service *	1.00	.49	.72	-.16	.68	.04
Participatory Leadership *	1.00	.68	.85	-.33	.76	-.10
Communication *	1.00	.49	.53	.34	.62	.48
Priest Characteristics*	1.00	.46	.55	.28	.62	.42
Leader Characteristics *	1.00	.63	.74	.17	.78	.36
Programs *	1.00	.61	.77	.05	.78	.26
Resources *	1.00	.43	.55	.24	.61	.39
Open to Changes *	1.00	.49	.72	-.13	.69	.07
Initial Eigenvalues of components			4.91	1.74		
Percent of Variance per component			40.95	14.51		

Note. ^a = Results after a promax rotation.

* = variables comprising Component 1

** = variables comprising Component 2

this component accounted for only 7.74% of the total variance, which was below the 10% cut-off. Likewise, only one of the 66 residual correlations had an absolute value greater than .10, which indicated that there was not a third component (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Taking into consideration all of these parameters, it was decided to accept the solution with two components. The pattern matrix (see Table 22) showed nine variables (i.e., Parish Life, Christian Service, Participatory Leadership, Communication, Priest

Characteristics, Leader Characteristics, Programs, Resources, Open to Changes) that loaded highly on Component 1 and two variables (i.e., Worship, Education) that loaded highly on Component 2. The Participation variable loaded equally on both components.

The structure matrix, the correlations between the variables and components, showed the same trends. The Worship and Education variables correlated highly with Component 2, the Participation variable correlated equally with both components, and the rest of the variables correlated higher with Component 1. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (1996), variables with more than one high value across components for either the pattern or structure matrices are complex in that they reflect the influence of more than one component. According to these authors, it is best to avoid complex variables because they make the interpretation of components ambiguous. With this consideration in mind, a decision was made to exclude the Participation variable from the component structure, and keep nine variables for Component 1 and two variables for Component 2 as indicated in Table 22. The correlation between these two components, after removing the Participation variable in Component 1, was .09, which was not significant at $p < .05$.

Overall, the loadings in the pattern matrix and the correlations in the structure matrix were consistent with the correlations in Table 21. This table revealed that Education correlated highly with Worship and the rest of the variables correlated highly among themselves. A computation of the internal validity of the items under each component revealed that the alpha for Component 1 with 47 items was .90. The alpha for Component 2 with nine items was .69 (see Appendices K and L for the complete psychometric properties of both components).

Component 2 was labeled Parish Mission because Worship and Education reflected the basic mission of the Church. Parish Life, Christian Service, Participatory Leadership, Communication, Priest Characteristics, Leader Characteristics, Programs, Resources, and Open to Changes described the general environment of a parish. Therefore Component 1 was labeled Parish Environment.

The results from the exploratory PCA used above were similar to the results of an exploratory principal axis analysis (see Appendix M). Both analyses resulted in two components/factors (i.e., components for PCA and factors for principal axis factor analysis) with the same variables loading on the same components/factors. One slight difference was that with the PCA, the Participation variable loaded equally on both components while with the principal axis analysis, the same variable loaded more on the first factor. However, the rotated factor matrix showed the difference in loading was small. These similar results further strengthen the finding that parish competence consists of two components.

Comparison of components across parishes. Mean component scores for each parish were computed for comparison (see Table 23). There was a greater range in scores for the Parish Mission Component than the Parish Environment Component. Parishes identified as effective (i.e., Parishes A, B, and C) had lower scores on Parish Mission as compared to Parish D, which was identified as least effective. Parish C, identified the most effective among the four, had the highest score for Parish Environment and the lowest score for Parish Mission. The results suggest that effectiveness of a parish had less to do with Worship and Education and more with environmental characteristics such as Parish Life, Participatory Leadership, Priest Characteristics, and Leader Characteristics.

Table 23

Mean Component Scores Per Parish

Parish	Parish Environment Component	Parish Mission Component
Parish A	5.31	5.88
Parish B	5.50	5.92
Parish C	5.71	4.77
Parish D	5.34	6.02
All Parishes Combined	5.51	5.47

Correlations between the components and outcome variables. These two components were correlated with several outcome variables that focused on the personal experiences of respondents to show evidence for concurrent validity (see Table 24). The table also indicates whether or not the correlations between an outcome item and the two components were significant using a t-test for dependent correlations (for the formula, refer to Cohen and Cohen, 1975). Scores for each component were computed by creating a mean for each respondent across all of the variables comprising the component. Thus a mean score for Component 2 was computed using the scores of two variables (i.e., Worship, Education) and a mean score for Component 1 was computed using the scores of the nine variables.

There was evidence for the concurrent validity of the two components. Parish Mission correlated with several outcome items that indeed focused on the faith and religious aspects of the church. These outcome items included importance of religion (item 23.7), importance of the parish (item 23.7), church attendance (item 23.9), importance of prayer (item 23.11), and efficacy of prayer (item 23.12). Stronger agreement in these items was related with stronger agreement that the Parish Mission

component (i.e., Worship and Education) was essential for a parish to be effective. Items 23.4 (Our parish has taught me how the Gospel affects my life) and 23.5 (Our parish

Table 24

Correlations between Components and Outcome Items

Outcome Items (Item numbers are as they appeared in the survey)	Components		t-values for correlation tests
	1: Parish Environment	2: Parish Mission	
33 (Part B). Our parish is close to being the ideal effective parish.	.19**	-.10	3.52**
23.1 (Part C). I feel welcome in our parish.	.25**	.04	2.57*
23.2 (Part C). I know what programs we have in our parish.	.22**	-.02	2.91**
23.3 (Part C) I am not satisfied with how our parish is being run. (R)	.11	-.12	2.74**
23.4 (Part C). Our parish has taught me how the Gospel affects my life.	.29**	-.01	3.71**
23.5 (Part C). Our parish meets my spiritual needs.	.24**	.04	2.44*
23.6 (Part C) I make an effort to belong to our parish.	.32**	.09	2.87**
23.7 (Part C). Religion is important in my life.	.22**	.25**	0.38
23.8 (Part C). Our parish is important in my life.	.20**	.18**	0.24
23.9 (Part C). It is not important to attend church. (R)	.04	.18**	1.68
23.10 (Part C). I attend church because the Church requires me to do so. (R)	.08	-.05	1.66
23.11 (Part C). Prayer is important in my life.	.12	.24**	1.47
23.12 (Part C). My prayers are answered.	.07	.21**	1.68
Participation level	-.01	.11	1.45
Component 1 : Parish Environment	1.00	.09	
Component 2: Parish Mission	.09	1.00	

Note. R = item was reverse-coded.

*p < .05 level (2-tailed). ** p < .01 level (2-tailed).

meets my spiritual needs.) were expected to correlate with Parish Mission. However they correlated significantly with the Parish Environment component. Even with these discrepancies however, there seemed to be concurrent validity of the parish mission component. In the same manner, the Parish Environment component was correlated with several outcome items that indeed focused on areas related to the variables comprising the component. These areas and items included sense of community (items 23.1 and 23.6), and programs (item 23.2).

There were unexpected results. The first item, an assessment of the parish as being ideal, was significantly correlated with Parish Environment ($r = .19, p < .01$) and negatively correlated with Parish Mission. The difference in the two correlations was likewise significant as seen in the third column of Table 24. This meant that respondents positively assessed the effectiveness of the parish alongside the positive assessment of the Parish Environment, and quite in the opposite direction for Parish Mission. Similarly, satisfaction with the way the parish was managed (item 23.3) was positively correlated with Parish Environment and negatively correlated with Parish Mission. The difference between the correlations was significant. The item's higher correlation with Parish Environment may have been due to the fact that this component contained variables dealing with leaders, leadership, resources, communication, and programs, which partially dealt with how the parish was managed. Therefore, there was evidence that Parish Environment may be the focus in the assessment of a parish's overall effectiveness.

The higher and significant correlations of items 23.4 (Our parish has taught me how the Gospel affects my life) and 23.5 (Our parish meets my spiritual needs) with

Parish Environment were unexpected in that the two items should have correlated with Parish Mission more than with Parish Environment. However these correlations can still be explained. The parish's ability to teach how the Gospel affects life (item 23.4) may have been related to specific variables in the Parish Environment component such as Christian Service, which included items of charity, and Parish Life which contained items related to welcoming. Charity and welcoming were two areas where a person applied Gospel teachings. The parish's ability to meet respondents' spiritual needs (item 23.5) may likewise have been related to specific variables in the Parish Environment component such as Participation which included items relating to participation in worship activities.

Comparison of CC Elements From the Literature, Interviews, and PCA

There was consistency in the elements of CC found in the literature, interviews, and the PCA analysis of the survey. Even if there were differences in the labels and the grouping of elements, the general ideas behind the elements consistently appeared. The elements identified in the parish interviews and the elements retained after the PCA were similar except for the removal of Participation after the PCA (see Table 25 for the comparison). A comparison between the elements identified by key respondent interviewees and those retained after the PCA showed that all the elements identified by key respondents were retained.

A comparison between the PCA results and the literature likewise showed consistency. Elements in the literature pertaining to resource, communication, and lay involvement in leadership had counterparts in the PCA. Some elements in the literature did not appear in the interviews or PCA as distinct elements although they were

Table 25

Comparison of CC Elements Across Studies, Two Interviews, and PCA

Elements Identified by Cottrell (1976)	Empirically-derived Elements	Elements from Non-Empirical Studies	Key Respondent Interviews	Parish Leader Interviews	PCA Results
Commitment to the community	Commitment	--	--	--	--
Clarity of identity and position in issues	Self-other awareness	--	--	--	--
Participation	Participation	Participation	--	Participation	--
Conflict containment and accommodation	Conflict containment and accommodation	Structures for resolving and containing conflicts; Homogeneity and heterogeneity	--	Parish life	Parish life
Development of communicative skills and facilities	Communication and articulateness	Communication structures	--	Communication	Communication
Machinery for facilitating participant interaction and decision-making.	Lay involvement and leadership, Less directive clergy; Cooperation; Democratic participation style	Leadership	Participatory leadership; Visionary leadership	Participatory leadership; Priest characteristics; Leader characteristics	Participatory leadership; Priest characteristics; Leader characteristics
Management of relations with the larger society	Management of relations with the larger society	Links with other communities and agencies	Christian service	Christian service; Resources	Christian service; Resources

Table 25 (continuation)

Comparison of CC Elements Across Studies, Two Interviews, and PCA

Elements Identified by Cottrell (1976)	Empirically-derived Elements	Elements from Non-Empirical Studies	Key Respondent Interviews	Parish Leader Interviews	PCA Results
Ability to articulate the community's views	--	--	--	--	--
	Psychological sense of community, Social support	Sense of community	--	Parish life	Parish life
	Resource adequacy and use	--	--	Resources	Resources
	Evaluation of efforts	--	--	--	--
		Achievement orientation	--	--	--
			Healthy faith development	Worship	Worship
			Education	Education	Education
			Programs	Programs	Programs
				Open to changes	Open to changes

subsumed under other elements. For example, elements in the literature pertaining to relations with other communities were subsumed under Christian Service and Resources. Another example was sense of community and homogeneity and heterogeneity, which were placed under Parish Life.

Thus, analysis of the data from Part A suggests that the component structure of parish competence has two components and nine variables. The first component is Parish Environment, which contains Parish Life, Christian Service, Participatory Leadership, Communication, Priest Characteristics, Leader Characteristics, Programs, Resources, and Open to Changes. The second component is Parish Mission, which contains Worship and Education. Results likewise suggest the concurrent validity of the two components. A further test of this component structure using Part B of the survey is presented in the next section.

Part B Analysis: A Confirmatory Factor Analysis

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted on Part B of the survey (i.e., respondents' assessment of their parish) through AMOS using the two-component and nine-variable structure resulting from Part A. The hypothesized model is presented in Figure 4 where ellipses represent latent variables and rectangles represent the measured variables. A two-component model of parish competence was hypothesized. The Parish Life, Christian Service, Participatory Leadership, Priest Characteristics, Leader Characteristics, Communication, Programs, Resources, and Open to Changes variables served as indicators of the Parish Environment component. The Worship and Education variables served as indicators of the Parish Mission component. The two components were hypothesized to covary with one another as represented by the double-headed arrow.

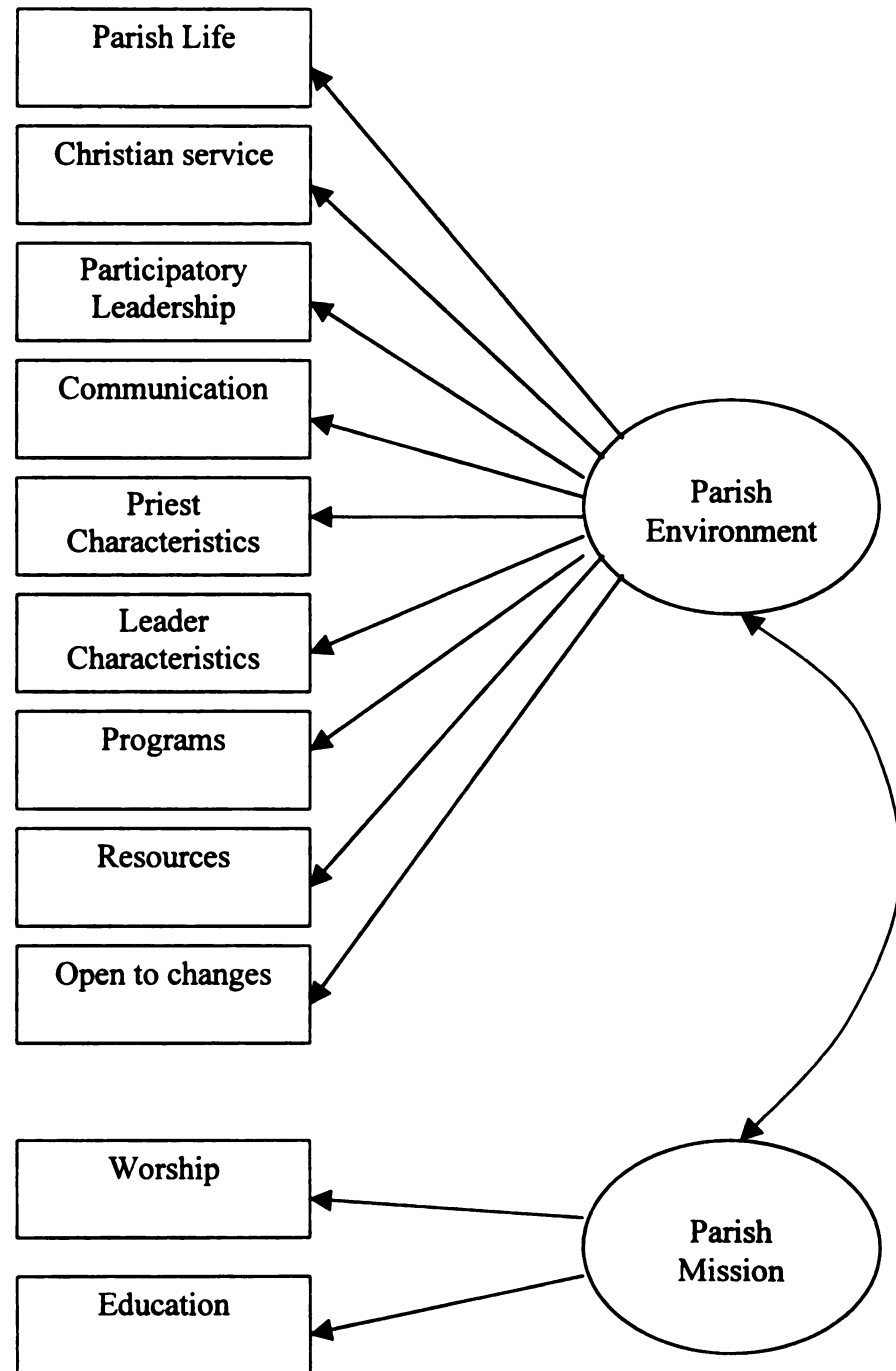


Figure 4. Revised component structure of parish competence tested using a confirmatory factor analysis.

Similar to the procedure followed in Part A, the 12 scales in Part B underwent reliability analysis before the CFA run. The criteria used were the same as those used in the reliability analysis in Part A (see Appendix N for the psychometric properties of the scales). Ten out of the original 81 items were removed leaving 71 items for analysis.

Scores used in the confirmatory factor analysis were computed similarly as in Part A. Mean scores for each of the 12 variables were computed for each respondent. A mean score was computed only if the respondent answered at least one half of the items in the particular scale.

The analysis employed the maximum likelihood estimation of the model. The first run resulted in a solution that was not admissible. Two possible reasons were use of a wrong model or the use of a small sample (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1984 as cited in Amos User's Guide, 1997). Although the program read data from 266 respondents, it only computed for those respondents without missing data. Going over the scale data, there were 125 respondents with missing data, thus data for only 141 were computed. The problem was found with the Education scale, which only had three items remaining after the reliability analysis (see the psychometric properties of the Education scale, Table 4, in Appendix N). The Education scale had two items dealing with the parochial school. However Parish C with 106 respondents did not have a parish school. Considering that a scale mean was computed only if at least half of the scale items were computed and two items out of the three did not apply to Parish C, 106 respondents were automatically discarded from the analysis.

It was decided to compute the Education scale differently. A scale score was computed if respondents answered at least one of the three items. This meant that

respondents from Parish C had a scale score for Education as long as they answered the one item applicable for their parish. Using this new criterion, there were only 32 respondents with missing data. With the increased sample size of 234, an admissible solution was achieved.

Several fit indices were computed. Although not all of the indices indicated fit, majority of them did. The chi-square value of the model was significant suggesting that the model did not fit the data, $\chi^2 (43, N = 234) = 96.71, p < .00$. Another index computed using the chi-square was the ratio of the χ^2 to the degrees of freedom (i.e., $96.71/43$), which in this case was 2.25. For Tabachnick and Fidell (1996), any value below 2 indicated a good fit. However, the authors cautioned that the significance of the chi-square itself was heavily influenced by a large sample, thus small differences can appear significant.

Other fit indices showed a good to moderate fit of the model with the data. The goodness of fit index, GFI, was close to 1.0, which indicated a good fit ($GFI = .93$). Accounting for the degrees of freedom, the adjusted goodness of fit index, AGFI, was lower but still close to 1.0 ($AGFI = .89$). Several comparative fit indices were used and all were beyond .9, which indicated a good fitting model ($NFI = .929$; $IFI = .959$; $CFI = .959$). The resulting RMSEA index was .07, which was within the .08 or less value suggested by Browne and Cudeck (as cited in Arbuckle, 1997) as indicating a reasonable value. Lastly, the root mean square residual (RMR) was .046, which was close to .00. This too indicated perfect fit (see Figure 5 for regression weights). Therefore, it can be reasonably concluded that the confirmatory factor analysis showed that the data in Part B of the survey supported the two-component model resulting from Part A.

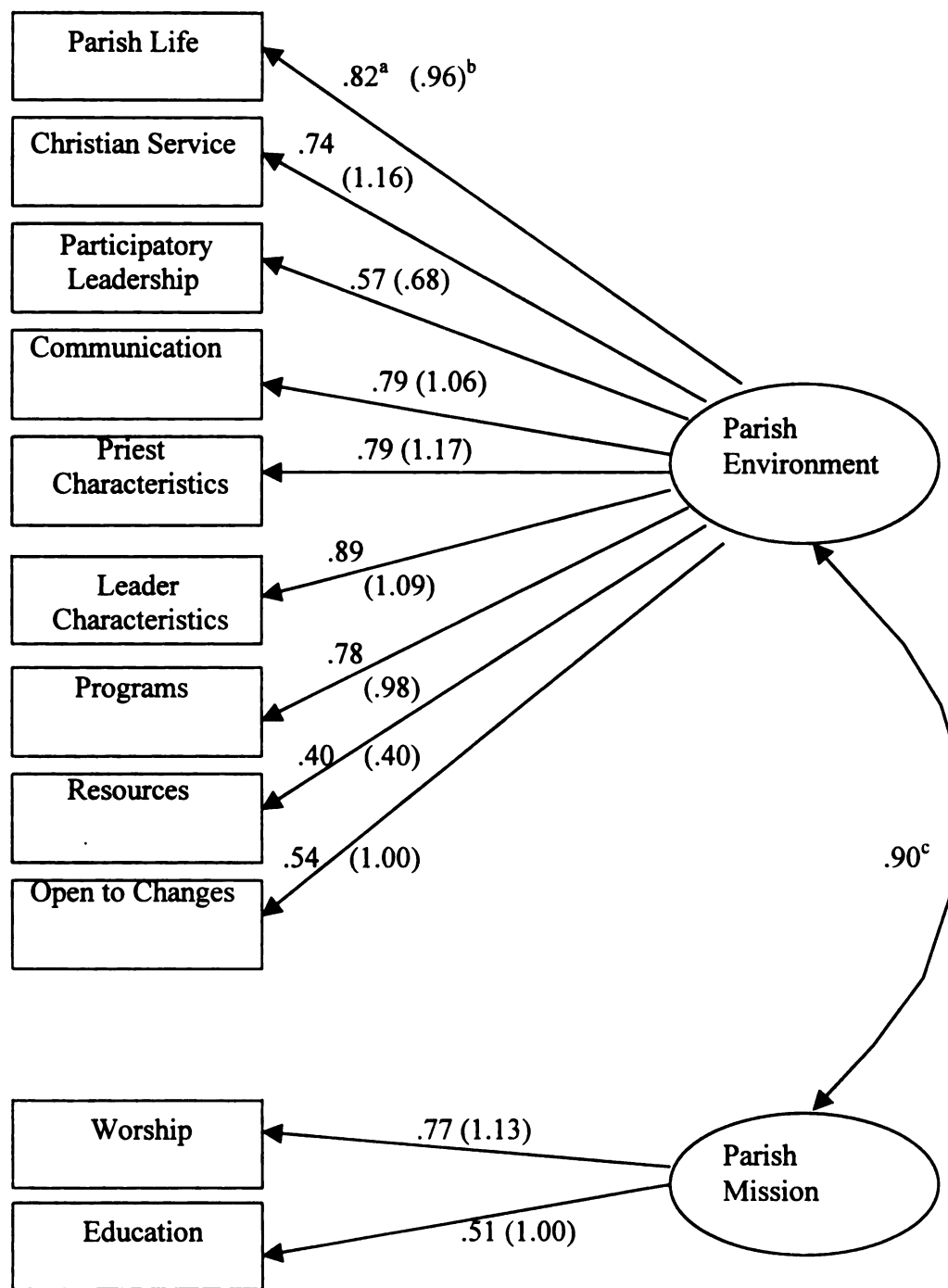


Figure 5. Component structure of parish competence with resulting regression weights.

Notes. a = Standardized Regression Weights. b = Unstandardized Regression Weights. c = correlation.

Summary of the Results for Research Question 2

Two different methods of data collection were used to determine the component structure of parish competence. The two sets of interviews resulted in similar elements. These elements were likewise similar to those in the literature. A conceptual component structure of CC was created based on the interviews. This component structure consisted of 12 elements falling under three general components (Figure 3). This component structure was tested using an exploratory principal components analysis using the data from Part A of the survey. The resulting component structure had strong similarities with the component structure that emerged from the interview. Out of the 12 elements and three general components that originally appeared from the interviews, 11 elements that fell under two general components were retained (Figure 4). This revised component structure of parish competence was then tested with a confirmatory factor analysis using the data from Part B of the survey. This last test confirmed that the component structure model did fit with the data.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study help add clarity to the definition and elements of parish or community competence. The results likewise point to areas where community psychologists can help religious communities better provide social services and help these communities become more effective.

Definition and Component Structure of Community Competence

The definition of community competence that emerged from the interviews generally focus on the ability to provide for parishioners' faith development. However the definition of CC does not just focus on the outcome but rather includes process as well. However, the focus on outcome may be an artifact of the manner the question was asked.

There is a wide range of ideas as to what the elements of CC are. The 12 elements that emerged from the interviews are thought of falling into three different components. However, after going through an exploratory principal components analysis, the 12 elements become 11 falling under the components Parish Mission and Parish Environment.

Definition of Community Competence

It appears CC can be understood both as an outcome and a process. Although the interviews tend to favor an outcome-based definition of CC in contrast with the literature, this outcome bias may be an artifact of the way the question was asked (i.e., What would an effective parish be like?). Community competence is likewise supposed to encompass the community, group, and individual levels but this was not evident in the results.

Community Competence as an Outcome

There seems to be a significant difference in how the literature and the interviewees defined community competence. The literature definition focused on collaboration along the problem solving process (Cottrell, 1976; Gatz, et al., 1982; Goeppinger, et al., 1982; Israel, 1985; Johnson & Mullins, 1990). Collaboration and consensus were especially central to Cottrell's definition of CC (1976). Collaboration in problem solving can be understood as the process aspect of community functioning. On the other hand interviewees in this study focused on the outcome -- the ability of the parish to fulfill its central mission of strengthening faith and providing good worship. Collaboration in the process of fulfilling the mission was not central to the definition although participatory and inclusive leadership aided in achieving the goal.

This difference in definition probably exists due to the distinct nature of a parish. As a religious entity, there is a clear understanding that its goals center on worship, faith, and education. Although this should not preclude the equal importance of the process involved in providing for those three goals, it presently does so in a Catholic parish. This is due to the hierarchical nature of the parish. The priest still has the final decision on what happens in the parish. Likewise the Vatican has the final decision on the direction of the Diocese and ultimately the parish.

This leads to the next issue of whether or not a hierarchical organization or community can exhibit competence. If one uses the collaboration-focused literature definition of parish competence as the template of parishioners' definition of competence, then the latter hardly fits the former. This lack of collaboration may lead one to conclude that competence is an inapplicable construct or has limited utility in describing parishes

and other hierarchical organizations. However considering that respondents could define and clearly illustrate examples of what competent (i.e., effective) and non-competent parishes are, then there may be another definition of competence. A definition that refers more to the attainment of outcomes with collaboration as an increasingly desirable process element, even if the latter is not yet on the same level of importance as outcomes.

However, the study results are not totally incongruent with the literature because there are outcome-based definitions of community competence. Definitions of CC have included the acquisition and use of resources (Gatz, et al., 1982; Iscoe, 1974; Johnson & Mullins, 1990), and fulfillment of the needs of the different groups in a community (Barbarin, 1981a; Hurley, et al., 1981). Both definitions reflect an outcome focus.

Community Competence as a Process

On another level of understanding, the elements underlying parish competence may actually reveal a process of change. Some respondents define parish competence in terms of the ability to constantly evolve – a continuous envisioning of what the parish could be and to continually work toward that vision. Vision involves change and the willingness to go through the process of change. Change on the other hand, requires studying the faith and social environments the parish is in, and discovering what parishioners want. Vision is the opposite of maintenance. Maintenance is contentment in what has been offered before and the manner the sacraments, services, and programs have been provided. In a maintenance-oriented parish, the process of change hardly exists.

However, the process of envisioning is not complete without collaboration. Although it is possible that the parish vision emerges from the priest alone, this is not desirable as the interviews suggest. There is an increasing desire for collaborative

decision-making, which includes setting visions and goals for the future. Without collaboration, the evolution of the parish depends on the pastor's vision. With collaboration, parish vision becomes a shared vision.

It may be that working towards a parish vision is the foundation of parish competence and its two components namely Parish Mission and Parish Environment. For example, vision is evidenced in the mission of worship through the vibrancy of liturgical celebrations. Vision in the area of parish environment can be shown through the expanding concern of service to include issues of social justice affecting different nations, and searching for new ways to welcome parishioners of all persuasions. On the other hand, maintenance of the status quo would be contentment in celebrating the sacraments in the manner they had been celebrated for years without an attempt to ensure its relevance to changes in society. Therefore an articulated and working parish vision may underlie the parish's competence. As the results show, there is evidence that a visionary parish is linked with its perceived competence and parishioners' satisfaction with the parish.

Therefore there are arguments for both an outcome and process definition of CC although there is more focus on the former as a probable result of the interview question. This is not in total agreement with the literature although there are overlaps. Aside from the bias of the question, it is also possible that the idea of competence and its proxy effectiveness may include both outcome and process and the emphasis on one or both depends on the type of community.

Levels of Conceptualizing CC

Community competence has been conceptualized along the levels of the individual, group, community, and society. According to Cottrell (1976), CC simultaneously encompasses the community, group, and the individual levels. In addition, management of relations with society is supposed to be important for a community's competence (Barbarin, 1981a). However, the results of this research do not present strong evidence that parishes consider the larger community and society as significant factors in parish competence. Although there is mention of linking with community and national organizations and of understanding other nations' realities (e.g., problems of third world nations as respondents refer to them), such linkages are not generally emphasized and are mentioned only by a few respondents. In addition, these linkages were mentioned in the context of the parish sharing its resource to other communities and not much in terms of a co-sharing and exchange of expertise or resource. This still suggests a separation between the parish and the world outside its boundary.

The literature and the results show both similarity and differences in the definition of CC and the levels of conceptualizing CC. This reflects the complexity of the definition of CC to the extent that a single definition of CC may not apply to different types of communities. Aside from having different definitions of CC, it may also be best to describe CC through its elements. It is noteworthy that there is a great amount of overlap in the elements comprising competence from what emerged from the interviews and from the literature.

Component Structure of Community Competence

There is a great amount of overlap between the elements of CC as described in the literature and as what was found in this study. There may be differences in labels but the descriptions behind the labels reveal similarities. For example, sense of community, leadership, and their variants are in the literature and in this study. On the other hand, there are differences in the elements and components of CC. This study has three additional elements reflecting the religious nature of the community. Another difference is in component structure of CC. This difference is clearly manifested in the comparisons between this study and the studies that empirically derive the component structure of CC. These comparisons are presented in the following two sections.

Comparison Between this Study and the Empirical Studies on CC

This research found two components compared with the four components Johnson and Mullins (1990) found. In addition to the different number of components between the two studies, another difference is the inclusion of Worship and Education in the Parish Mission component. Most of the elements in the four components John and Mullins found (i.e., communication, cooperation, and problem-solving; psychological sense of community; lay involvement and leadership; less directive clergy; evaluation of efforts) are included in the Parish Environment component in this study. Thus what stands out as similar between their study and this one is the prominence of congregation or parish environment.

With regard to the components of CC regardless of the type of community, there are similarities in the elements and components found in past studies and this study. Similarities with the study of Goeppinger and Baglioni (1985) include their components

on Democratic Participation Style, Resource Adequacy, and Decision-Making Interactions (e.g., conflict containment) and the Parish Environment component of this study. Eng and Parker (1994) found two components. Their Internal Social Interaction component included communication, participation, and social support, which are elements that likewise emerged in this study. Their External Social Interaction component included the following elements: decision-making, management of relations with the wider society, and conflict containment. These elements also emerged from the interviews and are part of the Parish Environment component. Therefore, there is a significant similarity in the elements (e.g., resource adequacy, communication) derived by this present study and by the other studies that empirically derived the elements of CC. However, these comparisons are made with caution because there are only several studies and they involve different communities.

On the other hand, there are also differences in how elements group into components. Most of the elements in the studies mentioned above fall under the Parish Environment component of this present study whereas the same elements form into two or three components in other studies. Another difference is that Participation consistently appears in the components in the other studies unlike in the present study where it is discarded from the final component structure.

Comparison Between this Study and the Review on the Community Characteristics that Influence CC Creation and Maintenance

There are both similarities and differences between the findings of this study and the community characteristics that influence CC described in the literature. Most components cited in the literature, with the exception of achievement orientation,

emerged from the interviews. On the other hand, there are important characteristics of community competence that are not evident in the literature because the elements are specific to the type of community.

Elements specific to the setting. Three components (i.e., Healthy Faith Development/Worship, Education, and Christian Service) do not appear in the literature but emerge in the key respondent interviews and figured prominently in the parish interviews. It is expected that faith/worship development and education appear as prominent elements in parish competence. These two are specific to religious congregations and thus not expected to appear in the literature of general community competence.

Christian Service figures prominently as an element of parish competence. The excitement among the interviewees when they talk about what they do and what developments they hope to see in the near future point to a growing area of work in the parish. This is very different from the findings of Castelli and Gremillion (1987) where pastors and parish administrators ranked social action programs near the bottom parish activities as sources of parish vitality. This is one area where change has occurred. In addition, service has gone beyond giving food and money. It now involves active social action such as sending out signed petitions on troubling issues and sending parishioners to missions within the nation and beyond in order to help.

Leadership. The literature cites leadership as an important component. Leadership figures prominently in this study to the extent of separating it into three elements -- priest, lay leaders, and participatory leadership. Interviewees had common expectation that priests and lay leaders have a vision and calling. Having a vision means priests and lay

leaders identify what the parish could be and could do. Having a calling means they are able to communicate to members to contribute their talents and resources to church and society (Malony, 1984). Interviewees had wider range of expectations from priests ranging from spirituality, leadership qualities, personality, being in tune with society, and a more open management style.

Consistent with the findings of Castelli and Gremillion (1987), the results of this study reveal that parishioners expect the priest to lead in a non-dictatorial and collaborative atmosphere. There is an increasing desire for participatory leadership, which is best exemplified by serving in the parish advisory council and in committees. Although the council is advisory, some priests do emphasize consensus among the members and lay leaders are presently satisfied with this. This exemplifies a democratic and collaborative running of a parish in a non-democratic church. This is important in light of a previous finding that congregations with the greatest laity involvement had the highest level of competence compared with those that allocated most responsibilities to the clergy (Johnson & Mullins, 1990). And there is preliminary evidence for this finding in this research. The parish considered most collaborative by key respondents and by parishioners is the closest to being the ideal effective parish as revealed by the questionnaire data.

A present challenge is finding more ways to allow leadership among the laity. A starting point in this process of discovery is setting aside expectations that the priest should be good at every aspect of parish life -- from worship to management of office affairs. The next step is having a more active recruitment process to involve parishioners

in parish governance. The best method suggested is the personal approach to parishioners. However this is a task which priests and lay leaders admit has never been easy.

Parish life and its sub-elements. Several ideas mentioned in the literature comprise one element that emerged from the interviews. Parish life includes areas the literature identified as the homogeneity-heterogeneity dualism, sense of community, and conflict resolution.

The homogeneity-heterogeneity element appeared in the interview in terms of ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, and politics. In terms of ethnicity and race, all parishes had a White majority but there was wide agreement that parishes need to be more welcoming to non-White parishioners. In the same manner that the literature gave reasons that either homogeneity or heterogeneity could lead to either competence or lower competence, the same ambiguity exists in the Catholic parish. Although there is consensus that parishes should be welcoming to everyone, including those who are different (e.g., race, stand on political issues), there is a struggle how to treat areas of difference that cross moral issues in official Church teachings (e.g., sexual orientation, abortion). It appears parishes create the milieu that define the extent of welcoming they extend. For example, one parish identified as effective has welcoming statements about people of different sexual orientation and allows a support group among gays and lesbians to meet in the parish premises. On the opposite end, one leader in the parish identified as least effective wondered aloud if parish leaders who consider openly welcoming gays and lesbians and celebrating differences in sexual orientation are truly Catholic.

Sense of community figured prominently in the literature as well as the interviews. Sense of community is under parish life in this study. A sense of welcoming and fellowship comprising sense of community facilitate the creation and maintenance of CC. People enjoy the friendly environment and are reinforced for their participation in worship and in parish activities. However there is a continuous challenge of encouraging sense of community especially with huge parishes. Social activities are planned but the subsequent issue then becomes participation in the activities.

Conflict resolution and containment is another theme from the interviews. There are concerns about how conflict and brewing issues can damage parish sense of community. However it seems the damage to community functioning is more insidious if issues are not brought up for discussion in a proper venue. However, the proper venue for acknowledgement and discussion of issues is not clear. Public acknowledgement of issues (e.g., a statement after mass) was mentioned as well as private audiences between priest, lay leaders, and parishioners involved in an issue.

Participation. Participation is a major element in community competence in the literature and in this study. Participation is a goal in itself and also a means to achieve other parish goals. There is a general desire about increasing the level of participation in most parish endeavors. At the same time, there is a united sigh of disheartenment among interviewees about the lack of response to parish efforts of getting more parishioners to participate beyond Sunday worship. The present challenge is finding effective ways of encouraging parishioners. Given that participation is the top reason for the presence of vitality in a parish (Castelli & Gremillion, 1987), encouraging participation is one area parish leadership may need to devote more planning and staff resource to. Most

respondents who covered this element thought personal invitations work and a few who tried it are convinced it does. However, there is an unfortunate consensus that lay leaders and active parishioners do not have the time to engage in this enough to make a significant difference. It is more troubling that there does not seem to be concrete parish-wide plans to make personal invitations a norm in inviting more parishioners.

Communication. Communication influences parish competence to the extent that communication between priests, lay leaders, staff, and parishioners is open.

Communication is the venue for parishioners to influence the decisions of the lay leaders and the priest. Therefore, communication is a tool that fosters collaborative leadership.

Dissemination of information regarding programs and activities is another component of communication. There is a reliance on the bulletin as the main method of disseminating information even if interviewees admit the bulletin is not the best way to reach parishioners. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be viable alternatives at present.

Literature-based elements not prominent in the results. Achievement orientation did not appear in the interviews as an element of parish competence. Linkages with other communities and agencies appeared although not prominently. Whatever desired linkages were mentioned appeared more in the context of Christian Service. Specifically, parishes establish links with communities or organizations usually to provide a service. Linkages are desired not much to the extent of learning from and sharing information with other communities, the Diocese, and other churches. This finding is consistent with the findings of Castelli and Gremillion (1987), which suggest that there does not seem to be any change in this area.

Community Competence as a Contextual Issue

There is preliminary evidence to suggest that competence is partly dependent on context. A parish that is intuitively labeled conservative by key respondents may show its competence through its mission (i.e., worship and education). Having a greater number of older parishioners, the parameters of parish competence may have followed a pre-Vatican II outlook where the focus is on following the prescribed liturgy and prayers. On the other side, the parish labeled proactive and visionary by the same key respondents shows its competence through components of its environment such as parish life and Christian service. This parish, being located near a university and having a significant turnover of parishioners, has continually been challenged with identifying new ways of attracting and appealing to different people, tastes, and outlook.

On a larger context of comparing parishes across two nations, explanations may be found for certain findings. Linkages with community and government agencies were not identified as a salient need in parishes in this study. However, such links are important with Philippine parishes because it is a way to gain connections with expertise and resources that may not be available in the parish. For example, connections with professional groups may pave the way for setting up a day to provide a free medical health or dental clinic, free legal aid, or speakers about specific topics such as parenting. Christian services back in the Philippines would probably not involve a food cupboard, even in a non-regular basis, because it will overwhelm parish resources especially in low and middle-income areas. Food provision may be limited to personal emergencies and natural calamities. With the extent of poverty and its consequences, it is possible that

Christian service may dominate the description of parish competence in the Philippines.

Therefore there is strong argument to suggest that CC is contextual in nature.

Relation of CC with Other Constructs

Community competence is an additional perspective in the study of effective community functioning because there are differences between CC and other constructs. The ideas behind similar constructs (e.g., empowerment) emerged in the interviews even if the actual construct labels themselves were hardly mentioned. However these ideas did not appear prominently.

Empowerment

Empowerment was mentioned sporadically in the interviews specifically in the context of collaborative leadership. However, collaborative leadership may be the extent of empowerment in the parish considering its hierarchical nature. Empowerment in the parish context does not seem to be similar to the mechanism by which people and communities gain mastery over their own affairs as referred to by Rappaport (1987). The process of attaining power and the actual attainment of power, which are defining point for empowerment, are not clearly present in CC at least in the context of Catholic parishes. Parishes do not wish to have the powers the Diocese has. Parishioners do not want to have equal powers with the priest to the extent they can overturn his decisions. What parishioners desire is greater collaboration and consensus building in decision-making even if they know the priest has the final decision. This may be the extent of power attainment presently desired in parishes.

However, there are overlaps between the definition of empowerment and some elements of CC. Empowerment as defined as initiating efforts to improve the community,

responding to threats to quality of life, providing opportunities for participation, and applying skills and resources in collective effort (Israel, et al., 1994) has similar ideas with the elements Christian Service, Participation, and Resources. Projects under Christian service aim to collectively gather and use resources to improve the lives of others. The success of these projects on the other hand, depends on the participation by parishioners.

Sustainable Development

Similarly, some elements of sustainable development and community development overlap with the elements of community competence. Mobilization of resources and the generation of membership commitment are reflected in CC through Resources and Participation. The use of social action processes to enact change and to influence the future is an important theme in sustainable development. This theme appears in parish competence through Christian Service (e.g., petitions against violence) albeit not prominently.

Practical Contributions of the Study

On the practical side, community competence is a useful alternative perspective in studying community functioning. It identifies areas where community psychologists can help religious communities function and serve the needs of its members better.

In terms of helping religious communities function more effectively, it is useful to know how a religious community understands competence and what helps it gain competence. Knowing that both mission and community environment play important roles is a start. Identifying what elements comprise each area of mission and environment alerts the community psychologist on the indicators he or she may be interested in

studying further. It is equally important to know that different components of competence are associated with different outcomes with regard to satisfaction with the parish and individual assessments of faith, prayer, and religion. Thus if one hears congregation members looking for ways to increase satisfaction with the congregation in general, a community psychologist is alerted to the possibility that members may be referring more to the environment rather than the fulfillment of the congregation mission.

There are several areas community psychologists may be particularly interested in working with religious congregations. The first is creating more opportunities of collaborative and shared leadership. There is a desire among priests and lay leaders to share both work and leadership. Although there has been huge progress in some congregations, there is a continuing desire to make leadership more participatory.

Another area of interest is fostering a sense of welcoming and inclusiveness in the midst of differences. An accompanying task is determining what could be common among members of the same faith and what differences could exist without fear of exclusion.

Service provision is a third area of interest. Priests and leaders desire to be more relevant to the outside community and the world by actively understanding the realities outside the congregation, by taking firmer stands on social justice issues, and through sharing of resources and expertise. There is the complementary task of establishing links with communities and organizations. These links can help a congregation reach more people with the services it provides. The fourth area that congregations can be helped in is convincing its members that there is a need to change. There is a need for members to take in more leadership responsibility, a need to be welcoming to those who are different, and a need to start looking beyond the congregation's boundary to be in tune with the

community and society. If religious congregations are assisted in making these changes, their roles in promoting personal and social change (Maton & Pargament, 1987) and the struggle for civil rights (Shinn, 1987) are greatly enhanced.

Another practical benefit of the study is the creation of a parish competence measure. The measure, as a whole or using any of its 12 scales, can be used to assess various areas of a parish or other religious congregations. Reliability of each of the 12 scales and the two components are established. To some extent, concurrent validity is likewise established. This measure can be used as a tool to assess what parish or congregation members believe are elements of an ideal effective congregation, and what they presently see in their congregations. By comparing the actual from the ideal, congregation leaders can pinpoint areas of strength and areas to work on.

Benefits of the Methodologies Used

The use of methods from the constructivist and positivist paradigms help greatly in formulating a definition of CC and a test of the definition. The use of two sets of open-ended interviews with individuals in the best position to form a conclusion on the topic has a great advantage (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This ensures that the definition and the identified elements of CC are based on experience. If the literature is the only source of information for the survey, certain elements would not appear. On the other hand, the general survey provides a quantitative test for the component structure of CC using a greater number of respondents.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations of the study. First the selection of parishes was purposive rather than random. Therefore conclusions cannot be generalized to Catholic

parishes even in the state. Selection of parishes was based on the comments of only five key respondents who work with many parishes in different capacities and with different intensities.

Efforts made to have a diverse set of interviewees in the first phase had some success. There was a range across interviewees' level of participation in the parish, age, and length of participation. However, there was almost no diversity in the ethnic background of the interviewees. One reason was the low proportion of non-white parishioners to begin with. Another was the low proportion of non-white parishioners whose names were suggested by priests and other interviewees. Another lack of diversity was in getting parishioners whose views on the church and parish are different from the mainstream.

Although there was assurance of confidentiality in the interviews, it is possible that respondents may have held back some information they felt should not be shared with an outsider. Although most interviewees were candid in their assessment, including the unflattering comments about their parish and its members, there were a few instances when a respondent hesitated in elaborating on an answer.

The survey also had several limitations. One limitation was the survey length. Although many items were removed from the original total, still many items were left. There was a conscious decision that given the objective of creating a measure, more items were desired over fewer items. The style of the survey is also a limitation. Even with several pre-tests done on the survey format to make it easier and less intimidating, it still appeared as such to some. These factors may have contributed to the low survey return,

which is another limitation. It is difficult to make any generalization with the survey results because of the low return rate.

Another limitation of the survey was that not all copies were distributed randomly. Only around a fourth were mailed randomly while the rest were distributed out of convenience. Thus, conclusions from the survey are limited.

A third limitation was the non-representative survey sample. The study sample was different from the county population of Catholics along several demographics including race, age, and education. Thus, generalization of the results from the survey is limited.

Finally, subject selection in the survey could have provided a source of artifact (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) for the components arising from the component analysis. It is conceivable that different components could arise if there was homogeneity among sites according to competence (e.g., only highly competent parishes were included) or the general demographic characteristics of the parish (e.g., urban parishes, same age range and mean of parishioners). As it was, parishes in this study differed greatly according to these and other variables. Therefore, generalizations made from this study needs caution. Given the low response rate, there were not enough respondents to allow component analysis according to different levels of competence across parishes and other demographic variables.

Conclusion

The literature introduced community competence as a promising, albeit still nebulous, concept in helping us understand effective community functioning. The findings of this study add clarity to the definition and elements of CC. It shows that CC

as applied to a religious congregation focuses more on outcome than on process. It likewise shows that elements of CC intercorrelate and that these elements form the components of parish mission and parish environment. The study also shows how parish mission and parish environment are differentially related to specific experiences of members. While this study contributes initial answers to the theoretical questions on the nature of CC and suggests practical use of the measure, additional research across different communities are needed to test the limits of the definition and use of community competence.

APPENDIX A
Definitions of a Competent Community

APPENDIX A **Definitions of a Competent Community**

Author(s)	Definition
Iscoe, I. (1974)	<p>Conceptually, it is a community that utilizes, develops, or otherwise obtains resources, including of course the fuller development of the resources of the human beings in the community</p> <p>The development of the competent community involves the provision and utilization of resources...so that the members of the community may make reasoned decisions about issues confronting them, leading to the most competent coping with these problems.</p> <p>Competent communities have alternatives.</p>
Cottrell, L. S. (1976)	<p>A community in which the various component parts of the community (a) are able to collaborate effectively in identifying community problems and needs, (b) can achieve a working consensus on goals and priorities, (c) can agree on ways to implement goals; and (d) can collaborate effectively in the required actions. The community that can provide the conditions and created the capabilities required to meet the above performance tests will be competent to cope with the problems of its collective life.</p>
Hurley, D. J. (1977)	<p>Ability to gain control over decision making, means of production, and resources.</p>
Hurley, D. J., Barbarin, O. A., Mitchell, R. E. (1981)	<p>The effective community is one that 1) develops an integrated and effective set of processes for meeting its own needs and individual member and environment needs; 2) develops an organizing structure that facilitates these operations; and 3) defines a commonly accepted culture within which the members and these processes can operate together.</p>
Barbarin, O. A. (1981a)	<p>CC refers both to the ability of social systems to respond adaptively to the differential needs of the varied populations they serve and to the ability of citizens or groups to use existing resources or develop alternatives for the purpose of solving problems of living.</p>

Appendix A (cont'n)

Author(s)	Definition
Barbarin, O. A. (1981a)	A community or organization is seen as competent to the extent it enables all its members to develop high levels of systems skills.
Goeppinger, J., Lassiter, P. G., Wilcox, B. (1982)	Ability of a community and its constituent parts to interact effectively, that is, to construct and utilize structures that allow it to manage the problems of its collective life and its members to lead satisfying and productive lives (Wilson, R. N., 1976)
Gatz, M., Barbarin, O. A., Tyler, F. B., Mitchell, R. E., Moran, J. A., Wirzbicki, P., Crawford, J. & Engelman, A. (1982)	People in a competent community have alternatives and know how to obtain and use resources (Iscoe, 1974). Community processes of resource utilization and problem solving, as well as communication and influence/power channels (Hurley, Barbarin, & Mitchell, 1981)
Goeppinger, J., Baglioni, A. J. (1985)	(Did not offer their own definitions but significantly cited the definitions by Iscoe and by Cottrell.)
Israel, B. A. (1985)	The ability of the community to collaborate effectively in selecting, implementing, and evaluating solutions to problems identified by the community.
Johnson, M. A., & Mullins, P. (1990)	Competent communities know how to acquire and deploy resources; they have the will to muster what they perceive themselves to need; they know how to allocate scarce resources. Competent communities are problem solvers.
Eng, E., Parker, E. (1994)	The ability to assess and generate the conditions necessary to execute change The authors also significantly cited the definitions by Iscoe and by Cottrell.

APPENDIX B
Definitions of Community Characteristics that Influence Competence

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Definitions of Community Characteristics that Influence Competence

Community Characteristic	Definition(s)
Leadership	<p>Leadership at the community level needs to be democratic and broad based in that members have many opportunities to perform leadership roles (Lackey et al., 1987; Levine, 1986; Maton & Rappaport, 1984; Meyers, Meyer, & Craighead, 1981; Warren, 1970).</p> <p>At the individual level, leaders have to be innovative, have to involve people in democratic participation, and have a community-wide vision (Lackey et al.; Cottrell, 1976).</p>
Homogeneity	<p>Homogeneity refers to the community members' state of being similar across several factors. These factors include ethnicity, identity, values, commitment to norms, goals, education, and socio-economic status.</p>
Sense of Community	<p>The experience of being part of a network of relationships wherein people express the need for intimacy, diversity, usefulness, and belongingness (Sarason, 1974).</p> <p>The shared faith that members' commitment to one another will result in the fulfillment of their needs (McMillan and Chavis, 1986).</p>
Participation	<p>Participation refers to a stable high rate of member participation in community endeavors as shown by its recent history.</p> <p>A high rate of participation means there is a consistent pool of people the community can tap.</p>
Structures for Resolving and Containing Conflicts	<p>This characteristic refers to individuals, committees, or protocol that assists the community to discuss and resolve differences.</p>
Structures for Effective Communication	<p>Community structures that allow members to express the experiences, needs, and intentions of oneself and that of one's group in order to facilitate a clearer understanding and productive discussion of issues (Cottrell, 1976).</p>
Achievement orientation	<p>Achievement orientation is the belief that members can resolve community problems through the community's knowledge and abilities (Breton, 1994; Lackey et al., 1987).</p>
Links with other communities and agencies	<p>Networking refers to the community group's present links and the community's ability to establish future links with other groups within and outside the community.</p>

APPENDIX C
Interview Schedule for Key Informants

APPENDIX C

Interview Schedule for Key Informants

Introduction: Hi, my name is Aggie Legaspi. I am a graduate student in the psychology department at Michigan State University. I am currently working on my dissertation research for which I am conducting this interview. As part of this study, I am interviewing several people from the community in order to find out how well different parishes carry on their objectives. A term community psychologists use to label this ability is community competence (in this case parish competence) which in a very general sense refers to the parish's ability to get things done or accomplish important parish needs and goals.

Generally, in this interview, I will ask you to talk about your perception on the competence, effectiveness, or the health of parishes. I will ask you about your own ideas of what it means for a parish community to be competent, effective, or healthy. Then I will ask you to give examples of parishes that illustrate the ideas of competence you mentioned. This interview will take about 1 to 1 ½ hours.

If it is all right with you, I am going to be audio-taping our conversation and taking notes throughout our meeting. However, you can ask me to turn off the tape recorder at any time if you would like me to. Only I, my assistants, and members of my dissertation committee will hear the audiotape or see my notes. In addition, nothing you say will be attributed to you directly in the dissertation manuscript and my conversations with members of my dissertation committee. I would like to emphasize that the parishes that I will later contact for the study will not be informed that they were chosen based on these interviews. Do you have any questions?

What I would like you to do now is read and sign the consent form I'm about to give you. This form outlines everything I just told you.

Informed Consent

I understand that the purpose of this interview is to discuss my perceptions on parish competence. I further understand that the data being collected are confidential and that neither my name nor any other identifying information will be stored with the data.

In addition, I understand that I can refuse to participate in this interview, refuse to answer any question, and that if for any reason I wish to terminate the interview before it has been completed, I am free to do so. I also understand that this interview will be audiotaped that will be erased after it has been transcribed. Only the researcher, his assistants, and members of his dissertation committee will have access to these tapes, transcription, or any other data collected. Furthermore, I understand that I can ask the researcher to turn off the tape recorder at any point during the interview.

This interview will take approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours. In this interview, the researcher will want to hear my ideas about what parish competence means and how they are exemplified in parish life.

To ensure accuracy, the interviewer has requested that he audiotape the interview. I can ask that the tape recorder be turned off at any point in our conversation. In addition, I may skip any question that I do not wish to answer and also stop the interview at any time.

If there are no questions, we'll begin the interview.

Name: _____

Date: _____

A. (Demographics) Before we begin with the actual questions, I would like to ask you a few general questions about yourself.

1. How long have you been working with this office?
2. What is your current position in this office?
3. How long have you been working in this department?
4. What positions have you held in:
 - a) in this office
 - b) in parishes (if there are a lot, you can just mention those which you think are the most significant)
5. How long have you been living within the Lansing region?
6. Demographics:
 - a) age:
 - b) gender:
 - c) education:

B. What a competent parish is for the respondent.

1. Let's begin with you describing the ideal competent, effective, or healthy parish you could imagine. What would it be like? Let us begin with a very general sense of competence as the ability to accomplish important parish needs and goals. You do not have to be limited by this. I would like to get all your ideas regarding what a competent, effective, or healthy parish community may be.

a. What do you see that makes it really competent/effective/healthy?

Probe: We have started with focusing on accomplishing important parish needs and goals. Aside from this, are there other ingredients or elements that you deem important in considering a parish's competence, effectiveness, or health?

- b. How important is each of the ingredients you mentioned for the competence, effectiveness, or health of a parish?
- c. Is any ingredient more important than another?
- d. Can a parish be weak in any of the ingredients you listed and still be considered a competent, effective, or healthy parish?

If so, what ingredients could be weak?

Why can it still be considered competent?

- e. Can a parish not have any of the ingredients you listed and still be considered a competent, effective, or healthy parish?

If so, what ingredients could be missing?

Why can it still be considered competent?

2. If you were to describe to me the least competent/effective/healthy parish you could imagine, what would it be like? (What do you see that makes it really lacking in competence, effectiveness, or health?)
3. Aside from competent, effective, and healthy what other idea or label comes to mind?
Probe: What label do you think would be most appropriate in describing your ideal parish?

For the next set of questions, let us now focus on the parishes within the city (present the list). What I'd like to do now is to see how your ideas regarding parish competence (or any other label) are evidenced in the city parishes.

4. You mentioned the following as the key ingredients in a competent (or the preferred label) parish. Let us go over each of the element you mentioned and identify in which city parishes you see each of these elements.

Go over each element mentioned above

- a. Would you please describe how each ingredient is best manifested in the city parishes? (or What parishes best manifest each of the ingredients?)
- b. Do these parishes having the same ingredient use or manifest it in the same manner?
If not, how are they different?
- c. What do you think helped these parishes you mentioned acquire or attain these characteristics?
- d. Can we consider these parishes you mentioned as being close to the ideal competent parish?
- e. Do you think these parishes you mentioned as manifesting competence had ingredients of competence that were weak or even absent?
- f. Yet in spite of these weaknesses, you still consider them as competent parishes.
What are the reasons behind this?

5. Let's go back to the list of key ingredients in a competent parish. What I would like to ask now is what parishes these elements are not strongly evidenced or even absent.
Go over each element mentioned above.

- a. Can you think of parishes in this city where you do not see evidence of the ingredients you mentioned for parish competence?
Would you please give some examples.

- b. Why do you think these ingredients are lacking?
- c. Would you consider these parishes as those that least illustrate your ideal of a competent parish?
- d. Do these parishes have any strengths at all?
 - 1) If so, what were they?
 - 2) In spite of these strengths, the parish is still far from your ideal competent parish. What are the reasons for this?
- e. What do you think needs to be done in order to bring this parish closer to your ideal parish?

C. Interview conclusion.

Are there any questions you have for me or are there additional comments that you would like to make? You have been very helpful in providing information. I truly appreciate the time and ideas you have shared with me and I enjoyed our conversation.

APPENDIX D
Study Description Given to Priests and Parish Council

APPENDIX D
Study Description Given to Priests and Parish Council

Aggie Legaspi
Community Psychology at MSU

I am currently working on my dissertation for my doctorate in community psychology. I am in the process of choosing four to five parishes that I believe represent some of the diversity in the city and the surrounding area.

The research aims to find out the diverse ways parishes effectively provide services to their parishioners. In this study, services cover liturgical, social, outreach, etc. The research will have two phases. The first phase is an interview of seven to nine very active parishioners from each of the four or five parishes. Respondents will be asked to talk about their perceptions on how their parish attains its goals and about their perceptions on how their parish can be a more effective one. The interviews will be conducted from April 1998 to June 1998. From these interviews, I will look for the common ways and unique ways in which parishes effectively provide services.

From these information, a survey will be written. This second phase is a survey of parishioners from the four to five parishes. The survey will ask respondents a) for their perceptions of what an effective parish is, b) for their perceptions of how their respective parish shows its effectiveness, and c) to rate their parishes on statements about the ways parishes effectively provide services (these statements will be based on the themes and ideas revealed in the interviews). I and my dissertation committee have not yet identified the target number of respondents but it may be from 50-100 for each parish. The target date of the survey is September 1998.

Confidentiality of respondents is an important concern. Thus, respondents for the interview and survey will not be identified nor will specific responses be identified with any respondent.

I believe that the information from these interviews and surveys can be useful for the parishes too. Upon request, I can summarize the results of the survey for each parish and present these to the respective parishes. This information can be used as an evaluation that can point to different ways effectiveness is attained, identify the parish's strong points, and areas that parishioners feel the parish needs to focus on. A summary of the interviews may be given as part of a report of the whole study.

APPENDIX E
List of Basic Questions Given to Priests and Parish Council

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List of Basic Questions Given to Priests and Parish Council

1. Let us begin with you identifying two challenges, opportunities, issues, or concerns in the past several years that you felt were significant and that you personally saw the parish went through?
 - a. What were the nature of the situations?
 - b. What were the steps taken by the parish in handling the situations? Who were involved?
 - c. Do you think the parish handled these situations in the most appropriate/effective manner?
 - d. What helped in successfully handling the situation?
2.
 - a. I am going to ask you about your perception on how the parish shows its effectiveness. However, before I do that, I would like to first have you rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, how effective you think the parish is in these past 3-5 years? (10= very effective)
 - b. What are the things you see in this parish that makes you say the parish is presently in this level of effectiveness?
 - c. What are the things or who are the people you think helped the parish attain this level of effectiveness?
3.
 - a. Is there room for improvement in your parish in terms of making it more effective?
 - b. If so, in what areas?
 - c. What changes do you think are necessary in order to make the parish more effective?

APPENDIX F
Demographic Characteristics of the Survey Respondents

APPENDIX F
Demographic Characteristics of the Survey Respondents

Demographic Characteristic	Parish A (%)^{a b}	Parish B (%)	Parish C (%)	Parish D (%)	Combined (%)
Proportion of respondents from parish	22.9 (N = 61)	17.3 (N = 46)	39.8 (N = 106)	19.9 (N = 53)	100.0 (N = 266)
Mean age (years)	56.3	51.9	43.8	54.4	50.2
Age range (years)	26 - 84	25 - 80	19 - 75	29 - 85	19 - 85
Mean length of stay in the city (years)	31.5	17.4	14.5	34.1	22.9
Mean length of continuous attendance in the parish (years)	24.8	14.0	11.3	25.8	17.73
Mean length of time have been a Catholic (years)	52.1	49.3	38.5	52.0	46.27
Proportion Female	63.9	60.9	67.9	62.3	64.7
Proportion Male	36.1	34.8	31.1	37.7	34.2
Proportion White	91.8	91.3	85.8	83.0	87.6
Proportion married	86.9	73.9	50.0	71.7	66.9
Proportion never been married	3.3	2.2	34.0	7.5	16.2
Proportion widowed, separated, divorced	9.6	19.5	14.1	20.7	15.4
Participation level: Leader or staff	32.8	30.4	24.5	18.9	26.3
Participation level: Active non-leader	37.7	43.5	48.1	39.6	43.2
Participation level: Not active	29.5	26.1	27.4	41.5	30.5
The parish attended is the closest to where respondent lives.	88.5	73.9	29.2	81.1	60.9
Converted to Catholicism	16.4	8.7	14.2	11.3	13.2
Church attendance: Several times a week	49.2	21.7	15.1	22.6	25.6

Appendix F (cont'n)

Demographic Characteristic	Parish A (%) ^{a b}	Parish B (%)	Parish C (%)	Parish D (%)	Combined (%)
Church attendance: Once a week	39.3	71.7	63.2	60.4	58.6
Church attendance: Several times a month	6.6	2.2	14.2	11.3	10.1
Prayer frequency: At least twice a day	63.9	54.3	34.0	54.7	48.5
Prayer frequency: Once a day	26.2	32.6	36.8	24.5	31.2
Prayer frequency: Several times a week	8.2	8.7	17.0	13.2	12.8
Education: Grade School	1.6	2.2	0.0	3.8	1.5
Education: High School	19.7	19.6	12.3	24.5	17.7
Education: Vocation or Technical	13.1	15.2	1.9	5.7	7.5
Education: College degree	41.0	23.9	26.4	43.4	32.7
Education: Graduate degree	18.0	32.6	54.7	19.8	35.3
Employment: Working full-time	39.3	50.0	47.2	43.4	45.1
Employment: Working part-time	16.4	15.2	19.8	17.0	17.7
Employment: Full-time homemaker	14.8	6.5	3.8	9.4	7.9
Employment: In school	0.0	2.2	12.3	1.9	5.6
Employment: Retired	26.2	17.4	12.3	26.4	19.2
Unemployed	1.6	2.2	1.9	0.0	1.5
Income: \$15,000 or less	9.8	13.0	22.6	11.3	15.8
Income: \$15,001-30,000	13.1	21.7	17.9	26.4	19.2
Income: \$30,001-45,000	21.3	17.4	11.3	18.9	16.2
Income: \$45,001-60,000	18.0	15.2	17.9	13.2	16.5
Income: \$60,001-80,000	4.9	6.5	7.5	9.4	7.1
Income: \$80,001-100,000	11.5	8.7	8.5	9.4	9.4
Income: Over \$100,000	6.6	10.9	6.6	0.0	6.0

Appendix F (cont'n)

Demographic Characteristic	Parish A (%) ^{a b}	Parish B (%)	Parish C (%)	Parish D (%)	Combined (%)
Donation: Less \$1/week	0.0	2.2	6.6	0.0	3.1
Donation: \$1-5/week	3.3	10.9	26.4	13.2	15.8
Donation: \$6-10/week	13.1	8.7	12.3	17.0	12.8
Donation: \$11-15/week	19.7	17.4	5.7	13.2	12.4
Donation: \$16-20/week	13.1	8.7	8.5	13.2	10.5
Donation: \$21-30/week	18.0	17.4	13.2	15.1	15.4
Donation: \$31-40/week	9.8	13.0	7.5	5.7	8.6
Donation: \$41-50/week	3.3	4.3	7.5	3.8	5.3
Donation: More than \$50/week	14.8	8.7	7.5	9.4	9.8
Survey distribution: mail	31.1	32.6	23.6	43.4	30.8
Survey distribution: hand- out	65.6	60.9	76.4	54.7	66.9

^a Percentage does not consider missing values (i.e., percentage is not the valid percent).

^b All values, except for demographic characteristics measured in years, are in percentages.

APPENDIX G
Comparison of Demographic Characteristics
Across Parishes and Counties

APPENDIX G
Comparison of Demographic Characteristics
Across Parishes and Counties

Demographic Characteristic	Parishes					County 1 ^{ab}	County 2
	A (%) ^{c d}	B (%)	C (%)	D (%)	Combined (%)		
Mean age (years)	56.3	51.9	43.8	54.4	50.2	- ^e	-
Median age (years)	56.0	49.0	44.0	49.0	49.0	28.4	33.5
18 - 24 ^f	0.0	0.0	11.5	0.0	4.6	25.5	12.9
25 - 44	25.0	34.1	39.5	39.6	35.2	43.8	46.0
45 - 64	40.0	47.7	41.3	24.6	38.7	19.3	26.7
65 and over	35.0	18.2	7.7	35.8	21.5	11.4	17.1
Proportion White	91.8	91.3	85.8	83.0	87.6	84.1	90.6
African-American	0.0	0.0	1.9	1.9	1.1	9.8	8.0
Hispanic	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.8	1.4
Asian and Pacific Islander	1.6	0.0	7.5	3.8	4.1	2.7	0.3
Native American	1.6	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.80	0.8	0.4
Multiracial	1.6	0.0	1.9	0.0	1.10	-	-
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.8	0.8	-	-
Non-American	1.6	0.0	2.8	5.7	2.6	-	-
Proportion married	86.9	73.9	50.0	71.7	66.9	48.6	58.3
Education: Grade School	1.6	2.2	0.0	3.8	1.5	-	-
Education: High School	19.7	19.6	12.3	24.5	17.7	23.8	34.1
Education: Vocation or Technical	13.1	15.2	1.9	5.7	7.5	-	-
Education: College degree	41.0	23.9	26.4	43.4	32.7	29.2 ^g	12.9
Education: Graduate degree	18.0	32.6	54.7	19.8	35.3	-	-

Demographic Characteristic	Parishes					County 1	County 2
	A (%) ^{a b}	B (%)	C (%)	D (%)	Combined (%)		
Employment:	39.3	50.0	47.2	43.4	45.1	-	-
Working full-time							
Employment:	16.4	15.2	19.8	17.0	17.7	-	-
Working part-time							
Employment: Full- time homemaker	14.8	6.5	3.8	9.4	7.9	-	-
Employment: In school	0.0	2.2	12.3	1.9	5.6	-	-
Employment: Retired	26.2	17.4	12.3	26.4	19.2	-	-
Unemployed	1.6	2.2	1.9	0.0	1.5	-	-
Employed ^h	55.7	65.2	67.0	60.4	62.8	93.2%	92.3
Income: \$15,000 or less	9.8	13.0	22.6	11.3	15.8	-	-
Income: \$15,001- 30,000	13.1	21.7	17.9	26.4	19.2	-	-
Income: \$30,001- 45,000	21.3	17.4	11.3	18.9	16.2	-	-
Income: \$45,001- 60,000	18.0	15.2	17.9	13.2	16.5	-	-
Income: \$60,001- 80,000	4.9	6.5	7.5	9.4	7.1	-	-
Income: \$80,001- 100,000	11.5	8.7	8.5	9.4	9.4	-	-
Income: Over \$100,000	6.6	10.9	6.6	0.0	6.0	-	-
Median household income	-	-	-	-	-	\$30,162	29,156
Median family income	-	-	-	-	-	\$37,361	33,967

Note. ^a County 1 includes Parishes B, C, and D. County 2 includes Parish A.

^b County values are for 1990.

^c Percentage does not consider missing values (i.e., percentage is not the valid percent).

^d All values, except for demographic characteristics measured in years as indicated, are in percentages.

^e Dashes indicate values and categories that were not computed or included.

^f County values for each age range consider only the adult population.

^g These were described as 4+ years in the Diocesan census.

^h Parish values include full-time and part-time workers.

APPENDIX H
Interview Schedule for Parishioners

APPENDIX H
Interview Schedule for Parishioners

Participant ID#:
Date of Interview:
Length of Interview:

Start Time:
End of Interview:

Introduction:

Hi, my name is Aggie Legaspi. I am from the Philippines and right now I am pursuing my graduate studies at Michigan State University. I am currently working on my dissertation for my doctorate in community psychology. This research I am conducting here is similar to what I have previously done in the Philippines.

As part of the study I am conducting, I am interviewing active parishioners within the area. I chose parishes that I believe represent some of the diversity in the city and the surrounding area. In this interview, I would like to explore the different ways your parish shows its effectiveness. I will ask you to talk about your perception on how your parish attains its goals and about your perception on how your parish can be a more effective one. You can refuse to answer a question. This interview will take about 1 to 1 ½ hours.

I would like to audio-tape our conversation. You can ask me to turn the tape recorder off at any time if you would like me to. Only I and my research assistants will hear the audio tape. In addition, nothing you say will be attributed to you directly in the dissertation manuscript. Do you have any questions?

Participant Consent Form

Michigan State University is currently conducting a study to examine the effectiveness of Roman Catholic parishes in attaining goals as perceived by parishioners.

1. I have been asked to participate in this study because I am an adult active parishioner.
2. My participation in this study will consist of a face to face interview. I will be asked about my perceptions of how my parish attains its goals and shows its effectiveness. This interview will take approximately 1 hour to 1 ½ hours and will be conducted at my home or at another convenient location.
3. My involvement in this study has been fully explained to me and I freely consent to participate. I realize that I may discontinue my participation at any time before, during or after the interview.
4. I can refuse to answer any question(s) asked of me before, during or after the interview. I may also ask questions at any time before, during or after the interview.
5. With my permission, this interview will be audio taped to verify that my responses were correctly recorded on the survey. The tapes will be kept by Augusto Legaspi and will be destroyed upon completion of this project. I also have the right to ask the researcher to turn off the tape recorder at any point during the interview.
6. Any information I provide will be held in the strictest of confidence. Only Augusto Legaspi and his research assistants will have access to the information provided in this interview.
7. Nothing I say will be attributed to me directly. My participation in this study will remain anonymous in any report of research findings.
8. Any questions about this study may be asked at any time by contacting:

Augusto Legaspi
Michigan State University
Psychology Department
129 Psychology Research Building
East Lansing, MI 48824
(517) 353-5015
(517) 353-9925

Marilyn Aronoff, Ph.D.
Michigan State University
Sociology Department
316 Berkey Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824
(517) 355-6640

My signature below indicates that I have read the above 8 items, that any questions I have raised have been answered to my satisfaction, and that I agree to participate in the interview.

Name _____ Date _____

Section A: Demographic Information

1. How long have you lived in the city/town?

____ years

2. How long have you attended this parish?

____ years

3. Did you or do you hold any position, or do you volunteer in the parish?

Yes ____ No ____

a. If so, what are these positions or volunteer work?

Past positions/volunteer work:

Present positions/volunteer work:

4. What is the highest grade or highest degree you completed in school?

____ Grade school

____ highest grade in grade school ____

____ High school diploma

____ Vocational/technical degree

____ B.A./B.S.

____ Graduate Degree (specify): _____

5. Are you currently:

____ Working full-time

____ Working part-time

____ Unemployed

____ Keeping house

____ In School

____ Other (specify): _____

6. What is your occupation/where do you work? _____

7. Are you currently married, never been married, widowed, separated, or divorced?

____ Married

____ Never been married

____ Widowed

____ Separated

____ Divorced

8. What is your ethnic background?

- ☐ African American
- ☐ Asian American
- ☐ Latino/a American
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

9. How old are you? _____

10. Gender: ☐ female
☐ male

Section B: Interview questions.

1. Let us begin with you identifying two challenges, opportunities, issues, or events in the past several years that you felt were significantly related to how the parish effectively operates and that you personally saw the parish went through?

a. Please briefly describe each of these two you mentioned.

Ask the following questions (b-g) for each of the two events mentioned:

b. What do you think the parish wanted to happen at the end of this?
(e.g., What should have been resolved?)

c. Do you think this event ended the way the parish wanted it to?
If the event is occurring at the present: By the way things are going, do you think this event will end the way you think the parish wants it to end?

d. 1] What were the things or the processes the parish did to address this situation? (List)
(or) What were the steps taken by the parish in handling this (event)?

2] For each of the items you mentioned, would you say that this was an effective or appropriate way to deal with it?

3] Why do you say so? (ask for each answer in #2)

4] Were any of the strategies your parish used more effective or helpful than the others?

e. Who were involved in handling this (event)?

f. We have discussed what the parish wanted to happen and what steps the parish took to make it happen. Now what other things do you think helped or aided the parish in dealing with this (or ensuring that the steps taken would succeed)?

g. Do you know of anything that made it difficult for the parish to handle this (event)?

For the second event mentioned (ask the same questions b-g)

h. What do you think the parish wanted to happen at the end of this?
(e.g., What should have been resolved?)

i. Do you think this event ended the way the parish wanted it to?
If the event is occurring at the present: By the way things are going, do you think this event will end the way you think the parish wants it to end?

j. 1] What were the things or the processes the parish did to address this situation? (List)
(or) What were the steps taken by the parish in handling this (event)?

2] For each of the items you mentioned, would you say that this was an effective or appropriate way to deal with it?

3] Why do you say so? (ask for each answer in #2)

4] Were any of the strategies your parish used more effective or helpful than the others?

k. Who were involved in handling this (event)?

1. We have discussed what the parish wanted to happen and what steps the parish took to make it happen. Now what other things do you think helped or aided the parish in dealing with this (or ensuring that the steps taken would succeed)?

m. Do you know of anything that made it difficult for the parish to handle this (event)?

2. The ideal effective parish

Let us now go to your idea of an effective parish. What would this parish be like?

We can begin with a very general sense of effectiveness as the ability to accomplish important parish needs and goals. You do not have to be limited to this. I would like to get all your ideas regarding what an effective parish may be.
(What are things you would see in this ideal effective parish?)

3. Descriptions of their parish

a. Now I would like to talk about your parish, (name of parish), and how effective you see it based on the ideas of effectiveness you just mentioned. However, before I do that, I would like to first have you rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, how effective you think the parish is in these past 3-5 years? (10= very effective; 1=least effective; 5 = in the middle in terms of effectiveness)

- b. What are the things you see in this parish that makes you say the parish is presently in this level of effectiveness?

(Probe: Ask for evidences of effectiveness and lack of effectiveness.

If the ranking is on the high end but not a 10, ask what is missing in the parish in terms of effectiveness.

If the ranking is on the low end but not a 1, ask what in what areas the parish shows effectiveness.)

- c. What is it in the community do you think contributed to your parish's current level of effectiveness (e.g., resources, agencies, events)?
- d. Who were the people you think helped the parish attain this level of effectiveness?
- e. What do you think helps the parish sustain this level of effectiveness?

4. Improving parish effectiveness

- a. For this parish, do you think there is room for improvement in terms of making it more effective (as you have earlier defined it)?
- b. If so, what areas do you think this parish needs to work on in order to make the parish more effective?
- c. What needs to be done in order to make sure these changes happen?
- d. What does the parish have or what does the parish need that will assist in making sure the desired changes happen?
- e. Who can assist in making sure the desired changes happen?
- f. Do you think you have a role in making these changes happen?
- 1] No _____
- 2] Yes _____

What is the role that you see yourself as having in this?

5. Interview conclusion

Are there any questions you have for me or are there additional comments that you would like to make? You have been very helpful in providing information. I truly appreciate the time and ideas you have shared with me and I enjoyed our conversation.

APPENDIX I
Additional Description of the Parish Interview Schedule and Analysis

APPENDIX I

Additional Description of the Parish Interview Schedule and Analysis

The interview contained four sections. However, not all data from the four sections were included in the dissertation manuscript. The first section asked for two challenges, opportunities, issues, or events that occurred in the past several years that the respondent felt were significantly related to parish effectiveness. Respondents elaborated on each challenge by discussing the outcome of the situation, how the parish handled the situation, who and what strategies were involved, and conditions that either facilitated or hindered the handling of the situation. The second section asked respondents to describe their idea of an effective parish. The third section followed up on the second by asking respondents to describe their parish based on their descriptions. As an aid to this task, respondents were asked to rate their parish from 1 (least effective) to 10 (very effective) over the past three to five years. The rating was used as a discussion point. Follow-up questions focused on identifying the conditions or people in the community that helped the parish attain and sustain the stated level of effectiveness. The fourth section focused on improving parish effectiveness. Respondents elaborated on this by describing what needs to be done in order to make sure the changes happen; what the parish needs that will assist in making the change happen; and what the respondent's role has, if any. The data included in this manuscript came from the second section of the interview, which asked for descriptions of an effective parish.

I did a thematic analysis for each section of the interview although I included only the analysis for the second section in this manuscript. In transcribing each interview, I used my notes written during the interview as guides. These notes were useful especially when respondents enumerated their responses (e.g., conditions in the community that helped the parish attain its effectiveness). Being both the interviewer and transcriber, I had the huge advantage of understanding what was recorded on tape. Therefore, very few words were unintelligible. Respondent identification numbers were also typed before each paragraph.

In order to get an overview of the general themes emerging from the interviews, I read several verbatim transcripts. For each section of the interview described above, I made a tentative list of themes. Using this list, I then went over several more transcripts for a pilot-test. I made changes in the themes as I saw fit. Some themes were added or combined with others. With this list, I went through one section at a time until I finished all transcripts. I marked each response segment (i.e., a break in the response such as a paragraph) with the applicable theme code. I also made applicable changes in the themes such as adding new themes, combining themes, or separating themes into more detailed ones (e.g., separating leadership into lay leaders, priests, and participatory leadership). Using a macro program, I created separate files for each theme for each interview section. The program pulled out each paragraph and its corresponding respondent identification number that had a particular theme code. Each file contained all the paragraphs that contained the response reflecting the theme and the respondent identification number. Most paragraphs contained more than one idea, thus each paragraph usually appeared in more than one file.

APPENDIX J
Questionnaire Survey to Parishioners

APPENDIX J
Questionnaire Survey to Parishioners

Greetings!

My name is Aggie Legaspi. I am a Catholic from the Philippines and right now I am pursuing my graduate studies at Michigan State University. I am currently working on my dissertation for my doctorate in community psychology.

As part of the study I am conducting, I am sending out surveys to parishioners in several parishes. This study is on the effectiveness of Roman Catholic parishes. For this study, an effective parish is defined as one that is able to identify parish needs and goals, and implement what it takes to reach those goals. I hope the results will help in identifying areas of strengths and areas parishes need to work on. The results from each parish will be shared with the leaders of the respective parishes. Results may help parish leaders identify how to better serve their parishioners.

Father ____ and (any other contact person) know(s) of this survey and gave permission for me to distribute the survey. Results will be anonymous and confidential. All responses will be aggregated according to parish. No individual response will be identified according to personal or demographic characteristics of the individual respondent.

I would like to ask for the adult in the household most involved in parish activities to answer the survey. The survey will take around 30-40 minutes to complete. Please answer all questions. Please return the completed survey in the business reply envelope provided.

There are three parts to this survey.

PART A asks for your opinion as to what an effective parish is.

PART B asks for your opinion regarding your own parish.

PART C asks for general information about you.

Since the survey asks for your opinion, there are no right or wrong answers.

- ◆ Consent to Participate: You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire.

Thank you.

Augusto (Aggie) Legaspi
Michigan State University
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129 Psychology Research Building
East Lansing, MI 48824
(517) 353-9925 (office)
(517) 355-3179 (home)
e-mail: legaspia@pilot.msu.edu

PART A

- There are several factors thought to be essential in assessing parish effectiveness. In the following section are statements that describe each factor written in capital letters. Please state the extent to which you agree or disagree with how essential the following statements are for parish effectiveness by circling the appropriate number. For this study, an effective parish is defined as one that is able to identify parish needs and goals, and implement what it takes to reach those goals.
- If you feel that an idea in an item is essential even if it will be difficult to attain now, encircle a number corresponding to 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree.'
- If you feel the idea represented in an item is not essential for a parish to be effective even if it a nice thing for a parish to have, circle a number corresponding to 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree.'

PARISH GOALS.

- ♦ Worship, Education, Service, Fellowship, and Participation are goals a parish may work on. Each general goal has specific goals.

In order for any parish to be effective,
it is essential that....

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. religious education is focused on adults.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2. <i>everyone in attendance enthusiastically participates in celebrations of faith.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3. a parish has a parochial school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4. <i>a resident priest is involved in the operations of the parochial school if a parish has one.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5. religious education is focused on children.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6. <i>parishioners know when and how to genuflect (e.g., kneel) in church.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7. a parish create guidelines on proper Church attire.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8. <i>everyone (including parishioners, staff, and priests) feels welcome regardless of how different his/her political views are from the majority of a parish.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9. liturgical music generate enthusiasm in parishioners to sing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10. <i>parishioners are encouraged to participate in parish activities through personal invitations (e.g., someone talking to parishioners after mass).</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

In order for any parish to be effective,
it is essential that....

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11. a parish has all year round worship opportunities (e.g., devotions, small worship groups) beyond the weekend and weekday masses.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12. people feel a sense of community year round and not just on special events.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
13. people are taught how to apply God's good news in their day-to-day lives.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14. a parish celebrate diversity in race and ethnicity of parishioners.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15. participants in any parish activities (including devotions, social activities) are made aware of how the activity is connected to love of God. ...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
16. a parish offer different styles of liturgy that appeal to different tastes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
17. a parish is involved in social issues affecting the town/city it is located in.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
18. a parish is involved in social issues affecting the world.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
19. a parish has no conflict among members of the parish.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
20. a parish has low parishioner turnover each year. ...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
21. high proportions of parishioners attend parish social events such as a parish dinner and parish picnic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
22. a parish celebrate diversity in sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, etc.) of parishioners.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
23. a parish has a good reputation in its town/city.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
24. the ultimate goal of a parish should be to provide Christian service programs (e.g., support groups, food cupboard).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
25. parishioners have a sense of pride in being members of their parish.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
26. a parish has a small population size.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
27. there are year round opportunities for parishioners to know each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
28. high proportions of parishioners attend a parish's own masses.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

In order for any parish to be effective,
it is essential that....

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
29. the same group of parishioners, rather than different parishioners, are involved across different parish events. (R)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
30. parishioners act as a parish's representatives to the local community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
31. a parish has Christian service programs (e.g., food cupboard, support groups) that serve the local community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
32. a parish is involved in social issues affecting the nation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

PARISH ORGANIZATION.

- ♦ A second area a parish may work on is its organizational structure that ensures that the parish provides the necessary programs and activities.
- ♦ For the following items, lay leaders include a] non-priest members of Religious Orders (e.g., a Sister), and b] parishioners who are members of the parish council; heads of commissions and organizations; staff.

In order for any parish to be effective,
it is essential that....

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
33. a program is the responsibility of the committee that thought of the program instead of being the equal responsibility of all parish committees. ... (R)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
34. a parish offer programs catering to varied social interests.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
35. a parish spend whatever amount is necessary to make all programs handicap accessible (e.g., Braille materials, sign interpreter for the deaf). ...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
36. a parish seek assistance from the Diocese.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
37. a parish explicitly encourage parishioners to give more of their time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
38. parishioners not involved in parish leadership are included in planning parish programs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
39. a parish create space to accommodate parish activities regardless of cost.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

In order for any parish to be effective,
it is essential that....

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
40. each parish ministry has its own staff.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
41. program schedules are convenient for everyone interested in joining them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
42. parishioners are open to changes introduced by the resident priest.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
43. aside from the priest, there is a person who can answer all questions about parish programs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
44. parishioners not involved in parish leadership are included in evaluating parish programs. ...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
45. a parish explicitly encourage parishioners to give more of their financial resources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
46. a parish seek assistance from other parishes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
47. a parish seek assistance from non-profits agencies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
48. a parish spend whatever amount is necessary to make all buildings and offices handicap accessible (e.g., for those using wheelchairs).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
49. parishioners are open to changes introduced by lay leaders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

LEADERSHIP

- ♦ A third area that a parish may work on is leadership. This includes how decisions are reached and the desirable characteristics of leaders.
- ♦ For the following items, lay leaders include a) non-priest members of Religious Orders (e.g., a Sister), and b) parishioners who are members of the parish council; heads of commissions and organizations; staff.

In order for any parish to be effective,
it is essential that....

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
50. parishioners wait for the pastor to initiate an idea before making plans.(R)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
51. a parishioner's abilities should be the only consideration for him/her to be a lay leader in a parish.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
52. lay leaders make decisions within their job description independent of a pastor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
53. lay leaders of a parish are sociable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

In order for any parish to be effective,
it is essential that....

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
54. <i>lay leaders represent the diversity in sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, etc.) of a parish.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
55. a pastor manages the parish in a manner that a businessperson manages the resources of a corporation.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
56. <i>a resident priest is involved with the happenings in the local community.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
57. an increasing number of parishioners join in running the parish (e.g., heads of committees, parish council member).				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
58. <i>all decisions are made through consensus among the resident priest and the parish pastoral council.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
59. lay leaders continually try new programs.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
60. <i>a resident priest continually try new programs. ...</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
61. lay leaders' enthusiasm is contagious.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
62. <i>lay leaders are involved with the happenings of the local community.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
63. a resident priest's homilies challenge the spiritual lives of parishioners.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
64. <i>a resident priest is quick in making decisions that affect the whole parish.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
65. a resident priest's enthusiasm is contagious. ...				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
66. <i>lay leaders represent the racial and ethnic diversity of a parish.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

COMMUNICATION

- ♦ Communication refers to the parish's ability to inform parishioners about the parish. In this part, parish leadership includes both priest and lay leaders.

In order for any parish to be effective,
it is essential that....

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
67. <i>parishioners can openly discuss their concerns with the parish leadership.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
68. parish leadership inform parishioners of parish issues through personal means (e.g., talking to parishioners after mass as they leave).				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

In order for any parish to be effective,
it is essential that....

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
<hr/>											
69. <i>the parish bulletin is the main medium of informing people of parish events.(R)</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
70. parish leadership do not discuss delicate but important parish issues (e.g., division in the parish) with parishioners.(R)				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
71. <i>parish leadership communicate with parishioners who do not attend church.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
72. parish leadership ask parishioners what their concerns are instead of waiting for parishioners to come forward.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
73. <i>a parish use the talents of all parishioners who answer time and talent surveys.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

PART B

Part B asks almost the same questions as Part A; however, Part B asks that you rate the degree to which the following statements accurately describe your parish over the **last 2 years**. The answers are based on your opinion, so there are no right or wrong answers. Even if you feel unsure how an item applies to your parish, please circle the rating that reflects your experience in the parish. Please answer all items.

PARISH GOALS.

- ♦ Worship, Education, Service, Fellowship, and Participation are goals a parish may work on. Each general goal has specific goals.

In my opinion, OR As I observe it
over the past two years,...

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. our parish does not have all year round opportunities (e.g., devotions, and small worship groups) for people to worship God beyond the weekend and weekday masses.(R)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2. our parish does not focus religious education on children.(R)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3. everyone attending our celebrations of faith participates enthusiastically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

**In my opinion, OR As I observe it
over the past two years,...**

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
4. <i>parishioners are taught how to apply God's good news in our day-to-day lives.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5. our parish celebrates diversity in race and ethnicity of parishioners.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6. <i>our parishioners know when and how to genuflect (e.g., kneel) in church.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7. our parish has guidelines on proper Church attire.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8. <i>participants in any of our parish activity (including devotions, social activities) are made aware of how the activity shows love of God.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9. our parish does not celebrate diversity in sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, etc.) of parishioners.(R)				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10. <i>everyone (including parishioners, staff, and priests) who holds political views different from the majority of the parish feels welcome.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11. the population size of our parish is just right.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12. <i>our liturgical music does not generate enthusiasm in people to sing.(R)</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
13. our parish focuses religious education on adults.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14. <i>people feel a sense of community year round and not just on special events.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15. members of our parish have no conflict among themselves.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
16. <i>our parish has significant turnover of parishioners every year.(R)</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
17. our parish has Christian service programs (e.g., food cupboard, support groups) that serve the local community.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
18. <i>Christian service (e.g., support groups, food cupboard) is our parish's ultimate goal.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
19. our parish offers different styles of liturgy that appeal to different tastes.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
20. <i>our parish has year round opportunities for parishioners to know each other.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
21. high proportions of parishioners attend our parish's own masses.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

**In my opinion, OR As I observe it
over the past two years,...**

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
22. <i>high proportions of parishioners attend our parish social events such as the parish dinner and parish picnic.</i>				1	2	3	4	5 6 7 8
23. our parish does not encourage participation in church activities through personal invitations (e.g., someone talking to parishioners after mass). (R)			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8
24. <i>different parishioners, rather than the same group of people, are involved across our different parish events.</i>			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8
25. our parishioners do not act as parish representatives to the local community. (R)			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8
26. <i>our parish does not have a good reputation in this town/city. (R)</i>			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8
27. parishioners have a sense of pride in being members of our parish.			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8
28. <i>our parish is involved in social issues affecting our town/city.</i>			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8
29. our parish is not involved in social issues affecting the nation. (R)			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8
30. <i>our parish is involved in social issues affecting the world.</i>			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8
31. our parish has a good parochial school.			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8
32. <i>our resident priest(s) is involved in the operations of our parochial school.</i>			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8
33. our parish still has a long way to go from being the ideal effective parish. (R)			1	2	3	4	5	6 7 8

PARISH ORGANIZATION.

- ◆ Another area a parish may work on is its organizational structure that ensures that the parish provides the necessary programs and activities.
- ◆ For the following items, lay leaders include a] non-priest members of Religious Orders (e.g., a Sister), and b] parishioners who are members of the parish council; heads of commissions and organizations; staff.
- ◆ If your parish has more than one resident priest, please answer for all resident priests.

In my opinion, OR As I observe it
over the past two years,...

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
34. <i>any program in our parish is the equal responsibility of all parish committees and not just the committee that thought of the program.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
35. committees in our parish that work on different programs communicate with each other.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
36. <i>everyone (including resident priests, lay leaders, and parishioners) in our parish trusts each other as working for the good of our parish.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
37. our parish does not offer programs that cater to different social interests. (R)				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
38. <i>our parish spends whatever amount is necessary to make programs handicap accessible (e.g., Braille materials, sign interpreter for the deaf)</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
39. aside from the priest, there is a person who can answer all questions about our parish programs.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
40. <i>our parish program schedules are not convenient for all interested in joining. (R)</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
41. parishioners not involved in our parish leadership are included in planning parish programs.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
42. <i>our parishioners are not open to changes introduced by our lay leaders. (R)</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
43. our parish explicitly encourages parishioners to give more of their time.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
44. <i>our parish explicitly encourages parishioners to give more of their financial resources.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
45. our parish does not seek assistance from the Diocese. (R)				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
46. <i>our parish seeks assistance from other parishes. ...</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
47. our parish seeks assistance from non-profit agencies.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
48. <i>parishioners not involved in our parish leadership are included in evaluating parish programs.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
49. our parish creates space to accommodate parish activities regardless of cost.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

**In my opinion, OR As I observe it
over the past two years,...**

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
<hr/>											
50. <i>our parish spends whatever amount is necessary to make buildings and offices handicap accessible (e.g., for those using wheelchairs).</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
51. each ministry in our parish has its own staff. ...				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
52. <i>our parishioners are not open to changes introduced by our resident priest(s).</i> (R)				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

LEADERSHIP

- ◆ Another area that a parish may work on is leadership. This includes how decisions are reached and the desirable characteristics of leaders.
- ◆ For the following items, lay leaders include a] non-priest members of Religious Orders (e.g., a Sister), and b] parishioners who are members of the parish council; heads of commissions and organizations; staff.
- ◆ If your parish has more than one resident priest, please answer for all resident priests.

**In my opinion, OR As I observe it
over the past two years,...**

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
<hr/>											
53. <i>an increasing number of parishioners join in running our parish (e.g., heads of committees, parish council member).</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
54. our lay leaders make decisions within their job description independent of our pastor.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
55. <i>our parishioners wait for our pastor to initiate an idea before making plans. (R)</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
56. all decisions in our parish are made through consensus among the priest(s) and the parish pastoral council.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
57. <i>in our parish, a parishioner's abilities are the only consideration for him/her to be a lay leader.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
58. our resident priest(s) is personable.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
59. <i>our parish lay leaders represent the racial and ethnic diversity of our parish.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
60. our lay leaders continually try new programs. ...				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

In my opinion, OR As I observe it
over the past two years,...

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
61. <i>our resident priest(s) is not able to identify goals based on the parish's changing needs. (R)</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
62. <i>our resident priest(s) does not continually try new programs. (R)</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
63. <i>our parish lay leaders are sociable.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
64. <i>our parish is not able to translate yearly themes into tangible goals. (R)</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
65. <i>our lay leaders are not involved with the happenings of our local community. (R)</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
66. <i>parishioners can feel the enthusiasm of our lay leaders.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
67. <i>our lay leaders are able to identify goals based on the parish's changing needs.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
68. <i>our parish lay leaders are spiritually healthy (e.g., strong faith life).</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
69. <i>our pastor manages our parish in a manner that a businessperson manages a corporation.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
70. <i>the homilies of our resident priest challenge parishioners' spiritual lives.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
71. <i>our parish lay leaders do not represent the diversity in sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, etc.) of our parish. (R)</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
72. <i>our resident priest(s) is spiritually healthy (e.g., strong faith life).</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
73. <i>our resident priest(s) is involved with the happenings of our local community.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
74. <i>parishioners do not feel the enthusiasm of our resident priest(s). (R)</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
75. <i>our resident priest(s) is quick in making decisions that affect the whole parish.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

COMMUNICATION

- ♦ Communication refers to the parish's ability to inform parishioners about the parish.
In this part, parish leadership includes both priest and lay leaders.

**In my opinion, OR As I observe it
over the past two years,...**

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
<hr/>											
76. <i>our parish leadership (i.e., both priest and lay leaders) communicates with parishioners who do not attend church.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
77. our parish leadership discusses delicate but important issues (e.g., division in the parish) with parishioners.				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
78. <i>our parish leadership waits for parishioners to come forward with their concerns instead of asking them.</i>			(R)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
79. even if our parishioners want to, they cannot openly discuss their concerns with our parish leadership.			(R)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
80. <i>our parish leadership informs parishioners of parish issues through personal means (e.g., talking to them after mass as they leave).</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
81. our parish uses the parish bulletin as the main medium of informing parishioners of parish events.			(R)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
82. <i>our parish uses the talents of all who answer the time and talent surveys.</i>				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

PART C. General Information.

1. Catholic parish you answered for: _____
2. Is the parish you wrote in #1 above the closest Catholic parish to where you live?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Do not know
3. How old are you? _____
4. Gender: ☐ female ☐ male

5. What is your ethnic background?

- ☐ African American
- ☐ Asian / Pacific Islander American
- ☐ Latino/a American
- ☐ Native American
- ☐ White American
- ☐ Multiracial
- ☐ Other (specify) _____
- ☐ If non-American, area of the world you come from (e.g., Middle East, Southeast Asia) _____

6. Are you currently

- ☐ Married
- ☐ Never been married
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ Divorced

7. Number of children living with you: _____

8. Ages of children living with you: _____

9. How long have you lived in the city/town?

_____ years

10. How long have you continually attended the parish you wrote in #1?

_____ years and _____ months

11. How long have you been a Catholic?

_____ years

12. Did you convert to Roman Catholicism?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

13. How often have you attended church in the past 2 years?

- ☐ several times a week
- ☐ once a week
- ☐ several times a month
- ☐ once a month
- ☐ several times a year
- ☐ never

14. Which Sunday Liturgy have you usually attended over the past two years?

- ☐ Anticipated Saturday Liturgy (any mass starting after 4 p.m.)
- ☐ Sunday morning (any mass starting at 7:00 to 10:30 a.m.)
- ☐ Sunday noon (any mass starting at 11:00 to 12:30)
- ☐ Sunday afternoon/evening (any mass starting at 5pm or later)
- ☐ None

15. How often have you prayed in the past 2 years?

- ☐ at least twice a day
- ☐ once a day
- ☐ several times a week
- ☐ once a week
- ☐ once a month
- ☐ once a year
- ☐ never

16. What is the highest grade or highest degree you completed in school?

- ☐ Grade school
- ☐ highest grade in grade school _____
- ☐ High school diploma
- ☐ Vocational/technical degree
- ☐ B.A./B.S.
- ☐ Graduate Degree (specify): _____
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

17. Are you currently:

- ☐ Working full-time
- ☐ Working part-time
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Full time home maker
- ☐ In School
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

18. What is your occupation? _____

19. What is your annual income?

- ☐ \$15,000 or less
- ☐ \$15,001-\$30,000
- ☐ \$30,001-\$45,000
- ☐ \$45,001-\$60,000
- ☐ \$60,001-\$80,000
- ☐ \$80,001-\$100,000
- ☐ over \$100,000

20. What is your average donation to your parish over the past two years?

- ☐ \$0
☐ less \$1 per week or (less \$4 per month) (less \$48 per year)
☐ \$1-5 per week or (\$4-20 per month) (\$48-240 per year)
☐ \$6-10 per week or (\$21-40 per month) (\$241-480 per year)
☐ \$11-15 per week or (\$41-60 per month) (\$481-720 per year)
☐ \$16-20 per week or (\$61-80 per month) (\$721-960 per year)
☐ \$21-30 per week or (\$81-120 per month) (\$961-1440 per year)
☐ \$31-40 per week or (\$121-160 per month) (\$1441-1920 per year)
☐ \$41-50 per week or (\$161-200 per month) (\$1921-2400 per year)
☐ more than \$50/week or (more than \$200/month) (more than \$2400/year)

21. Check which committees or ministries you have been involved in these **past 2 years** and check the nature of your involvement (i.e., steering committee, volunteer).

	Member of Steering Committee	Volunteer
WORSHIP (e.g., Worship groups, Music, Mass Usher)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EDUCATION (e.g., Bible study, Religious Education,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CHRISTIAN SERVICE (e.g., Hospital visits, St. Vincent de Paul)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ORGANIZATIONS (e.g., Youth group, Senior group,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GENERAL PARISH COMMITTEES (e.g., Parish Council, Finance)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ad Hoc Committees (e.g., Parish Dinner, Festival)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others: please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. Please identify at most three committees, organizations, or programs you have been most involved with.

- a. _____
 b. _____
 c. _____

23. Your personal experience with your parish.

		Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	<i>I feel welcome in our parish.</i>								
2	I know what programs we have in our parish.								
3	<i>I am not satisfied with how our parish is being run. (R)</i>								
4	Our parish has taught me how the Gospel affects my life.								
5	<i>Our parish meets my spiritual needs.</i>								
6	I make an effort to belong to our parish.								
7	<i>Religion is important in my life.</i>								
8	Our parish is important in my life								
9	<i>It is not important to attend church. (R)</i>								
10	I attend church because the Church requires me to do so. (R)								
11	<i>Prayer is important in my life.</i>								
12	My prayers are answered.								

Comments you would like to add about your parish (e.g., strengths, areas to work on):

Thank you very much for answering this survey. Please make sure you answered all items.

Please return the survey using the business reply envelope provided.

Have a blessed day.

APPENDIX K
Psychometric Properties of the Parish Environment Component

APPENDIX K
Psychometric Properties of the Parish Environment Component

Items Comprising the Component (item numbers reflect the numbers found in Part A of the survey)	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
8. Everyone (including parishioners, staff, and priests) feels welcome regardless of how different his/her political views are from the majority of a parish. ^a	6.88	1.46	.28
14. A parish celebrates diversity in race and ethnicity of parishioners. ^a	6.13	1.77	.42
16. A parish offers different styles of liturgy that appeal to different tastes. ^a	5.10	1.71	.34
19. A parish has no conflict among members of the parish. ^a	3.97	1.99	.14
22. A parish celebrates diversity in sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, etc.) of parishioners. ^a	3.96	2.34	.37
23. A parish has a good reputation in its town/city. ^a	6.16	1.41	.32
25. Parishioners have a sense of pride in being members of their parish. ^a	6.52	1.24	.48
27. There are year round opportunities for parishioners to know each other. ^a	6.20	1.18	.52
17. A parish is involved in social issues affecting the town/city it is located in. ^b	5.97	1.43	.45
18. A parish is involved in social issues affecting the world. ^b	6.00	1.43	.46
24. The ultimate goal of a parish should be to provide Christian service programs (e.g., support groups, food cupboard). ^b	5.04	1.65	.45
31. A parish has Christian service programs (e.g., food cupboard, support groups) that serve the local community. ^b	6.24	1.27	.45
32. A parish is involved in social issues affecting the nation. ^b	5.71	1.50	.47
38. Parishioners not involved in parish leadership are included in planning parish programs. ^c	5.61	1.49	.35
52. Lay leaders make decisions within their job description independent of a pastor. ^c	4.30	1.74	.24
54. Lay leaders represent the diversity in sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, etc.) of a parish. ^c	3.54	2.03	.41

Items Comprising the Component (item numbers reflect the numbers found in Part A of the survey)	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
57. An increasing number of parishioners join in running the parish (e.g., heads of committees, parish council member). ^c	6.08	1.17	.56
66. Lay leaders represent the racial and ethnic diversity of a parish. ^c	5.82	1.70	.46
67. Parishioners can openly discuss their concerns with the parish leadership. ^d	6.90	1.12	.39
68. Parish leadership informs parishioners of parish issues through personal means (e.g., talking to parishioners after mass as they leave). ^d	5.47	1.52	.34
71. Parish leadership communicates with parishioners who do not attend church. ^d	5.29	1.41	.23
72. Parish leadership asks parishioners what their concerns are instead of waiting for parishioners to come forward. ^d	6.08	1.12	.44
73. A parish uses the talents of all parishioners who answer time and talent surveys. ^d	6.33	1.18	.30
55. A pastor manages the parish in a manner that a businessperson manages the resources of a corporation. ^e	4.56	1.75	.16
56. A resident priest is involved with the happenings in the local community. ^e	5.82	1.23	.57
60. A resident priest continually tries new programs. ^e	5.14	1.43	.50
63. A resident priest's homilies challenge the spiritual lives of parishioners. ^e	6.84	1.24	.31
64. A resident priest is quick in making decisions that affect the whole parish. ^e	4.28	1.75	.09
65. A resident priest's enthusiasm is contagious. ^e	6.78	1.20	.44
53. Lay leaders of a parish are sociable. ^f	5.85	1.29	.53
59. Lay leaders continually try new programs. ^f	5.17	1.40	.52
61. Lay leaders' enthusiasm is contagious. ^f	6.12	1.32	.58
62. Lay leaders are involved with the happenings of the local community. ^f	5.94	1.22	.64
34. A parish offers programs catering to varied social interests. ^g	5.64	1.36	.64
35. A parish spends whatever amount is necessary to make all programs handicap accessible (e.g., Braille materials, sign interpreter for the deaf). ^g	5.12	1.75	.51

Items Comprising the Component (item numbers reflect the numbers found in Part A of the survey)	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
41. Program schedules are convenient for everyone interested in joining them. ^g	5.27	1.39	.36
43. Aside from the priest, there is a person who can answer all questions about parish programs. ^g	5.81	1.40	.43
44. Parishioners not involved in parish leadership are included in evaluating parish programs. ^g	5.85	1.51	.27
36. A parish seeks assistance from the Diocese. ^h	5.30	1.56	.35
37. A parish explicitly encourages parishioners to give more of their time. ^h	5.52	1.25	.31
39. A parish creates space to accommodate parish activities regardless of cost. ^h	3.84	1.52	.34
45. A parish explicitly encourages parishioners to give more of their financial resources. ^h	5.16	1.30	.19
46. A parish seeks assistance from other parishes. ^h	4.32	1.48	.24
47. A parish seeks assistance from non-profits agencies. ^h	4.40	1.55	.29
48. A parish spends whatever amount is necessary to make all buildings and offices handicap accessible (e.g., for those using wheelchairs). ^h	5.28	1.82	.46
42. Parishioners are open to changes introduced by the resident priest. ⁱ	5.58	1.25	.44
49. Parishioners are open to changes introduced by lay leaders. ⁱ	5.68	1.27	.58
N = 194	Alpha = .90	Scale Mean = 258.59	Scale SD = 29.74

Note. ^a Items comprising the Parish Life variable.
^b Items comprising the Service variable.
^c Items comprising the Participatory Leadership variable.
^d Items comprising the Communication variable.
^e Items comprising the Priest Characteristics variable.
^f Items comprising the Leader Characteristics variable.
^g Items comprising the Program variable.
^h Items comprising the Resource variable.
ⁱ Items comprising the Open to Change variable.

APPENDIX L
Psychometric Properties of the Mission Component

APPENDIX L
Psychometric Properties of the Mission Component

Items Comprising the Component (item numbers reflect the numbers found in Part A of the survey)	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
2. Everyone in attendance enthusiastically participates in celebrations of faith. ^a	5.22	1.85	.18
6. Parishioners know when and how to genuflect (e.g., kneel) in church. ^a	4.14	2.21	.58
7. A parish creates guidelines on proper Church attire. ^a	3.73	2.09	.53
11. A parish has all year round worship opportunities (e.g., devotions, small worship groups) beyond the weekend and weekday masses. ^a	6.45	1.20	.24
13. People are taught how to apply God's good news in their day-to-day lives. ^a	7.17	1.01	.17
15. Participants in any parish activities (including devotions, social activities) are made aware of how the activity is connected to love of God. ^a	6.38	1.29	.34
3. A parish has a parochial school. ^b	4.46	2.41	.52
4. A resident priest is involved in the operations of the parochial school if a parish has one. ^b	5.94	1.99	.42
5. Religious education is focused on children. ^b	5.88	1.87	.22
N = 249 Alpha = .69 Scale Mean = 49.39			Scale SD = 8.78

Note. ^a Items comprising the Worship variable.

^b Items comprising the Education variable.

APPENDIX M
Comparison Between Principal Components and Principal Axis Factor Analyses

APPENDIX M
Comparison Between Principal Components and Principal Axis Factor Analyses

Variable	Principal Components Analysis (PCA)				Principal Axis Analysis (PA)			
	Pattern Matrix ^a		Structure Matrix ^a		Factor Matrix		Rotated Factor Matrix ^b	
	Component		Component		Factors		Factors	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Worship	.02	.77	.23	.78	.33	.55	.16	.62
Parish life	.75	-.08	.72	.12	.66	-.16	.68	.03
Participation	.47	.47	.59	.59	.62	.29	.51	.46
Education	-.34	.86	-.11	.76	.03	.71	-.17	.69
Christian service	.72	-.16	.68	.04	.60	-.20	.63	-.02
Participatory leadership	.85	-.33	.76	-.10	.69	-.41	.77	-.20
Communication	.53	.34	.62	.48	.62	.18	.55	.35
Priest characteristics	.55	.28	.62	.42	.61	.13	.55	.30
Leader characteristics	.74	.17	.78	.36	.77	.03	.73	.25
Programs	.77	.05	.78	.26	.75	-.07	.74	.15
Resource	.55	.24	.61	.39	.59	.10	.54	.27
Open to changes	.72	-.13	.69	.07	.61	-.18	.63	.00

Note. ^a = With Promax rotation.
^b = With Varimax rotation.

APPENDIX N
Psychometric Properties of Survey Part B Scales

APPENDIX N
Psychometric Properties of Survey Part B Scales

Table 1
Psychometric Properties of Worship Scale

Scale Items (item numbers reflect the number appearing on Part B of the survey)	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
1. Our parish does not have all year round opportunities (e.g., devotions, and small worship groups) for people to worship God beyond the weekend and weekday masses. (R)	6.13	1.62	.28
3. Everyone attending our celebrations of faith participates enthusiastically.	4.35	1.62	.44
4. Parishioners are taught how to apply God's good news in our day-to-day lives.	5.55	1.43	.56
8. Participants in any of our parish activity (including devotions, social activities) are made aware of how the activity shows love of God.	5.22	1.42	.52
Alpha = .66	Scale Mean = 21.26		Scale SD = 4.29

Note. (R) = Item was reverse coded.

Table 2
Psychometric Properties of Parish Life Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
5. Our parish celebrates diversity in race and ethnicity of parishioners.	5.18	1.73	.46
10. Everyone (including parishioners, staff, and priests) who holds political views different from the majority of the parish feels welcome.	5.45	1.54	.54
11. The population size of our parish is just right.	5.24	1.44	.43
14. People feel a sense of community year round and not just on special events.	5.80	1.41	.61
15. Members of our parish have no conflict among themselves.	3.63	1.58	.28
19. Our parish offers different styles of liturgy that appeal to different tastes.	4.74	1.62	.28
20. Our parish has year round opportunities for parishioners to know each other.	5.56	1.41	.58
26. Our parish does not have a good reputation in this town/city. (R)	6.68	1.53	.29
27. Parishioners have a sense of pride in being members of our parish.	6.32	1.22	.60
Alpha = .76 Scale Mean = 48.58 Scale SD = 7.93			
<u>Note.</u> (R) = Item was reverse coded.			

Table 3
Psychometric Properties of Participation Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
12. Our liturgical music does not generate enthusiasm in people to sing. (R)	5.61	1.85	.38
21. High proportions of parishioners attend our parish's own masses.	5.90	1.27	.46
22. High proportions of parishioners attend our parish social events such as the parish dinner and parish picnic.	4.74	1.28	.33
23. Our parish does not encourage participation in church activities through personal invitations (e.g., someone talking to parishioners after mass). (R)	4.92	1.64	.39
24. Different parishioners, rather than the same group of people, are involved across our different parish events.	4.34	1.51	.26
25. Our parishioners do not act as parish representatives to the local community. (R)	5.24	1.36	.40
Alpha = .63 Scale Mean = 30.75 Scale SD = 5.34			

Note. (R) = Item was reverse coded.

Table 4
Psychometric Properties of Education Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
2. Our parish does not focus religious education on children. (R)	6.41	1.62	.43
31. Our parish has a good parochial school.	6.60	1.57	.47
32. Our resident priest(s) is involved in the operations of our parochial school.	5.64	1.87	.46
Alpha = .64 Scale Mean = 18.66 Scale SD = 3.87			

Note. (R) = Item was reverse coded.

Table 5
Psychometric Properties of Christian Service Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
17. Our parish has Christian service programs (e.g., food cupboard, support groups) that serve the local community.	6.09	1.53	.57
18. Christian service (e.g., support groups, food cupboard) is our parish's ultimate goal.	4.17	1.64	.49
28. Our parish is involved in social issues affecting our town/city.	5.54	1.53	.67
29. Our parish is not involved in social issues affecting the nation. (R)	5.58	1.60	.55
30. Our parish is involved in social issues affecting the world.	5.39	1.68	.57
Alpha = .79 Scale Mean = 26.78 Scale SD = 5.89			

Note. (R) = Item was reverse coded.

Table 6
Psychometric Properties of Participatory Leadership Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
41. Parishioners not involved in our parish leadership are included in planning parish programs.	4.52	1.55	.43
53. An increasing number of parishioners join in running our parish (e.g., heads of committees, parish council member).	4.61	1.26	.30
56. All decisions in our parish are made through consensus among the priest(s) and the parish pastoral council.	4.78	1.53	.28
57. In our parish, a parishioner's abilities are the only consideration for him/her to be a lay leader.	3.75	1.40	.19
59. Our parish lay leaders represent the racial and ethnic diversity of our parish.	4.95	1.59	.37
71. Our parish lay leaders do not represent the diversity in sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, etc.) of our parish. (R)	4.26	1.87	.35
Alpha = .57 Scale Mean = 26.87 Scale SD = 5.27			

Note. (R) = Item was reverse coded.

Table 7
Psychometric Properties of Communication Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
35. Committees in our parish that work on different programs communicate with each other.	4.72	1.42	.53
76. Our parish leadership (i.e., both priest and lay leaders) communicates with parishioners who do not attend church.	4.05	1.33	.54
77. Our parish leadership discusses delicate but important issues (e.g., division in the parish) with parishioners.	4.27	1.59	.60
78. Our parish leadership waits for parishioners to come forward with their concerns instead of asking them. (R)	4.71	1.54	.47
79. Even if our parishioners want to, they cannot openly discuss their concerns with our parish leadership.(R)	5.88	1.78	.45
80. Our parish leadership informs parishioners of parish issues through personal means (e.g., talking to them after mass as they leave).	4.47	1.45	.46
82. Our parish uses the talents of all who answer the time and talent surveys.	5.11	1.57	.50
Alpha = .78	Scale Mean = 33.22	Scale SD = 7.04	

Note. (R) = Item was reverse coded.

Table 8
Psychometric Properties of Priest Characteristics Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
58. Our resident priest(s) is personable.	6.87	1.26	.62
61. Our resident priest(s) is not able to identify goals based on the parish's changing needs.(R)	5.95	1.56	.69
62. Our resident priest(s) does not continually try new programs.(R)	5.61	1.50	.61
70. The homilies of our resident priest challenge parishioners' spiritual lives.	5.98	1.59	.63
72. Our resident priest(s) is spiritually healthy (e.g., strong faith life).	7.02	1.18	.56
73. Our resident priest(s) is involved with the happenings of our local community.	5.81	1.48	.70
74. Parishioners do not feel the enthusiasm of our resident priest(s).(R)	5.92	1.73	.72
Alpha = .87 Scale Mean = 43.17 Scale SD = 7.76			

Note. (R) = Item was reverse coded.

Table 9
Psychometric Properties of Leader Characteristics Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
36. Everyone (including resident priests, lay leaders, and parishioners) in our parish trusts each other as working for the good of our parish.	5.42	1.57	.57
60. Our lay leaders continually try new programs.	5.04	1.20	.50
63. Our parish lay leaders are sociable.	5.82	1.24	.56
64. Our parish is not able to translate yearly themes into tangible goals.(R)	5.47	1.54	.47
65. Our lay leaders are not involved with the happenings of our local community.(R)	5.65	1.36	.52
66. Parishioners can feel the enthusiasm of our lay leaders.	5.36	1.39	.71
67. Our lay leaders are able to identify goals based on the parish's changing needs.	5.19	1.24	.72
68. Our parish lay leaders are spiritually healthy (e.g., strong faith life).	6.09	1.22	.55
Alpha = .84 Scale Mean = 44.05 Scale SD = 7.41			

Note. (R) = Item was reverse coded.

Table 10
Psychometric Properties of Programs Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
34. Any program in our parish is the equal responsibility of all parish committees and not just the committee that thought of the program.	4.21	1.48	.22
37. Our parish does not offer programs that cater to different social interests.(R)	5.40	1.50	.42
38. Our parish spends whatever amount is necessary to make programs handicap accessible (e.g., Braille materials, sign interpreter for the deaf).	4.83	1.61	.35
39. Aside from the priest, there is a person who can answer all questions about our parish programs.	5.33	1.66	.47
40. Our parish program schedules are not convenient for all interested in joining.(R)	5.15	1.49	.37
48. Parishioners not involved in our parish leadership are included in evaluating parish programs.	4.41	1.72	.40
Alpha = .64 Scale Mean = 29.34 Scale SD = 5.66			

Note. (R) = Item was reverse coded.

Table 11
Psychometric Properties of Resources Scale

Scale Items	Item Means	Item SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations
43. Our parish explicitly encourages parishioners to give more of their time.	5.34	1.27	.35
44. Our parish explicitly encourages parishioners to give more of their financial resources.	5.28	1.38	.21
45. Our parish does not seek assistance from the Diocese.(R)	5.24	1.58	.18
46. Our parish seeks assistance from other parishes.	3.41	1.53	.29
47. Our parish seeks assistance from non-profit agencies.	3.54	1.48	.23
49. Our parish creates space to accommodate parish activities regardless of cost.	4.41	1.53	.35
50. Our parish spends whatever amount is necessary to make buildings and offices handicap accessible (e.g., for those using wheelchairs).	5.07	1.71	.28
51. Each ministry in our parish has its own staff.	4.35	1.59	.18
Alpha = .54 Scale Mean = 36.65 Scale SD = 5.90			
<u>Note.</u> (R) = Item was reverse coded.			

Table 12
Correlations of Open to Changes Scale Items with Other Scales.

Item/Scale	Item 42. Our parishioners are open to changes introduced by our lay leaders.	Item 52. Our parishioners are open to changes introduced by our resident priest(s).
Item 42. Our parishioners are open to changes introduced by our lay leaders.	1.00	0.63**
Item 52. Our parishioners are open to changes introduced by our resident priest(s).	0.63**	1.00
Worship	0.38**	0.25**
Parish Life	0.40**	0.34**
Participation	0.49**	0.40**
Education	0.32**	0.21**
Christian Service	0.50**	0.41**
Participatory Leadership	0.27**	0.16*
Communication	0.43**	0.28**
Priest Characteristics	0.44**	0.40**
Leader Characteristics	0.49**	0.39**
Programs	0.51**	0.37**
Resource Availability and Use	0.26**	0.17**

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 13
Correlations among Variables.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Worship (1)	.66	.93	.88	.72	.72	.70	.72	.76	.82	.84	.48	.47
Parish Life (2)	.65	.76	1.01	.87	.80	.79	.83	.79	.92	.87	.53	.52
Participation (3)	.57	.69	.63	.83	.78	.78	.88	.85	.96	.91	.49	.69
Education (4)	.46	.60	.52	.64	.61	.64	.75	.75	.86	.82	.66	.42
Christian Service (5)	.52	.62	.55	.44	.79	.60	.70	.69	.79	.81	.52	.62
Participatory Leadership (6)	.42	.51	.46	.39	.40	.57	.72	.60	.73	.96	.67	.35
Communication (7)	.51	.64	.61	.53	.55	.47	.78	.75	.88	.90	.48	.49
Priest Characteristics (8)	.57	.64	.62	.56	.57	.42	.61	.87	.88	.74	.44	.56
Leader Characteristics (9)	.61	.74	.70	.63	.65	.50	.71	.75	.84	.95	.51	.59
Programs (10)	.54	.61	.57	.52	.58	.58	.63	.55	.70	.64	.66	.67
Resources (11)	.28	.34	.28	.38	.33	.37	.31	.30	.34	.39	.54	.36
Open to Changes (12)	.34	.39	.48	.30	.49	.23	.38	.46	.48	.47	.23	--

Note. Correlations above the diagonal are corrected for attenuation. Correlations below the diagonal are raw correlations. Diagonals contain scale alphas.

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