



Contribution of Laity to the Growth of Catholic Church in Tanzania: Case of Catholic Archdiocese of Dar es salaam

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to explore the contribution of the laity in the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania, using the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam as a case study. It investigated the role and self-understanding of the laity within the Church through five specific objectives: examining the areas and extent of laity contribution, determining the sufficiency of this contribution, identifying factors constraining it, and recommending ways to enhance laity involvement. A case study research design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative approaches, was employed to obtain in-depth insights. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to ninety-three (93) laity leaders and seven (7) parish priests, as well as Skype interviews with twenty-six (26) selected laity members. These priests and other respondents were obtained from a total population of 2,550 using Yamane's sampling formula. Secondary data, sourced from the Archdiocese's annual reports, indicated that the laity in Dar es Salaam actively participated in various apostolic missions, including community service, evangelization, and church administration. However, the level of contribution varied significantly among different parishes. Key constraints identified included a lack of adequate training, limited resources, and insufficient support from clergy. The research concluded that while there was a notable contribution from the laity to the apostolic mission, there was a need for more structured support and training programs to enhance their effectiveness. Recommendations included establishing more robust training initiatives, better resource allocation, and fostering a more collaborative environment between the clergy and the laity. These measures were considered essential for maximizing the laity's potential in fulfilling the Church's mission in Tanzania. By addressing these factors, the Catholic Church in Tanzania could significantly improve the engagement and impact of the laity in its apostolic mission, ultimately contributing to a more vibrant and inclusive church community.

Keywords: Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam, Catholic Church, Church Growth, Laity, Tanzania

I. INTRODUCTION

The Catholic Church has long recognized the indispensable role of the laity in its mission, emphasizing that the faithful, not limited to clergy, are integral to the Church's life and growth. This recognition has been notably reaffirmed since the Second Vatican Council, which highlighted the active contribution of laypeople in the Church's apostolic mission. In Tanzania, and particularly within the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam, lay involvement in church activities has been a cornerstone of the Church's vibrancy and expansion. However, while the laity's contributions are acknowledged, there has been limited scholarly attention to how this contribution tangibly impacts the Church's growth and mission within this region.

Historically, the Catholic Church has operated with a predominantly clerical structure, where the roles of priests, bishops, and other ordained ministers were emphasized as central to the Church's function. However, the Second Vatican Council marked a significant shift, advocating for the empowerment of the laity as co-responsible for the Church's mission. This shift was further supported by subsequent papal teachings, which called for greater lay involvement in various aspects of church life, from liturgical contribution to leadership in church-based social initiatives.

Despite these theological and doctrinal shifts, there remains a gap in the practical understanding of how these changes have been realized in different dioceses worldwide, particularly in Tanzania. The Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam, one of the most significant ecclesiastical jurisdictions in the country, serves as an ideal case for examining this dynamic. This study seeks to explore the specific contributions of the laity within this Archdiocese, identifying areas where their engagement has been strong and where there may be opportunities for further growth. By doing so, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the laity's role in the Church's development and to highlight potential pathways for enhancing lay contribution in the Church's mission in Tanzania.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) marked a significant turning point in the Catholic Church's approach to the role of the laity. One of the key emphases of the Council was the need for apostolic associations to enhance the contribution of laypeople in the Church's apostolic missions. According to Pope Paul VI in his 1964 documents, the mission of the Church is a collective endeavor where bishops, priests, and the laity are all contributors in the function of Christ. The active and vibrant contribution of the laity has a profound impact on the life of the Church, so much so that without it, the apostolic mission of the pastors could be severely limited in its effectiveness.

In response to the directives of the Vatican II Council, the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam established several apostolic associations aimed at fostering lay involvement in the Church's mission. Among these are WAWATA (*Wanawake Wakatoliki Tanzania*), UWAKA (*Utume wa Wanaume Wakatoliki*), and VIWAWA (*Vijana Wakatoliki Wafanyakazi*). These associations were founded to ensure that the laity would not only be active contributors but also play a critical role in the growth and development of the Catholic Church in Tanzania.

Since 1972, the strategic plan of the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam has seen some notable and modest successes. Key milestones include the establishment of St. Mary's Minor Seminary in Visiga, largely run by WAWATA and UWAKA's involvement in the founding of the Archdiocese of the Little Sisters of Saint Francis (LSoF). These achievements underscore the potential of lay contributions when effectively mobilized.

In addition to these milestones, the Archdiocese has instituted annual ceremonies known as *Mavuno Jimbo* (Harvest), held every November, where apostolic associations contribute to the Archdiocese's development. This event highlights the collective effort of the laity in supporting the Church's mission, reflecting their crucial role in the life of the Church.

However, despite the establishment of these apostolic associations and pastoral departments, there remains a significant gap in laity contribution. Many members of the laity are still not fully engaged in the Church's apostolic mission, which has hampered the growth and development of the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam. This reality points to an ongoing challenge: the need to deepen and broaden lay contribution to fulfill the Church's mission fully.

It is from this backdrop that the present study seeks to explore the factors contributing to the insufficient contribution of the laity in the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church within the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam. By examining the current state of lay involvement, this research aims to identify barriers and opportunities for enhancing the role of the laity, thereby contributing to the overall mission of the Church in Tanzania.

1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To examine areas of laity contribution to the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania
- ii. To determine insufficiency of the contribution of the laity in the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania.
- iii. To identify factors constraining contribution of the laity in the apostolic mission to recommend further uptake for the Catholic Church in Tanzania.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Catholic Ecclesiology of the Laity

Christifideles Laici. According to Chapter IV of *Lumen Gentium*, which specifically addresses the role of the laity, the term refers to all the faithful who are not part of the clergy or religious orders (Pope Paul VI, 1964). The laity participates in the prophetic, priestly, and kingly roles of Christ in their unique ways. Defined as all faithful members who are not in holy orders or in a state of life specially approved by the Church, they become one body with Christ through baptism and are integral to the People of God. They share in Christ's priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions and contribute to the mission of the entire Christian community both within the Church and in the world (Pope Paul VI, 1964).

Lumen Gentium, as articulated by the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council, emphasizes that the Church consists of many members who, despite having different functions, work towards a common goal and are united in "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Pope Paul VI, 1964). *Lumen Gentium* further explains that the laity, due to their secular roles, have unique access to individuals and areas that ordained ministers might not reach, allowing them to act as the "*salt of the earth*" and bring the Gospel into worldly settings. This position them to be a transformative leaven in society, living in the world while not being "*of*" the world. Laypeople are called to make the Church present and

active in areas where only they can be the salt of the earth, serving as witnesses and instruments of the Church's mission based on the gifts bestowed upon them (Pope Paul VI, 1964).

Lumen Gentium's call for increased lay contribution does not entail assigning clerical functions to the laity but rather encourages them to sanctify the secular world through their everyday duties. Lay initiatives may be conducted independently or in collaboration with clergy, ensuring that both groups utilize their gifts to further the Church's mission. Lay's contribution is aimed at supporting the Church's role as the light of the nations.

Chapter III, "The Various Fields of the Apostolate," identifies potential areas for lay apostolate action, including church communities, family, youth, and the social order at local, national, and international levels (Pope Paul VI, 1965). It emphasizes the need for laity to collaborate with priests in building up the parish and highlights the importance of fostering a sense of apostolic mission in youth.

A significant section of the chapter highlights the importance of apostolic activity by married couples and families, emphasizing the "indissolubility and sacredness of the marriage bond," the right and duty of parents to provide Christian education, and the dignity and autonomy of the family. The family apostolate may include adoption, hospitality, education, work with adolescents, formation of engaged couples, catechetical work, and support for families in need (Pope Paul VI, 1965).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Catechism highlights the seven Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. The Corporal Works include feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick, visiting the imprisoned, and burying the dead. The Spiritual Works encompass admonishing sinners, instructing the ignorant, counseling the doubtful, comforting the sorrowful, bearing wrongs patiently, forgiving injuries, and praying for the living and the dead (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2000). These teachings underscore the Church's view on the laity and their link to practical service, or diakonia, especially towards the less privileged.

2.2 Empirical Review

In his 2002 thesis, Hobel argued for a theology of the laity that is genuinely positive, ecumenical, and universal. Rather than focusing on specific content, he explored the necessary dimensions of such a theology and how it could be developed. He noted that many current lay theologies are predominantly negative in both content and interpretation. Consequently, he proposed examining lay contribution as a fundamental aspect of being the Church, rather than merely performing tasks within it. Hobel suggests ways to present lay contribution more positively. He offers an alternative model for defining the laity, using the image of the Church as a spoked wheel. Hobel's central argument is that current discussions are inadequate and that a new theology should start from the Church's collective vocation, emphasizing the interdependence of clergy and laity without subordination (Hobel, 2002).

Anomah (2020) observed that, even fifty-four years after Vatican II, the role of the laity in the Roman Catholic Church remains contentious for some clergy and laity. There is a perception among some that the laity's role is passive and that they overreach when attempting to fully participate in the Church's mission as priests, prophets, and kings (Pope Paul VI, 1964). This creates tension regarding the proper role of the laity, despite Vatican II's clear definitions. In his thesis, Anomah outlined the laity's prophetic, priestly, and kingly roles both within the Church and in the broader world. He argued that in areas such as family, culture, politics, and economics, the laity are often more qualified and effective in spreading the Gospel through their actions and words. He recommended that both clergy and laity, through their baptism and confirmation, should actively collaborate in the mission of Christ to spread God's kingdom on earth (Anomah, 2020).

Gakuna (2019) emphasized the crucial role of the laity in the Catholic Church's evangelization efforts and growth. He highlighted that the laity are called to embody Christ's values and actions in their daily lives, serving as witnesses to God's kingdom. His study, focused on Njoro Parish in Nakuru County, Kenya, aimed to understand the extent, outcomes, and challenges of lay contribution in evangelization. The research revealed that evangelization efforts by the laity need strengthening, and collaborative ministry is essential for achieving the parish's evangelization goals. It found that some laity are passive due to a lack of training and reluctance from both laity and clergy to involve them in evangelization. Gakuna recommended training for the laity in pastoral fields and sensitizing them to their evangelization roles for greater effectiveness (Gakuna, 2019)

Utzerath (2011) argued that unresolved issues regarding the laity's status and role persist nearly fifty years after Vatican II. The magisterium's focus on whether laypersons can perform traditionally ordained roles contrasts with sociological surveys showing lay members in the U.S. and Western countries experiencing inadequate formation, confused identities, marginalization, low commitment levels among young Catholics, and steady attrition. These lay issues reflect broader Church problems. Utzerath argued that realizing the laity's and Church's potential depends on achieving authenticity through graced conversion, which is both spiritual and social. Authenticity thrives in a

collaborative ecclesial environment, enabling reciprocal sharing and cooperation between laity and clergy. She concluded that such dialogical collaborations are crucial for realizing the full potential of both the laity and the Church (Utzerath, 2011).

Sedo (2017) examined the roles, responsibilities, and contributions of the laity in education. His research focused on defining the laity conceptually and operationally through religious and academic perspectives, the laity’s general roles within and outside the Church, and their specific contributions to education. He emphasized the integral role of the laity as baptized members of the Church with responsibilities both within the Church and in broader society. Sedo’s study presented the laity’s mission in education, highlighting their active and substantial role in God’s community. He stressed the importance of recognizing the laity’s contributions and responsibilities, particularly in the educational field, to understand their significant impact on the Church and society (Sedo, 2017).

2.3 Conceptual Framework

This research investigates the contribution of laity in the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania, specifically within the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam. It examines various independent variables: training and education, resource allocation, clergy support, awareness and understanding, church policies and structures, community and cultural attitudes, personal motivation and commitment, and communication and outreach. These factors are analyzed to understand their influence on key dependent variables, which include the extent of laity contribution, the effectiveness of their contributions, the perceived sufficiency of their involvement, and the overall success of the church’s mission. The study employs a mixed-method approach, collecting data through surveys, interviews, and secondary sources. The findings are expected to highlight the areas where laity contribution is lacking and identify the constraints hindering their full engagement. Based on these insights, the research aims to provide recommendations to enhance the training programs, resource support, clergy-laity collaboration, and communication strategies. Ultimately, the goal is to foster a more active, committed, and effective laity, thereby strengthening their contributions to the church’s mission in Tanzania and ensuring a more vibrant and inclusive church community. This is illustrated in the simple flow chart presented in Figure 1.

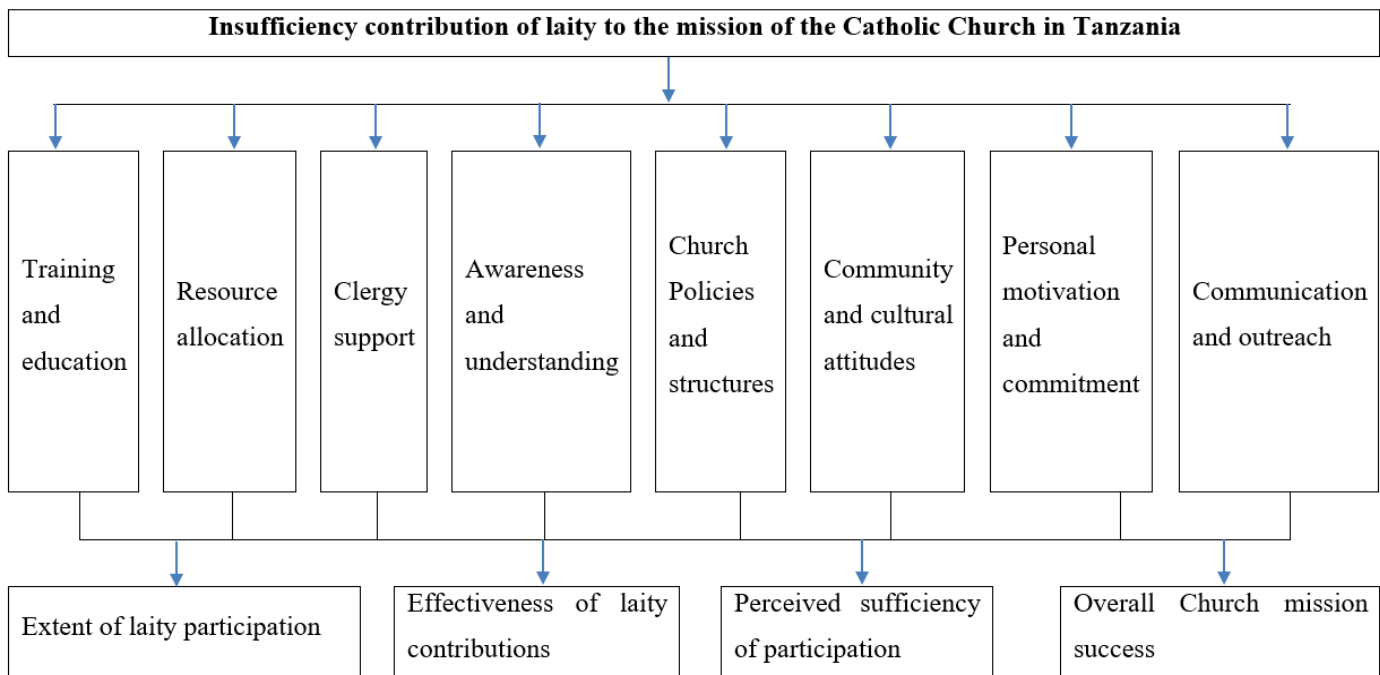


Figure 1
Conceptual Framework

III. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at the archdiocese of Dar es Salaam; in Tanzania. The study area is selected because it’s among the oldest and constitutes a number of parishes, offices, priests and faithful laity. The study adopted case study design that involved comprehensive description and analysis of the catholic archdiocese of Dar es Salaam. This



approach provides an in-depth analysis of contribution of laity to the growth of Catholic Church in Tanzania. The population of the study comprised the laity from 3 apostolic association and 150 priests from 148 parishes in directory of archdiocese of Dar es Salaam. 5 leaders of each apostolic association was sampled from each parish making a total of 2,550 population. The study comprised of three apostolic associations. The associations are WAWATA (*Wanawake Wakatoliki Tanzania*), UWAKA (*Utume wa Wanaume Katoliki*) and VIWAWA (*Vijana Wakatolik Wafanyakazi*). The association’s key role include; ensuring that every lay participates to the development of the Church, also helping the laity spiritually. The study also comprised of priests. The priests’ inclusion is because of their role in organizing and parenting the apostolic associations. 93 questionnaires were circulated to and collected from WAWATA, UWAKA and VIWAWA. Interviews were administered to seven priests and five leaders of apostolic associations. The quantitative data were analysed using graph, charts, tables or other diagram to represent a particular variable (frequency and percentage). Content analysis were used to analyse qualitative data. Themes were carefully identified from the descriptive responses, coded and classified. Respondents participated in the study willingly, participants consented their engagement.

Table 1
Population of the Study

Population of Study	Frequency
WAWATA	800
UWAKA	800
VIWAWA	800
Priests	150
Total	2,550

Each Parish contains five leaders of WAWATA, five leaders of UWAKA and five leaders of VIWAWA. Hence; number of all leaders of each apostolic association in 160 parishes is obtained as follows:

$$\therefore 160 \times 5 = 800$$

The sample size was determined by using Yamane’s (1967) formula (Yamane, 1973) as shown below; the formula is used to determine the number of sample size (*n*) based on the known population size (*N*).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Whereby;

n= sample size

N= targeted population size

1=Constant

e= sampling error that ranges 1- 10% population in this study, the sample size (*n*) is unknown; targeted population size (*N*) is 2,370, sampling error 10%

Hence, from the formula above;

$$n = \frac{2550}{1 + 2550(0.1)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{2550}{1 + 2550(0.01)}$$

$$n = \frac{2550}{1 + 25.5}$$

$$n = \frac{2550}{25.5}$$

n = 100, thus the sample size used comprised of 100 respondents.

The study use a sample size of 100 respondents from the selected four groups of respondents. From the apostolic associations, the researcher sampled 31 WAWATA, 31 UWAKA and 31 VIWAWA respondents and 7 priests. These respondents were purposely sampled based on their roles, experience, professional and position to the contribution to the apostolic mission in the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam and Tanzania in general.

IV. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Response rate

All 93 questionnaires distributed to WAWATA (31), UWAKA (31) and VIWAWA (31) were filled and returned. This amounts to 100% collection. Data were collected from 31 WAWATA, 31 UWAKA and 31 VIWAWA. As sampled 7 interviews were conducted priests and 5 to leaders of apostolic associations.

4.2 Distribution and demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 2

Distribution and Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Personal characteristics	Frequency (n=88)	Percent (%)	Cumulative Frequency
Age Group (Years)			
21-30	23	23	23
31-40	16	16	39
41-50	28	28	67
51-60	22	22	89
61 and above	11	11	100
Sex			
Male	53	53	53
Female	47	47	100
Education Level			
Diploma	7	7	7
Undergraduate Degree	49	49	56
Master's Degree	33	33	89
Doctorate (PhD)	11	11	100
Career age			
0-5years	30	30	30
6-10 years	28	28	58
More than 10 years	42	42	100
Current position title			
Chairman	50	50	50
Secretary	43	43	93
Priest	7	7	100

4.4 Areas of laity contribution to the Apostolic Mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania

The areas of laity contribution had seven sub-variables. The sub-variables are parish life, evangelization, education, social justice, missionary work, stewardship and formation and discipleship. Likert scale of two points Agree and Disagree were used to measure areas of the laity contribution from questionnaires as depicted in the Table 3.

Table 3

Areas of laity contribution to the Apostolic Mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania

Area of Contribution	Respondents - Agree (%)	Respondents - Disagree (%)
Parish Life	96	4
Evangelization	68	32
Education	91	9
Social Justice	71	29
Missionary Work	18	82
Stewardship	67	33
Formation and Discipleship	58	42

Parish life

Interviews from priests and leaders on Parish Life revealed the following;

One priest during the interview commented that;

Laity engages in various activities within their local parishes, including serving in liturgical ministries such as lectors, altar servers, and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. Additionally, they contribute to the vibrant community life of the parish through contribution in religious education programs, outreach initiatives, and social events that foster fellowship among parishioners”.

One leader respondent writes in a questionnaire

I strongly believe that the laity plays a vital role in parish activities. Their dedication and enthusiasm truly enrich our community, making our parish a vibrant and welcoming place for all.

Evangelization

Interviews from priests and leaders on Evangelization revealed the following;

One priest during an interview responded:

The laity are called to share their faith with others through personal witness and active involvement in evangelization programs. This can take the form of inviting friends and family to mass, participating in faith-sharing groups, or engaging in discussions about the Catholic faith with those who are curious or seeking spiritual guidance.

One priest, revealed this:

I respectfully disagree with the notion of extensive lay involvement in evangelization efforts. In my experience, such initiatives often lack the theological depth and pastoral sensitivity necessary for effectively communicating the teachings of the Church. I believe it's important to prioritize quality over quantity when it comes to evangelistic outreach.

One leader commented the following:

As someone who has been involved in parish leadership, I've observed challenges associated with coordinating lay-led evangelization efforts. While I appreciate the enthusiasm of lay volunteers, I've also encountered instances where their approach has been inconsistent with the teachings and traditions of the Church. For these reasons, I'm cautious about endorsing widespread lay involvement in evangelization.

Interviews from priests and leaders on education revealed the following;

A Priest who is also a PhD holder elaborated during an interview:

Education also plays a vital role in the growth of the Church, with the laity supporting Catholic schools, universities, and religious education programs. By ensuring access to quality education rooted in Catholic teachings and values, the laity contributes to the formation of future generations of Catholics who are equipped to live out their faith in the modern world.

Interviews from priests and leaders on social justice revealed the following;

One leader emphasized the personal impact of lay-led education, stating,

As a lifelong member of this parish, I have benefited greatly from the teachings and guidance of lay educators. Their passion for sharing the faith has inspired me to deepen my own spiritual journey and become more actively engaged in parish activities.

Another leader pointed this;

The laity's contribution ensures that educational programs are accessible to individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences. This diversity enriches the learning environment and enables everyone, regardless of their level of knowledge or expertise, to engage meaningfully with our Catholic teachings.

Interviews from priests and leaders on Formation and Discipleship revealed the following;

One leader highlighted this:

The laity's contribution in formation initiatives ensures that individuals from all backgrounds and walks of life have access to spiritual growth opportunities. Their diverse perspectives and personal testimonies enrich the learning experience and inspire others to embrace their faith journey with authenticity and zeal.

Education

Interviews from priests and leaders on education revealed the following;

One priest who eloquently stated this through interviews:

The laity's contribution in education is instrumental in nurturing the faith formation of individuals of all ages. Their dedication to teaching and mentoring not only imparts knowledge but also cultivates a deeper understanding and appreciation of our Catholic heritage.

Another priest who is also a PhD holder elaborated during an interview:

Education also plays a vital role in the growth of the Church, with the laity supporting Catholic schools, universities, and religious education programs. By ensuring access to quality education rooted in Catholic teachings and values, the laity contributes to the formation of future generations of Catholics who are equipped to live out their faith in the modern world.

Another respondent who is a chairman in a certain parish echoed this sentiment during an interview, saying, *As a parent, I am grateful for the dedication of lay educators who work tirelessly to instill the values of our faith in our children. Their commitment to excellence in teaching goes beyond imparting knowledge; it fosters a sense of belonging and community within our parish family.*

One leader also emphasized the practical impact of lay involvement in education, stating,

The laity's contribution in educational programs ensures accessibility and inclusivity, as they bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the table. This enriches the learning environment and enables individuals from all walks of life to engage meaningfully with our Catholic teachings.

Despite the overwhelming agreement among the majority of respondents, a minority of participants expressed disagreement regarding the extent of the laity's involvement in educational endeavors within the parish. For instance, one respondent leader remarked in a during interviews:

While I acknowledge the importance of education within the parish, I believe it should primarily be led by ordained clergy or trained professionals. I'm hesitant about relying solely on lay members for teaching roles.

Another leader also remarked;

I believe that theological education should be overseen by individuals with specialized training and credentials. While lay members may have good intentions, their lack of formal theological education could lead to misunderstandings or misinterpretations of Church teachings.

Social Justice

Interviews from priests and leaders on social justice revealed the following;

One Priest articulated this;

The laity's contribution in education is essential for nurturing the faith of our community members. Their dedication to teaching and mentoring not only imparts knowledge but also fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of our Catholic traditions.

Another leader emphasized the personal impact of lay-led education, stating;

As a lifelong member of this parish, I have benefited greatly from the teachings and guidance of lay educators. Their passion for sharing the faith has inspired me to deepen my own spiritual journey and become more actively engaged in parish activities.

Additionally, another leader highlighted the inclusivity fostered by lay involvement in education, stating,

The laity's contribution ensures that educational programs are accessible to individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences. This diversity enriches the learning environment and enables everyone, regardless of their level of knowledge or expertise, to engage meaningfully with our Catholic teachings.

One leader remarked differently as follows;

While I acknowledge the importance of education within the parish, I am skeptical about relying solely on lay members for teaching roles. I believe that theological education should be overseen by individuals with specialized training and credentials."

Another dissenting leader expressed concern about the theological depth of lay-led education, stating:

I worry that lay-led educational initiatives may lack the necessary theological rigor and depth required to effectively transmit the teachings of the Church. It's crucial to ensure that our educational programs uphold the integrity of our faith tradition.

Additionally, another leader highlighted the need for clear delineation between lay and clerical roles within the Church, stating:

I believe that while lay involvement in education is valuable, it should be supplementary to the leadership of ordained clergy. We must preserve the distinct roles and responsibilities entrusted to each group within the ecclesiastical structure to maintain the Integrity of our faith community.

Missionary Work

Interviews from priests and leaders on missionary work revealed the following;

In agreeing to the missionary work, one Priest respondent stated,

I believe that involving the laity in missionary activities is essential for reaching individuals in our community who may not otherwise have access to the message of Christ. Their passion and dedication to evangelization can inspire others to explore their faith and deepen their relationship with God.

Another Priest emphasized the practical benefits of lay involvement in missionary efforts, stating,

The laity's contribution in missionary works allows for greater outreach and engagement with diverse communities. Their unique insights and personal connections can help bridge cultural and linguistic barriers, making the gospel more accessible to a wider audience.

Additionally, a leader also highlighted the importance of empowering lay members to take on leadership roles in missionary endeavors, stating;

I support the involvement of the laity in missionary activities as it fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility within the parish community. By providing opportunities for lay leadership, we empower individuals to share their faith boldly and authentically with others.

One leader remarked a dissenting view that;

While I appreciate the enthusiasm of lay volunteers, I believe that missionary works should be primarily led by ordained clergy or trained professionals. This ensures the integrity and consistency of the evangelistic message and upholds the authority of Church teachings.

Another dissenting leader expressed concern about the theological depth of lay-led missionary efforts, stating,;

I worry that lay-led missionary activities may lack the necessary theological expertise to effectively communicate the teachings of the Church. It's essential to ensure that our evangelistic efforts are grounded in sound doctrine and led by individuals with proper training and qualifications.

Additionally, another leader highlighted the potential for confusion or inconsistency in lay-led missionary endeavors, stating,

I'm cautious about relying solely on lay members for evangelization, as their interpretations of Church teachings may vary widely. Without proper oversight and guidance, there is a risk of spreading misinformation or diverging from established doctrine.

Stewardship

Interviews from priests and leaders on stewardship revealed the following;

One Priest agreed that;

The laity's contribution in stewardship, especially in financial matters, is crucial for sustaining the financial health of our parish. Their commitment to giving generously and sacrificially ensures the financial stability of our community and supports the various ministries and outreach programs.

Another leader emphasized the importance of financial transparency and accountability in stewardship practices, stating;

As a parishioner, I value the laity's involvement in overseeing financial matters within our parish. Their oversight helps ensure that resources are used wisely and ethically, and that financial decisions align with the values and mission of the Church.

Additionally, one Priest highlighted the holistic nature of stewardship and its impact on financial stewardship, stating,

The laity's contribution in stewardship extends beyond financial contributions. It includes promoting financial literacy, budgeting, and wise stewardship of resources. Through their example and leadership, lay members inspire others to prioritize giving and financial responsibility as integral aspects of their faith.

One leader remarked in dissent that,

While I appreciate the enthusiasm of lay volunteers, I believe that financial stewardship initiatives are primarily led by ordained clergy or trained professionals. This ensures the integrity and effectiveness of financial management practices and upholds the authority of Church teachings.

Another dissenting leader expressed concern about the equitable distribution of financial stewardship responsibilities, stating,

I worry that relying solely on lay members for financial stewardship initiatives as it lead to unequal burdens and expectations within the parish community. It's essential to ensure that financial stewardship efforts are inclusive and accessible to all members, regardless of their financial resources or expertise... Most of financial contributions are from abroad

Additionally, another leader highlighted the potential for mismanagement or misunderstandings about financial stewardship among lay members, stating,

I am cautious about relying solely on lay volunteers for financial stewardship education and oversight. Without proper training and oversight, there is a risk of financial mismanagement or misinterpretation of stewardship principles, which could undermine the financial health of our parish.

Formation and Discipleship

Interviews from priests and leaders on formation and discipleship revealed the following:

One Priest agreed with the formation and discipleship stating that:

The laity's contribution in formation and discipleship is essential for guiding individuals on their faith journey and equipping them with the knowledge and tools to live out their Catholic identity in the world. Their dedication to teaching, mentoring, and spiritual accompaniment fosters a sense of belonging and discipleship within our parish family.

Another leader emphasized the personal impact of lay involvement in formation, stating:

As someone who has benefited from lay-led formation programs, I can attest to the transformative power of their guidance and support. The laity's willingness to share their faith, wisdom, and life experiences has helped me deepen my relationship with God and discern my vocation within the Church."

Additionally, one Priest highlighted the inclusivity fostered by lay involvement in discipleship, stating:

The laity's contribution in formation initiatives ensures that individuals from all backgrounds and walks of life have access to spiritual growth opportunities. Their diverse perspectives and personal testimonies enrich the learning experience and inspire others to embrace their faith journey with authenticity and zeal.

One leader in dissent remarked that:

While I appreciate the enthusiasm of lay volunteers, I believe that formation and discipleship initiatives should be primarily led by ordained clergy or trained professionals. This ensures the integrity and effectiveness of the formation process and upholds the authority of Church teachings.

Another dissenting leader expressed concern about the theological depth of lay-led formation efforts, stating,

I worry that lay-led formation programs may lack the necessary theological expertise to effectively transmit the teachings of the Church. It's essential to ensure that our formation initiatives are grounded in sound doctrine and led by individuals with proper training and qualifications.

Also another leader highlighted the potential for confusion or inconsistency in lay-led discipleship endeavors, stating:



I'm cautious about relying solely on lay members for discipleship, as their interpretations of Church teachings may vary widely. Without proper oversight and guidance, there is a risk of spreading misinformation or diverging from established doctrine.

4.5 Level of contribution of the laity in the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania

The levels were determined from the UWAKA, WAWATA and VIWAWA. The Likert Scale was used to measure three sub-variables, namely; those who were expected to contribute (those who are able to contribute in apostolic associations), those who were potentially available to contribute (those who are at least members of apostolic associations), and those who were actively engaged in contribution.

Data on level of contribution were collected from annual reports of the Laymen Apostolic Committee at the Diocesan and Parish levels. The findings indicate that there exists a substantial pool of men potentially capable of engaging in liturgical ministries across UWAKA, WAWATA, and VIWAWA. Within the UWAKA cohort, comprising approximately 35,000 individuals, only a modest 18,000 (51.42%) have elected to join the ministry. Findings indicate that the number of actively contributing members within UWAKA stands at a mere 11,000 (31.43%). Similarly, within the WAWATA demographic, encompassing an estimated 420,000 women, a comparatively higher proportion of 37,000 (88.1%) have enlisted in the ministry. However, despite this greater contribution rate, the active membership remains limited to 26,000 (61.90%) individuals. Lastly, the VIWAWA category, comprising approximately 48,600 youths, exhibits the lowest enrollment figures, with a mere 12,000 (24.69%) individuals choosing to engage in VIWAWA activities. Of these, only 5,256 (10.82%) are actively involved in such pursuits, as indicated in the Figure 2.

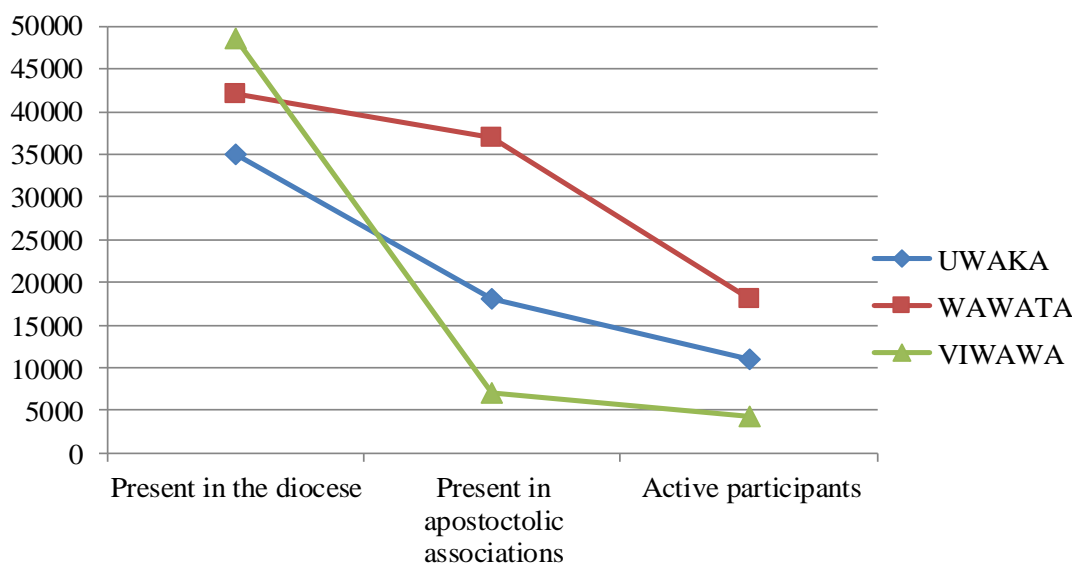


Figure 2
Level of Contribution of the Laity in the Apostolic Mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania

4.6 Factors Constraining Contribution of the Laity in the Apostolic Mission to Recommend further Uptake for the Catholic Church in Tanzania

The factors constraining contribution of the laity were determined from the UWAKA, WAWATA and VIWAWA. The mean were established to weight the factors! The mean were ranked into points and ranking (the highest point being 91 ranked number 1) while the lowest point being 14 and ranked 15. The factors with their points and rank according to their frequencies are summarized in the Table 4.

Table 4*Factors Constraining Contribution of The Laity in the Apostolic Mission in Tanzania*

Factors	Point Scores	Rank
Internal fragmentation and division	91	1
Scandals and Crisis of Trust	89	2
Lack of Formation	88	3
Inadequate networking and collaboration	82	4
Lack of vision and strategic planning	78	5
Inadequate Resources	77	6
Spiritual Apathy (discouragement)	72	7
Gender Inequality (Gender dynamics)	71	8
Cultural and Linguistic Barriers	63	9
Resistance to Change	62	10
Hierarchical Structures (clericalism)	59	11
Lack of recognition and appreciation	53	12
Perceived Irrelevance	46	13
Limited Engagement	16	14
Secularization and Cultural Influences	14	15

IV. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings reveal a strong consensus among respondents in the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam affirming the active contribution of the laity in parish life, evangelization, education, social justice, missionary work, stewardship and formation and discipleship. The high level of agreement underscores the diverse ways in which the laity contributes to church, reflecting their multifaceted engagement across various dimensions. This consensus reflect a broad engagement in liturgical ministries, catechetical programs, pastoral outreach, and social justice initiatives. These engagement to be specific include active involvement in liturgical ministries, such as serving as lectors, altar servers, or members of the choir, as well as contribution in catechetical programs, pastoral outreach initiatives, and social justice ministries. These findings underscores the vital role of the laity in advancing the Church's mission and the need for pastoral leaders to foster a culture of co-responsibility and empowerment. Overall, these findings underscore the significance and widespread recognition of the laity's contributions to parish life, highlighting the collaborative and inclusive nature of community involvement within religious institutions. This consensus highlights the laity's critical role in nurturing the intellectual, spiritual, and moral development of the faith community, aligning with Church teachings on the importance of education in discipleship. The disparity in opinions offers valuable insights into the perceived role and effectiveness of lay contribution in parish life, evangelization, education, social justice, missionary work, stewardship and formation and discipleship endeavors, shedding light on both affirming and dissenting perspectives within the community. Conversely, the dissenting minority who disagreed with the assertion of laity contribution in parish life, evangelization, education, social justice, missionary work, stewardship and formation and discipleship endeavors presents an opportunity for introspection and exploration of underlying concerns or reservations within the church and community. Their perspectives may reflect skepticism or lack of awareness regarding the quality or effectiveness of parish life, evangelization, education, social justice, missionary work, stewardship and formation and discipleship endeavors, concerns about the adequacy of training and support for lay educators, or challenges related to access to resources and infrastructure. Addressing these concerns is essential for fostering a more inclusive and effective approach to educational ministry, ensuring that all members of the faith community are empowered to contribute their talents and expertise to the formation of future generations of Catholics. The findings highlight both the affirmation and divergence of perspectives regarding the contribution of the laity within the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam. Moving forward, it is imperative for pastoral leaders to engage with both the affirming and dissenting voices, fostering a culture of dialogue, discernment, and collaboration that empowers all members of the Church to fulfill their baptismal call to proclaim the Good News and advance the Kingdom of God. This resounding affirmation aligns closely with the theological principles expounded in the documents reviewed in the literature, including *Christifideles Laici* (Pope John Paul II, 1988), *Lumen Gentium* (Pope Paul VI, 1964), *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Pope Paul VI, 1965), and *Evangelii Gaudium* (Pope Francis, 2013) which emphasize the essential role of the laity in the mission of the Catholic Church. Furthermore, the findings affirm the pastoral directives outlined in *Gaudium et Spes* (Pope Paul VI, 1965), which emphasize the Church's mission to be a sign of God's love and

presence in the world, with the laity playing a vital role in realizing this mission within their local communities. Additionally, the vision presented in *Africae Munus* (Pope Benedict XVI, 2011) underscores the Church's mission to be a "family of God" actively engaged in the service of humanity, with the laity serving as indispensable agents of evangelization and social transformation.

The levels of contribution varies across WAWATA, UWAKA and VIWAWA. Seemingly the rate of contribution is moderate among WAWATA and UWAKA and low among VIWAWA. However, low enrollment of members to WAWATA, UWAKA and VIWAWA is noticed across these three groups. This findings on contribution can therefore be attributed to low enrollment of the members per respective groups. The insufficiency of contribution cannot be established and concluded unless enrollment is arrived into its full potential across these three groups. These findings however offers a detailed exploration of the extent of lay contribution in advancing the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania, focusing specifically on involvement and level of contribution in liturgical ministries. Building upon insights drawn from key documents in the literature review, including *Lumen Gentium* (Pope Paul VI, 1964), *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Pope Paul VI, 1965), *Gaudium et Spes* (Pope Paul VI, 1965), the Catechism of the Catholic Church (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2000), *Christifideles Laici* (Pope John Paul II, 1988), *Evangelii Gaudium* (Pope Francis, 2013), and *Africae Munus* (Pope Benedict XVI, 2011), that aims to uncover the gaps between the potential for contribution and the actual engagement levels among various demographic groups within the Church. These findings underscore significant discrepancies between the potential pool of participants and the actual contribution levels within liturgical ministries, necessitating further investigation into the underlying factors influencing recruitment and retention. Drawing upon the teachings and principles outlined in the literature review documents, the findings emphasizes the importance of lay involvement in the apostolic mission of the Church and highlights the need for targeted interventions to address barriers to contribution and promote greater engagement among the laity. Findings also reveals that a significant majority of respondents, identified Internal fragmentation and division, Scandals and Crisis of Trust, Lack of Formation, Inadequate networking and collaboration, Lack of vision and strategic planning, Inadequate Resources, Spiritual Apathy (discouragement), Gender Inequality (Gender dynamics), Cultural and Linguistic Barriers, Resistance to Change, Hierarchical Structures (clericalism), Lack of recognition and appreciation, Perceived Irrelevance, Limited Engagement and Secularization and Cultural Influences as key factors constraining contribution of the laity in the apostolic mission in Tanzania. These finding underscores the profound impact of internal and external discord and disunity within and outside the Church community on the ability of lay members to actively engage in mission-oriented activities. The findings also underscores the profound impact of internal and external challenges, such as scandals and breaches of trust within the Church, on the willingness and ability of lay members to actively engage in mission-related endeavors. The findings also underscores the crucial role of education, training, and spiritual formation in equipping the laity to actively engage in mission-oriented activities within the Church. The importance of fostering strong connections and partnerships among different stakeholders within the Church community to facilitate effective collaboration in mission-oriented activities is also underscored. These findings again underscore the importance of having clear direction, goals, and strategies in place to effectively mobilize and engage the laity in mission-oriented activities. The findings also underscores the pressing need to address issues related to waning spiritual fervor and commitment among the faithful, which can significantly impede their engagement in mission-oriented activities within the Church. The findings once more underscore the pressing need to address issues related to gender disparities and discrimination within the Church, cultural differences, language barriers, hierarchical Structures (clericalism) and limited engagement which can hinder the full and equal contribution and contribution of all members in mission-oriented activities.

Drawing insights from *Lumen Gentium* (Pope Paul VI, 1964), which emphasizes the unity of the Church as the Body of Christ, the study highlights the importance of fostering a spirit of communion and collaboration among all members of the Church, including the laity. *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Pope Paul VI, 1965) further underscores the call for lay Catholics to actively contribute in the Church's mission, emphasizing the need for unity and solidarity in working towards common goals. *Gaudium et Spes* (Pope Paul VI, 1965) addresses the challenges of division and discord within the Church community, calling for dialogue, reconciliation, and efforts towards unity and peace. Similarly, *Evangelii Gaudium* (Pope Francis, 2013) exhorts the Church to overcome divisions and embrace a culture of encounter and dialogue, recognizing the richness of diversity within the faith community. Moreover, the Catechism of the Catholic Church emphasizes the importance of unity among believers, highlighting the Church as a communion of saints called to witness to the unity and love of God. *Christifideles Laici* (Pope John Paul II, 1988)underscores the role of lay Catholics as active participants in building up the Church, calling for collaboration and solidarity in fulfilling the Church's mission. *Africae Munus* (Pope Benedict XVI, 2011), with its focus on the Church's mission in Africa, further emphasizes the need for unity and collaboration among all members of the Church, recognizing the challenges posed by internal divisions and calling for concerted efforts towards reconciliation and unity.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

This study reveals both the challenges and opportunities facing the laity's involvement in the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania. Key obstacles include internal fragmentation, hierarchical structures, resource constraints, and cultural barriers that hinder lay contribution. However, there are also promising pathways for progress, such as strengthening family life, promoting financial transparency, and enhancing formation programs. The study underscores the need for flexibility, community building, and spiritual discernment to foster a culture of engagement. Ultimately, it highlights that active lay involvement is a theological imperative linked to baptismal discipleship and mission, urging a shift towards more collaborative Church governance. The findings underscore the importance of addressing the inadequacies in lay contribution in furthering the apostolic mission of the Catholic Church in Tanzania, particularly within liturgical ministries. By leveraging insights from the literature review documents and implementing targeted strategies to overcome barriers to engagement, the Church can empower the laity to fully embrace their role as co-workers in the vineyard of the Lord, contributing their talents and resources to the advancement of God's kingdom on earth. By integrating these insights, we affirm the laity's role in advancing the Church's mission and responding to the Gospel's call for justice, mercy, and love.

5.2 Recommendations

To address the factors affecting laity involvement in the Catholic Church's mission in Tanzania, comprehensive reforms and institutional changes are essential. Church policies and structures should be revised to foster inclusivity, transparency, and active lay contribution, with clear guidelines for governance and decision-making. Investment in robust education and training programs, encompassing theological formation, leadership, pastoral skills, and spiritual growth, is crucial for equipping the laity. Efforts must also focus on creating a welcoming environment by tackling gender inequality, cultural barriers, and discrimination, thereby promoting a vibrant and respectful community. Transparent and equitable resource allocation should be ensured, prioritizing programs that support the laity's mission and community development. Building collaborative partnerships with civil society, government, and other stakeholders will enhance the impact of initiatives aimed at boosting laity involvement. Implementing effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks will help track progress and adjust policies based on standardized indicators and data. Additionally, empowering youth through dedicated ministries, mentorship, and leadership opportunities is vital for sustaining and energizing future contribution.

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