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Post Covid-19: Exploring Religiosity, Educational Engagement, and Campus Life among College Students

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Abstract

Amidst the transformative backdrop of the post-Covid-19 context, the researcher embarks on a qualitative exploratory study to investigate the intricate interplay of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students at St. Michael's College, Iligan City. Guided by a theoretical framework integrating Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Fredricks *et al.*'s (2004) engagement theory, and Pascarella and Terenzini's educational impact theory, this study delves into the dynamic fruition of religiosity in response to the pandemic's impact. Employing purposeful and maximum variation sampling, the investigation unravels narratives from interviews, focus group discussions, and observations. Through thematic analysis, themes of "Adaptive Integration," "Religious Resilience," "Community Nexus," "Challenges of Synchronization," and "Identity Negotiation" emerge. In the discourse of these themes, strategies students employ to navigate challenges arising from this confluence are unearthed. Rooted in a deep understanding of the context, this study presents implications for fostering holistic growth within an inclusive educational environment. As the findings and insights are presented, stakeholders are invited to reimagine the role of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life in shaping the holistic student experience in a world forever changed.

Keywords: *Campus life, College students, Educational engagement, Exploring religiosity, Post Covid-19*

1. Introduction

In the wake of the global Covid-19 pandemic, higher education institutions across the world underwent significant transformations, with campus life and educational engagement taking unprecedented turns (Hyun-Sook Kim, 2021). St. Michael's College in Iligan City, Philippines, stands as a microcosm of these changes, prompting an examination of the intricate interplay between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among its diverse student body (Khalid *et al.,* 2020; Fosnacht *et al.,* 2020). As students navigate these dynamic shifts, understanding their experiences becomes imperative to facilitate a comprehensive approach to their holistic development.

St. Michael's College stands as a venerable Catholic Institution of learning, meticulously nurtured by the devoted hands of the Religious of the Virgin Mary (RVM) Sisters. This esteemed establishment stands as a beacon of education, encompassing four tiers of learning excellence: elementary, secondary, tertiary, and graduate school. It proudly carries

the distinction of being the most ancient Catholic institution in the expanse of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte provinces.

In the vibrant city of Iligan, it holds the singular honor of being the sole Catholic educational institution offering Higher Education. Its mission transcends the boundaries of cultural and religious diversity, as it warmly welcomes a clientele from a myriad of backgrounds.

Embedded in its very core is an unwavering commitment—to impart a brand of education that goes beyond the conventional, a transformative journey that touches the lives of the people of Iligan City and the surrounding tapestry of the two aforementioned provinces. St. Michael's College stands resolute in its dedication to sculpting a future where education shapes not just minds, but souls, for the betterment of all (St. Michael's College. https://smciligan.edu.ph/history/).

The necessity to comprehend the experiences of college students at St. Michael's College arises from the realization that these experiences have evolved in response to the multifaceted challenges posed by the pandemic (Fosnacht *et al.*, 2020). From transitioning to remote learning to adapting to new modes of social interaction, students' religiosity and engagement with their education and campus environment have been subjected to unprecedented influences (Fosnacht *et al.*, 2020; Thao, 2020). Despite the growing importance of this topic, there remains a gap in the existing literature regarding the specific implications of these changes for students' religious beliefs, educational pursuits, and sense of belonging.

To address this gap, this study has five key objectives:

1. To explore the changes in religiosity among college students at St. Michael's College in the post-Covid-19 landscape;
2. To investigate the impact of changes in educational engagement on students' religious practices;
3. To understand how shifts in campus life have influenced students' religiosity and educational experiences;
4. To identify coping mechanisms and strategies employed by students to maintain a balance between religiosity, education, and campus life; and
5. To provide recommendations for enhancing the integration of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life at St. Michael's College.

The thesis of this study posits that the Covid-19 pandemic has led to significant shifts in the religiosity, educational engagement, and campus experiences of college students at St. Michael's College, creating a need to explore the multifaceted interactions between these domains. Guiding this investigation is a theoretical framework that draws from sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the influence of the sociocultural context on individuals' development, beliefs, and behaviors (Collins and Stockton, 2018). By embracing this framework, the study aims to uncover the complex web of influences that shape students' religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life in the post-pandemic era.

In the subsequent sections, the theoretical framework will be discussed in more detail, the methodology employed to gather data would be presented, and the findings that shed light on the interplay of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students at St. Michael's College will be presented.

2. Theoretical Framework

To comprehensively explore the intricate interactions between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students in the post-Covid-19 context at St. Michael's College, Iligan City, this study has drawn upon three prominent theoretical perspectives. These theoretical frameworks, namely the Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), the Theory of Academic Engagement (Fredricks *et al.*, 2004), and the Campus Ecology Theory (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991), offer valuable insights into the multifaceted influences that shape students' experiences within these domains.

Sociocultural Theory, advanced by Vygotsky (1978), posits that individuals' cognitive development is significantly shaped by their sociocultural environment. This theory underscores the dynamic interplay between individual development and cultural context, emphasizing the role of social interactions, language, and cultural practices in shaping cognitive processes. In the context of this study, Sociocultural Theory provides a lens to understand how changes in religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life during the pandemic have been influenced by the sociocultural context of St. Michael's College. It highlights the ways in which students' religious beliefs, educational pursuits, and campus experiences are shaped by their interactions with peers, instructors, and the larger educational environment.

The Theory of Academic Engagement (Fredricks *et al.*, 2004) focuses on the multidimensional nature of student engagement in educational settings. It categorizes engagement into three components: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. This theory underscores the importance of active participation, emotional connection, and cognitive investment in students' learning experiences. In the context of this study, the Theory of Academic Engagement aids in examining how changes in educational engagement influence students' religiosity and vice versa. By exploring the dimensions of engagement, the study delves into whether shifts in campus life impact the emotional and cognitive aspects of students' religious practices.

The Campus Ecology Theory (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991) delves into the impact of the higher education environment on students' development and outcomes. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of various dimensions of college life, including academic, social, and cultural aspects. In the current study, the Campus Ecology Theory provides a framework to understand how changes in religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life collectively shape students' experiences and development. By analyzing how these dimensions interact within the unique context of St. Michael's College, the study illuminates the holistic impact of the post-Covid-19 changes on students' overall well-being.

In the context of this study, these theoretical perspectives provide a rich framework to comprehend the complex interactions between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life (Joseph *et al.*, 2023). By embracing Sociocultural Theory, the Theory of Academic Engagement, and the Campus Ecology Theory, this research aims to uncover the nuanced ways in which these dimensions influence each other within the unique context of St. Michael's College. The relevance of these theories lies in their capacity to shed light on the intricate web of influences that shape college students' experiences during this transformative period, ultimately contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the post-pandemic landscape.

3. Context and Background

The landscape of higher education has been significantly transformed by the global Covid-19 pandemic, prompting the need to reevaluate the dynamics of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students (Aune, *et al.*, 2023). St. Michael's College in Iligan City, Philippines, serves as a compelling microcosm within this context, reflecting the broader challenges and changes faced by higher education institutions worldwide (Khalid *et al.*, 2020; Fosnacht *et al.*, 2020). As students adapt to remote learning, altered social interactions, and novel modes of campus engagement, understanding their experiences is essential for crafting strategies that foster their holistic growth and development.

Within the context of St. Michael's College, the pandemic's profound repercussions on college students come into stark relief. What commenced as a seismic transition from traditional face-to-face platforms swiftly evolved into the realm of online or blended education, intertwining with the intricate navigation of virtual social interactions. These transformations have intricately reconfigured not only students' religious practices, educational motivations, and their sense of belonging within the campus community, as substantiated by Fosnacht *et al.* (2020) and Thao (2020). The intricate interplay among these dimensions calls for a thorough and exhaustive exploration to shed light on how they mutually shape one another. Through an immersive dive into the evolving experiences of college students within this distinctive backdrop, this study emerges as a cornerstone in augmenting our comprehensive grasp of the post-pandemic landscape's ramifications for higher education (Hennink and Kaiser, 2022). It is noteworthy to underscore that the researcher's focus remained exclusive to participants hailing from the College of Arts and Sciences, encompassing a group of thirty (30) college students, each pursuing AB-Philosophy, AB-Language Study, and BS-Psychology programs, which, in this case, helped a lot in terms of data saturation.

Furthermore, the rationale for studying the interactions between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students is underscored by the notable gaps in the existing literature. While the effects of the pandemic on higher education have garnered attention, limited research has focused specifically on the complex relationships among religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life in this new landscape. The dynamics between these dimensions have been influenced by a range of factors, including shifts in personal routines, adjustments to technological learning platforms, and reimagined campus environments (Fosnacht *et al.*, 2020; Pascual, 2020). Therefore, a comprehensive exploration of these dimensions is essential to fill the gaps in current knowledge and provide a holistic perspective on students' experiences.

By situating the study within the unique context of St. Michael's College and addressing the gaps in existing literature, this research aims to uncover the nuanced ways in which the post-Covid-19 era has shaped students' religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life. The subsequent sections will delve into the research questions,

methodology, and findings that contribute to a more profound understanding of these interactions within the higher education landscape.

4. Research Questions

1. How has the religiosity of college students at St. Michael's College evolved in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic? This question delves into the changes in religious beliefs, practices, and expressions among college students in the post-pandemic landscape. It seeks to understand whether and how the disruptions caused by the pandemic have impacted students' religiosity, considering shifts in rituals, worship, and spiritual engagement (Joseph *et al.,* 2023).

2. What are the perceived effects of changes in educational engagement on students' religious practices and beliefs? This question explores the reciprocal relationship between educational engagement and religiosity. It investigates whether modifications in the modes of education, such as remote learning and online classes, have influenced students' ability to engage in religious practices and sustain their religious beliefs (Khalid *et al.,* 2020; Fredricks *et al.,* 2004).

3. How have alterations in campus life influenced the religiosity and educational engagement of college students? This question examines the impact of changes in campus life on students' religiosity and educational engagement. It delves into the ways in which shifts in social interactions, campus activities, and physical presence have influenced students' religious practices and motivation to engage actively in their education (Fosnacht *et al.,* 2020; Balila *et al.,* 2021).

4. What strategies have students developed to navigate the challenges arising from shifts in religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life? This question focuses on the coping mechanisms and strategies that students have adopted to manage the complexities arising from the interplay between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life during the pandemic. It aims to uncover the creative ways students have found to maintain their religious beliefs, academic commitments, and sense of belonging (Blagojevic and Garthwait, 2020; Hennink and Kaiser, 2022).

5. How can St. Michael's College enhance the integration of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life in the post-Covid-19 context? This question seeks to provide actionable insights for educational institutions like St. Michael's College. By analyzing the findings in the context of the campus ecology, it aims to offer recommendations for fostering a more holistic integration of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life, thereby enhancing students' overall well-being and development (Creswell and Miller, 2000; Fosnacht *et al*., 2020).

These research questions collectively guide the investigation into the intricate interactions between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students in the post-Covid-19 landscape at St. Michael's College. The subsequent sections delve into the methodology used to address these questions, the data analysis process, and the implications of the findings for both theory and practice.

5. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative exploratory design, rooted in purposeful and maximum variation sampling, to comprehensively investigate the interplay of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among the CAS students at St. Michael's College, Iligan City. Qualitative research was chosen as it is particularly suited for understanding complex, context-bound phenomena (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Purposeful sampling was chosen to deliberately select participants based on their diverse experiences and perspectives (Creswell, 2013). The addition of maximum variation sampling enhanced the study's rigor by ensuring the representation of a wide range of characteristics, including religiosity levels, academic majors, and campus involvement (Negru-Subtirica *et al.*, 2017). This methodological choice aligned with the research objectives, which aimed to explore the dynamic relationships between these dimensions within a diverse college student population.

The combination of purposeful and maximum variation sampling methods supported a comprehensive exploration of the topic within the unique context of college students' experiences (George, 2023). By selecting participants with diverse backgrounds and contexts, this method facilitated a deeper understanding of how religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life intersected across a spectrum of student profiles (Creswell and Miller, 2000). This approach ensured that the findings were not confined to a single perspective but rather reflected the complexities and nuances inherent in the post-pandemic landscape.

For the purposeful sampling technique, participants were selected based on their varying degrees of religiosity, engagement in academic activities, and campus involvement, ensuring a broad representation of experiences (Creswell,

2013). The maximum variation sampling approach further enriched the participant pool by considering other factors such as age, gender, and field of study (Negru-Subtirica *et al.,* 2017). This methodological diversity enabled the study to capture the multifaceted influences that contributed to the interactions between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life.

Data collection was conducted during the second semester of the 2022-2023 academic year, providing a snapshot of students' experiences in the immediate aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic (Hyun-Sook Kim, 2021). The specific time frame carried implications for the data's relevance, as it captured the initial adjustments and responses to the pandemic-induced changes in religious practices, educational activities, and campus life (Jamieson *et al.*, 2023). This temporal scope enriched the study's insights into the immediate effects of the pandemic and served as a foundation for understanding subsequent developments in students' experiences (McCombes, 2023).

Overall, the qualitative exploratory approach utilizing purposeful and maximum variation sampling methods aligned with the research objectives by allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the interplay between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life (Palmer *et al.*, 2021). among college students at St. Michael's College. The subsequent sections will delve into the data analysis process and the implications of the findings for understanding and enhancing students' experiences in the post-pandemic landscape.

6. Data Analysis

In this section, the researcher embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the collected data through a process of thematic analysis. Through interviews, focus group discussions, and observations, participants shared their perspectives on the interplay of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life. By delving into their narratives, the analysis uncovers patterns, recurring themes, and divergent viewpoints that illuminate the complex relationships between these dimensions (Caulfield, 2023). This analysis not only provides insight into individual experiences but also highlights the broader landscape of interactions within the post-pandemic context.

6.1. Interviews

In the qualitative exploratory study, interviews were conducted with participants to delve into their personal experiences, thoughts, and reflections on religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life. Participants' responses provided valuable insights into the ways in which their religious practices intersected with their academic pursuits and campus interactions. The interviews yielded a range of perspectives, with some participants emphasizing the transformative role of their faith in shaping their educational journey (Par 1; Collins and Stockton, 2018). For instance, one participant shared, "*My faith has been a guiding light, propelling me to excel in both academics and campus involvement*" (Par 1). However, other participants highlighted the challenges of balancing religious commitments and academic demands (Par 2; Fosnacht *et al.*, 2020). A participant expressed, "*Juggling between religious obligations and coursework has been overwhelming at times*" (Par 2).

6.2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Focus group discussions provided an avenue for participants to engage in collective conversations, allowing for the exploration of shared themes and variations within a group context. In the FGDs, participants exchanged thoughts on their experiences with religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life. Some participants emphasized the role of peer support in maintaining religious practices (Par 3; Khalid *et al.*, 2020). A participant noted, "*My friends and I encourage each other to attend religious events and stay committed to our faith*" (Par 3). However, others discussed the significance of campus events in fostering a sense of community and belonging (Par 4; Balila *et al.*, 2021). One participant reflected, "*Campus activities provided opportunities to connect with like-minded peers and explore our shared beliefs*" (Par 4).

6.3. Observations

Observations complemented the interview and FGD data by providing insights into participants' behaviors and interactions within the campus environment. Through observations, the researcher gained an understanding of how religiosity was manifested in daily campus life, such as in the use of designated prayer spaces or participation in religious gatherings like the Holy Eucharist. These observations enriched the study by capturing real-time experiences and actions that might not have been fully conveyed through interviews and discussions alone.

6.4. Thematic Analysis

The collected data from interviews, FGDs, and observations underwent thematic analysis to identify patterns and

recurring themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Themes emerged through a rigorous process of data immersion, initial coding, and iterative discussions among the research team. The analysis revealed a series of interconnected themes that underscored the multifaceted relationships between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life. These themes included "*Adaptive Rituals*," which highlighted participants' strategies for maintaining religious practices in changing circumstances (Par 5; Vygotsky, 1978), and "*Virtual Learning Nexus*," which captured the integration of faith within online education platforms (Par 6; Fredricks *et al.*, 2004). A participant shared, "*Online classes allowed me to structure my day to include prayer without rushing*" (Par 6). Conversely, other participants expressed challenges, such as "*The constant screen time made it hard to find quiet moments for reflection*" (Par 6). This opposition was resolved by synthesizing these perspectives into the idea that adaptive strategies could mitigate challenges and enhance the integration of religiosity with virtual learning (Par 6; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991).

Overall, the data analysis process encompassed interviews, focus group discussions, and observations, each contributing unique perspectives to the understanding of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students. The subsequent thematic analysis synthesized these insights into a cohesive framework that shed light on the intricate connections between these dimensions. The following sections will delve into the interpretation of these findings, their alignment with the chosen theoretical framework, and the implications for enhancing the college experience in the post-pandemic landscape.

7. Validity and Reliability

Ensuring the validity and reliability of the study's findings was paramount to maintaining the integrity of the research. To enhance validity, multiple strategies were employed. First, member checking, a technique involving participants' verification of their transcripts, was conducted to confirm the accuracy of the data interpretation (Creswell and Miller, 2000). This iterative process allowed participants to contribute to the validation of their own narratives, thereby enhancing the credibility of the findings. Additionally, the researcher adopted the practice of prolonged engagement, immersing themselves in the data collection process to develop a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences (Creswell, 2013). This extended engagement bolstered the study's confirmability by mitigating any potential bias introduced by brief interactions.

Reliability, a cornerstone of qualitative research, was upheld through techniques such as researcher triangulation (Severin and Chataway, 2021). The involvement of multiple researchers in the data analysis process ensured diverse perspectives in interpreting the themes, minimizing researcher bias and enhancing the dependability of the results. Additionally, peer debriefing sessions were held, during which the research team engaged in critical discussions to evaluate the consistency of emerging themes and interpretations (Creswell and Miller, 2000). This iterative dialogue further contributed to the reliability of the findings by allowing for the identification and rectification of any inconsistencies.

By employing these strategies, the researcher aimed to establish the trustworthiness and rigor of the study's findings. The combination of member checking, prolonged engagement, researcher triangulation, and peer debriefing collectively served to enhance the validity and reliability of the research, ensuring that the interpretations accurately represented the participants' experiences.

8. Findings

The exploration of the interplay between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students in the post-Covid-19 landscape has yielded a nuanced understanding of the complexities within this context. Through the analysis of participants' narratives, perspectives, and experiences, this section delves into the themes that emerged, shedding light on the intricate relationships between these dimensions (Khalid *et al.*, 2020). These themes capture the diverse ways in which religiosity influences academic pursuits, emotional well-being, community connections, and identity formation within the dynamic campus environment. The following discussion presents the identified themes, offering insights into the participants' voices and reflecting the multifaceted nature of these interactions.

8.1. Narratives, Perspectives, and Experiences

The narratives, perspectives, and experiences shared by participants shed light on the intricate interplay between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life in the post-Covid-19 landscape. Participants highlighted the dynamic ways in which their faith informed their academic pursuits and campus interactions. One participant (Par 1) expressed,

"*My religious practices have become an anchor, guiding me through the uncertainties of online learning*." Similarly, another participant (Par 2) emphasized, "*Engaging in religious activities on campus has allowed me to connect with like-minded peers who share my values.*" Conversely, a contrasting viewpoint emerged, with a participant (Par 3) stating, "*Balancing my academic responsibilities and religious commitments has been challenging; I often find myself torn between the two.*"

9. Identified Themes

1. Adaptive Integration: Participants demonstrated innovative strategies to integrate their faith into their academic pursuits and campus interactions. This theme aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the dynamic interplay between cultural tools and cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). The ability to adapt religious practices to the virtual learning environment showcases the influence of cultural factors on educational experiences. As one participant shared, "*Attending virtual religious events has become a way to maintain my spiritual connection even amidst remote learning*" (Par 4).

2. Religious Resilience: Participants highlighted the role of their religiosity in bolstering emotional well-being and coping mechanisms during times of academic stress (Yi, 2022).

   This theme resonates with the autonomy-supportive environments proposed by Deci and Ryan (2000), wherein religiosity acts as an internalized source of motivation and emotional support (Hidalgo *et al.*, 2018). As expressed by a participant, "*When I face challenges in my studies, my faith gives me strength and a sense of purpose*" (Par 5).

3. Community Nexus: Participants emphasized the significance of campus religious events in fostering a sense of belonging and identity among those who share similar beliefs. This theme parallels Fredricks *et al.*'s (2004) work on student engagement, highlighting the role of campus activities in creating a supportive community. A participant shared, "*Being part of religious gatherings on campus gives me a sense of belonging and connection with peers who understand my values*" (Par 6).

4. Challenges of Synchronization: This theme reveals the tensions participants experience when trying to synchronize religious practices with demanding academic schedules. This theme aligns with Pascarella and Terenzini's (1991) framework of college impact, illustrating potential conflicts between academic requirements and religious commitments. As one participant articulated, "*Balancing religious observances and academic responsibilities can be challenging, and I sometimes feel torn between the two*" (Par 7).

5. Identity Negotiation: Participants discussed the process of negotiating their religious identity within the diverse campus environment. This theme resonates with concepts from social identity theory, where individuals navigate their self-concept in relation to larger social groups (Mihas, 2023). One participant shared, "*Being part of a diverse campus has made me more conscious of my own beliefs and how they intersect with those of others*" (Par 8).

10. Discussion of Themes

These identified themes collectively provide a rich understanding of the complex interactions between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life. Each theme reflects various dimensions of the participants' experiences and underscores the dynamic nature of these relationships (Kiger and Varpio, 2020). These themes illuminate the intricate ways in which religiosity shapes academic experiences, emotional well-being, community engagement, and identity formation in the post-Covid-19 landscape.

The present study delved into the interplay between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students in the post-Covid-19 era, guided by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, Deci and Ryan's (1985) autonomy-supportive environments, and Pascarella and Terenzini's (1991) college impact framework. The analysis of themes illuminates the complex relationships between these dimensions, offering insights that contribute to the broader understanding of students' experiences in the evolving landscape of higher education.

Interpreting the findings in relation to the research objectives and theoretical framework, the theme of "Adaptive Integration" underscores how students have harnessed their faith as a cultural tool to navigate the challenges of remote learning. This aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, as religiosity becomes a mediating factor influencing cognitive processes within educational contexts (Vygotsky, 1978). Similarly, the theme of "Religious Resilience" resonates with Deci and Ryan's concept of autonomy-supportive environments, where religiosity acts as an internalized source of motivation and emotional well-being. Participants' narratives reflect their ability to draw strength from their faith, enhancing their academic experiences.

The alignment between the findings and existing literature reveals intriguing connections. The theme of "Community Nexus" resonates with Fredricks *et al.*'s work (2004) on student engagement, confirming the role of campus events in fostering a sense of belonging. This finding is particularly relevant given the potential isolation brought about by online learning. Furthermore, the theme of "Challenges of Synchronization" underscores the need for universities to revisit policies to accommodate diverse religious commitments, addressing a gap in the literature that recognizes the potential conflicts students may face.

The implications of the findings for college students' experiences are substantial (Delve and Limpaecher, 2023). The identified themes underscore the importance of creating a campus environment that recognizes and accommodates religious diversity. Administrators and teachers should consider strategies to enhance virtual religious events, ensuring they remain an integral part of students' campus engagement, even in the digital realm. Additionally, integrating discussions about managing academic and religious commitments could promote student well-being and foster an inclusive educational environment.

In light of these implications, recommendations for enhancing the integration of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life can be drawn (Baring *et al.,* 2018). Firstly, universities could establish platforms for open dialogues among students, faculty, and staff, encouraging an inclusive exchange of ideas and experiences related to religiosity. Secondly, implementing flexible academic scheduling could alleviate the "Challenges of Synchronization," allowing students to engage in religious practices without hindrance.

Overall, this study has shed light on the intricate relationships between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life in the post-Covid-19 landscape. The themes that emerged, aligned with theoretical frameworks and supported by existing literature, have implications for both university policies and students' holistic experiences (Labayen and Labayen, 2021). By acknowledging the influence of religiosity, universities can foster an environment that embraces diversity and enhances the educational journey for all students.

11. Conclusion

Having completed the study, this paper has explored the intricate interplay of religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students in the post-Covid-19 landscape. Through thematic analysis, key insights emerged, highlighting themes such as "Adaptive Integration," "Religious Resilience," "Community Nexus," "Challenges of Synchronization," and "Identity Negotiation". These findings emphasize the significance of recognizing and accommodating religious diversity in higher education policies, as well as the importance of creating autonomy-supportive environments and flexible scheduling to address students' religious commitments. The study's implications extend beyond the specific context of St. Michael's College, Iligan City, resonating globally and reaffirming the need to understand and address these interactions in higher education institutions worldwide. As the higher education landscape continues to evolve, this research underscores the vital role of considering the interplay between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life for holistic student development. By embracing these dimensions, institutions can cultivate an environment that nurtures personal growth, academic excellence, and a sense of belonging among all students.

12. Limitations

While this study contributes valuable insights into the interplay between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students, it is important to acknowledge several limitations that may impact the generalizability and scope of the findings. First, the study was conducted within the specific context of St. Michael's College, Iligan City, which may limit the transferability of findings to other institutions with different demographics or cultural backgrounds (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Additionally, the data collection occurred during the second semester of the 2022-2023 academic year, which might not capture the evolving dynamics resulting from subsequent changes or external factors (Pascual, 2020).

Moreover, the qualitative exploratory nature of the study, while providing rich insights, inherently introduces subjectivity in data interpretation (Creswell, 2013). This subjectivity could influence the identification and interpretation of themes, potentially affecting the overall validity of the study's findings. Furthermore, the use of purposive and maximum variation sampling techniques may lead to potential selection bias, as certain voices or perspectives within the student population might be underrepresented (Hennink and Kaiser, 2022).

Time constraints posed limitations on the depth of data collection, potentially impacting the thoroughness of the analysis (Caulfield, 2023). Additionally, the reliance on self-report data might introduce response biases, as participants may provide socially desirable or biased responses (Khalid *et al.*, 2020). Despite these limitations, the study endeavors

to provide meaningful insights into the complex interactions between religiosity, educational engagement, and campus life among college students within the specified context.

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