

The Shared Mission: A Phenomenological Study on the Marist-Lay Partnership

WILTER C. FRIALES

<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5786-5345>

cuevas_friales@yahoo.com

Notre Dame of Marbel University

City of Koronadal, South Cotabato, Region 12, Philippines

Originality: 100% • Grammar Check: 99% • Plagiarism: 0%



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ABSTRACT

The term partnership is being viewed in the context that the lay people are not just simply workers or employees of the Brothers in schools, but they are partners in fulfilling the mission on education. This Phenomenological Study of the Marist-lay partnership explored the lived-experiences of both the Marist lay and Marist Brothers in the context of a partnership for the mission of the Marist. It is a phenomenological qualitative design of research that aimed to explore the lived experiences of both the Marist Brothers and the Lay in the context of the partnership. This qualitative research used the transcendental Phenomenological approach following the method introduced by Moustaka (1994). The first part of the study explored the lived-experiences of the Marist Brothers and lay while they work with the Marist mission. It presented their vocation stories, challenges encountered, and attitudes towards work, working relationships, and the impact of such a partnership in their lives. The second part of the study revealed the different meanings and the themes drawn in understanding the concept of Marist-lay partnership as perceived by the Marist Brothers and the lay in working for the Marist mission. The emergent themes were extracted after the thorough

process of thematic coding, analysis, and categorization of the transcripts from the in-depth interview of the researcher to the identified participants of the study. Based on the result of the exploration, it was drawn out that collaboration appeared to be very important to be established in the Marist community. As one of the emerging themes, a collaboration between brothers and lay leads to a good relationship that eventually results in a good partnership. Thus, there is a need for a continuous nurturing process and redefining of the roles and functions of the lay in the mission.

Keywords — Education, Marist-Lay Partnership, Phenomenological Qualitative Research design, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

There are a number of higher educational institutions in the world that are being owned and managed by different religious orders. Most of the academic institutions are being manned by priests or professed religious brothers or lay belonging to a particular congregation. In most cases, to ensure and maintain the catholicity of the catholic schools, the religious brothers, sisters, and priests are the ones leading the institutions being the school president or the director. However, the priests and religious brothers and sisters alone could not be able to handle managing the institutions considering their numbers. Herick (2009) shared that as the involvement of the members of the congregation becomes less, the connection of the institution's mission to the founding congregation and their particular charism is likely to be less visibly evident. Thus, the laity is increasingly assuming the leadership of the institutions. There goes the idea of a partnership between the religious people and the lay in working for the mission. Newton (1981) viewed the partnership between the lay and the religious as a new vision of Catholic education which sees the work of education in the Church no longer as a mission entrusted to the religious orders and congregations but rather as a 'ministry of teaching' in which both lay and religious share as equal partners.

Further, in terms of how lay people lead the catholic institutions, Lay leadership pertains to the role of lay persons on the decision making process on the policy and related concerns ensuring the future and welfare of the catholic schools in the local school or diocesan systems in particular as mentioned in this study. Further, Newton mentioned that the term lay leadership can refer to the increasingly dominant role that lay persons are assuming in shaping the

actual environment which permeates Catholic education, that atmosphere which both gives Catholic schools their unique “climate” and, also, most would agree, more than the formal course of studies, produces the characteristic effect of the Catholic school. Franco (2016) supported in his work that in most of the Catholic Higher Institutions, the lay people play a very significant role in terms of the leadership in the institutions. As defined, these are the persons who are not religiously- professed but with increasing responsibility and influence in the institutions. Morey & Holtscheinder, 2005 (as cited by Herrick (2009), shared in their work that there is so much effort on the part of the lay leaders from mid to senior-level of administration in personally living such commitment to the mission.

Catholic schools, founded by priests and nuns, have contributed significantly to the Taiwan society. Based on an examination and comparison of servant leadership between religious and lay principal led schools, the schools are being successfully maintained by Lay leaders who can enhance an understanding of Christ’s servant spirit to maintain the Catholic culture (Tchiong, 2013). Similar to that idea, one of the key teachings of the Second Vatican Council was the recognition that people do not just belong to the church as much as they are the church by right and responsibility of their baptism. They do not only share in the membership of the Church but also its mission. In the Vatican Council II (1961-1965), as cited in the work of Elvery (2013), the Catholic Church re-established the importance of the baptismal vocation of all members of the church re-enforcing that all the baptized individuals are involved in the mission of the Church. Likewise, the renewal of religious life acknowledged that all baptized persons are invited to engage in the Church’s mission. Thus, the lay have found their place in the mission, which is also anchored to the mission of the church.

This partnership is even true to the Marist Institute, which is the center of this exploration. The Marist Brothers and the lay partnership has been considered and conceived to be a significant phenomenon that is less likely explored, discovered and described. Most of the literature reviews focused more on understanding the charism and manifestation of the Marist spirituality but not much on the understanding deeply what this partnership between the brothers and lay people is all about from the experiences of both the lay and brothers.

Marist Brothers is an international community of Catholic Religious Institute of Brothers founded by St. Marcellin Champagnat, a priest from France. The goal of the institute is to educate young people, especially those most neglected ones. While the Brothers work with the young people in parishes, religious retreats,

spiritual accompaniment, and at-risk youth setting, today, it is also true that we know and encounter most of them doing mission in the schools owned by the institute-the Marist Brothers themselves. When they established their schools in the Philippines in 1948 in Cotabato, the brothers ran the schools on their own. They taught, they administered, disciplined, and established the reputation of the schools for basic education of the young men of the community. Later, due to the limited number in the community, the Marist Brothers needed the help of the lay people in running the school. In the study of Green (1997), it says that the decreasing number of Marist Brothers has been paralleled by a changing ecclesiology which has emphasized an increased role of the lay people in the life of the church. Lay Champagnat Marists are people who choose to live up to the charism. They are the ones who acknowledge the responsibility of transmitting the charism of Marcellin Champagnat through being a school administrator, faculty, or staff in the Marist School. They are the ones who recognize their roles in nurturing the schools in the Marist way. As more lay people assume responsibility for these schools, it has been acknowledged that attention needs to be formally given to the way charism may be continued and transmitted. (Mathieson, 2000). They did this with a sense of vocation drawn from the Marian spirituality, which resides in the charism. They live this vocation by being co-responsible with the brothers for “Marist” mission, especially to the young people and the youth on the margins, and shared life with brothers and one another (Champagnat Marists, 2009). The lay people became the co-workers of the brothers in the fulfillment of their mission. They worked with the brothers in the mission to educate the young men of the community. They embraced the Marist pedagogy and values, journeyed together on such mission, and these made most of the personnel work for a long period in the Marist schools, and even retire on the same institutions (Marist Brothers, 2009). Today, Lay Marists have discovered that the spirituality that stems from Marcellin Champagnat and the early community of Brothers resonates strongly with them as a way of bringing the gospel to life. From that evolved the term partnership in the mission, which means that the lay people are not just simply workers or employees of the Brothers in schools, but they are partners sharing the mission.

Shared Mission is not just a catchy phrase but a reality that is penetrating to the very heart of the Marist ministries all over the world. In the beginning, the idea was a novel one, and as time went by, attempts to spell it out in concrete ways didn't always meet with success. Today, however, many carefully-thought-out and striking steps are being taken to confirm this exciting adventure that

involves lay people and brothers working side by side for the Kingdom, sharing Marcellin's spirituality and mission (Institute of the Marist Brothers, 2001).

The partnership between the Brothers and the Lay Marists is being placed in new forms of ministry and community and is one where all Marists realize that their respective vocations are mutually enhanced by sharing their life, spirituality, and mission. The document of the Institute of the Marist Secretariat of the Laity states that the vocational journey of Marist laypeople opens the way for a deeper relationship with Brothers. This communion is based on both following Jesus, sharing the same radical call of the Gospel, the same faith, the same baptism, and the same charism. Communion leads to vocational complementarity, mutual enrichment, and searching together for a greater vitality of the charism in today's world. Through this communion, the Marist institution is becoming identified with a wider group than brothers and works (Institute of the Marist, 2017).

This phenomenological study of the Marist-lay partnership explored the lived experiences of the Marist lay and Marist Brothers in the context of partnership for the mission of the Marist. This study hoped to lead readers in understanding delete the phenomenon of such partnership, considering the reasons of staying in the Marist institute, the attitudes manifested while working in the mission, the working relationship, the impact and challenges, and the concept and meaning of partnership for the Marist Brothers and the lay.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to explore the phenomenon of the partnership between the Marist brothers and the lay in the context of working for the Marist mission. This study focused on the understanding of the concept of partnership from the lived-experiences of both the Marist Brothers and the Lay considering the reasons of staying in the Marist institute, the attitudes manifested while working in the mission, the working relationship, the impact and the challenges, and how they lived up this partnership while working for the Marist mission on education.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This is qualitative research using transcendental Phenomenological approach following the method introduced by Moustaka (1994). The researcher had entered the field and looked for the informants. In this study, the informants

were the heads of any of the peers who gave a referral to the participants. After having been permitted, the researcher conducted an in-depth interview with the participants. After every interview, the researcher transcribed and coded the recorded data. In the coding process, the researcher highlighted the significant statement, sentences, or quotes that explain or describe the experiences of the Marist Brothers and the Lay in the context of Partnership. This process was called horizontalization. In doing so, careful judgment and reflection on the part of the researcher was employed. The process had been repeatedly done to aid the researcher in following through certain patterns of the responses. Once an idea or ideas being shared in every question had been repeatedly shared or mentioned by the participants, that is where saturation point had already been achieved. All coded statements were clustered according to themes. These significant statements and themes were then used to develop the textual and structural descriptions. From the structural and textual descriptions, the researcher then wrote a composite description that presents the “essence” of the phenomenon, called the essential, invariant structure (essence), and from that evolved the emergent themes of the partnership phenomenon of this study.

Research Site

The study was conducted within Region 12. It includes all the Marist Schools situated in the region. The Marist institutions which had been part of this study were Notre Dame of Marbel University (Tertiary and IBED), Notre Dame of Dadiangas University (Tertiary and IBED), Notre Dame of Kidapawan College (Tertiary and IBED), and Notre Dame of Cotabato (Basic Education only).

Instrumentation

An interview guide was utilized in the conduct of the interview for the data gathering process. It was a researcher-made tool containing questions needed to describe the experiences of the Marist Brothers and the lay and their understanding of the concept of the Marist-Lay Partnership. A dry-run was conducted by the researcher prior to the actual interview with the participants to ensure the validity and appropriateness of the questioning approach of the researcher.

Participants

In this Phenomenological Study of the Marist-lay Partnership, all administrators, faculty, retirees, and Marist Brothers of the Marist schools in Region 12 are the participants of the study. However, data collection to explain

a certain phenomenon requires the researcher to achieve the saturation point of the data being collected. Saturation is the point in data collection when no new or relevant information emerges with respect to the newly constructed theory (Saumure & Given, 2008). Hence, not all of the administrators, faculty, and retirees of the Marist schools had been chosen to be participants of the study since the saturation point had already been achieved after the 12 Marist lay and six Marist Brothers from the four different Marist schools in Region 12 were interviewed. These 18 participants of the study were chosen according to the referral of their workmates.

The lay participants of the study were the five administrators, three faculty, one non-teaching personnel, and three retirees, with a total of 12 lay participants from four different Marist Schools in Region 12.

The administrator participants vary according to the number of years in service, levels of positions, ranks, and ages. Three of them are administrators of the Tertiary level, and two of them are in Basic Education.

The faculty participants of the study vary according to the number of years in service, ranks, and ages. One is a college faculty, and two are faculty in the Basic Education.

The retiree participants of the study vary in terms of the number of years being retired personnel and their ranks prior to retirement. One of the retirees retired in the Basic Education as an administrator, one retired as college faculty, one retired as an administrator in the College and one retired as a college instructor.

The lay participants were the following in pseudo names:

Angie has been working in the Marist school for more than 20 years. She started in the Marist school as a faculty of the College until such time that she became an administrator. She had deeply involved herself with the mission of the Marist Institute.

Bambie has been working in the Marist school for 28 years. She has been a faculty member teaching Mathematics and has also been the head of the committee.

Charmie is a retired personnel from the Marist school. She retired from work at the age of 60 as desired by her husband. She had been a faculty member, and at the same time, she had also experienced being a top-level administrator of the school.

Dong has been working in the Marist School for more than 20 years now. He has been a faculty member and a head of a particular program in the College Department.

Ester has been working in the Marist school for 17 years already. She started in the Marist school as a staff in the Campus ministry until such time that she became a campus minister of the school.

Fanie has been in the Marist school for almost 18 years. With that span of time, she had been a faculty member and at the same time administrator.

Gwen is an alumna of the school where she is employed at the moment. She had been a working student of the school and her good performance on her job as a working student allowed her to be hired as personnel of the school.

Helen has been working in the Marist school for 19 years and all her employment years were under the school where she is at the moment. She started as a college instructor teaching Physical Education subjects until such time that she became an administrator.

Irene has spent all the 30 years of her employment in the Marist school where she is employed at the moment. She has taught in Grade school, College and even in the Graduate school. Presently, she is handling one of the top administrative positions in the school where she is connected.

Jamie had retired after 40 years of serving the Marist school as one of the top-level administrators. She had experience teaching in the public school for five years prior to her employment in the Marist School, where she retired.

Kathy had retired from the Marist school after working there as a college instructor in the Business College for 33 years. The school where she was employed had been her first and last employment.

Mary has been working in the Marist school for 25 years already. She has been a Guidance Counselor in the Marist school for that long number of years.

For the Marist Brothers participants, there were six brothers who were part of the study who were assigned to the different Marist schools in the region.

Br. Allan has been in the congregation for 40 years now. He started at the age of 14 right after graduation in high school. He had been a faculty member, middle-level administrator, and even the president of several Marist Schools.

Br. Bong has been in the Marist Brothers for 25 years. His understanding and knowledge about the brothers have been rooted in his educational background, having been schooled in a Marist school. He had been a faculty and a school principal of several Marist schools in the Philippines.

Br. Carlo has been in the congregation for 12 years already and has held several functions as moderator, coordinator, and faculty member.

Br. Dan joined the brothers in the year 1997 up until now functioning as a sports coach, coordinator, and faculty member.

Br. Emil has already been in the Marist Brothers for 44 years. He has been a faculty member, middle-level administrator and became president of several Marist schools in the Philippines.

Br. Gerry started his journey being a brother after graduation in high school on the same Marist school. He has been with the brothers for 47 years. He has held several functions as a brother, such as being a classroom teacher, director, and being a president of several Marist schools.

Data Collection

The researcher had entered the field and looked for the informants. After the researcher had been granted with the permission to conduct the study at the field, he had a courtesy call with the school head or the in-charge of the school and was formally introduced to the participants of the study. These participants were recommended by the school head, and some were recommended by the informants.

The researcher did a recording of the conversation between him and the participant. For ethical consideration, there was a prior notice to the participant that the interview shall be recorded.

The traditional face-to-face in-depth interview was conducted to generate and explore the lived experiences of the Marist Brothers and the lay as this process was also intensified by Giorgi (2009).

Each participant was allocated approximately 60 minutes to two hours for the initial interview, and one to one and a half hours for the follow-up interview. Interviews were held on-site in the respective schools of the identified participants.

Prior to the interview, the researcher had provided the participants with a short briefing/orientation of the purpose of the interview and explained the transcription process and how the data shall be used. Each interview started with a grand tour.

The researcher made it a point to reiterate the confidentiality of the study, to speak with each participant about how they could be able to receive the transcribed copy of the interview for review and discuss the importance of follow up meeting.

During the transcription process, the researcher used codes rather than real names. The analysis of the data followed after all the recorded audios were transcribed.

During the transcription process, the researcher used codes rather than real names. The analysis of the data followed after all the recorded audios were

transcribed. As cited by Arthur (2012) in her study, the summative explanation by the interviewer at the conclusion is recommended as a form of member checking.

In the study, it was emphasized to the participants that the study would not be in any way cause harm to them nor be utilized for any negative motives and purposes against them.

The protocol had also been observed in this study. Permission from the authority to conduct the study was considered, and the participants were aware of their part and of the direction of the study being conducted.

Confidentiality in the study was also given emphasis. The participants were not identified according to their real identity, but they were represented with codes. Their sharing and responses were used not for any other purposes but only to give meaning and substance to this study on a partnership which is expected to provide certain implications or insights for the good of the Marist Institute.

Coding of Data

After the researcher had transcribed all the data he gathered, he did the axial coding marking passages which he believed, using his own value judgment and thorough reflection, to be significant in relation to the phenomenon being studied. Once themes were already identified, the researcher had reread the passages within each category and examined the relationship of the themes until such time that significant themes emerged. Thematic coding was implemented highlighting color to color themes in the text. The color-coded data were sorted and stored in the electronic files with the theme noted as a file name. After coding all the transcripts, all the folders and files were reviewed for accuracy. It helped in organizing the themes, linking data sources, and drawing conclusions.

Data Analysis

In the data analysis, the researcher considered the procedure prescribed by Moustakas (1994) as cited by Creswell (2007). This method of organizing and analyzing phenomenological data is also derived from the modification of the methods of analysis, as suggested by Stevick (1971), Colaizzi (1973), and Keen (1975). Each of the steps is presented in the appropriate order of analysis. Building on the data from the first and second research questions, data analysts go through the data (e.g., interview transcriptions) and highlighted “significant statements, sentences or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon. Moustakas (1994) calls this step horizontalization. Next, the researcher developed clusters of meaning from these significant statements into themes.

These significant statements and themes were then used to write a description of what the participants had experienced (textual description). They were used to write a description of the context or setting that influenced how the participants had experienced the phenomenon, called the imaginative variation or structural description. This was introduced by Moustakas (1994).

From the structural and textual descriptions, the researcher then wrote a composite description that presents the “essence” of the phenomenon, called the essential, invariant structure (essence). Primarily, these passages focused on the common experiences of the participants in the study. And that is where the emergent themes were drawn out to become the result of the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reasons for working with the Brothers and for being a Marist Brother

There were four themes that emerged as reasons why the lay opted to stay and work in the Marist school. The first theme spoke about the benefits which they got from school. Such benefits included opportunities, satisfaction, and security. Secondly, it spoke about the sense of fulfillment in working with Marist school. Fulfillment came from the joy that the lay felt as they work in the Marist school. The third theme spoke about the influence of being a Marist to the lay. Some laypersons were in the Marist institute because of the sense of rootedness that they have with the Marist. Rootedness means their connection or the connection of their family members to the Marist which they still continue to carry on and live up until today that they are still in the institute.

For the Marist Brothers, they believe that being one is a vocation. Once called, they respond to into it, live in the community, and engage in the mission.

Attitudes of the Brothers and lay towards work in the mission

There is one prevailing theme that emerged under this question. It seemed that the lay has positive attitudes towards their work. They had shown commitment to their work in such a way that despite the tough moments with the brothers, they remained committed to the mission. Second, it seemed that they had the dedication to their work that they always go an extra mile in accomplishing a certain task. Third, the lay partners had shown compassion on how they take care of the young people that they deal with. They showed commitment, compassion, and dedication. Meanwhile, the Marist brothers also seem to show positive attitudes towards work with their genuineness and dedication to their work.

The perception of the lay and the Brothers towards the attitudes of their partners

The most prevailing theme to describe the perception of the lay towards the attitudes of the Marist Brothers is that the latter had certainly been living up the Marist values of presence, simplicity, and humility. The presence was manifested through the supervision, monitoring, guidance, and even support of the brothers in any of the school programs and activities. Simplicity was manifested in the way the brothers live their lives and even at the usual encounters of the brothers with the lay. Meanwhile, the perceived attitudes of the brothers for the lay were captured by the theme of love for the things they do because of the dedication and commitment which the lay manifest in work for the mission.

Working relationship between the Marist Brothers and the Lay

An open relationship had been the dominating theme in describing the working relationship between the brothers and the lay as perceived by the latter. In an open relationship, there is harmony between and among them, and the Family Spirit is visible in the community. An open relationship had also been the dominating theme in describing the relationship between the lay and the brothers as perceived by the brothers. Secondly, the sense of professionalism also appeared as one of the dominating themes under this question.

Significant impact of the Marist-lay Partnership

For the lay partners, the most dominating theme to describe the significant impact of the Marist-lay partnership to them was the opportunity to grow holistically, which includes their opportunity to grow professionally and spiritually. The lay people saw themselves growing in the Marist school. That was also one reason why they stay. They believed that they grow professionally through the different opportunities afforded to them. They also grew spiritually through the different spiritual exercises that the Marist schools provided for the lay. For the Brothers, the Marist-lay partnership has a significant impact in terms of their leadership and management.

Challenges Encountered

Frustration had been the dominating theme to describe the challenges encountered by the lay partners in working with the Brothers. Whereas, for the brothers, relational gap and managerial challenges had been two of the dominating themes revealed. In terms of the relational gap, it includes the

attitudinal challenges experienced by the brothers in working with the lay and the other work-related challenges.

Meaning of Partnership for the Marist Brothers and the Lay

There were three themes that emerged in the understanding of the meaning of partnership for the lay. These themes were relational, attitudinal, and involvement. The relational theme involves the interaction and blending of the Brothers and the lay, their collaboration, their openness with each other and the support and guidance which they give to each other. The attitudinal theme refers to the respect, trust, and confidence that each gives to one another. Involvement as a theme is understood through the sharing of decision making and sharing of the mission of the brothers and the lay.

There were two prevailing themes revealed in terms of how the Marist brothers have understood the meaning of partnership. These themes were relational and involvement themes. The relational theme speaks of the complementarity between the brothers and the lay—the working together relationship and the support and guidance that each gives to one another. The second theme emerged for the brothers were also the same as that of the lay, which is involvement. It speaks about the sharing of decisions and the sharing of the mission between the brothers and the lay.

Emerging themes on Marist-lay Partnership.

There were three identified themes that emerged in understanding the concept of Marist-lay partnership by the Marist Brothers and the lay. These themes were a collaboration, equity, and ownership. The collaboration includes interaction and blending, working together, openness, support, guidance, and empowerment. Equity speaks about how the Marist Brothers and the lay shared decisions. Ownership speaks on how the Brothers and the lay shared the mission together.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result of the exploration, it was drawn out that collaboration appeared to be very important to be established in the Marist community. As one of the emerging themes, the collaboration between brothers and lay leads to a good relationship that eventually results in a good partnership. This has been practically the reason why most of the Marist schools were giving so much

emphasis on building a good relationship between and among the brothers and the lay and even with other stakeholders because it has been the foundation of establishing a strong partnership.

The next theme that emerged in the study is equity, and it is synonymous to fairness. Both the lay and the brothers are treated equally with respect to the sense of personhood that they have. That covers respect in terms of decision making which is believed to be very critical to be sustained and strengthened. It can be understood that in the context of partnership, empowerment and growth have always been part of the process and that is through the shared decision making where everyone is seen to be a potential contributor of good ideas for the success of the mission. This is believed to be important in trying to strengthen the partnership between the lay and the brothers. If the lay feel that they are involved in the process, they would keep their interest to stay and it had been a phenomenon that the lay partners had seen and felt in trying to digest their way of partnering with the Brothers in the mission.

Working collaboratively towards the shared mission would also mean ownership. Since it had already been a phenomenon that exists in the institute as revealed in the sharing of the participants of the study, and considering as well that this is an important phenomenon which needs to be sustained and even strengthened, then therefore, there is a need for a continuous nurturing process and redefining the roles and functions of the lay in the mission, and that they would need to understand deeply the philosophy of why there is a need for them to collaborate.

Lastly, the study perhaps became an affirmation of the support system that the Brothers are trying to establish in the institutions. There is a need to intensify the process in such a way that it would become a two-way process which means that support must be in reciprocity for both the Brothers and the lay.

This phenomenological study on the Marist-lay partnership revealed the lived-experiences of the Marist Brothers and the lay partners in the context of partnership. Considering the results and the processes that this study had gone through, it implied that with the fact of the existence of the partnership phenomenon between and among the Brothers and the lay, there is a need to sustain the strength of such partnership by focusing more on the identified emerging themes to ensure lasting and stronger partnership upon working in the Marist mission.

The institute has to work further on strengthening more the involvement and participation of the lay partners in all the undertakings of the institution

which promote the appreciation of the mission of the Marist and deepening the understanding of partnership by encouraging them to get involved into several meaningful and relevant activities.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

This study provides the readers deep understanding on the concept of partnership particular the partnership between the Marist Brothers as a religious congregation that runs educational institution as one of their significant mission and the lay people who work in the Marist schools as faculty, administrators, and non-teaching staff. The picture of partnership is viewed in any of the educational institutions run or owned by any of the religious orders in the Philippines and even in the other parts of the world. But, for this study, the focus is on exploring this phenomenon of the partnership between the Marist Brothers and the Lay. In the course of exploring the body of knowledge, there are several study conducted on understanding what Marist charism is all about, and how this charism are actually transmitted and reflected in the school, but little is known about the phenomenon of partnership. It is commonly understood that the lay people who work in the Marist schools are simply considered to be workers or employees in the institution. They got employed, paid, and earn a living. Thus, they are expected to perform their duties and responsibilities as expected from them. As years went by, this kind of relationship has transcended into something deeper and more meaningful beyond the classic understanding of employee-employer relationship as the case may be. Marist Brothers and the Lay people are partners in the mission of the Marist institute. What really is this partnership about? How is it being understood and lived up by both the Marist Brothers and the Lay? How will this help inform the institute in terms of providing more avenues and opportunities for both the Brothers and the lay-in intensifying and enriching more the vocation through strengthening such a partnership as a phenomenon.

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