

**Association of Consecrated Women in Eastern and Central Africa
(ACWECA)**

**Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate
Georgetown University,
Washington, DC**

***Women Religious in ACWECA Region:
Effective Evangelization in Modern Society***



Sisters from ACWECA region in a workshop (By courtesy of ACWECA)



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African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC)



The African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) facilitates access to education for women religious in Africa that leads to enhancement and expansion of the education, health, economic, social, environmental and spiritual services they provide to the people and communities in Africa and beyond.

Learn more about ASEC at <https://www.asec-sldi.org>

Association of Consecrated Women in Eastern and Central Africa



The Association of Consecrated Women in Eastern and Central Africa, (ACWECA) is a regional body comprising of National Associations of Sisterhoods (Women Superiors General) from ten English speaking countries of Eastern and Central Africa. It promotes the spirit of collaboration and sharing of spiritual, human and economic resources among Member Conferences, to enhance religious formation and to strengthen leadership capacity for deeper evangelization.

Learn more about ACWECA at <https://www.acweca.org>

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate



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Association of Consecrated Women in Eastern and Central Africa (ACWECA)

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Women Religious in ACWECA Region: Effective Evangelization in Modern Society

Executive Summary

The Sisters' Education Survey was designed by Sister Hellen A. Bandiho of ACWECA Secretariat and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University. ACWECA undertook a survey of sisters' needs beyond formal education so that these sisters may be better prepared to address the spiritual and social needs of the young people in the ACWECA region. The research question was "How can the sisters be prepared, beyond formal education, to address the spiritual and social needs of young people?"

Due to complications involved in conducting a survey in ACWECA region an appropriate channel of communication for questionnaire delivery had to be found. WhatsApp, a social media application, is one of the key media applications used by many people in the region and was selected for this survey. While a few sisters may own laptops and use email, which was another option, smart phones proved to be more accessible by our intended recipients – women religious. CARA programmed and hosted the survey on its webpage. A link to the survey was sent to the National Associations, to Superior Generals and to other groups that sisters belong to. It was also sent to national formation houses and to ASEC coordinators. This link was mainly sent via WhatsApp with those receiving the invitation forwarding it to other sisters. A few sisters requested to be sent a link by email. In all, 262 sisters responded to the survey. Due to there not being a reliable census of the total number of sisters in the ACWECA region capable of using WhatsApp social media, a response rate cannot be calculated.

Major findings can be summarized as follows:

Characteristics of Respondents

- Responding sisters were invited to indicate the country they come from. Five countries out of nine from the ACWECA region were represented in this survey, which is 56% of all National Associations in the ACWECA region (Tanzania, whose survey was conducted last year, was excluded).

- In calendar year 2020, the average age of valid respondents is 43. For purposes of analysis, responding sisters are divided into these three age groups, reflective of the policies of many governments in regard to employment: 60% are young adults, ages 18 to 45; 36% are adults, ages 46 to 60; and 4% are older adults, ages 61 and older.
- Some responding sisters have high educational achievement, with 51% having a bachelor's degree or higher and 19% being diploma holders. In addition, 62% report having been involved with ASEC's HESA, SLDI, or Scholarship programs.

Counseling Skills

Sisters were asked about how adequately prepared they are for counseling in a variety of areas and about how helpful they would find it to be more knowledgeable in those same areas. Only the strongest measures (those responding "very") are shown in the table below.¹ One tenth or less of responding sisters indicate that they are "very" prepared in any of the areas of counseling measured. In contrast, more than eight in ten report that they would find it "very" helpful to be more knowledgeable in each of the areas. As the final column displays, there is a gap of more than 70 percentage points between the two measures for each area, demonstrating sisters' reported need for skills in the area of counseling compared to their level of preparedness.

Preparedness in Areas of Counseling, Helpfulness in Gaining More Knowledge in that Area, and Gap Between the Two			
	Describes Self as "Very" Adequately Understanding Counseling in an Area	Would Find It "Very" Helpful to Have More Knowledge About an Area	<i>Gap Between the Two Measures</i>
Areas for Counseling	%	%	%
Drug and alcohol abuse	6	94	89
Sexual abuse	7	92	85
Health problems	7	92	85
Mental health issues	6	89	83
Family problems	10	92	82
Relationships issues	10	88	76
Gangs and violence	5	81	76
Emotional problems	11	83	72

¹ For all other responses, see the Counseling Skills section of the main report. For non-response rates, see Appendix II.

Social Justice

Sisters were also asked how adequately prepared they are to minister in a variety of social justice areas and how helpful they would find it to be more knowledgeable in those same areas. With one exception (religion related issues), less than a quarter of sisters report feeling “very” prepared for ministry in each of the areas.² Further, 73% to 88% report that they would find it “very” helpful to have more knowledge in each of the areas. The gap between the two measures is especially pronounced among the first four issues listed in the table below. That said, the gap between the bottom five issues is still substantial, between 58 and 69 percentage points as well, indicating a strong desire for more knowledge about each of these issues.

Preparedness in Understanding Social Justice Issues, Helpfulness in Gaining More Knowledge about Issues, and Gap between the Two			
	Describes Self as “Very” Adequately Understanding an Issue	Would Find It “Very” Helpful to Have More Knowledge about an Issue	<i>Gap between the Two Measures</i>
Social Justice Issues	%	%	%
Disability needs & rights	10	87	77
Health & healthcare	12	87	75
Economic inequality	15	87	72
Legal injustices & rights	15	86	71
Labor practices	12	81	69
Race & ethnicity	12	79	67
Homelessness	22	84	62
Immigration & migration	11	73	62
Religion related issues	30	88	58

Technological Use and Skills

- Ninety-seven percent of respondents’ report using smart phones at least once a week and 60% use a computer as often. The most popular social media application is WhatsApp.
- Respondents are most likely to say they use the internet for educational/academic purposes (49%), for spiritual purposes (35%), and for socializing (40%).

² See the Social Justice Issues section of the main report for all other responses. For non-response rates, see Appendix II.

As can be seen in the table below, at least half of respondents report using technology once a month or more for most of the purposes measured. Additionally, about one in five to almost six-tenths use technology for those purposes at least once a week. Despite such frequent use, between 79% and 94% say they would find it “very” helpful to have more training in each of the areas.

Frequency Using Technology and Helpfulness of Having More Training in an Area			
Purpose in Using Technology	Describes Self as Using Technology at Least “Once a Month” for Purpose %	Describes Self as Using Technology at Least “Once a Week” for Purpose %	Would Find It “Very” Helpful to Have Training in These Areas %
Watch online videos pertaining to faith	23	45	79
Find answers to faith questions online	16	58	85
Search for spiritual content online	14	50	94
Search to verify what a faith leader has said	14	20	87
Read the Bible on line	12	50	90
Pray with the Pope through Click to Pray	11	22	87
Have online conversations about faith	9	46	87

In addition, 75% report that receiving more training in social media applications would be “very” helpful to them and 97% would like to have more training on differentiating bad from good websites.

Abuse

Finally, responding sisters were asked how helpful it would be to have training in the resources available for different kinds of abuse. At least eight in ten say having training in each of the following areas would be “very” helpful to them:

- Physical abuse and violence (93%)
- Drug abuse (88%)
- Sexual abuse (87%)
- Alcohol abuse (83%)
- Mental health and recovery from trauma (80%)

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Introduction

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Due to complications involved in conducting a survey in ACWECA region, an appropriate channel of communication for questionnaire delivery had to be found. WhatsApp, a social media application, is one of the key media applications used by many people in the region and was selected for this survey. While a few sisters may own laptops and use email, which was another option, smart phones proved to be more accessible by our intended recipients – women religious. CARA programmed and hosted the survey on its webpage. A link to the survey was sent to the National Associations, to Superior Generals and to other groups that sisters belong to. It was also sent to National formation houses and to ASEC coordinators. This link was mainly sent via WhatsApp with those receiving the invitation forwarding it to other sisters. A few sisters requested to send a link by email. In all, 262 sisters responded to the survey. Due to there not being a reliable census of the total number of sisters in the ACWECA region capable of using WhatsApp social media, a response rate cannot be calculated.

Interpreting This Report

Most of the questions in this survey use four-point response scales (i.e., "not at all," "only a little," "somewhat," "very well"; or "not at all helpful," "only a little helpful," "somewhat helpful," "very helpful"). These scales allow respondents to choose between two relatively "negative" choices (e.g., "not at all helpful" and "only a little helpful") and two relatively "positive" choices (e.g., "somewhat helpful" and "very helpful"). In parts of the analysis in this report, these responses are

combined to allow for clearer comparisons. However, sometimes examining the most positive response distinguishes important contrasts in level of support.

In addition, readers may also wish to compare the difference between the two extreme responses, say “not at all helpful” and “very helpful,” to compare the level of intensity with which opposing opinions are held. These comparisons and others may be drawn by referring to the actual percentage responses given in Appendix II. That appendix shows the percentage responses for each item, calculated out of 100%, as well as the percentage of all respondents that did not respond to each question, separately calculated out of 100% for clarity of comparison.

In addition to summarizing the responses to most questions for respondents as a whole, the report also compares the responses of those from selected subgroups. The first section of the report describes the characteristics of the respondents as well as the subgroups that are used in the analyses that follow. Throughout the report, the tables and charts that compare differences between and among these various subgroups are presented following the responses for respondents as a whole in each section.

The margin of error for *differences between subgroups*, such as the differences among those of different age groups or those with different levels of education, depends on the size of the subgroups being compared. Unless otherwise noted, all subgroup differences described in the graphs of this report are statistically significant: that is, they pass standard tests of statistical inference and can be considered to be “real” differences. In some instances, differences between or among subgroups that are not statistically significant are also noted. These differences should be treated as merely suggestive of real differences that may exist between the subgroups under consideration.

The results of this survey fairly represent the characteristics and attitudes of Women Religious in ACWECA region. It provides an indication of their needs as will be elaborated in this report.

Organization of this Report

Six sections comprise this report

- Characteristics of Responding Sisters
- Assessment for Ministries in Areas of Social Justice
- Counseling Ministries Assessment
- Assessment for Ministry Using Technology
- Assessment for Ministries Addressing Abuse
- Social Needs Assessment

Section I: Characteristics of Responding Sisters

This section of the report includes demographic and other descriptive data for the 262 valid respondents to this survey. These data may be helpful in considering who responded to the survey, which populations are represented in the data, and their characteristics.

Countries' Participation

There are 10 National Associations in the ACWECA region. However, Tanzania did not participate in the survey because the same survey was conducted in the country last year. Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia could not participate due to communication challenges. Thus, participants for this survey represent about 56% of all intended countries in the region as listed in the box below.

Countries/Associations Represented by Survey Participants

1. Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya (AOSK)
2. Association of Women in Religious Institutes of Malawi (AWRIM)
3. Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU)
4. Zambia Association of Sisterhood (ZAS)
5. Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Zimbabwe (CMRS -Zimbabwe)

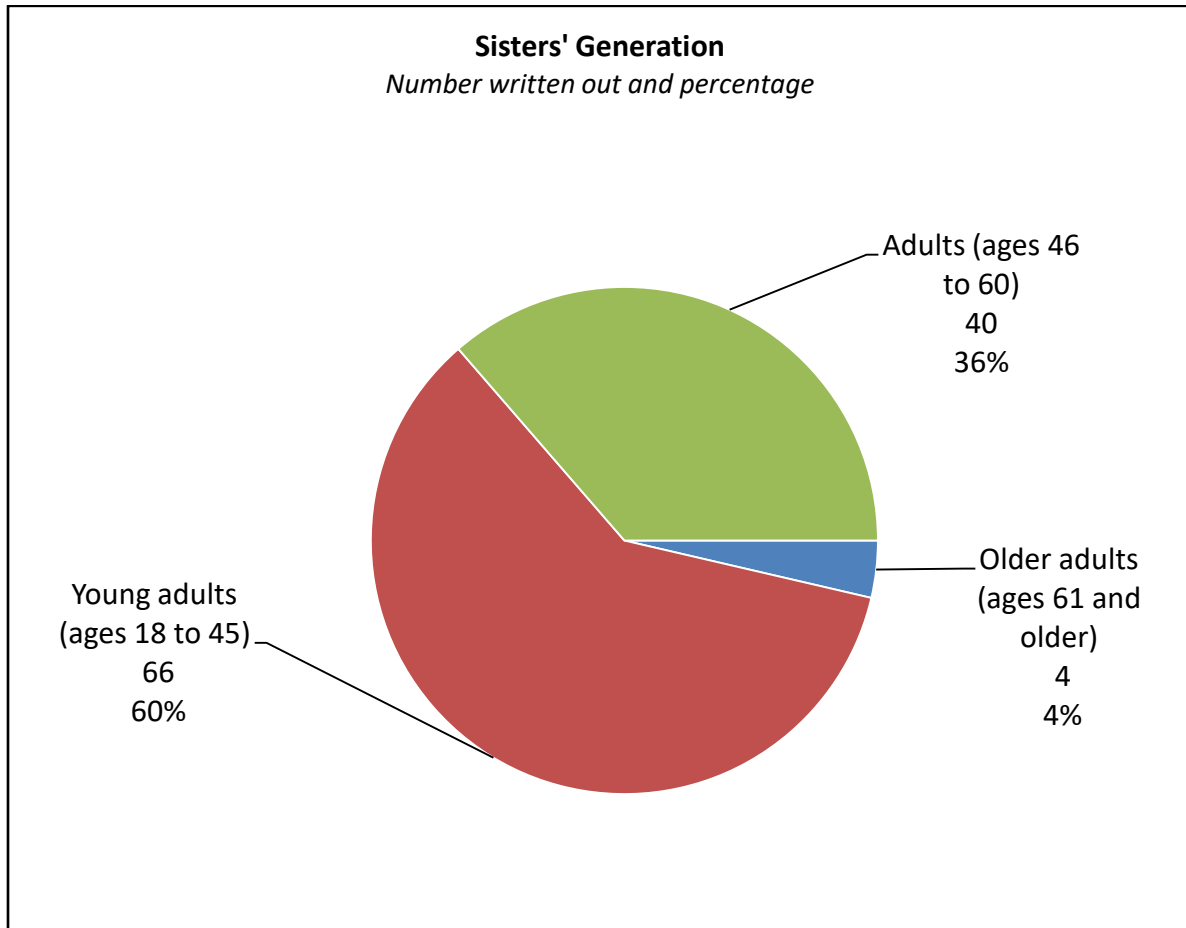
Age and Generation

Responding sisters were born between 1946 and 1997. The youngest responding sister was 24 years old and the oldest was 74 years. The average age of respondents is 43, with half saying they are 41 years or younger. Seventy-six percent are under age 50.

Age Range	
	%
18-45	60
46-60	36
61+ older	4
Years	
Average age	43
Median age	41
Youngest	24
Oldest	74

Important differences between groups are typically found among those who belong to different generations. This survey divides participants into three age groups: young adults, adults, and older adults. This grouping reflects most of the government policies.

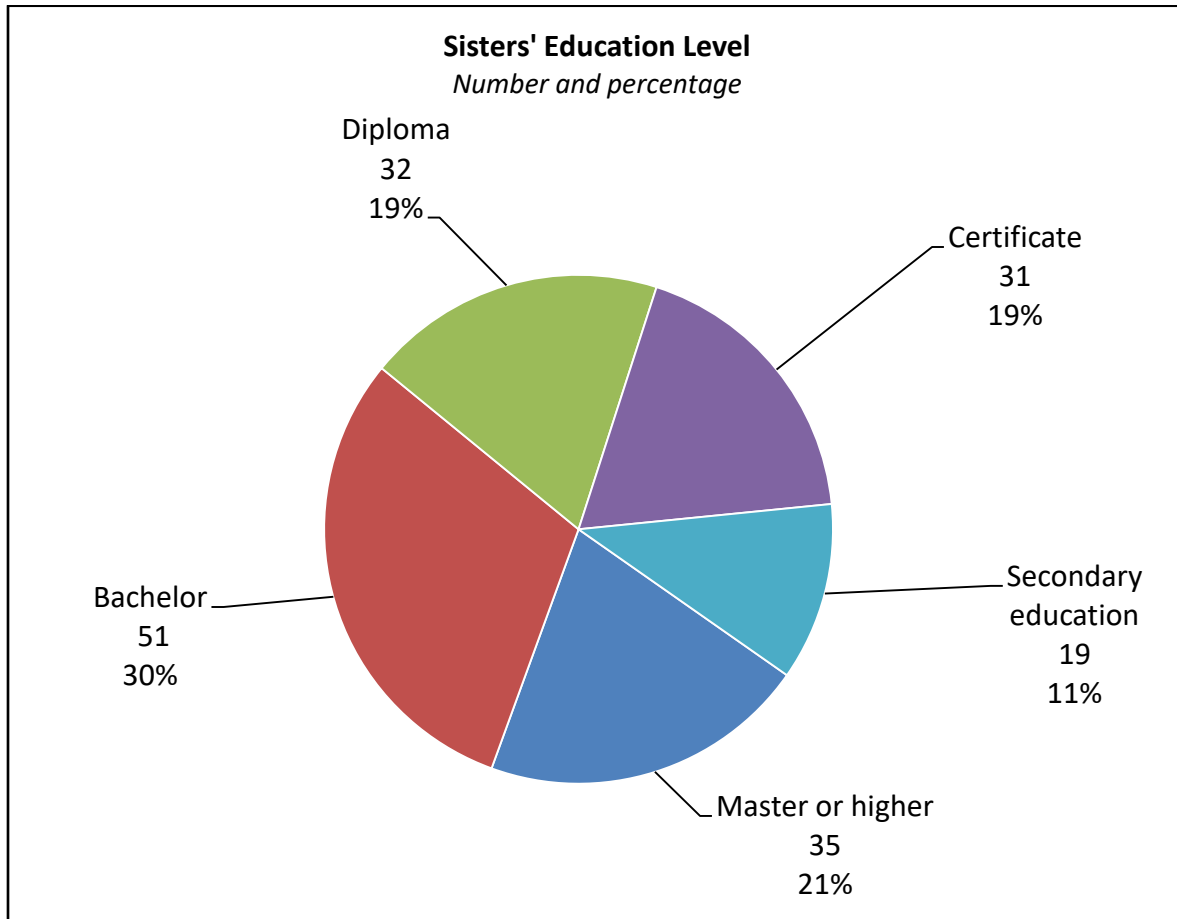
As is shown in the figure below, 60% of the participants are young adults, followed by adults (36%), and older adults (4%). However, 152 participants (58%) did not respond to the question about their age.



These age groups will be used throughout the report for comparison purposes.

Education of the Participants

Responding sisters were asked to indicate their highest level of educational achievement. Some 51% hold a bachelor's degree or higher, showing that half of the respondents who responded to the survey are highly educated. However, 36% (94 participants) did not respond to this question.

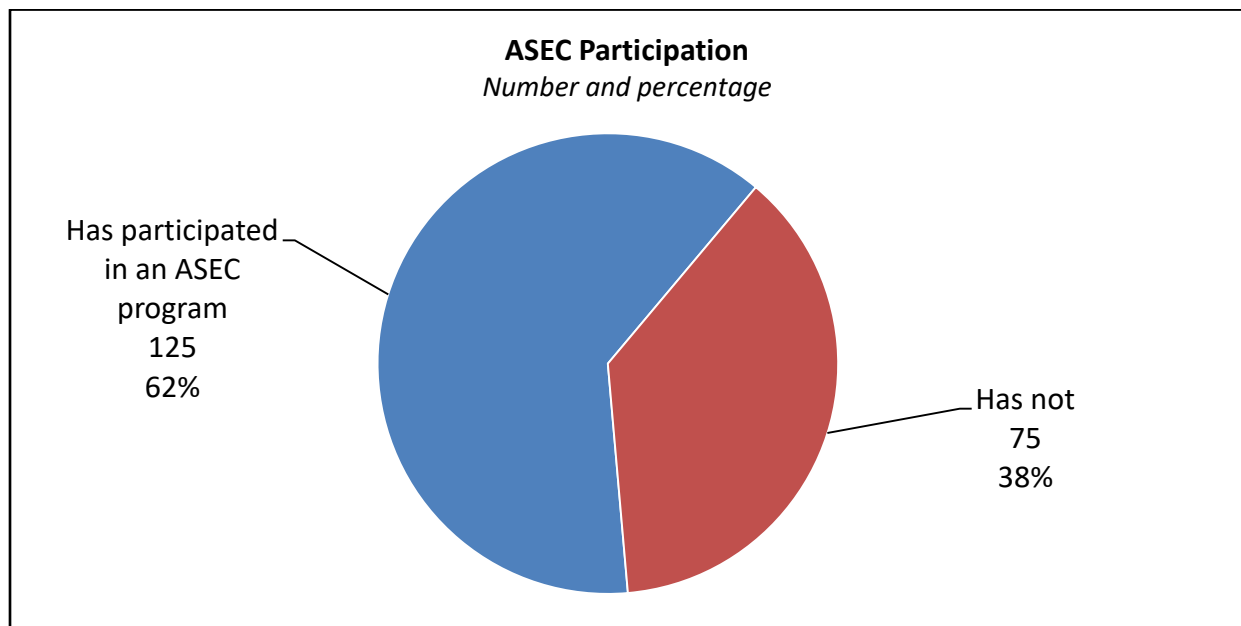


These education groups will be used throughout the report for comparison purposes.

ASEC Participation

African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) sponsors sisters from 10 African countries including some in the ACWECA region. The four programs ASEC sponsors in the region are Service Learning Program, Higher Education for Sisters in Africa (HESA), Sisters Leadership Development Initiative (SLDI) and the Scholarship program. Introductory concepts in the themes surveyed in this project are taught in some of their programs.

Sisters were asked if they participated in any ASEC programs. Sixty-two percent report having participated in one or more of the ASEC programs while 38% have not.



Differences according to ASEC participation will be used throughout the report for comparison purposes.

Section II: Assessment for Ministries in Areas of Social Justice

Because sisters need to understand the concept of social justice and just relationships between and among countries and societies to minister to and advocate for those in need, sisters were asked how well prepared for ministry they are in some basic areas of social justice as well as how helpful it would be to have more training in those same areas.

Preparedness for Ministries Involving Social Justice Issues

Six-tenths report being “somewhat” or “very” adequately prepared in understanding in the areas of religion related issues. Responding sisters are also especially likely to report being prepared in the areas of race and ethnicity (53%), homelessness (52%), health and healthcare (51%) and economic inequality (50%).

Thinking of your Ministries Since You Took Your Vows, How Adequately Prepared Are You in Understanding These Social Justice Issues?		
	“Somewhat” and “Very” Adequately Prepared Combined %	“Very” Adequately Prepared Only %
Religion related issues	60	30
Race and ethnicity	53	12
Homelessness	52	22
Health and healthcare	51	12
Economic inequality	50	15
Disability needs and rights	42	10
Legal injustices and rights	38	15
Labor practices	34	12
Immigration and migration	31	11

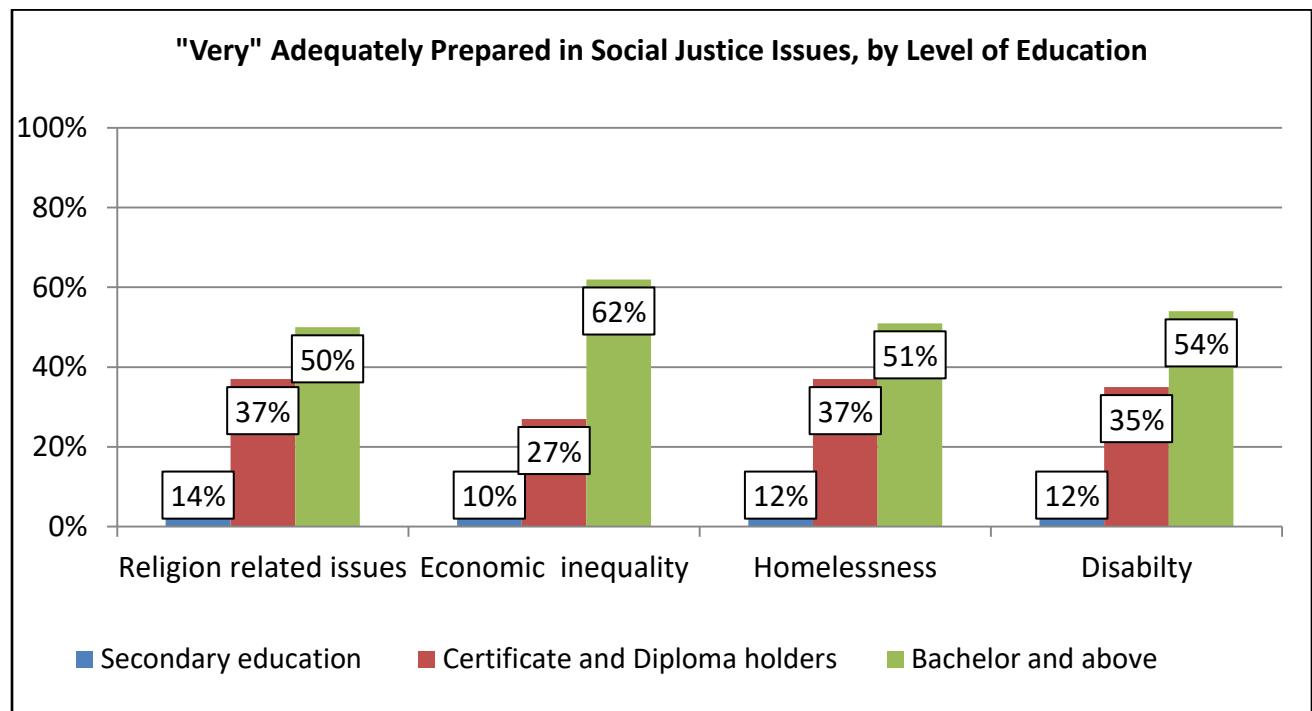
Three-tenths report being “very” adequately prepared in the area of religion related issues (30%). Respondents report that they are “very” adequately prepared in areas of homelessness (22%), economic inequality (15%), race and ethnicity (12%), health and healthcare (12%), immigration and migration (11%), indicating the need for more preparation in many of these areas.



"I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness" John 12:46

Differences in Preparedness by Education³

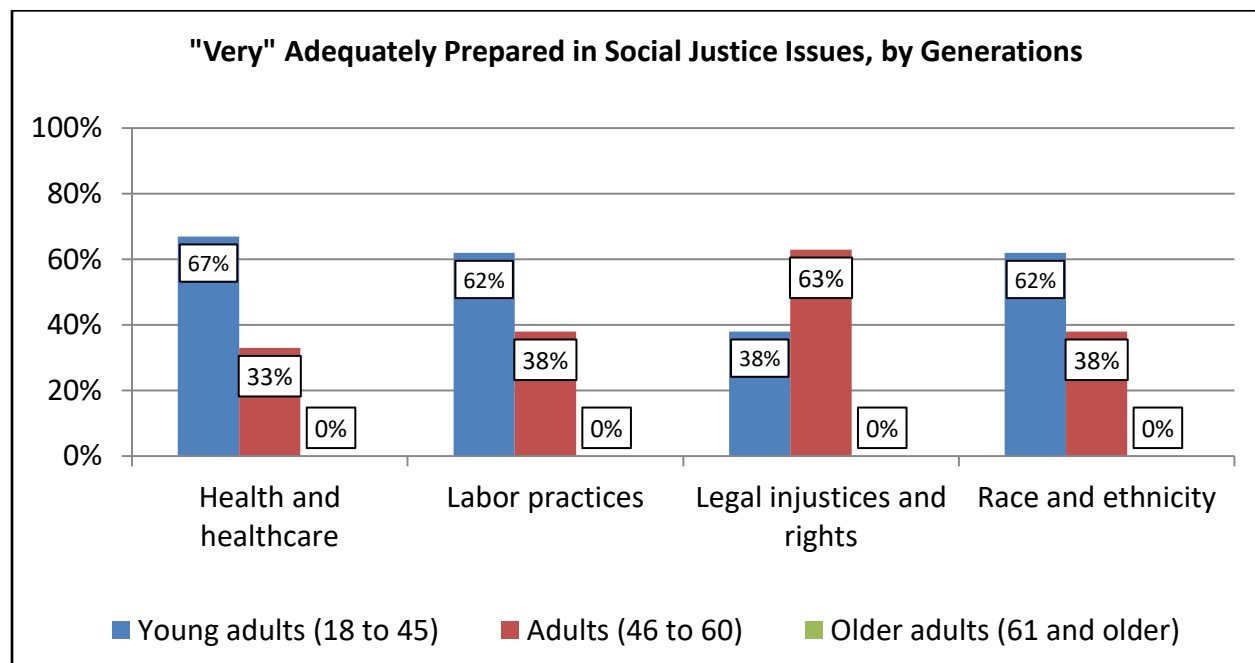
Holders of bachelor degree and above are especially likely to report being “very” prepared in the areas of religion related issues, economic inequalities, homelessness, and disability issues.



³ As was discussed in the Introduction section, only subgroup differences (such as those by highest level of educational achievement, generation, and ASEC program participation) that are statistically significant are displayed in the graphs presented in this report.

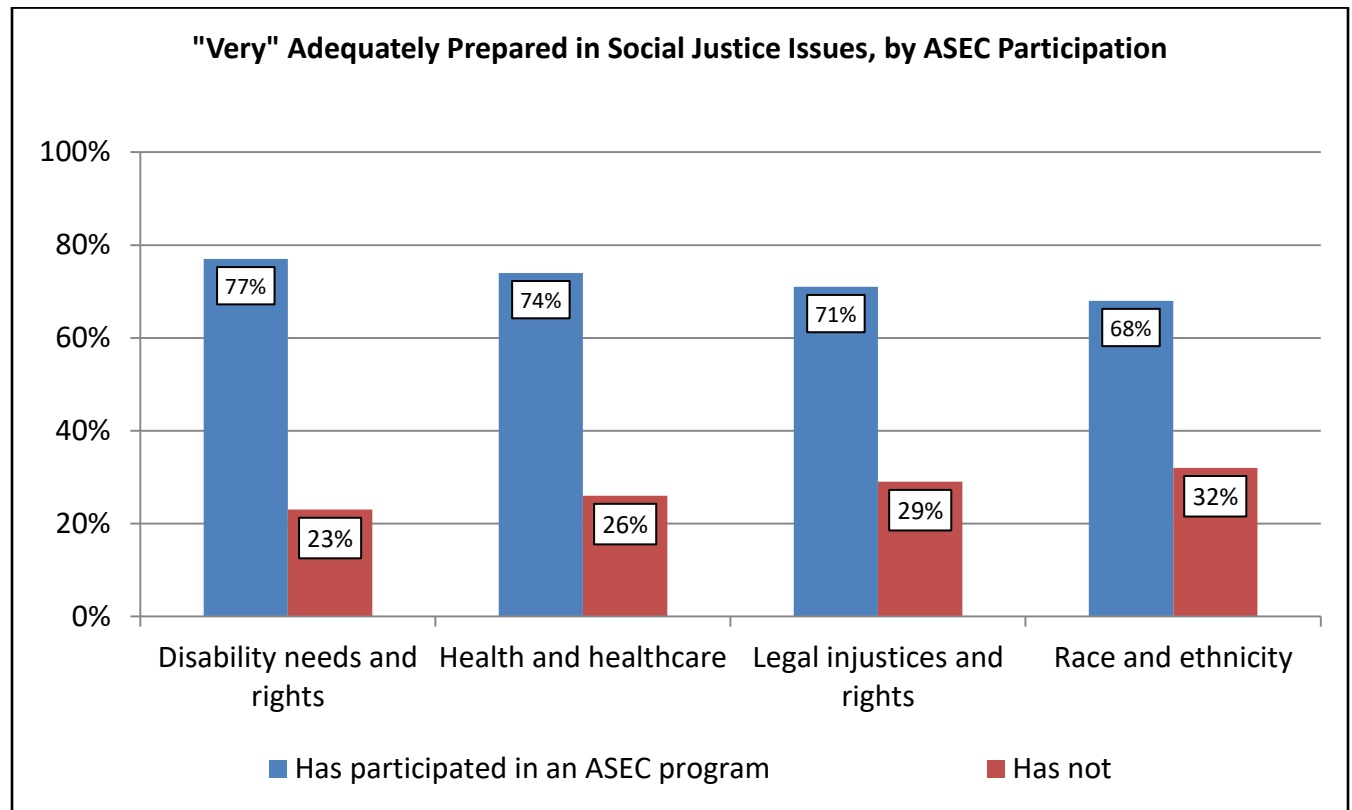
Differences in Preparedness by Generation

Between 38% and 67% of young adult respondents report that they are “very” well prepared in understanding each of the social justice issues presented in the figure below. With the exception of legal injustices and rights, no more than 38% of those of the older two generations report being “very” adequately prepared in any of the areas.



Differences in Preparedness by Past ASEC Program Participation

Responding sisters who have participated in an ASEC program are more likely than others to report that they are adequately prepared in all social justice issues presented in the figure below.



Helpfulness of Further Training in Social Justice Issues

Sisters were also asked to indicate how helpful it would be to have more training in various social justice related issues. Between 88% and 98% report that gaining further knowledge in any of the areas listed in the table below would be “somewhat” or “very” helpful to them.

How Helpful Would it be to You to Gain More Knowledge about these Issues?		
	“Somewhat” and “Very” Helpful Combined	“Very” Helpful Only
	%	%
Religion related issues	98	88
Immigration and migration	98	73
Disability needs and rights	97	87
Homelessness	97	84
Economic inequality	96	87
Health and healthcare	96	87
Legal injustices and rights	96	86
Labour practices	94	81
Race and ethnicity	88	77

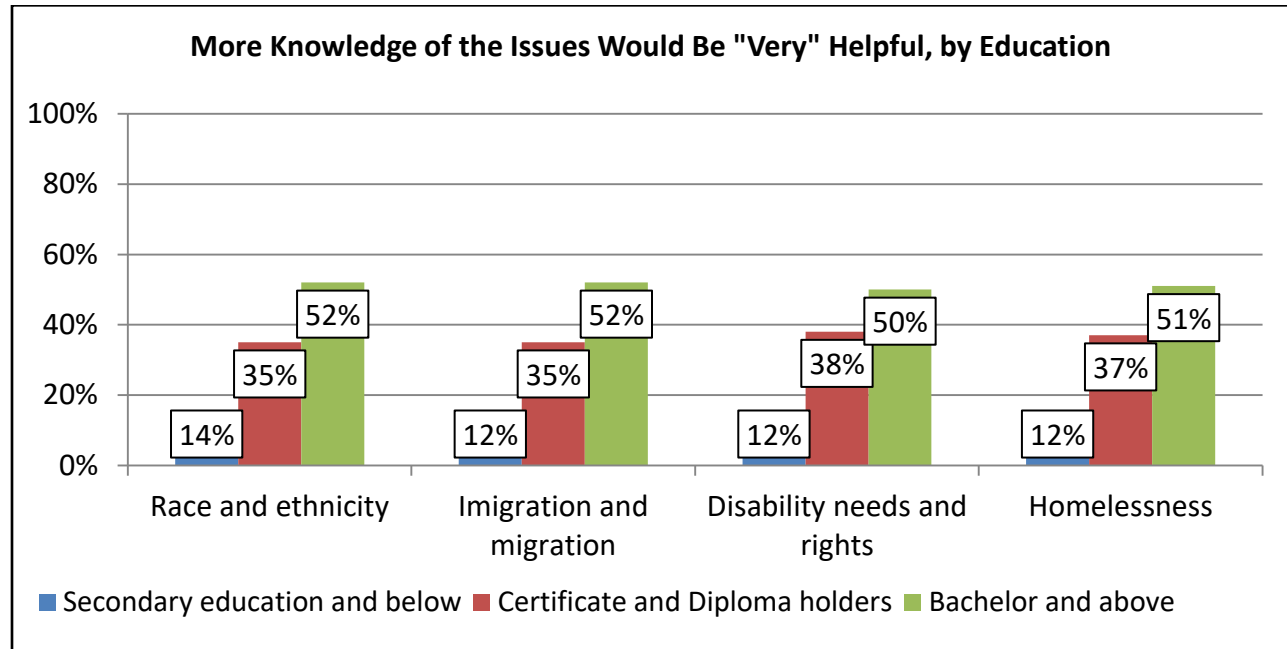
- More than eight in ten report that having more knowledge about religion related issues (88%), disability knowledge and rights (87%), health and healthcare (87%), economic inequality (87%) legal injustices and rights (86%), homelessness (84%) and labour practices (81%) would be “very” helpful to them.
- Roughly seven in ten indicate that having more knowledge in the following areas would be “very” helpful to them: immigration and migration (73%) and race and ethnicity (71%).

Sisters were requested to write any other social justice issues in which they wish they could have more training. Some of the additional issues the sisters wish to have training in are:

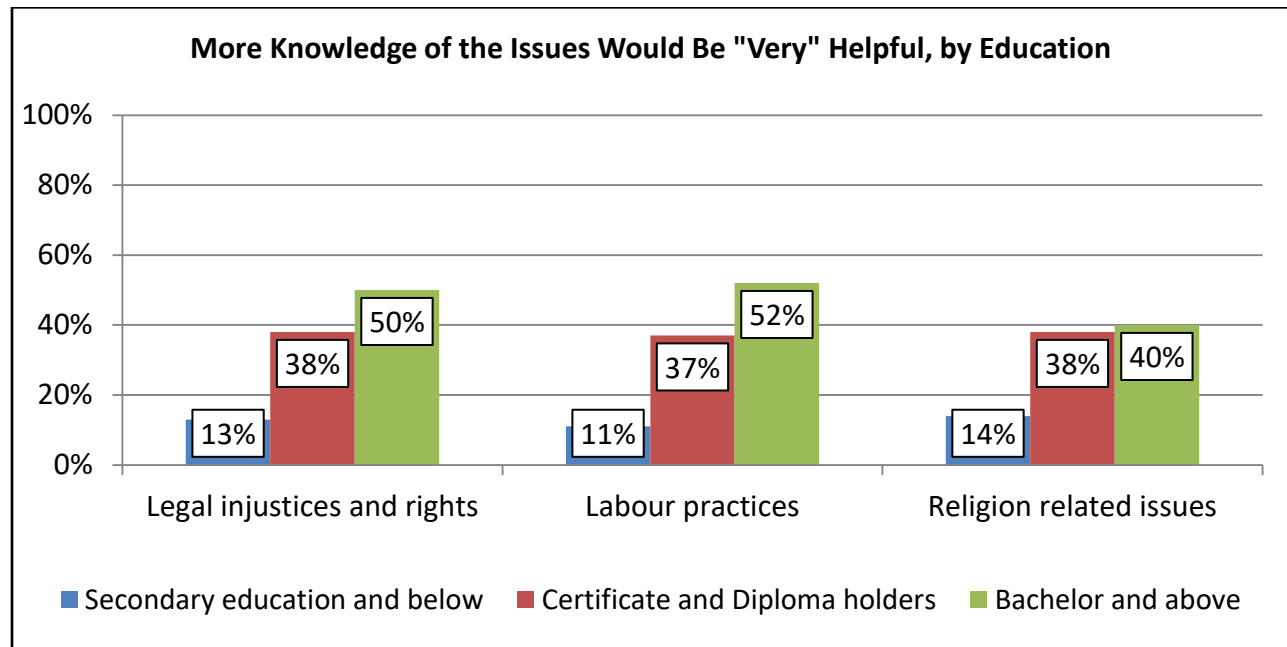
- Guidance and counseling
- Child rights
- Child abuse
- Child protection
- Child Protection Policy
- Child/human trafficking
- Homelessness
- Justice and peace
- Drug and substance abuse
- Race and ethnicity
- Aging gracefully
- Forensic psychology
- Child psychology
- Economic inequalities
- Social justice
- Domestic violence
- Female genital mutilation, (FGM)
- Religion and culture/Inculturation
- Environment protection
- Global warming
- Gender issues
- Human dignity
- Human rights
- Poverty
- Sustainable development
- Youth and women empowerment
- Early or forced marriages
- Child and vulnerable persons' rights
- How to work with people with disability
- Civil & Canon Law
- Anti-social behavior
- Stress and suicide
- Family, marriage, divorce and separation
- Reproductive health
- Interpersonal relationships
- Teenage pregnancies/Abortion
- Sexual abuse
- Modern slavery
- Moral justice
- Multiculturalism
- Psycho-spiritual psychology
- Relationships and freedom
- Inequality
- Social teaching of the Church
- Social inclusivity

Differences by Education

Participants were asked how helpful it would be to have more training about each of the social justice issues presented below. Sisters with bachelor degree and above are most likely to indicate that more training in all areas indicated in the figure below would be “very” helpful to them, while those holding secondary education are least likely to say the same.

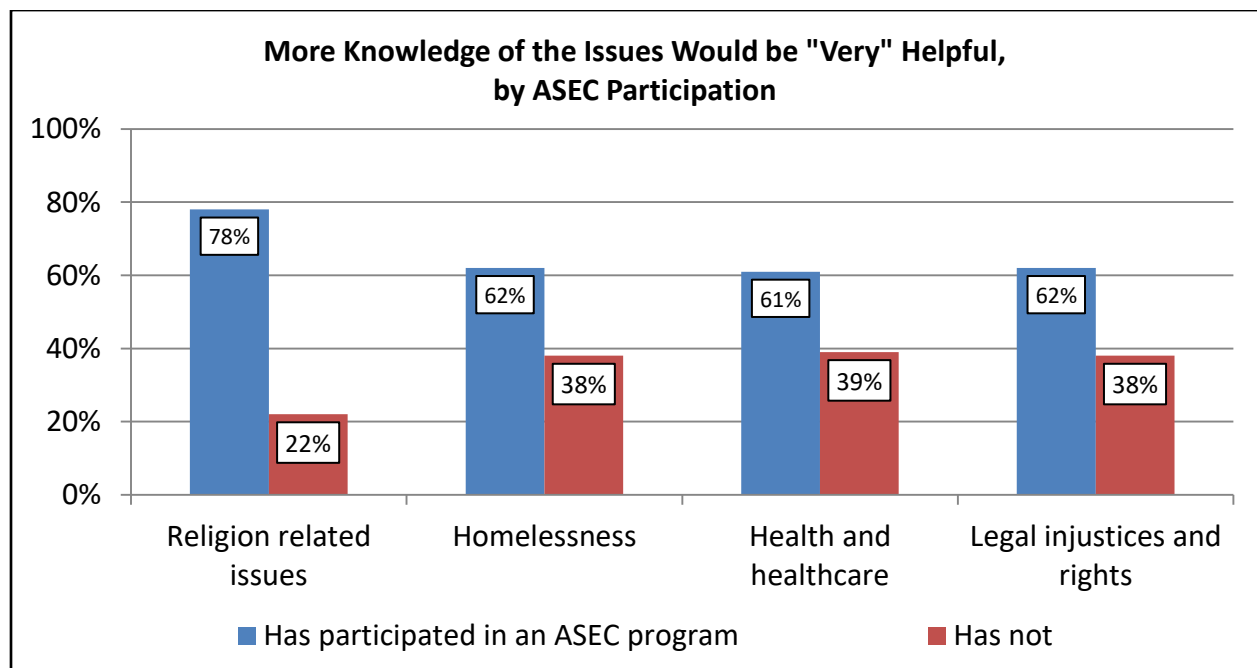
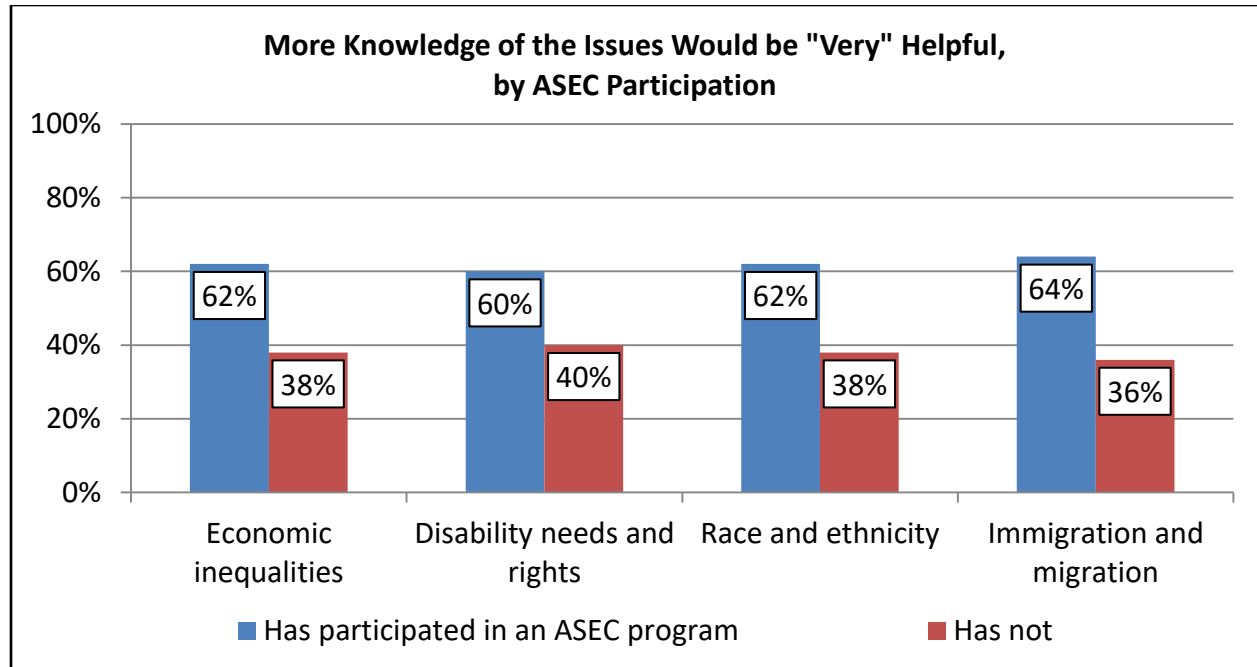


Those with a secondary education and below are least likely among each of the education categories to indicate that more knowledge in the other areas shown below would be “very” helpful. That said, slightly less than half of those with bachelor and above indicate that having more knowledge in any of these areas would be “very” helpful to them.



Differences by Past ASEC Program Participation

Between 60% and 64% of respondents who participated in the ASEC programs report that it would be “very” helpful to have more training in the social justice issues reflected in the two figures below.



Summary: Preparedness in Relation to the Desire for More Training

A summary of those giving the most positive response (“very”) for both questions is presented below. The gaps between the two measures give an indication of how useful further education in each area would be. The five highest gaps – that is the areas where more knowledge would be of most benefit to the sisters in their current ministries – are in the areas of disability needs and rights (77%), health and health care (75%), homelessness (72%), economic inequality (72%) and legal injustices and rights (71%), indicating a genuine desire among the sisters for more training about each of these issues.

Preparedness in Understanding Social Justice Issues, Helpfulness in Gaining More Knowledge about Issues, and Gap between the Two

	Describes Self as “Very” Adequately Understanding an Issue	Would Find It “Very” Helpful to Have More Knowledge about an Issue	<i>Gap between the Two Measures</i>
Social Justice Issues	%	%	%
Disability needs & rights	10	87	77
Health & healthcare	12	87	75
Homelessness	22	84	72
Economic inequality	15	87	72
Legal injustices & rights	15	86	71
Labor practices	12	81	69
Immigration & migration	11	73	62
Religion related issues	30	88	58
Race & ethnicity	12	77	55

Section III: Counseling Ministries Assessment

While counseling is a profession in its own right, countries under this study do not have sufficient specialists in the area. This challenge gives an opportunity to sisters to address some of the issues related to counseling young people. Sisters were asked about how adequately prepared they are to minister in a variety of counseling skills areas and also about how helpful they would find it to be more knowledgeable in those same areas.

Preparedness for Ministries Involving Counseling

Responding sisters vary in how prepared they say they are to provide counseling in different areas. At least two-fifths report that they are at least “somewhat” prepared to provide counseling in the areas of family problems, relationship issues and emotional problems faced by young people. Between 15% and 38% report being at least “somewhat” prepared to provide counseling in each of the other areas.

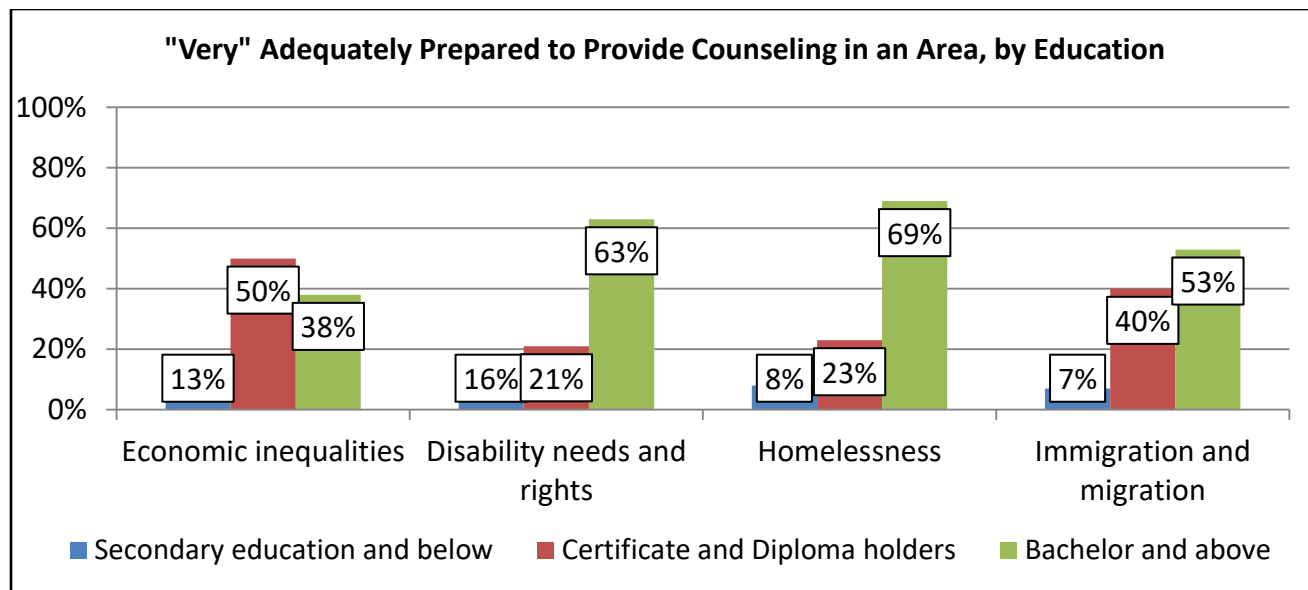
**Thinking of your Ministries Since You Took Your Vows,
How Adequately Prepared Are You to Provide
Counseling in these Areas?**

Areas of Counseling	“Somewhat” or “Very” Prepared to Counsel in an Area Combined	“Very” Prepared to Counsel in an Areas Only
	%	%
Family problems	42	10
Relationship issues	40	10
Emotional problems	40	11
Sexual abuse	38	7
Drug and alcohol abuse	28	6
Health problems	24	7
Mental health issues	18	6
Gangs and violence	15	5

Responding sisters also vary in the proportions saying they are “very” prepared to provide counseling in the different areas. One tenth report being “very” prepared in the areas of emotional problems (11%), family problems (10%) and relationship issues (10%). Less than one in ten, however, reports being as prepared in other areas reported in the table.

Differences in Preparedness by Education

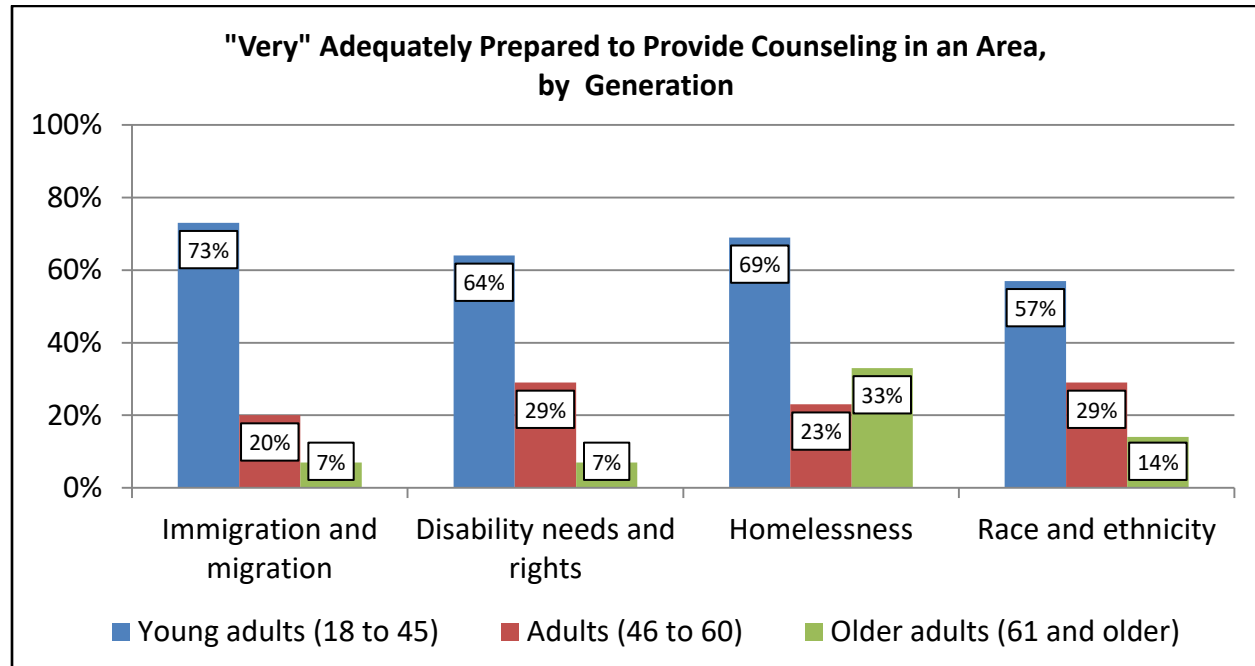
Between 7% and 16% of sisters with secondary school education report being “very” adequately prepared to counsel in the areas shown in the figure below.



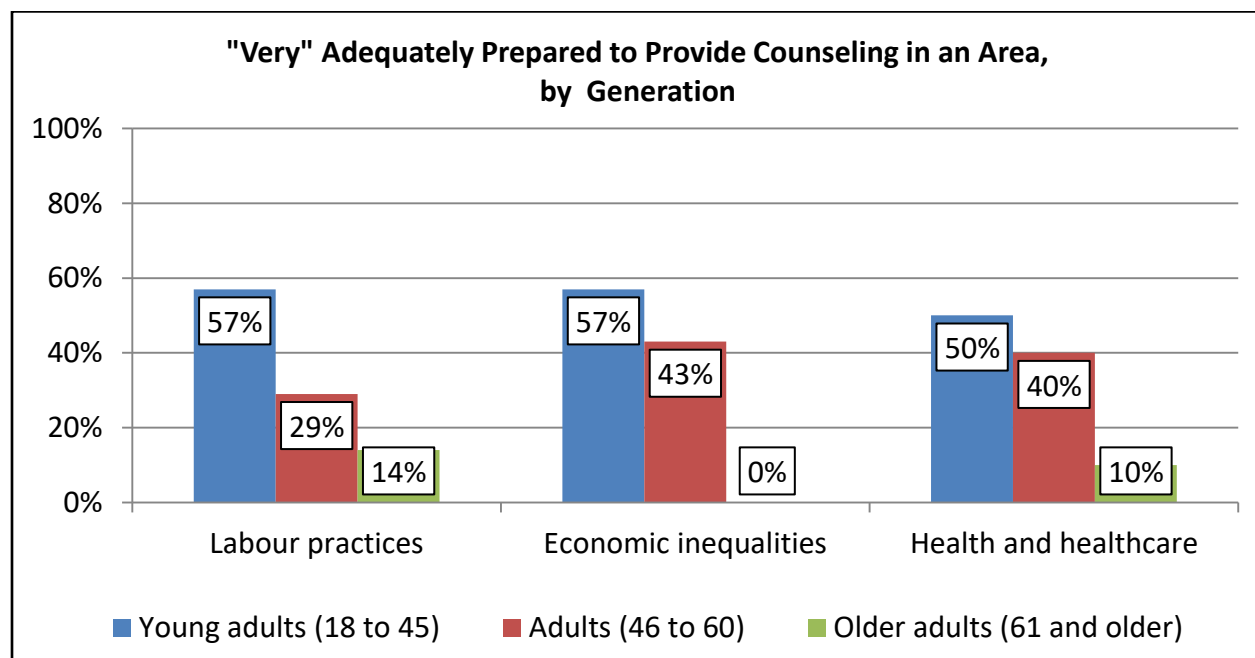
- Among responding sisters with a bachelor's degree and above, more than two-thirds report being "very" adequately prepared to counsel on homelessness (69%) and disability needs and rights (63%).
- For those holding a certificate or a diploma, between 21% and 50% report being "very" adequately prepared to counsel on economic inequalities, immigration and migration, homelessness and disability needs and rights.

Differences in Preparedness by Generation

While at least two-thirds of young adult respondents report being “very” adequately prepared to counsel in the areas shown in the figure below, those of other generations are less likely to feel that prepared.

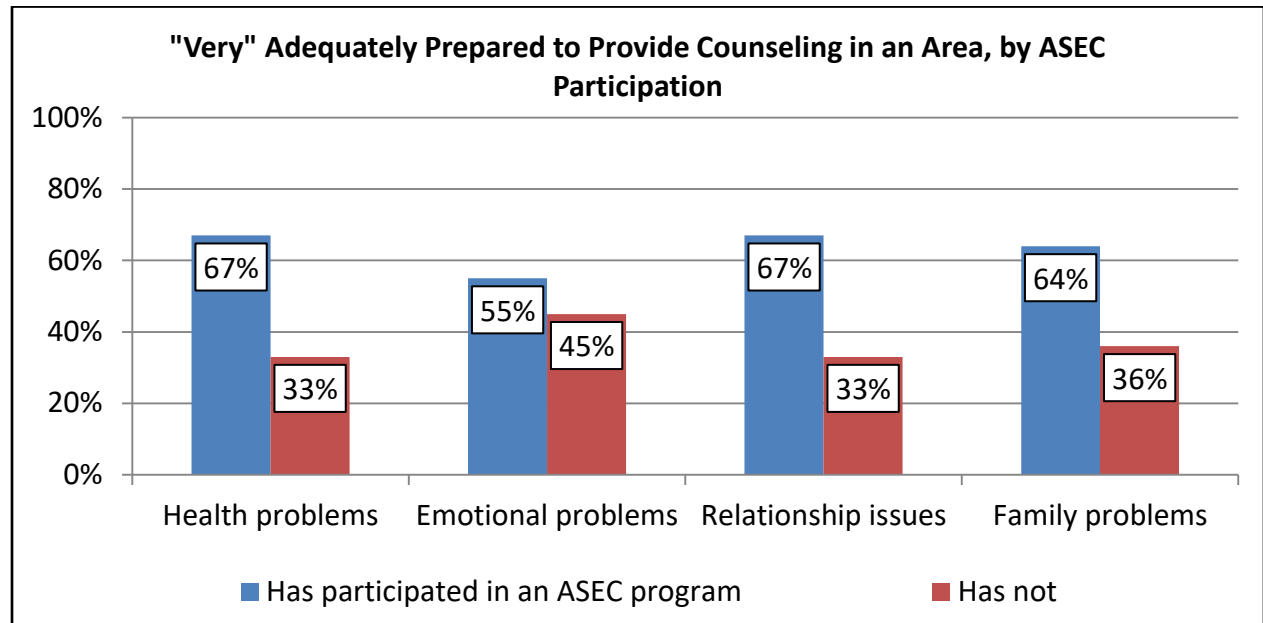


Young adults are relatively more likely than older generations to indicate being “very” adequately prepared to provide counseling in the three areas presented in the table below.



Differences in Preparedness by ASEC Program Participation

Sisters who have participated in ASEC programs are more likely than those who have not to report being “very” adequately prepared to counsel in the areas shown below.



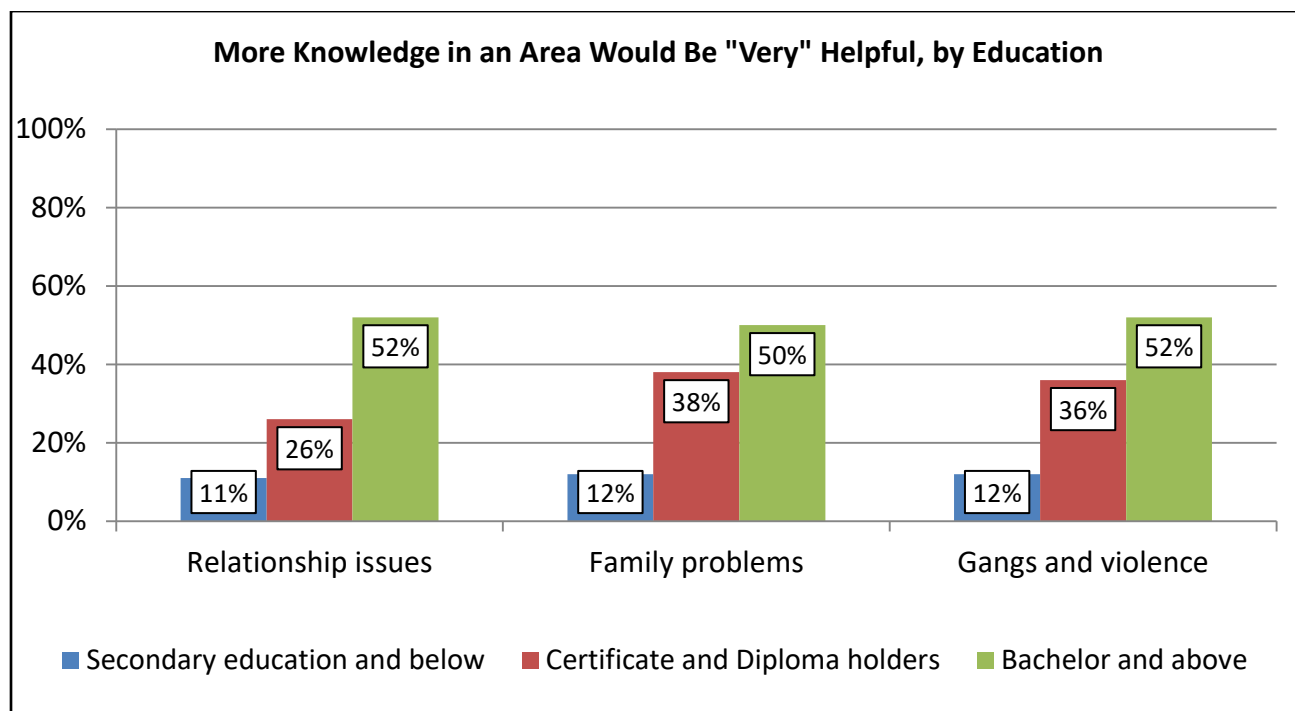
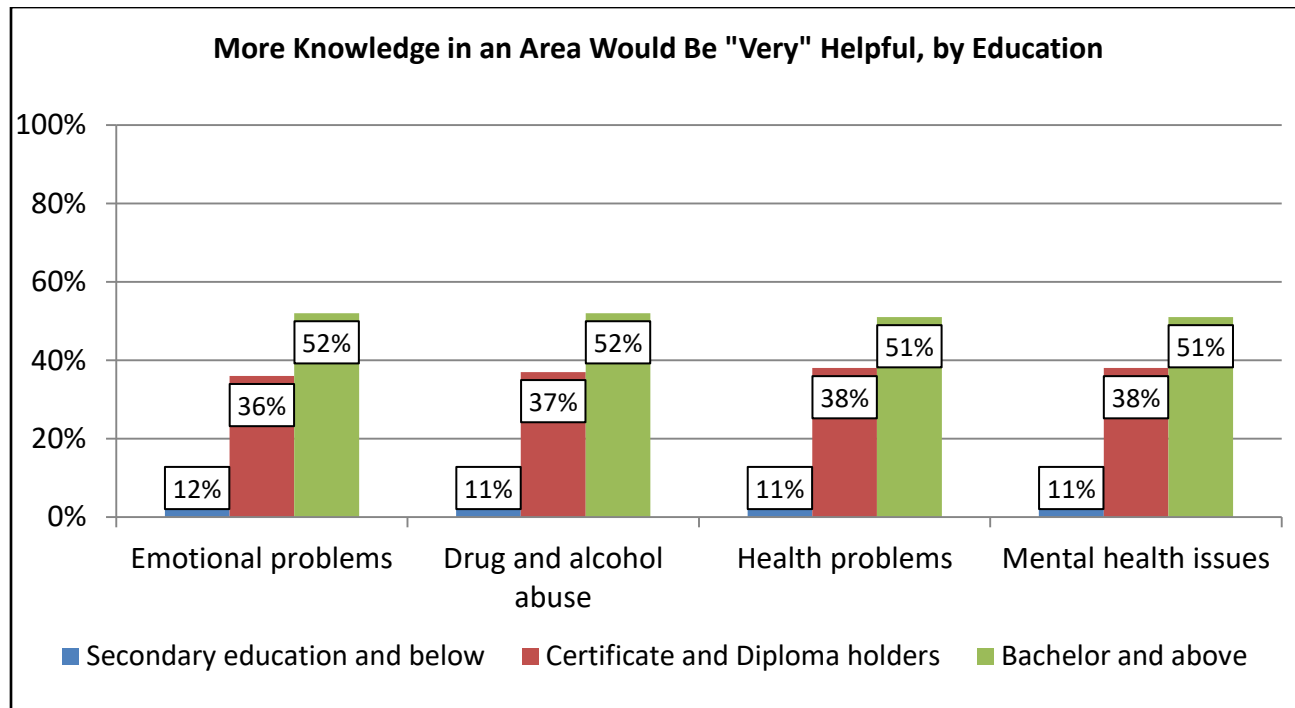
Helpfulness of Further Training in Areas of Counseling

More than nine in ten report that having training in all counseling skills reported in the table below would be “somewhat” or “very” helpful to them and their ministries. Between 81% and 94% say more training in each area would be “very” helpful to them.

How Helpful Would it be to You to Gain More Knowledge about Counseling in these Areas?		
	“Somewhat” and “Very” Helpful	“Very” Helpful
Areas of Counseling	%	%
Relationships issues	99	88
Family problems	99	91
Mental health issues	99	89
Sexual abuse	99	92
Emotional problems	97	83
Drug and alcohol abuse	99	94
Gangs and violence	98	81
Health problems	97	92

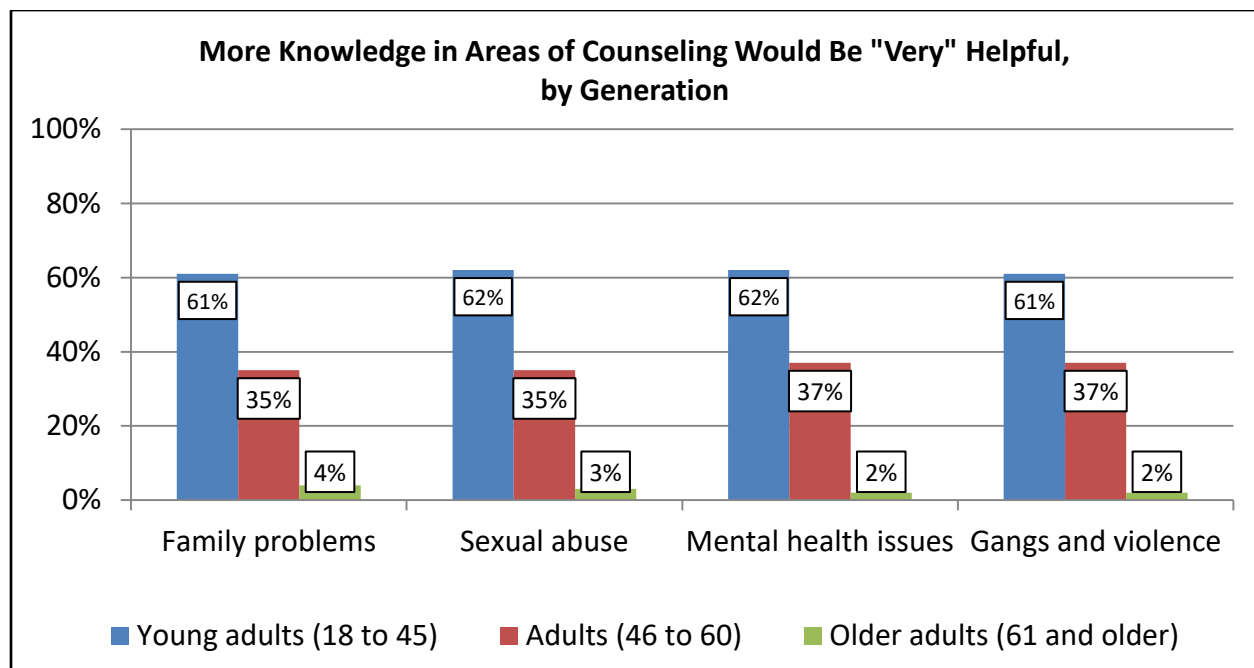
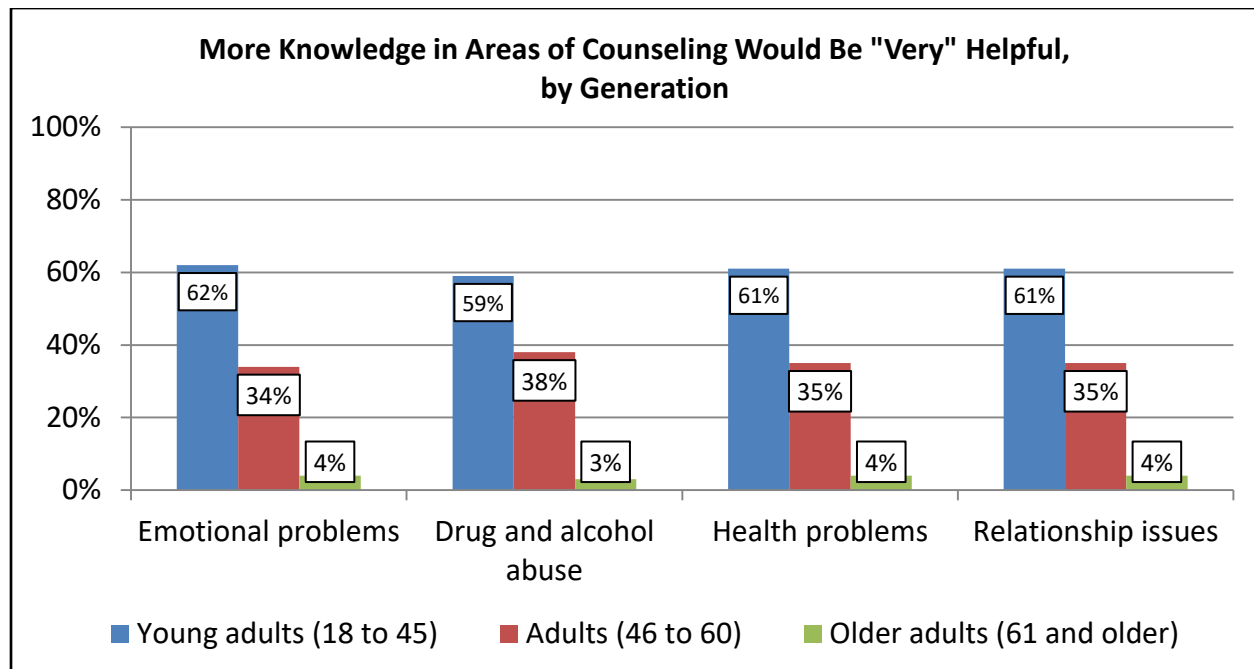
Differences by Education

Bachelor degree holders and above are especially likely to report that having more counseling skills in the areas shown in the two figures below would be “very” helpful to them.



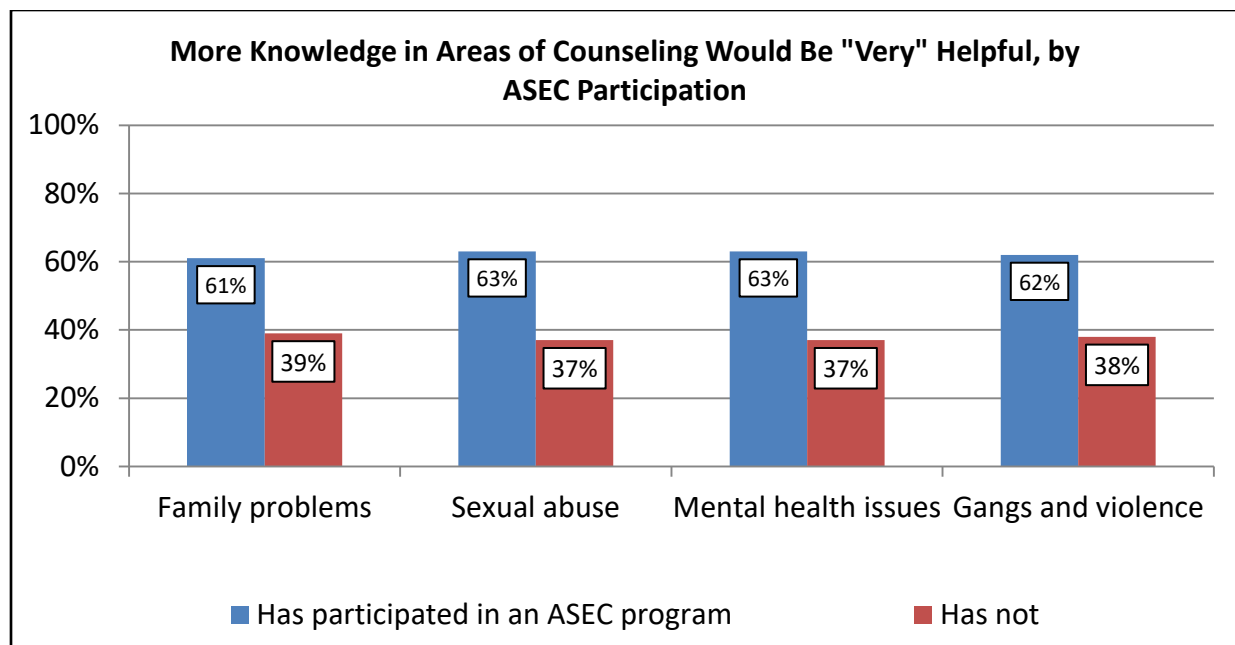
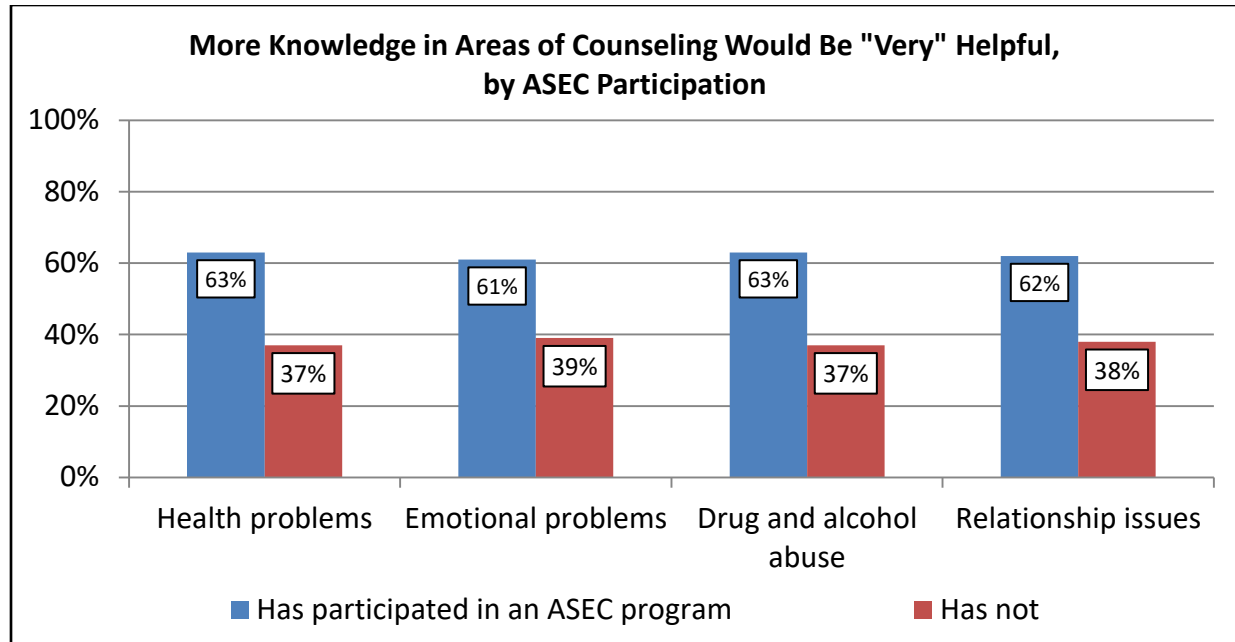
Differences by Generation

More than half of young adult respondents say having additional training in the areas of counseling shown in the two figures below would be “very” helpful to them. One third of adults are see such training as “very” helpful.



Differences by ASEC Program Participation

More than six in ten sisters who participated in any ASEC programs report that more training in the counseling areas presented in the two figures below would be “very” helpful to them.



Summary: Preparedness in Relation to the Desire for More Training

A summary of those giving the most positive response (“very”) for both questions is presented below. No more than one in ten of responding sisters indicate that they are “very” prepared in any of the areas of counseling measured. In contrast, more than eight in ten report that they would find it “very” helpful to be more knowledgeable in each of the areas. As the final column displays, there is a gap of 72 to 89 percentage points between the two measures, demonstrating sisters’ reported need for skills in the area of counseling compared to their level of preparedness.

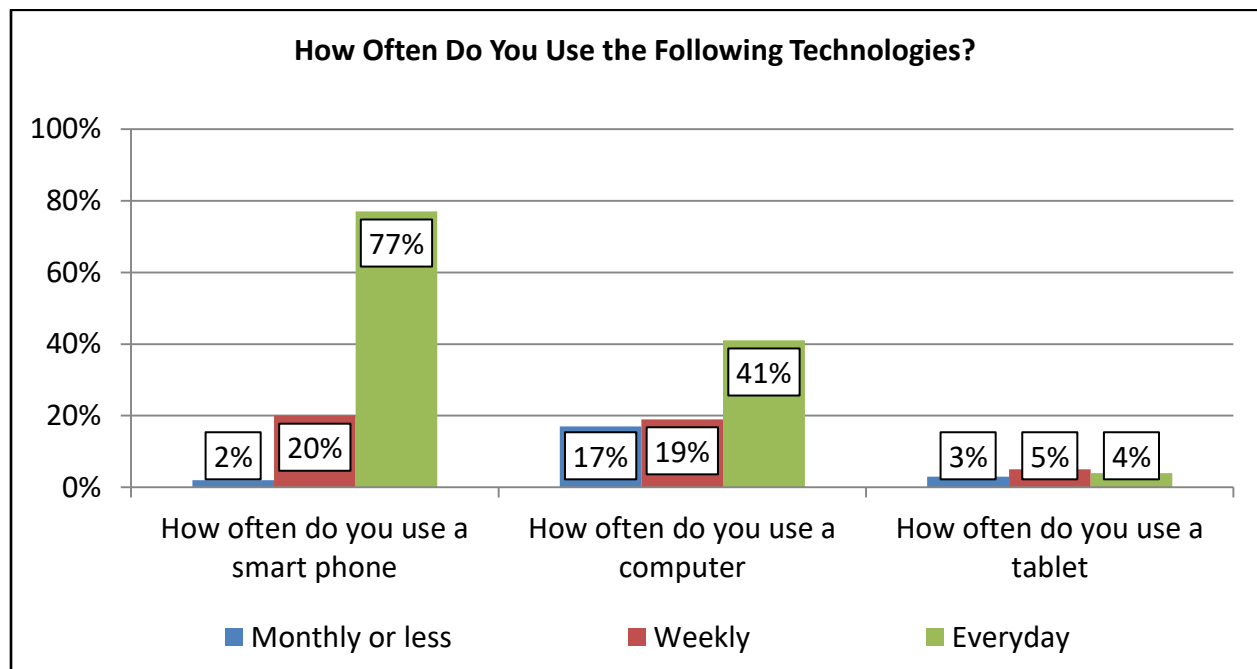
Preparedness in Areas of Counseling, Helpfulness in Gaining More Knowledge in that Area, and the Gap Between the Two			
	Describes Self as “Very” Adequately Understanding Counseling in an Area	Would Find It “Very” Helpful to Have More Knowledge About an Area	<i>Gap Between the Two Measures</i>
Areas for Counseling	%	%	%
Emotional problems	11	83	72
Family problems	10	92	82
Relationships issues	10	88	76
Sexual abuse	7	92	85
Health problems	7	92	85
Mental health issues	6	89	83
Drug and alcohol abuse	6	94	89
Gangs and violence	5	81	76

Section IV: Assessment for Skills in Using Technology

In today's age of technology, young people seem to be constantly connected online, via social media or through mobile applications. Computers, tablets, smart phones are trends that are shaping the young generation today. They tend to search for all answers on the internet. To serve them better, sisters need some skills using technology. Respondents were requested to indicate how often they use technology in their ministries and personal lives and how helpful further training in technological areas would be to them.

Frequency of Using Technologies

Over three-fourth of responding sisters (77%) report using a smart phone every day, while 41% respondents use a computer every day. Tablets are not commonly used by respondents; although it is not shown in the figure below, 83% of sisters say they “never or rarely” use them.



Purposes for Internet Usage

Participants were asked to indicate what they use the internet for. About half of the responding sisters (49%) use the internet for education/academic purposes, 38% use it for socializing, and 35% use the internet for spiritual purposes. Eleven percent use it for sports and news and 2% use it for games and for streaming movies and series.

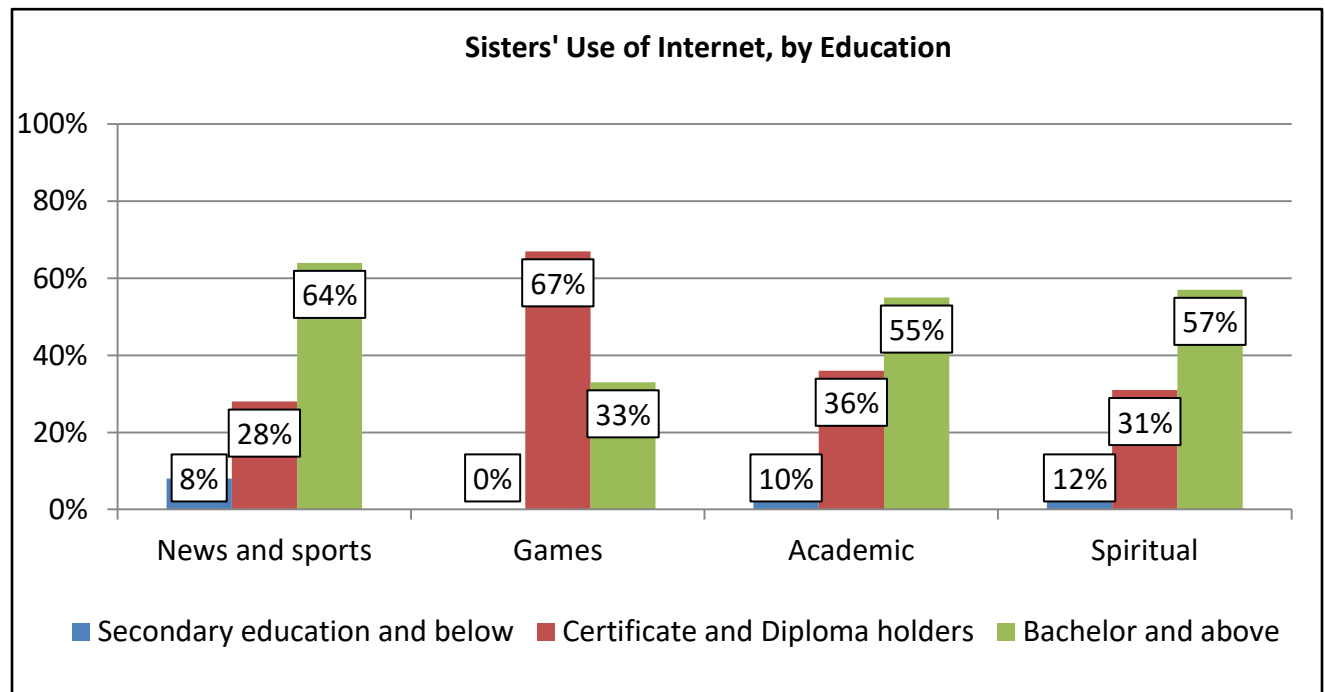
I Use the Internet for the Following Purposes

Respondents were invited to choose the three they use it for most often

	Among the Three They Use It for Most Often
	%
Education/academic purposes	49
Socializing	38
Spiritual	35
News and sports	11
Games	2
Streaming movies and series	2

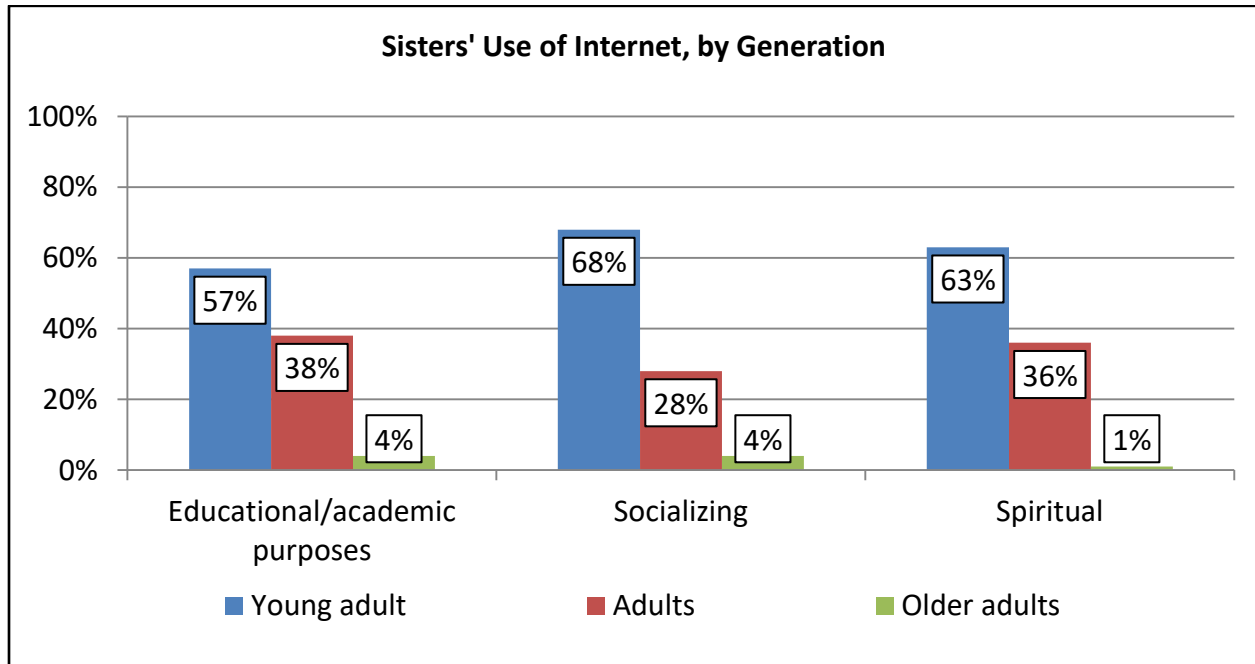
Internet Use by Education

More than five in ten responding sisters with bachelor and above level of education use the internet for news and sports, spiritual (57%) and academic purposes (55%). Sixty-seven percent of certificate and diploma levels use the internet for games.



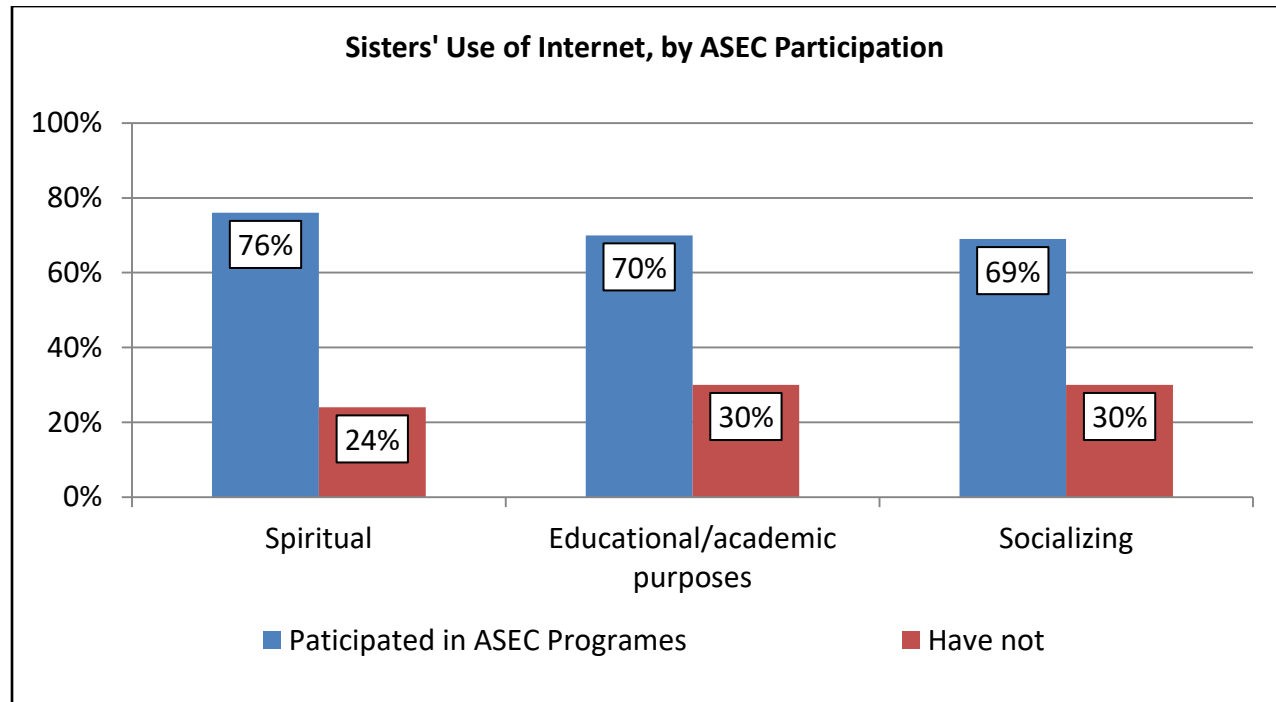
Internet Use by Generation

More than five in ten respondents of the young adult generation use the internet for socializing, spiritual and educational/academic purposes. Older adults are least likely of all the generations to use the internet for each of the aspects mentioned in the figure below.



Internet Use by ASEC Participation

Respondents who have participated in ASEC programs are more likely than those who have not participated in ASEC programs to use the internet for spiritual purposes (76%), academic purposes (70%), and socializing (69%).



Frequency of Using the Internet for Spiritual and Faith Purposes

Sisters were asked how often they use the Internet for different spiritual and faith purposes. At least five in ten responding sisters report searching for spiritual content on line (63%), finding answers to faith questions on line (58%), reading the Bible online (50%) and verifying what a church leader has said on line (50%) at least once a week. Praying with the Pope on line (22%) and watching videos pertaining to faith on line (45%) is not common to most respondents.

How Often Do You Do Each of The Following?

	Every Day %	Once a Week %	Once or Twice a Month %	Less than Monthly %
Search for spiritual content online	36	27	12	25
Find answers to faith questions online	29	29	16	27
Read the Bible online	28	22	12	37
Have online conversations about faith	26	20	9	45
Search to verify what a faith leader has said	22	28	14	36
Watch online videos pertaining to faith	14	31	23	32
Pray with the Pope through Click to Pray	3	19	11	66

In addition, between 3% and 36% of respondents use the Internet every day for all purposes indicated above.

Helpfulness of Having Training in Uses of Technology

Participants were asked to indicate how helpful it would be to have training in the internet related issues listed in the table below. Between 89% and 97% report that training in those areas would be “somewhat” or “very” helpful to them. Some 79% to 94% indicate that training in any of the areas would be “very” helpful to them.

How Helpful Would It Be to Have Training in these Areas?		
	“Somewhat” and “Very” Helpful Combined %	“Very” Helpful Only %
Search for spiritual content online	97	94
Search to verify what a faith leader has said	95	87
Sharing online conversations about faith	95	87
Read the Bible on line	95	90
Pray with the Pope through Click to Pray	93	87
Find answers to faith questions online	93	85
Finding online videos pertaining to faith	89	79

Frequency of Using Different Social Media Applications

Although the questions were not asked directly to responding sisters, we have some indication of how many sisters use which applications from their responses to other questions on the survey. These are shown in the table below, with WhatsApp among the most commonly used applications.

Frequency Using Different Applications	
	%
<i>Do not use/ chose not to select any of the social media applications listed</i>	44
Uses WhatsApp	54
Uses Facebook	44
Uses Twitter	23

There are some differences in use of the applications by generation. While all applications are frequently used among the young adults, they are most likely to use Facebook (66%), Twitter (62%) and WhatsApp (59%). In contrast, about 38% of adults use Twitter (37%), WhatsApp (37%) and Facebook (33%). Only four percent of older adults use WhatsApp, with 1% of that generation using Facebook and none uses Twitter.

Purposes for Using Social Media Applications

Among those using each application, the table below shows for what purposes the applications are used. Sisters are most likely to use WhatsApp (40%) and Facebook (36%) for socializing and are more likely to use WhatsApp for family communication (33%). None of the respondents, however, report using any of the social media applications for shopping.

What Do You Use the Following Applications for? <i>Respondents were invited to “check all that apply”</i>			
	WhatsApp	Facebook	Twitter
	%	%	%
Socializing	40	36	18
Family communication	33	12	6
Spiritual discussions	29	16	9
News and current events	24	24	12
Academic purposes	20	10	10
Source of encouragement	11	13	10
Sharing photos	9	5	1
Exploring my world	0	4	3
Shopping	0	0	0

Three Primary Purposes for Using Each Application

In addition, sisters were asked to select the three primary purposes for which they most frequently use each social media application. As can be seen below, the same three purposes were selected for each application, although in a different order for each:

- WhatsApp: Socializing (40%), family communication (33%), and news and current events (24%)
- Facebook: Socializing (36%), news and current events (24%), and spiritual discussions (16%)
- Twitter: Socializing (18%), news and current events (12%) and academic purposes (10%)

Additional Training in Social Media Applications and Judging Websites

- Participants were asked to report how helpful it would be to have additional training in social media applications. More than nine in ten (98%) report that additional training in social media applications will be “somewhat” or “very” helpful and 75% report that training in those applications would be “very” helpful.

- Ninety-seven percent of sisters report a need for more training on differentiating bad from good websites.

Examples of technological needs presented by the sisters in the ACWECA region

Sisters were also asked to describe their other technological needs which could help them to better serve young people. Their responses are summarized below.

- Computer knowledge/skills
- General skills in Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
- Abuse of technology
- Cyber security
- Network security
- How to manage social and media privacy
- Advantages and disadvantages of using technology
- Changes in Technologies
- Use and management of social media applications such as Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Instagram
- Accounting software
- Skills in Internet use
- Assessing the impact of new technology on young people
- Basic skills in different computer software like Adobe in design, Photoshop, windows movie maker, Access, database
- Use of Microsoft office programs like Power Point, publisher and excel
- How to create an online platform for sharing questions and answers about life
- How to create spiritual videos like documentaries and religious audios
- Web design and management
- Deeper understanding of Information Technology
- Online counseling
- Media and technology addiction
- How to block undesirable advertisements
- Identifying and using inspirational sites
- How to create videos
- Group communication
- How to differentiate between good and bad sites,
- Effective use of media
- Online learning/video conferencing
- Cloud computing
- Media ethics
- Keying in data using statistical analysis methods
- Use of power point for effective group presentation
- Creating and uploading information on a website.

- Integration of IT skills in to general learning to the youths
- Internet for knowledge advancement
- IT and internet ethics – the dos and don'ts
- Effective use of technology
- How to partition the computer
- Use of Skype
- Etiquette in mobile telephone use
- Quick books
- Integrating media into development
- More training on how the internet and online media work
- How to understand, analyze and create content that adds value.
- Advantages and disadvantages of social media
- Use of technology as a means for evangelization

Summary: Assessing Frequency of Uses of Technology in Relation to Desire for More Training

A summary of responding sisters using technology at least once a week and how helpful it would be to have more training is presented in the table below. More than two in ten sisters use technology for the purposes listed in the table “once a week” while over one in ten use it for the same purposes “every day”. At least four-fifths of sisters who responded to this survey would find it “very” helpful to have more training in all areas listed in the table below.

Frequency of Uses of Technology and Helpfulness of Having More Knowledge in the Area			
	Uses Technology for This “Once a Week” %	Uses Technology for This “Everyday” %	Would Find It “Very” Helpful to Have More Training in This Area %
Watch online videos pertaining to faith	31	14	79
Find answers to faith questions online	29	29	85
Search online to verify what a faith leader has said	28	22	87
Search for spiritual content online	27	36	94
Read the Bible on line	22	28	90
Have online conversations about faith	20	26	87
Pray with the Pope through Click to Pray	19	30	87

Section V: Assessment for Ministries Addressing Abuse

Some young people experience abuses in many different forms. These types of abuse may include alcohol, sexual, violence, and illegal drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, and heroin. In this section, sisters' awareness of the resources available to help youth deal with abuse is assessed, as is how helpful sisters would find it to have additional training in helping those suffering from abuse.

Awareness of Abuse Resources

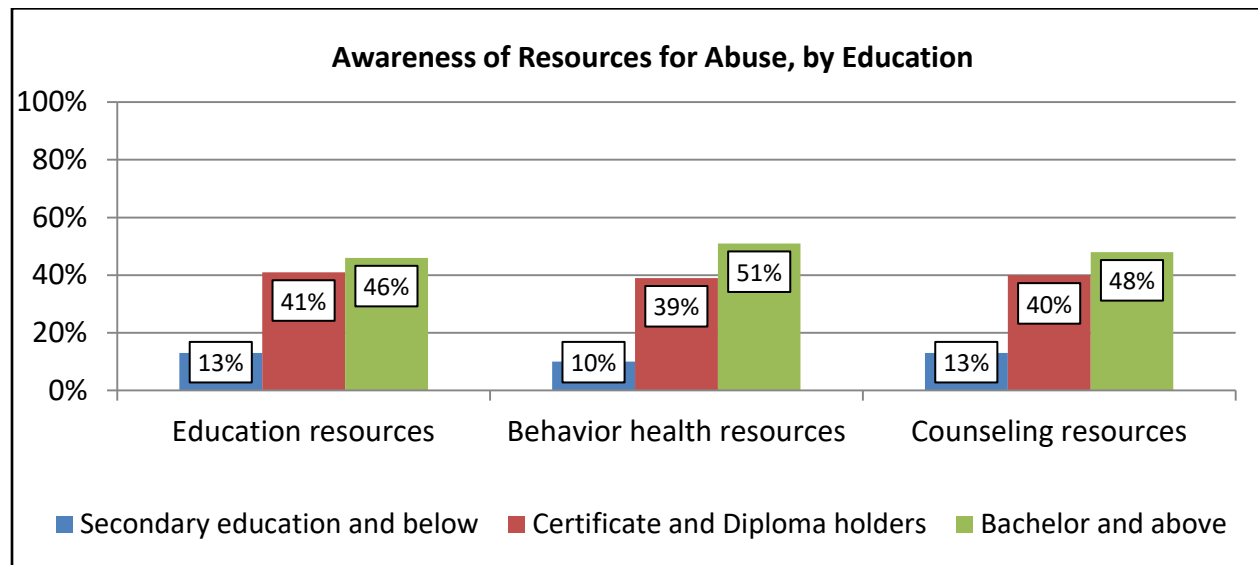
Sisters were asked if they are aware of any resources available to them to assist young people to overcome their abuse, which may impair behaviour and sometimes cause death. More than five in ten sisters who responded to this survey report to be aware of counseling resources (59%), physical health resources (53%) and education abuse resources (53%). Between 43% and 52% of them are aware of other outreach groups or services (52%) and behavioural health resources (43%).

Are you Aware of Any Resources Available to You to Assist Young People to Overcome Their Abuse?		
	“Yes” Responses	“No” Responses
	%	%
Counseling resources	59	41
Physical health resources	53	47
Education resources	53	47
Other outreach groups or services	52	48
Behavioural health resources	43	57

Slightly less than six in ten respondents (57%) are not aware of behavioral health resources available to assist young people to overcome their abuse while slightly less than half of responding sisters (41% to 48%) are not aware of any of the other resources listed in the table above. This percent of “no” responses is too high to ignore.

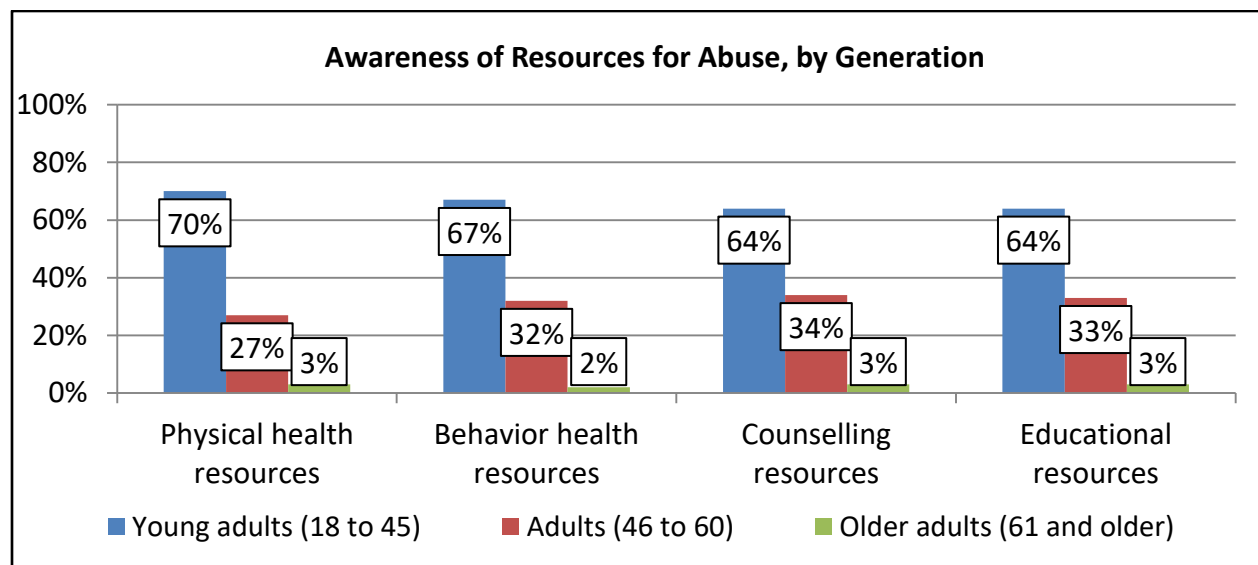
Differences in Awareness by Education

Five in ten sisters holding bachelor or higher report being aware of education resources and almost four in ten are aware of educational resources, behavioral health resources and counseling resources. Sisters with a secondary school education are least likely to report awareness of any of the abuse resources listed in the figure below.



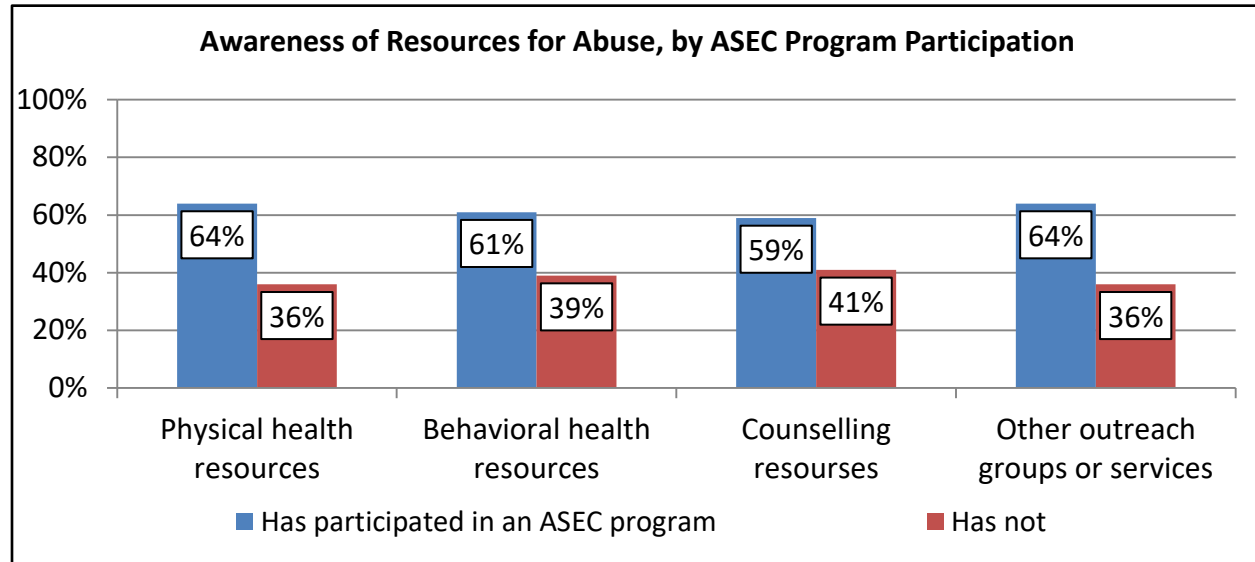
Differences in Awareness by Generation

Young adults and adults are more likely than older adults to report being aware of the abuse resources in the figure below.



Differences in Awareness by ASEC Program Participation

Sisters who participated in ASEC programs are more likely than those who have not participated to be aware of the abuse resources shown in the figure below.



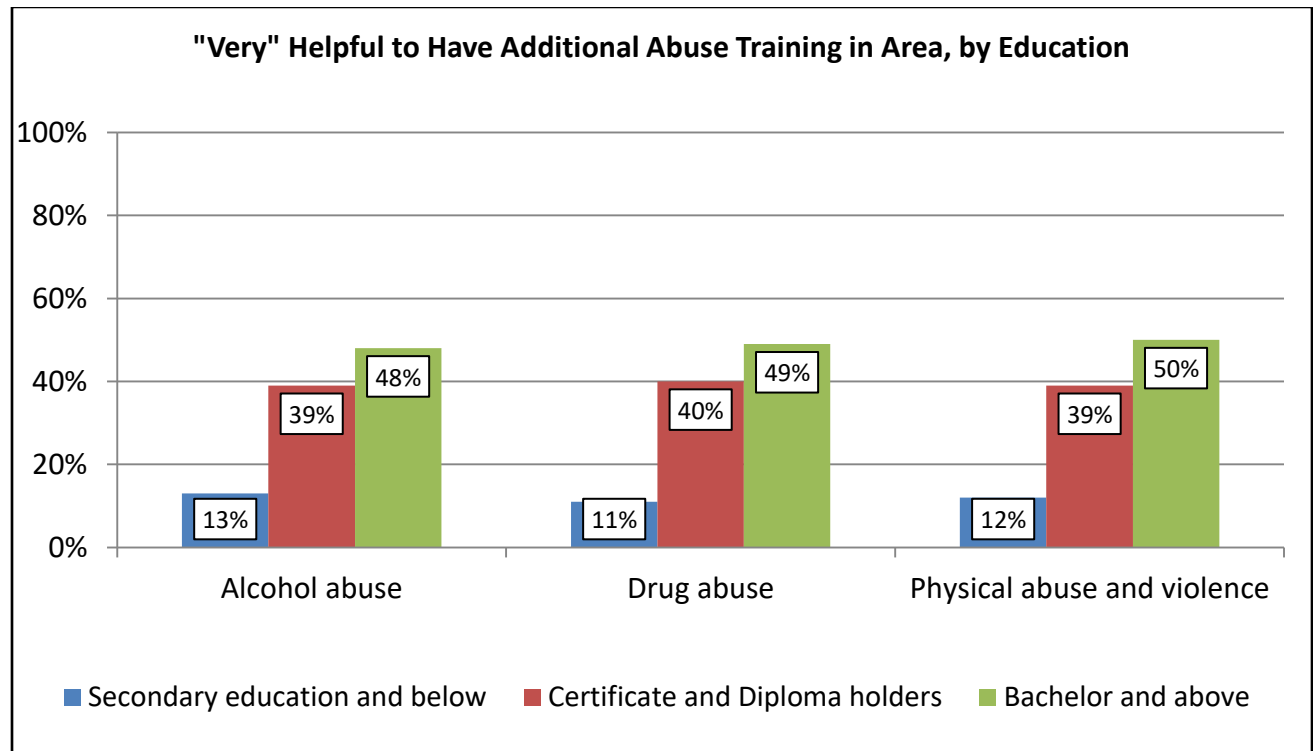
Helpfulness of Additional Training in Abuse Related Issues

At least nine in ten sisters report that additional training in the abuse related issues listed in the table below would be “somewhat” or “very” helpful to them. Between 80% and 93% report that such training in each area would be “very” helpful to them.

How Helpful Would It Be to Have Additional Training in these Areas?		
	“Somewhat” and “Very” Helpful Combined %	“Very” Helpful Only %
Sexual abuse	99	87
Drug abuse	99	88
Mental health and recovery from trauma	98	80
Physical abuse and violence	98	93
Alcohol abuse	93	83

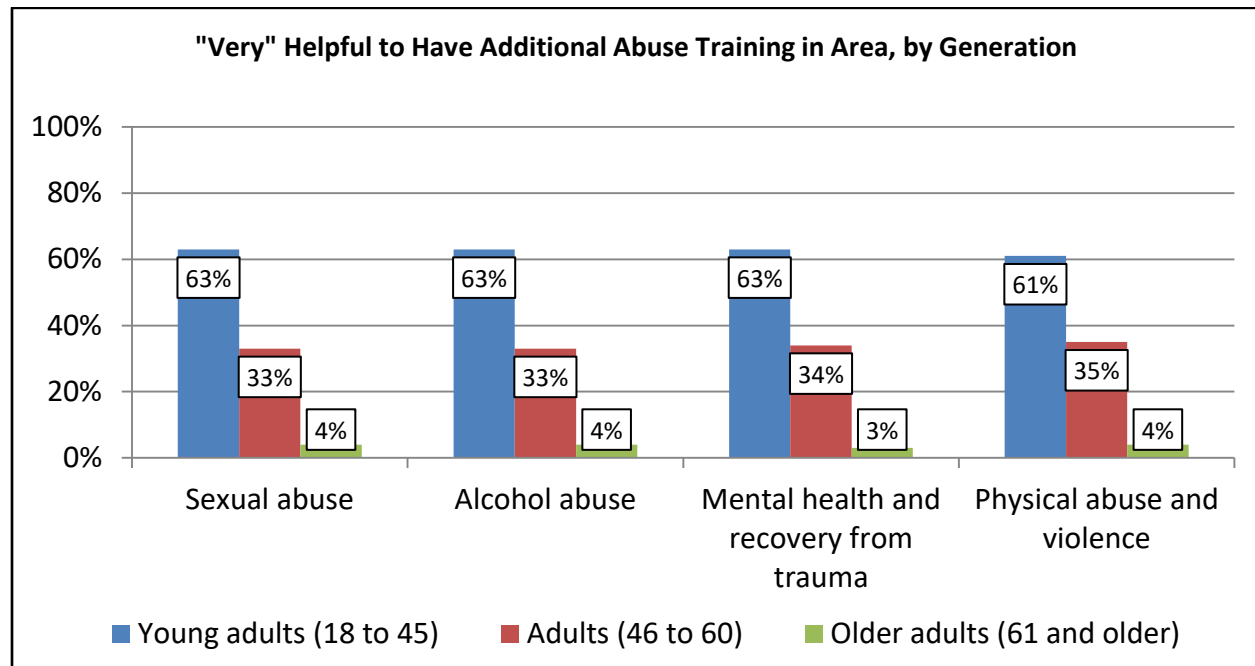
Differences by Education

Half of all bachelor degree holders and above and one third of certificate and diploma holders report that it would be “very” helpful for them to have additional training in each of the areas shown in the figure below.



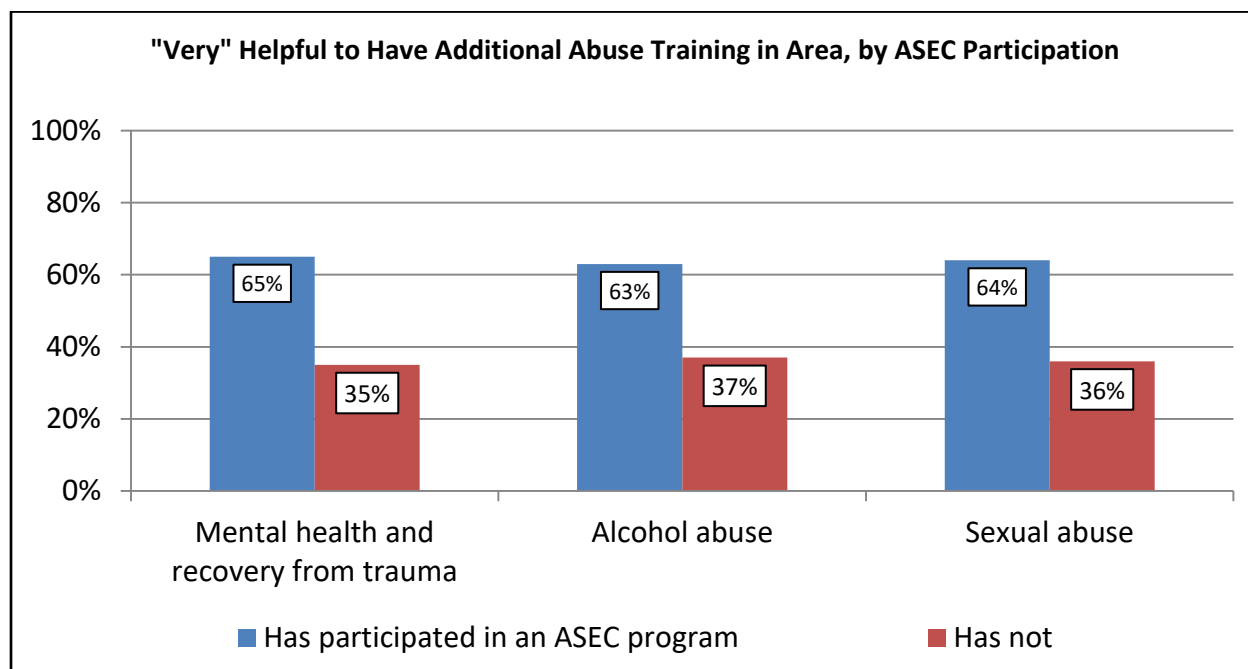
Differences by Generation

Six-tenths of young adult generation respondents report that having training in any of the areas of abuse presented in the figure below would be “very” helpful to them while one-third of adult generation respondents report the same.



Differences by ASEC Program Participation

At least six in ten respondents who participated in any ASEC programs report that having training in various abuse issues in the figure below would be “very” helpful.



Summary: Awareness of Abuse Resources and Need for Additional Training

Around half of responding sisters (43% to 59%) report being aware of some resources to help youth deal with their abuse issues in a variety of areas.

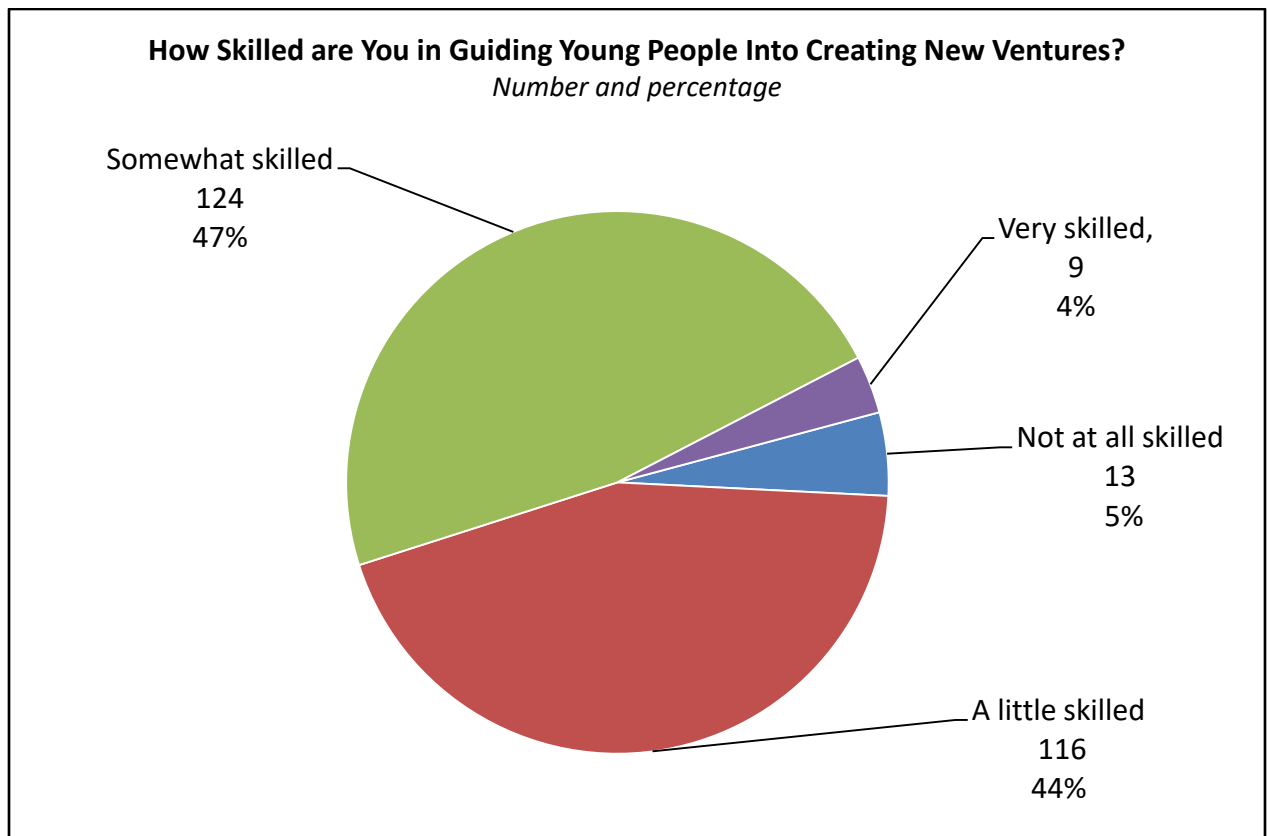
Between 80% and 93% of responding sisters report that having additional training in any of the abuse related areas would be “very” helpful to them. These high percentages are another call to Superior Generals and their supporters in the ministry, to give priority to training sisters in abuse related issues.

Section VI: Social Needs' Assessment

Many young people complain about unemployment. Participants were asked how skilled they were in guiding young people into creating new ventures as a way of becoming financially independent.

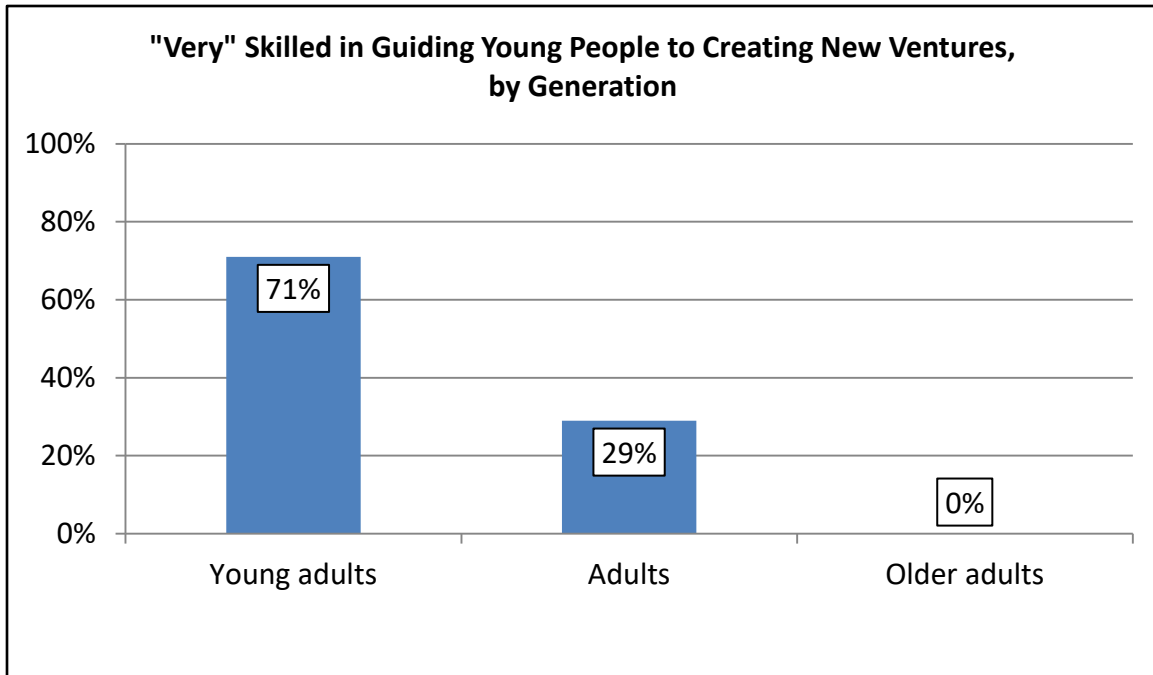
Preparedness for Ministries Involving Creating New Ventures

Seventy percent of participants report being at least “somewhat skilled” in guiding young people into creating new ventures.



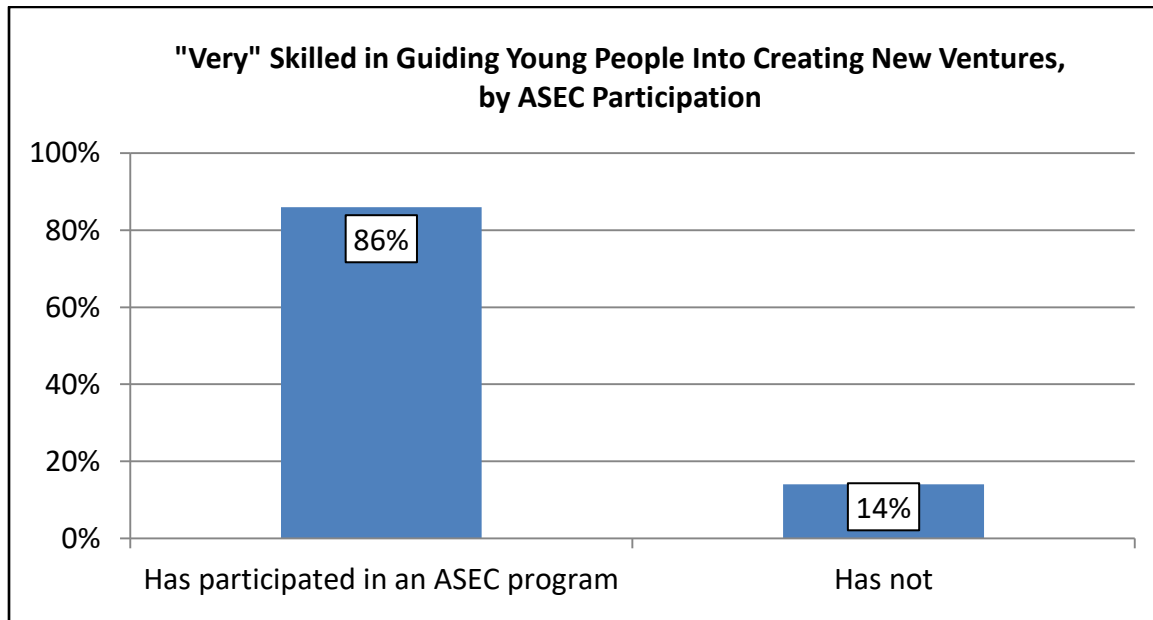
Assessing Preparedness by Generation

Young adults are considerably more likely than other generations to report being “very” skilled in guiding young people into creating new ventures as a way of becoming financially independent.



Assessing Preparedness by ASEC Program Participation

Sisters who participated in ASEC programs (86%) are more likely than those who did not (14%) to report being “very” skilled in guiding young people into creating new ventures as a way of becoming financially independent.



Examples of entrepreneurial or vocational education resources provided by sisters in ACWECA region

Sisters were also asked to provide examples of the kinds of entrepreneurial resources that sisters provide in the region. Below are those they offered.

- Machine embroidery
- Designing and decorations
- Carpentry and joinery
- Bead works
- Rosary making
- Provision of seed capital to set up small scale businesses on completion of vocational training.
- Cookery
- House-management
- Financial investment and sustainability
- Commercial farming
- Computer graphics training
- Commercial organic farming
- Home crafts
- Knitting and weaving

- Making candles
- Handcrafts and making necklaces
- Commercial mushroom growing
- Commercial water bottling.
- Creating opportunities for youth apprenticeships in careers of choice after completion of vocational trainings so as to widen their perspective of a business beyond the classroom knowledge they get in the school.
- Brick laying
- Dress making
- Commercial poultry farming
- Salon and hair dressing
- Concrete practice
- Plumbing
- Industrial design
- Food science
- Catering
- Fashion and design
- Cottage industry
- Electrical wiring
- Bakery
- Sewing
- Tailoring

Summary: Assessment of Social Needs

About 49% of sisters are either “not at all skilled” or “a little skilled” and only 4% are very skilled in guiding young people into creating new ventures as a way of becoming financially independent. Entrepreneurship is always evolving. Therefore, providing continuous skills to sisters who then can transfer this knowledge to young people is always very helpful. Sisters are invited to learn unceasingly and improve their entrepreneurial skills in order to match their skills with the needs of today’s young people.



Participants of ACWECA’s Sisters Blended Value Project in Uganda – January, 2020

Implications of these Findings

In summary, sisters who responded to this survey tend to be relatively young (60% are age 45 or younger), well-educated (51% have at least a bachelor's degree), frequent users of technology (97% use a smart phone at least once a week), and knowledgeable about their ministry needs (having served in their ministries for an average of eight years). Their ministries require competency in many areas, including those related to social justice, counseling, abuse, and technology. The table below summarizes the areas they have identified where more training would be “very” helpful for their ministry. As can be seen, between 73% and 94% say each would be “very” helpful, indicating an extreme need for more training for the sisters. This is a call to all Superior Generals and their supporters to listen to the voices of their sisters.

Areas Where More Training Would be “Very” Helpful to the Sisters

Area	%
Search for spiritual content online	94
Drug abuse	94
Drug and alcohol abuse counseling	94
Physical abuse and violence	93
Sexual abuse counseling	92
Sexual abuse	92
Counseling for family problems	91
Read the Bible on line	90
Counseling for mental health issues	89
Religion related issues	88
Counseling for relationships issues	88
Health & healthcare	87
Economic inequality	87
Search online to verify what a faith leader has said	87
Pray with the Pope through Click to Pray	87
Disability needs & rights	87
Have online conversations about faith	87
Legal injustices & rights	86
Find answers to faith questions online	85
Homelessness	84
Alcohol abuse	83
Counseling for health problems	82
Gangs and violence counseling	81
Labor practices	81
Mental health and recovery from trauma	80
Counseling for emotional problems	80
Race & ethnicity	79
Watch online videos pertaining to faith	79
Using social media applications	75
Immigration & migration	73

Appendix I: A Note on the Process, Challenges and Benefits of this Survey

Process

- Questionnaires were prepared and posted to Qualtrics program
- A link to Qualtrics was sent to participants using WhatsApp
- Clicking on the link led the sisters to completing the questionnaire
- Qualtrics recorded the results
- Data were received by CARA and a Qualtrics file was converted to SPSS by CARA
- Data were cleaned and analyzed using SPSS program

Challenges

- For most participants, the online questionnaire was their first experience. More time was required to complete the questionnaire than it takes for experienced people.
- Some sisters skipped most of the questions. This could have been due to internet connectivity or lack of knowledge in the questions.
- Connectivity was a challenge to some sisters residing in less accessible areas. This resulted in repeating the exercise more than once.
- WhatsApp was used to reach the sisters but they had never used this application for this purpose before. While it was a challenge for them, it was also a learning experience.
- The method was more successful when sisters were grouped together and provided with a reliable group air time. This ensured that the work was completed without interruptions.

Benefits

- Less time is needed when using social media applications as a communication channel for similar surveys.
- Costs are reduced. Data entry is completed by participants. No need to employ someone to enter data.
- There was no need to fill in the questionnaire and post them.
- Postage cost is eliminated.
- Accuracy of data entry is maintained

Conclusion

We invite all stakeholders to support sisters in understanding issues related to social justice, counseling, technology, abuse issues, and knowledge in creating new ventures. This knowledge is important to sisters as they serve young people in their various apostolates. Results from this study may provide a tool to approach organizations which may be interested and willing to support them.



Sisters from Zimbabwe in a group photo after attending formation program facilitated by ACWECA in July 2019

Appendix II: Response Frequencies to All Questions

