

AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS' MARITAL STATUS ON THEIR CREDIBILITY AS PUBLIC SPEAKERS AS PERCEIVED BY THE STUDENTS OF A ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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Abstract

Considering the fact that the Roman Catholic faith does not allow its priests to get married or engage in any form of sexual relationship, this study aimed to determine if the credibility of married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers was lower compared with that of the unmarried ones. Aristotle's Modes of Persuasion served as the theoretical framework of the study. The Source Credibility Measure(s) devised by McCroskey and Teven (1999) was utilized to quantify the priests' credibility. Forty-two (42) students in a Roman Catholic school were asked to participate in the experiment. They were divided into two groups. The first group was instructed to rate the credibility of the "unmarried priest" while the second group assessed the credibility of the "married priest." The first phase of the experiment, which aimed to determine the initial credibility of the priests, was administered three days before conducting the second, which intended to measure the terminal credibility. This was done because the questionnaires that were used to measure both levels of credibility were exactly the same. Results showed that the credibility of both priests was perceived positively. However, statistical tests proved that the difference between the credibility of the unmarried and married priests as public speakers was significant. Meaning, despite the fact that they were both perceived to be credible public speakers, the unmarried priest was considered to be more credible.

Keywords: Credibility, Initial Ethos, Terminal Ethos, Roman Catholic priests, Competence, Trustworthiness, Goodwill

Introduction

The Philippines is known for being the first, and perhaps, the only predominantly Christian country in Asia. Eighty-five percent of its ninety million citizens are Christians; more than half of which are members of the Roman Catholic faith.

Unlike the other denominations of Christianity, the Roman Catholic Church, due to its theological convictions, particularly the so-called “vow of celibacy,” does not, in any way, allow its priests to get married or engage in any form of sexual relationship. It follows then that any priest who violates the aforementioned law may be excommunicated from the Church.

Considering the conservative nature of Philippine society and the predomination of Roman Catholicism in the country, it could be assumed that a “married priest” or any celebrant who defies any of the principles of the Roman Catholic faith may be regarded by the members of the society as someone who betrays not just the Church, but the trust of the congregation as well.

Public trust is a social issue which is often associated with credibility or ethos. One is said to be credible if s/he has earned the trust of the people around him/ her. Although most frequently discussed in the sphere of social sciences, particularly in sociology, credibility which is defined as “the attitude toward a source of communication held at a given time by a receiver” (McCroskey, 1986, p. 62) is also a widely studied area in the realm of oral communication.

A number of communication researches covering various aspects of ethos have been conducted in different settings. Many attempted to dissect the said theoretical concept, including its stages and dimensions. Since communication may be categorized into different levels, it would be safe to assume that credibility affects the quality of any communication transaction, may it be interpersonal dyadic or organizational in nature. However, it is quite noticeable that the function of ethos is mostly exemplified in public communication situations.

The art of public speaking occupies a vital place in any society as it may serve as an effective vehicle for information dissemination, persuasion, and sometimes, entertainment; thus, it is undeniable that the said art helps in keeping the social forces moving. History would prove that public speeches have the capacity to help, and on the contrary, disrupt the development of a nation.

While discussing the role of public communication in the political arena, it must be noted that it is neither confined nor limited to politics. Needless to say, public speaking as a form of art encompasses and embraces almost all social institutions – from education, to mass media, and most especially, to religion. For example, a homily given by a priest could be considered as a public address since all its elements are present in that specific communication transaction. The churchgoers or parishioners serve as the receivers of the message being conveyed by the priest (as the source of communication). The impact of the message on the listeners is affected by a number of factors; one of which is ethos. For instance, one may perceive gay priests as less credible compared with the straight ones; or older priests to be more competent than the young ones.

The demarcation between credible and unreliable priests now arises. It is interesting to see how people of the Roman Catholic Church perceive the competence and trustworthiness of controversial priests. Controversial, in this context, is used to refer to those priests who deviate(d) from the norms and standards set by the Roman Catholicism. A perfect example of this would be the case of married priests.

From the aforementioned elucidations, it could be said that the ethos of priests may actually be studied in numerous contexts. As stated earlier, one might be interested to see the relationship between the gender/ sexual preference of priests and their ethos as public speakers or the effect of their age on their credibility. Despite this, the researcher of this study was particularly interested in examining the possible effect/s of priests' marital status on their credibility as public speakers.

The purpose of this research then, was to determine the difference between the speaker's credibility of unmarried and married Roman Catholic priests when they deliver a religious message as perceived by the students of a Roman Catholic school. It must be noted, however, that it was not the concern of the study to determine the priests' ethos as servants of the Church; instead, the research just focused on their ethos as public speakers.

Statement of the Problem

This research study aimed to answer the question:

What is the effect of Roman Catholic priests' marital status on their credibility as public speakers as perceived by the students of a Roman Catholic school?

Specific Objectives

This paper specifically aimed to determine how the students of a Roman Catholic school perceive the credibility of unmarried and married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers. The paper also intended to measure the difference between the initial and terminal credibility of the priests. To further support the findings for the aforementioned objective, the research as well endeavored to identify the reasons for the said difference. Finally, to see if marital status had any effect on the perceived credibility of the students toward the priests as public speakers, the paper sought to determine the difference between the credibility of unmarried and married Roman Catholic priests. The factors that could affect the perceptions of the students toward the credibility of the priests were also identified.

Hypotheses

To complement the objectives of the study, two hypotheses were formulated. The first hypothesis predicted that the students of a Roman Catholic school would positively perceive the credibility of unmarried Roman Catholic priests as public speakers; while the second one predicted that the very same students would negatively perceive the credibility of married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers.

Theoretical Framework

Aristotle's Means/Modes of Persuasion as interpreted by reputable communication scholars such as McCroskey (1986), Tompkins (1982), and Covino and Joliffe (1995) served as the study's sole theoretical framework.

Two Classifications of Means/Modes of Persuasion

Being one of the earliest rhetorical theories, the Aristotelian Tradition divides the means of persuasion into two different classes—the inartistic and artistic. According to this perspective, the inartistic modes which include things such as contracts and oaths do not properly belong to the realm of rhetoric because the persuader does not create them (Tompkins, 1982). Today, these inartistic modes are referred to as pieces of evidence. Meaning, the orator may use them to build and strengthen an argument but then again, they are not being created by the speaker. On the other hand, the artistic modes are said to be within the scope of rhetoric because the rhetor has control over them. S/he may manipulate and create them depending on the rhetorical situation.

Three Kinds of Artistic Means/Modes of Persuasion

According to the Aristotelian rhetoric, the artistic modes of persuasion are basically divided and categorized into three kinds: logos or the speaker's logical appeal, pathos or the speaker's emotional appeal, and ethos or the speaker's ethical appeal.

Ethos

Ethos is defined as “the attitude toward a source of communication held at a given time by a receiver” (McCroskey, 1986, p. 62). Other terms associated with ethos are credibility, prestige, and character. Ethos has three stages: the extrinsic or initial, the intrinsic or transactional or derived, and the terminal (Bulan & de Leon 2002). It also has three dimensions: competence or authoritativeness, trustworthiness or character, and goodwill or intention (Bulan & de Leon, 2002). Before, only the first two dimensions were considered to be evaluative. However, further contemporary researches, specifically the one conducted by McCroskey and Teven (1999) proved that goodwill could also be measured and quantified.

The Three Stages of Ethos

The initial ethos is the source's ethos prior to the beginning of the communication transaction. In public speaking situations, this is the speaker's ethos “just before s/he begins to speak” (McCroskey, 1986). Background, personal characteristics, appearance, education, reputation, and previous knowledge about the speaker are some of the objectively relevant factors that may affect the speaker's ethos (McCroskey, 1986; Bulan & de Leon 2002). Another determinant of initial ethos is the so-called sponsorship effect which refers to the process of selecting somebody to give a short introduction about the speaker. “The implications of sponsorship effect are important for the source. One may be expected to have substantially higher initial ethos if introduced by a person respected by the audience than one would have without such an introduction” (McCroskey, 1986, p. 69). Aside from sponsorship effect, other factors such as environment or surroundings might also affect one's initial ethos (McCroskey, 1986).

Next to initial ethos is the derived or transactional ethos. This is the speaker's ethos during the actual communicative act. The Aristotelian rhetoric

posits that one's ethos may be modified during the actual communication situation through the speaker's words and actions which are continually being assessed by the listeners. "This credibility level may heighten or diminish the speaker's initial ethos" (Bulan & de Leon, 2002, p. 64). The major propositions of the Aristotelian rhetoric emphasize "the importance of a source's 'rhetorical choices' evidenced by the message. By rhetorical choices, Aristotle meant the things the source chooses to discuss, the arguments used, and the support for the arguments" (McCroskey, 1986, p. 71). Among the other factors that affect the speaker's derived ethos are the impact of the message (which includes the evidence presented by the rhetor in his/her speech, organization of the message, the language used, and the over-all impact of the message), the effect of the circumstances, context, and/or situation where the communication takes place, and of course, the delivery of the message (McCroskey, 1986; Bulan & de Leon, 2002).

The third and final stage is the terminal ethos or the speaker's credibility after the communicative act. This is the level "at which the listener perceives and assesses the speaker upon completion of the communication event; the point of reckoning for the listener as to the worthwhileness of the event" (Bulan & de Leon, 2002, p. 64). Many scholars believe that this is the most significant stage of ethos because

...like all impressions, this may be lasting or without impact. It may also precede a next communication event with the same speaker and with the same listeners. If the terminal credibility conferred on the speaker was favorable or high, chances are the listeners will be very receptive initially the next time and perhaps throughout. Otherwise, the opposite would be true. Even if a speaker had low initial ethos, he could still recover and gain high terminal credibility. (Bulan & de Leon, 2002, p. 65)

In effect, terminal ethos could be regarded as the sum total or the product of extrinsic and intrinsic ethos.

Dimensions of Ethos

The Aristotelian rhetoric proposes three general dimensions of ethos. These are the authoritativeness, trustworthiness, and goodwill. Social psychologists Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1953) echo the same dimensions but label them as "expertness, trustworthiness, and intention" (McCroskey, 1986, p. 64). Despite this congruence, some scholars believe that the three factors of ethos are competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism. Overtly, the discrepancy lies in the third dimension which refers to "the activity or liveliness of the source" (p. 64). However, close scrutiny of these dimensions would reveal that the third dimension is, in fact, related to goodwill or intention factor. Therefore, a conclusion could be drawn that "goodwill or intention is important but not independent of the other two dimensions of ethos" (p. 64). In spite of this, later studies prove and suggest that goodwill may be measured and calculated separately. Thus, it

should be restored to its former status in rhetorical communication theory. Empirical research is reported indicating the existence of the goodwill dimension as part of the structure of the ethos/source credibility construct and a measure of that dimension is provided with evidence for its reliability and validity. (McCroskey, 1999, p. 90)

Pathos

Pathos is most of the time referred to as “the speaker’s use of emotional appeals” (Bulan & de Leon, 2002, p. 60). This mode of persuasion, which is further defined by the Aristotelian Tradition as “states of mind that affect judgments” (Covino & Joliffe, 1995, p. 71), is usually (especially in literature) “associated with characters who evoke audience’s pity” (p. 71). This being the case, it could be said that a rhetorical act (i.e. a speech) is effective if the rhetor or the speaker is able to stir and influence the emotions of his/ her listeners.

Logos

Logos could be simply defined as the speaker’s logical appeal or “the method of reasoning and argumentation” s/he employs (Bulan & de Leon, 2002, p. 60). “For Aristotle, proof through logos, or what may be called logical proof, involves the construction of persuasive examples and enthymemes” (Covino & Joliffe, 1995, p. 64). These proofs are necessary in rhetorical communication because they help in strengthening the arguments included in the speech. It must be noted, however, that “the premises of the enthymeme are drawn not from certainties (as with the syllogism), but from the beliefs and presuppositions of the audience” (p. 48).

Conceptual-Operational Framework

The study’s conceptual-operational framework examines, describes, and exemplifies how ethos operates in a public speaking situation, specifically in a communication event which involves a priest delivering a religious message before Roman Catholic students. Despite the fact that the three modes of persuasion work together to achieve optimum result, this framework focuses only on the most potent factor of persuasion—ethos.

The framework posits that public communication starts with the source of the message or the public speaker. Being the initiator of communication, the speaker conveys the intended oral message to the listeners through a public speech. Upon (or even before) receiving the oral message, the listeners assess the credibility of that public speaker. This assessment could be categorized as either positive or negative. Several factors, including the different dimensions of ethos affect the perceived credibility of listeners toward the source of communication.

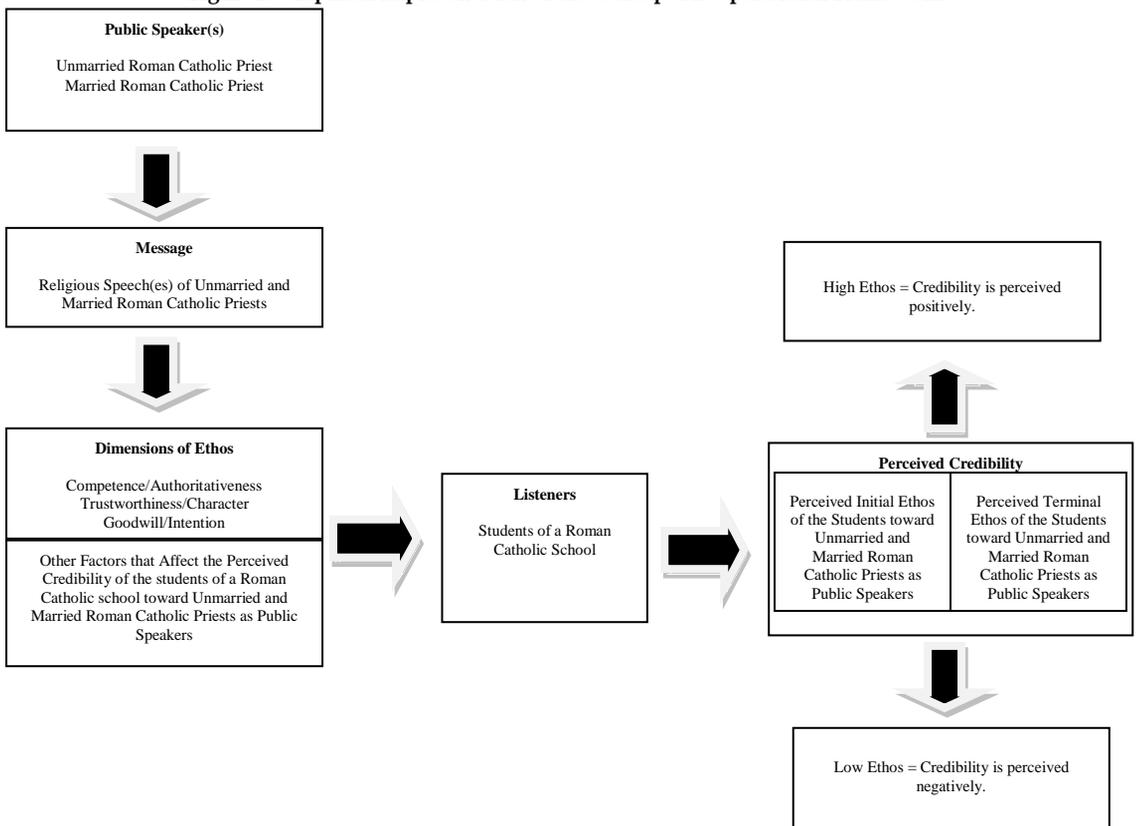
Although credibility has a number of dimensions, the researcher chooses to use and concentrate on the ones theorized by Aristotle. These are the competence or authoritativeness dimension which includes the speaker’s intelligence, training, and expertise; trustworthiness or character dimension which refers to the

communicator’s honesty, honor, and morality; and goodwill or intention dimension which pertains to the orator’s concern for the audience (McCroskey, 1986; Bulan & de Leon, 2002).

The levels of ethos under investigation are limited to initial and terminal stages only primarily because these two are highly measureable whereas the transactional or derived stage cannot be quantified (especially in an experimental setting). This limitation, however, does not imply that transactional ethos is less important compared with the other two levels of ethos. Moreover, the study’s framework proposes that transactional ethos affects the terminal ethos to a great extent. Therefore, the level of terminal ethos assumes the effects of transactional ethos on one’s “total” credibility.

The graphical representation of the study’s conceptual-operational framework (see Figure 1) illustrates how the students of a Roman Catholic school perceive the credibility of unmarried and married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers.

Figure 1: Graphical Representation of the Conceptual-Operational Framework



Methodology

Subjects

Forty-eight (48) students (17 or 40.48% were males while 25 or 59.52% were females) in one fourth year high school class in Immaculate Concepcion Parochial School, a Roman Catholic academic institution, were asked to participate in this research. However, only forty-two (42) of them were able to complete the two-phase quasi-experiment.

The ages of the subjects ranged from fourteen (14) years old to seventeen (17) years old. Twenty-one (21) out of forty-two (42) participants were fifteen years old. Majority of the remaining half was sixteen (16) years old, and the rest were either fourteen (14) or seventeen (17) years old. All the participants were single at the time of the experiment, and all of them were members of the Roman Catholic faith.

The table (Table 1) below summarizes the demographic data of the forty-two (42) subjects.

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Subjects

Sex		Age		Civil Status		Religion/De nomination	
Male	17 (40.48%)	14 years old	1 (2.38%)	Single	42 (100%)	Roman Catholic	100%
Female	25 (59.52%)	15 years old	21 (50%)				
		16 years old	19 (45.24%)				
		17 years old	1 (2.38%)				

Research Instruments

The Source Credibility Measure(s) (McCroskey & Teven, 1999) was the primary instrument employed to meet the objectives of this study. This measurement contains semantic differential type of scales that were developed by employing oblique factor analyses which yielded correlated dimensions that are parallel to and consistent with those constructs originally theorized by Aristotle. It is composed of eighteen pairs (six for each dimension of ethos) of bipolar adjectives that can accurately evaluate the source’s initial and terminal ethos. The alpha reliability of these measures which attest to their internal consistency ranges between .80 and .94. Aside from the Source Credibility Measures (McCroskey & Teven, 1999), two open-ended questions were also included in the questionnaire to know the possible reasons for the difference between the perceived initial and terminal ethos of the students toward the priests as public speakers. They were also responsible for identifying the other factors that might have possibly affected the perceived credibility of the students toward the source.

Data Gathering Procedures

The forty-two (42) subjects were briefed about the study's subject matter before the experiment proper (but the detailed discussion followed after the completion of the experiment). After this, they were divided into two equal groups. The first group was exposed to the tape-recorded speech of the "unmarried priest," while the second group listened to the same tape-recorded speech but it was introduced to them as a speech delivered by a "married priest." "Reverend Father Rodrigo Mercado" was the fictitious name used for both "unmarried and married priests." The supposed speech that the priests delivered was constructed by the researcher. It was recorded through the help of a voice talent who was majoring in Speech Communication during the time of the research implementation.

To measure the perceived initial ethos of the students toward the priests as public speakers, questionnaires containing the Source Credibility Measures of McCroskey and Teven (1999) and the two open-ended questions were distributed to them right after listening to the introduction. The introduction was also tape-recorded to minimize, if not totally avoid, sponsorship effect. The same instrument was used to determine the listeners' perceived terminal ethos toward the priests.

The first phase of the experiment was administered three days before conducting the second phase mainly because the questionnaires that were used to quantify both the initial and terminal ethos of the priests were similar. The first phase gauged the initial ethos by having the tape-recorded introductions of the "unmarried and married priests" played before the two sets of participants. Following this, they were given enough time to answer the questionnaires. Then, the researcher informed them that certain technical difficulties arose that eventually forced him to cut and postpone the "experiment" and would resume three days after. After three days, the second phase of the experiment was then conducted using the same subjects. This time, they were no longer exposed to the tape-recorded introductions about the priests since the sole purpose of the introductions was only to measure the initial ethos. Instead, they immediately listened to the speech itself. Subsequently, they were asked to fill out the questionnaires to determine their perceived terminal ethos toward the priests.

Upon the completion of the experiment, the researcher explained all the aspects of the study, including the reasons for controlling some of the variables, to the subjects. He also thanked them for participating and asked them if they had any question or clarification.

Data Analysis

The Source Credibility Measures (McCroskey & Teven 1999) represent three unique but intercorrelated and interconnected constructs parallel to those theorized by Aristotle. Thus, these measurements provide three separate total scores (one for each dimension of ethos). To get the total score for each dimension, scores for the items pertaining to that particular dimension were summed up. Scores for nine items were inversely computed (as prescribed by the developers of the instrument).

The highest possible score for each dimension was forty-two (42) and the lowest possible score was six (6). Scores were classified according to three

categories: positive, neutral/undecided, and negative. Positive scores were further subdivided into five categories: very high positive, high positive, moderate positive, low positive, and very low positive. This subdivision was applicable only on the individual total scores for every dimension because there was no single score that was computed to represent the initial, terminal, and total credibility of the priests. Again, this was due to research’s primary instrument that always requires three separate total scores (one for each dimension). Although the neutral or undecided score which was twenty-four (24) was obtainable for any of the dimensions of ethos, the researcher, in consideration of the instrument used, found it statistically and logically improbable to get a score of twenty-four (24) for all the dimensions of ethos. This was his ultimate basis for categorizing the credibility of priests as either positive or negative.

Table 2 summarizes the categories of scores given by the students for the Roman Catholic priests’ credibility as public speakers.

Table 2: Categories of Scores Given by the Students for the Roman Catholic Priests’ Credibility as Public Speakers

Scores	Categories	Positive Scores	Categories
25-42	Positive	42	Very High Positive
24-24.99	Neutral/Undecided	36.01-41.99	High Positive
6-23.99	Negative	30.01-36	Moderate Positive
		25.01-30	Low Positive
		25	Very Low Positive

To maintain the accuracy of the gathered data, the three separate total scores for both initial and terminal ethos were not summed up to create one (single) score. The three separate total scores for the initial ethos (one for each dimension) were combined with the three corresponding total scores for the terminal ethos (one for each dimension), and then averaged to compute the total credibility.

Four statistical tests (t-test of Independent Samples, t-test of Paired Samples, Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test, and McNemar Test) were utilized to address the objectives of the study.

Findings and Analyses

Objective 1: To determine how the students of a Roman Catholic school perceive the credibility of unmarried Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

A considerable percentage (90.48%) of the subjects perceived the speaker’s credibility of the unmarried Roman Catholic priest positively. The mean scores for the competence dimension (34.38), trustworthiness dimension (35.48), and goodwill dimension (30.67) were all classified as moderate positive.

Table 3 summarizes the perceived credibility of the students toward the unmarried Roman Catholic priest as a public speaker.

Table 3: Ratings for the Unmarried Roman Catholic Priest's Credibility as a Public Speaker

90.48%	positively perceived the unmarried Roman Catholic priest's credibility as a public speaker
9.52%	negatively perceived the unmarried Roman Catholic priest's credibility as a public speaker

The findings of the study **affirmed the first hypothesis that the students of a Roman Catholic school would positively perceive the credibility of unmarried Roman Catholic priests as public speakers.**

Since the "total" credibility of the unmarried priest as a public speaker was the product of the initial and terminal ethos of the students toward him, it could be said that his positive total credibility was brought about by positive initial and terminal ethos. It follows then that the factors that affected his initial and/or terminal ethos were the same elements that influenced his "total" credibility. Following this line of argument, the researcher, based on the propositions of the study's theory, concludes that the congruence of the speaker's and listeners' background, personal characteristics, education, social affiliations, experiences, and religion greatly affected the attitude of the latter toward the speaker's credibility of the former.

Objective 1a: To determine the perceived initial ethos of the students toward unmarried Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

More than half (76.19%) of the students who participated in the experiment perceived the initial ethos of the unmarried Roman Catholic priest positively. The mean scores for the competence dimension (33.29) and trustworthiness dimension (34.52) were both categorized as moderate positive. Only the mean score for the goodwill dimension (27.43) was regarded as low positive.

Table 3.1 presents the perceived initial credibility of the students toward the unmarried Roman Catholic priest as a public speaker.

Table 3.1: Ratings for the Unmarried Roman Catholic Priest's Initial Credibility as a Public Speaker

76.19%	positively perceived the unmarried Roman Catholic priest's initial credibility as a public speaker
23.81%	negatively perceived the unmarried Roman Catholic priest's initial credibility as a public speaker

Considering the positive attitude of the students toward the unmarried priest's initial ethos, it could be assumed that the short tape-recorded introduction about the unmarried priest was able to directly or indirectly elicit a favorable response from them. However, the researcher acknowledges the possibility that the introduction for the unmarried priest was not the sole cause of the attitude of the students toward the said speaker simply because the ethos of a source of communication, logically, does not depend only on the readily available social characteristics of the speaker. Instead, the perceived initial ethos may highly rely on the shared beliefs and principles of both the speaker and the receivers of the

message (Bulan & de Leon, 2002). In this case, the researcher regards the subjects' religion and educational training from a Roman Catholic school as two of the many factors that immensely influenced their perceived initial ethos toward the unmarried priest.

Objective 1b: To determine the perceived terminal ethos of the students toward unmarried Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

Almost all the subjects (90.48%) perceived the terminal ethos of the unmarried priest positively. The mean scores for the competence (35.48) and goodwill (33.90) dimensions were both identified as moderate positive. Only the mean score for the trustworthiness dimension (36.43) was classified as high positive.

Table 3.2 shows the perceived terminal credibility of the students toward the unmarried Roman Catholic priest as a public speaker.

Table 3.2: Ratings for the Unmarried Roman Catholic Priest's Terminal Credibility as a Public Speaker

90.48%	positively perceived the unmarried Roman Catholic priest's terminal credibility as a public speaker
9.52%	negatively perceived the unmarried Roman Catholic priest's terminal credibility as a public speaker

If the short tape-recorded introduction affected the initial ethos of the unmarried priest to a great extent, it could be presumed as well that the tape-recorded speech, particularly its nature and topic, partly shaped the perception of the students toward the priest's terminal ethos. Moreover, the Classical Rhetorical Theory implicitly argues that the speech is one of the major determinants of speaker's transactional ethos. Accepting the fact that transactional ethos greatly influences terminal ethos (Bulan & de Leon, 2002), it could be said that the perceived terminal credibility of the students toward the unmarried priest was partially, if not completely, determined by the tape-recorded speech. The similarity of the beliefs, principles, traditions, religion, and even the nationality of the unmarried priest, being the initiator of communication, and the students, being the receivers of the message generated responses from the listeners that were advantageous to the source.

Objective 1c: To determine the difference between the perceived initial and terminal ethos of the students toward unmarried Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

Both t-test of Paired Samples (initial and terminal competence: p-value=.074, initial and terminal trustworthiness: p-value=.020, initial and terminal goodwill: p-value=.000) and Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test (initial and terminal competence: p-value=.100, initial and terminal trustworthiness: p-value=.023, initial and terminal goodwill: p-value=.001) proved that the difference between the students' perceived initial and terminal ethos toward the unmarried priest was

significant only in trustworthiness and goodwill dimensions. The difference between the initial and terminal competence was proven to be insignificant or not significant.

Tables 3.3 and 3.4 present the difference between the perceived initial and terminal ethos of the students toward the unmarried priest as a public speaker.

Table 3.3: Difference between the Perceived Initial and Terminal Ethos of the Students toward the Unmarried Roman Catholic Priest as a Public Speaker (t-test of Paired Samples)

		Mean	Paired Differences		t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Mean	Std. Deviation			
Pair 1	Initial Competence	33.29	2.19	5.316	1.888	20	.074
	Terminal Competence	35.48					
Pair 2	Initial Trustworthiness	34.52	1.90	3.448	2.531	20	.020*
	Terminal Trustworthiness	36.43					
Pair 3	Initial Goodwill	27.43	6.48	6.539	4.538	20	.000*
	Terminal Goodwill	33.90					

*Statistically significant, $p < .05$ (2-tailed)

Table 3.4: Difference between the Perceived Initial and Terminal Ethos of the Students toward the Unmarried Roman Catholic Priest as a Public Speaker (Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test)

	Initial Competence-Terminal Competence	Initial Trustworthiness-Terminal Trustworthiness	Initial Goodwill-Terminal Goodwill
Z	1.644	2.267	3.358
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.100	.023*	.001*

*Statistically significant, $p < .05$ (2-tailed)

Although the p-values produced by the two statistical tests were not exactly identical, they nevertheless indicated consistency because both of them affirmed each other's findings.

Objective 1d: To identify the reasons for the difference between the perceived initial and terminal ethos of the students toward unmarried Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

In view of the study's theoretical framework, the possible reasons for the difference between the perceived initial and terminal ethos of the students toward the unmarried Roman Catholic priest were the following:

Due to increased scores or ratings

There were significant differences between the students' perceived initial and terminal trustworthiness, and initial and terminal goodwill due to the increased scores or ratings given for the unmarried priest's ethos after the communicative act. As shown in the preceding sections of this paper, the mean score for the initial

trustworthiness was categorized as moderate positive whereas the mean score for the terminal trustworthiness was classified as high positive. The same principle applies and goes in the case of the goodwill dimension in which the mean score for the initial goodwill was regarded as low positive while the mean score for the terminal goodwill was considered moderate positive. On the other hand, the mean scores for the initial and terminal competence were both classified as moderate positive which means that even before the speech, the students already had bases for perceiving the ethos of the unmarried priest positively. This positive attitude did not change after the communicative act which indicates that the speech did not create a great impact on the perceived terminal competence of the students toward the unmarried priest.

Due to environmental and/or social factors

As discussed earlier, the personal experiences, educational and family background, religious beliefs, affiliations, and other social and non-social influences of and received by the listeners affect their perceived initial ethos toward the source of communication. Therefore, it could be inferred that the students’ background affected their perceived initial ethos toward the unmarried priest, hence, affected the difference between his initial and terminal credibility.

Due to the religious speech

The theory proposes that the speech delivered by a rhetorician is one of the determinants of his transactional ethos (Bulan & de Leon, 2002). Because terminal ethos is greatly affected by transactional ethos, it could be assumed that the experimental speech affected the difference between the unmarried priest’s initial and terminal ethos.

However, it was proven, through McNemar Test, that the effect of the religious message on audience’s attitude shift (p-value=.250) was not significant. In spite of this particular finding, the earlier stated interpretation regarding the difference between the students’ perceived initial and terminal ethos toward the unmarried priest was not negated for the reason that McNemar Test measures the effect of an event or an experimental intervention, which in this case, was the tape-recorded speech on audience’s attitude reversal. Attitude reversal pertains to attitude change or attitude shift; for example, from positive to negative or vice versa.

Table 3.5 summarizes the results of McNemar Test.

Table 3.5: Effect of the Unmarried Priest’s Religious Message on the Students’ Attitude Shift

	Perceived Terminal Ethos		N	21
Perceived Initial Ethos	Negative Perception	Positive Perception		
Negative Perception	2	3	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.250*
Positive Perception	0	16		

*Not statistically significant, p>.05 (2-tailed)

Objective 2: To determine how the students of a Roman Catholic school perceive the credibility of married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

A relatively large percentage (80.95%) of the subjects perceived the speaker's credibility of the married Roman Catholic priest positively. The mean scores for the competence dimension (30.95) and trustworthiness dimension (30.98) were both classified as moderate positive. Only the mean score for the goodwill dimension (28.05) was regarded as low positive.

Table 4 shows the perceived credibility of the students toward the married Roman Catholic priest as a public speaker.

Table 4: Ratings for the Married Roman Catholic Priest's Credibility as a Public Speaker

80.95%	positively perceived the married Roman Catholic priest's credibility as a public speaker
19.05%	negatively perceived the married Roman Catholic priest's credibility as a public speaker

The findings of the study **negated and rejected the second hypothesis that the students of a Roman Catholic school would negatively perceive the credibility of married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers.**

Again, the "total" credibility of the married priest was derived by combing his initial and terminal ethos. Although his initial ethos was perceived negatively, the collected data showed that all the subjects (100%) gave positive ratings for his terminal ethos. The unexpected shift of the students' attitude toward the terminal ethos of the married priest could be the chief reason for his positive "total" credibility in spite of his negative initial ethos.

Objective 2a: To determine the perceived initial ethos of the students toward married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

Only seven (7) or 33.33% of the students who evaluated the initial credibility of the married priest gave positive ratings for him. The mean scores for the competence (27.19) and trustworthiness (27.48) dimensions were both considered as low positive while the mean score for the goodwill dimension (24.10) was regarded as undecided or neutral. Although the first two dimensions were classified as positive, the initial ethos of the married priest was still interpreted as negative because it was not able to obtain positive ratings for its goodwill dimension.

Table 4.1 summarizes the perceived terminal credibility of the students toward the married Roman Catholic priest as a public speaker.

Table 4.1: Ratings for the Married Roman Catholic Priest's Initial Credibility as a Public Speaker

33.33%	positively perceived the married Roman Catholic priest's initial credibility as a public speaker
66.67%	negatively perceived the married Roman Catholic priest's initial credibility as a public speaker

The tape-recorded introduction about the priest might have partly caused the negative attitude of the students toward the married priest as a public speaker. However, it must not be discounted that the students’ family and educational background, personal experiences, belief, values, and theological and religious convictions had a great impact on their perceived initial ethos toward the married priest. The disparity between the principles they were holding honed them to believe that it was profane and blasphemous for priests to get married; thus, convincing them to give unfavorable ratings for his initial ethos.

Objective 2b: To determine the perceived terminal ethos of the students toward married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

Interestingly, all the subjects (100%) perceived the terminal ethos of the married Roman Catholic priest positively. The mean scores for all the dimensions were categorized as moderate positive (competence: 34.71, trustworthiness: 34.48, goodwill: 32.00).

Table 4.2 presents the perceived terminal credibility of the students toward the married Roman Catholic priest as a public speaker.

Table 4.2: Ratings for the Married Roman Catholic Priest’s Terminal Credibility as a Public Speaker

100%	positively perceived the married Roman Catholic priest’s terminal credibility as a public speaker
0%	negatively perceived the married Roman Catholic priest’s terminal credibility as a public speaker

The tape-recorded speech, being the only experimental intervention that was done after the students assessed the initial credibility of the married priest and before they evaluated his terminal credibility might have determined the said priest’s transactional ethos. Taking the major propositions of the Classical Rhetorical Theory into account, it could be supposed that the modified transactional ethos of the married priest could have drawn positive responses from the subjects, thus, perceiving his terminal credibility positively.

Objective 2c: To determine the difference between the perceived initial and terminal ethos of the students toward married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

Both t-test of Paired Samples (initial and terminal competence: p-value=.000, initial and terminal trustworthiness: p-value=.000, initial and terminal goodwill: p-value=.000) and Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test (initial and terminal competence: p-value=.000, initial and terminal trustworthiness: p-value=.001, initial and terminal goodwill: p-value=.000) established that the difference between the perceived initial and terminal ethos of the students toward the married priest was significant in all the three dimensions.

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 present the difference between the perceived initial and terminal ethos of the students toward the married priest as a public speaker.

Table 4.3: Difference between the Perceived Initial and Terminal Ethos of the Students toward the Married Roman Catholic Priest as a Public Speaker (t-test of Paired Samples)

		Mean	Paired Differences		t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Mean	Std. Deviation			
Pair 1	Initial Competence	27.19	7.52	5.269	6.544	20	.000*
	Terminal Competence	34.71					
Pair 2	Initial Trustworthiness	27.48	7.00	6.332	5.066	20	.000*
	Terminal Trustworthiness	34.48					
Pair 3	Initial Goodwill	24.10	7.90	5.504	6.582	20	.000*
	Terminal Goodwill	32.00					

*Statistically significant, $p < .05$ (2-tailed)

Table 4.4: Difference between the Perceived Initial and Terminal Ethos of the Students toward the Married Roman Catholic Priest as a Public Speaker (Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test)

	Initial Competence-Terminal Competence	Initial Trustworthiness-Terminal Trustworthiness	Initial Goodwill-Terminal Goodwill
Z	3.982	3.478	3.886
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000*	.001*	.000*

*Statistically significant, $p < .05$ (2-tailed)

Regardless of the fact that the p-values yielded by the two statistical procedures were not exactly the same, they still exhibited reliability due to their consistent findings.

Objective 2d: To identify the reasons for the difference between the perceived initial and terminal ethos of the students toward married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

Given the central tenets of the Aristotelian rhetoric, the possible reasons for the difference between the perceived initial and terminal ethos of the students toward the married Roman Catholic priest were the following:

Due to increased scores or ratings

The significant difference between the initial and terminal credibility of the married priest was again brought about by the higher scores or ratings given by the students for his terminal ethos than for his initial ethos which means that his ethos, by far, heightened after the speech.

Due to environmental and/or social factors

Again, analyzing the propositions of the theory may lead one to believe that the congruity of the listeners' and speaker's personal experiences, educational and family background, religious beliefs, and affiliations affect one's ethos, specifically

the initial stage because some of these items of information are already available even before the communication. Considering this, it could be said that some of the married priest’s readily available social characteristics, especially his marital status, that were made known to the students before the actual speech might have elicited negative responses from them because those items of information conflicted with their principles, thus, perceiving the married priest’s initial ethos negatively.

Due to the religious speech

After listening to the religious message, the attitude of the students toward the married priest reversed. It was unanticipated that all the 21 subjects (100%) would perceive his terminal ethos positively.

The results of McNemar Test attested that the effect of the religious message on audience’s attitude change (p-value=.000) was, indeed, significant. This goes to show that the religious message played a crucial role in reversing the attitude of the students toward the terminal ethos of the married priest. This finding provided support for the Classical Rhetorical Theory which posits that the transactional ethos which greatly affects terminal ethos, highly depends on the speech of the rhetor (McCroskey, 1986; Bulan & de Leon, 2002).

Table 4.5 summarizes the results of McNemar Test.

Table 4.5: Effect of the Married Priest’s Religious Message on the Students’ Attitude Shift

	Perceived Terminal Ethos		N	21
Perceived Initial Ethos	Negative Perception	Positive Perception		
Negative Perception	0	14	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	.000*
Positive Perception	0	7		

*Statistically significant, p<.05 (2-tailed)

Objective 3: To determine the difference between the credibility of unmarried and married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers as perceived by the students of a Roman Catholic school

Both priests were proven to be credible public speakers. However, statistical test (t-test of Independent Samples) revealed that the difference between their ethos (competence: p-value=.012, trustworthiness dimension: p-value=.001, goodwill dimension: p-value=.038) was significant in all the three dimensions. This difference was brought about by the higher ratings given by the students for the unmarried priest’s credibility than for the married priest’s. Although the students regarded both priests as reliable public speakers, they evidently believed that the unmarried one was slightly or to some extent, more credible. A mean difference of 3.43 was seen between the mean scores for the two priests’ “total” competence (unmarried priest’s “total” competence: 34.38, married priest’s “total” competence: 30.95). For the trustworthiness dimension, there was a 4.5 mean difference

(unmarried priest's "total" trustworthiness: 35.48, married priest's "total" trustworthiness: 30.98). Lastly, a 2.62 mean difference was observed between the two priests' "total" goodwill (unmarried priest "total" goodwill: 30.67, married priest's "total" goodwill: 28.05).

Table 5 shows the difference between the unmarried and married priests' credibility as public speakers.

Table 5: Difference between the Perceived Credibility of the Students toward the Unmarried and Married Roman Catholic Priests as Public Speakers (t-test of Independent Samples)

	Priest's Status	Mean	Mean Differences	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Competence Dimension	Unmarried	34.3810	3.43	3.83701	.83730	2.629	.012*
	Married	30.9524		4.58232	.99994		
Trustworthiness Dimension	Unmarried	35.4762	4.50	3.80617	.83057	3.457	.001*
	Married	30.9762		4.59205	1.00207		
Goodwill Dimension	Unmarried	30.6667	2.62	4.51479	.98521	2.147	.038*
	Married	28.0476		2.29737	.71954		

*Statistically significant, $p < .05$ (2-tailed)

Objective 4: To identify the factors that affect the perceived credibility of the students of a Roman Catholic school toward unmarried and married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers

Applying the fundamental principles of the Aristotelian rhetoric previously discussed, it could be assumed that the following factors affected the perceived credibility of the students of a Roman Catholic school toward the unmarried and married Roman Catholic priests as public speakers:

Due to environmental and/or social factors

The students' family background, personal experiences, beliefs, values, and moral and ethical principles certainly shaped the way they perceived the speaker's credibility of the two priests. More than these, religion and educational training provided by a Roman Catholic school doubtlessly affected their assessments. Finally, the social and non-social influences they received like messages from mass media and others somehow modified or, on the other hand, reaffirmed the preexisting perception they had of the unmarried and married priests' credibility.

Due to the religious speech

Another factor that probably determined the credibility of the priests as public speakers was the speech itself. From the findings presented earlier, it was proven that the speech had a significant effect on listeners' attitude change. Although the statistical treatment indicated that the speech did not have a significant effect on the attitude shift, meaning, reversal of the initial attitude of the students toward the unmarried priest's credibility as a public speaker, it nonetheless confirmed that after the speech, the students gave higher ratings for the credibility of the unmarried priest. This may lead to a conclusion that the priest's message, in

general, is actually seen as more important than his sexual orientation. Meaning, regardless of his sexual preference, he could still be a credible public speaker, provided he delivers good and logical speeches.

More than the technicalities and content of the speech, its nature and topic also determined the credibility of the priests as public speakers. In effect, there was a possibility that if the speech topic had been changed, it would have stimulated different attitude in the students.

Due to the introductions

If the speech was one of the determinants of the two priests' credibility, it could be supposed as well that the introductions made for them implicitly created impacts on their credibility as public speakers. Needless to say, if the entire content of the introductions, including the items of information that were made available, had been changed, then, the perceived credibility, particularly the initial ethos would have changed as well.

Due to the educational training

From the very beginning, the attitude of the students toward the credibility of the two priests as public speakers was partly attributed to the educational training they had in their academic institution. Because of this, the researcher endeavored to obtain some pertinent information about the school's religion and Christian education classes. It was found that Immaculate Concepcion Parochial School, the Roman Catholic academic institution where the experiment was held, covered and incorporated three main areas in its religion courses. At present, the school facilitates doctrinal teachings which explain the basic principles of Roman Catholicism, worship which discusses Biblical stories, and moral(s) which tackles the implications of Biblical teachings in one's life.

Implications of the Study

Ethos or most of the time referred to as the source's credibility has been a well-studied area in the field of communication from Aristotle's time up to the present. A number of communication scholars have been devoting much of their time studying the different concepts that are directly and/or indirectly related to ethos which only proves its importance in any communication transaction.

The findings of the study generally support the proposition that credibility as a theoretical concept must be separated from the triadic association of ethos (credibility), pathos (emotional appeal), and logos (logical appeal) as presented and posited by the central tenets of Classical Rhetorical Theory (Rosenthal, 1966) because it is "a distinct type of communicative act, as such, should be conceived on a different level or plane of classification" (Rosenthal, 1966, p. 126). Furthermore, it is classified as an independent kind of persuasion which falls under the genre of personal persuasion. A persuasive act is said to be personal "if the personality of the speaker becomes the focal point of the reaction and the activation of the

controlling value response is derived from that source either directly or indirectly" (p. 126).

Furthermore, the findings also affirm the major principles of the Aristotelian rhetoric, specifically with regard to the factors that affect one's credibility and its stages. The results also provide empirical data that may attest to the dynamic nature of ethos as a function of time, culture, and even geographic location. Despite the fact that study presents concrete findings supported by observable evidence, it must be noted that the findings and their implications are limited to the particular sample; hence, generalizations could not be drawn. Because of this, additional studies employing larger samples should be done to validate the study's results.

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