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The Role of the Laity: A Review of Literature

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Abstract: The laity has been discussed and studied for many years now. There may have been previous written works and documents, religious and scholarly, which gave definitions, elaborations, and analyses on the subject matter. Now, this research is about the laity's role, responsibilities, and the contributions that the laity has done in the field of education. There are three main foci of this paper; 1.) the conceptual and the operational definition of the laity based on religious and academic works; 2.) the general roles and responsibilities of the laity, in and out of the Church; and 3.) the role, responsibilities, and contributions of the laity on the field of education. The research paper is a qualitative and conceptual study since it discusses and elaborates the subject matter based on previous written works and documents. The ideas presented in the written documents are analyzed and synthesized to present the ideas and concepts as interpreted by the researcher. Certain issues surrounding the laity are given focus and emphasis such as the true definition of the laity and its position in the Church. In this research, the definition is established based on various perspectives—even including definitions and claims based on the negative (the not/non). As an overview of its definition, the laity is the baptized faithful of the Church and it has certain roles and responsibilities in and out of the Church that's why it is an integral, substantial, and active part of God's community. The research study presents the roles and responsibilities of the laity and it gave more emphasis on its mission in the field of Education. Since the researcher is an educator herself, she chose the topic so that she, herself, can expand her knowledge and widen her horizons on the roles and responsibilities of the laity as a potential ally and partner of the education system in nation building, youth formation, and socio-civic development.