

2010

Choices and values in Catholic high school education : a study of parent decision making in the San Francisco Bay Area

Barry Thornton

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.usfca.edu/diss>

Recommended Citation

Thornton, Barry, "Choices and values in Catholic high school education : a study of parent decision making in the San Francisco Bay Area" (2010). *Doctoral Dissertations*. 354.
<https://repository.usfca.edu/diss/354>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, Capstones and Projects at USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized administrator of USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center. For more information, please contact repository@usfca.edu.

The University of San Francisco

CHOICES AND VALUES IN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION:
A STUDY OF PARENT DECISION MAKING
IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

A Dissertation Presented
to

The Faculty of the School of Education
Department of Leadership Studies
The Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership Program

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Barry Thornton
San Francisco
December, 2010

THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
Dissertation Abstract

Choices and Values in Catholic High School Education:
A Study of Parent Decision Making in the San Francisco Bay Area

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) (2005) wrote *Renewing our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary School in the Third Millennium* in which it identified challenges facing Catholic schools. The Bishops noted a decrease in the number of schools, declining student enrollment and rising tuition costs. The higher tuition rates were particularly evident in the San Francisco Bay Area where the average Catholic high school tuition rate far exceeded the national average.

In light of the issues identified by the USCCB, this research study examined how parents framed the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. The study focused on three components of the parents' decision, including the values parents sought, the importance of the schools' Catholic foundation, and the impact of rising tuition. The investigation used a mixed methodology that involved on-line surveys of parents of sophomore level students and follow-up interviews with a sample of parents. Fifteen Catholic high schools in the San Francisco Bay Area participated in the research. Nine-hundred and seventy-two parents responded to the survey, and 10 parents participated in follow-up interviews.

The findings indicated that parents framed their decision in terms of a set of interrelated factors. They wanted a strong academic and college preparatory education in a value-based context. The Catholic character of the schools provided a foundation for values, even if the parents were not Catholic. Parents identified the importance of the community in shaping their children's values. They sought a community of teachers and

peers that reflected the parents' values and supported their child in his or her development. The cost of tuition did not appear to impact how the decision was framed, but affordability was a high concern for the parents. Parents carefully considered the overall value of a Catholic education in making their school-choice decision. The study made recommendations to strengthen the faculty's understanding of their unique role in Catholic school, to assess the school's level of program effectiveness, to evaluate communications programs in outreaching to the Catholic community, and to explore methods of financial support for parents seeking a Catholic education for their children.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

Barry Thornton

December 1, 2010

Candidate

Date

Dissertation Committee
Ginny Shimabukuro, Ed.D.

December 1, 2010

Co-Chairperson

Ray Vercruysse, Ed.D.

November 2, 2010

Co-Chairperson

Dan McPherson, Ph.D.

November 2, 2010

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people to thank in a project of this magnitude. Words cannot express my gratitude to my wife, Susie Friday, whose passionate support of me is a constant source of inspiration. Her love is beyond compare, and I am blessed beyond measure. I am thankful to my mom and dad, my first educators, who taught me the deepest lessons of life and gave me the gift of faith. And, I am thankful to my family: Patricia, Theresa and Mikel, Cecelia and Mickey – who provided their beautiful home in Taos, New Mexico for a place of quiet beauty in which to write – Chris and Lori, Julia and Lauren, Camille, Cecelia Claire – who edited my proposal draft – Sean and Molly, and my in-law family, Bob, Greg, Theresa, Jack and Caroline Friday, all of whom played special individual and collective roles at various times during the research.

The research took longer, much longer than I anticipated. The extended time gave me the honor of studying with three outstanding educators and dissertation chairs. Sr. Mary Peter Traviss, O.P. encouraged me to engage in doctoral studies and shaped my initial research questions. Her tireless advocacy for Catholic education and love for scholarship has been a profound source of inspiration. Br. Ray Vercruysse, C.F.C, Ed.D. chaired the dissertation when Sr. Mary Peter retired, and he guided me through my proposal defense and research prior to his departure to assume a leadership position within Christian Brothers' community. Br. Ray's patience and counsel saw me through my most challenging personal and professional moments. I am grateful beyond words. Gini Shimabukuro, Ed.D. was my first instructor when I arrived at ICEL over a decade ago, prior to entering doctoral studies. Little did I know that she would help me complete my dissertation in its final stages. Dr. Shimabukuro possesses the unique combination of

scholarship and pastoral guidance to which I can only hope to aspire. I would like to thank Dan McPherson, Ed.D., Associate Dean of Education and committee member, whose insights into the project improved my study on all levels. Dr. McPherson played a pivotal role in helping me complete the project.

I am grateful to the Junípero Serra High School community as a whole for their support in this work and many people in particular. President Lars Lund encouraged me to begin my career in Catholic education over 15 years ago and has been an ongoing source of personal and professional support. His advocacy for this project helped me bring it to completion. My assistants Jane Blank and Kathy Roque helped with many of the details of the project and read many drafts, and I am deeply grateful.

I am indebted to the Archdiocese of San Francisco through the Superintendent Maureen Huntington, and the Associate Superintendent, Brett Allen, who supported me through professional development grants throughout my education at the University of San Francisco, even in the midst of a national recession. I am deeply indebted to my colleagues in Catholic education, the presidents, principals, and superintendents of the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the Dioceses of San Jose and Oakland, who cooperated with me in this research project. Last, and importantly, I continue to be inspired by the parents who participated in this research. They inspired me with their profound witness to the Catholic faith and their loving sacrifice for their children.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ii
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER I. RESEARCH PROBLEM	1
Statement of the Problem.....	1
Purpose of the Study	6
Background and Need for the Study	6
Theoretical Framework.....	11
Research Questions.....	14
Limitations	14
Significance.....	18
Definition of Terms.....	19
Catholicity and Catholic Character	20
Framing.....	20
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	21
Restatement of the Problem	21
Overview of Review of Literature	22
Catholic Church Documents	22
Papal Documents	22
Spectata fides: On Christian Education	22
Divini illius magistri: On Christian Education	25
Vatican Documents.....	27
Gravissimum educationis: Declaration on Christian Education	28
The Catholic School.....	30
Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith.....	33
The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School	35
The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium.....	37
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.....	38
To Teach as Jesus Did.....	39
Teach Them	41
In Support of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools.....	43
Principles for Educational Reform in the United States	45
Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium	46
Summary	48
Parent Choice	51
Values	54
Cost	56
Summary	58
Theoretical Framework: Theories of Judgment and Decision Making	59
Utility Theory.....	60

Theory of Judgment	61
Theory of Decision Making: Prospect Theory.....	64
Summary	68
Summary of the Review of Literature	69
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY	71
Restatement of the Purpose.....	71
Research Design and Methodology	71
Population	72
Instrumentation	73
Validity	76
Reliability.....	78
Interviews.....	79
Data Collection	79
Analysis of Data.....	81
Researcher Background	82
CHAPTER IV. RESULTS.....	84
Characteristics of Respondents.....	85
Research Questions 1 and 2	88
Research Question 1	108
Research Question 3	112
Summary	120
CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS...	122
Summary	122
Conclusions.....	123
Research Question 1	123
Research Question 2	127
Research Question 3	129
Implications.....	131
Recommendations.....	135
Recommendations for Future Research	135
Recommendations for Future Practice.....	136
Final Remarks	138
REFERENCES	141
APPENDIX A. SURVEY: PARENT CHOICE IN CATHOLIC SECONDARY EDUCATION	146
APPENDIX B. TELEPHONE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND PROTOCOL.....	159
APPENDIX C. IRBPHS APPROVAL LETTER	162
APPENDIX D. LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS REQUESTING PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH.....	165
APPENDIX E. PERMISSION LETTERS FROM SUPERINTENDENTS GRANTING PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH.....	167

APPENDIX F. LETTER TO PRESIDENTS/PRINCIPALS REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY	171
APPENDIX G. CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH STUDY	174
APPENDIX H. EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE TO PARENTS REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY	176
APPENDIX I. VALIDITY PANEL MEMBERS AND QUALIFICATIONS.....	183
APPENDIX J. LETTER TO VALIDITY PANEL.....	185
APPENDIX K. VALIDITY PANEL EVALUATION.....	187
APPENDIX L. LETTER REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN RELIABILITY STUDY	192
APPENDIX M. RANKED VALUES BY RESPONDENTS WHO HAD A VERY POSITIVE EXPERIENCE IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL.....	194
APPENDIX N. RANKED VALUES BY RESPONDENTS' GENDER.....	197
APPENDIX O. RANKED VALUES BY RESPONDENTS' ETHNICITY	199
APPENDIX P. RANKED VALUES BY RESPONDENTS' FAMILY INCOME.....	201
APPENDIX Q. IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS VALUES BY PARENTS WHO ATTENDED CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL	203
APPENDIX R. RANKED IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS VALUES ASSESSED BY PARENTS WHOSE EXPERIENCE IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL WAS VERY POSITIVE.....	206
APPENDIX S. IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS VALUES ASSESSED BY PARENTS WHO ATTEND MASS ON A WEEKLY OR BIMONTHLY BASIS	208
APPENDIX T. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT REASON PARENTS HAD A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST THE RELIGIOUS FACTORS THAT WERE OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE IN A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL.....	211
APPENDIX U. THE EXTENT TO WHICH PARENTS BELIEVE THAT THE SCHOOL EMBODIES CATHOLIC VALUES REFERENCED AGAINST THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS FACTORS IN SENDING THEIR SON OF DAUGHTER TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL	213
APPENDIX V. THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS FACTORS IN SENDING THEIR SON OF DAUGHTER TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED TO THE PARENTS DESIRE TO SEND THEIR CHILD TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL.....	216
APPENDIX W. RANKED RELIGIOUS VALUES BY PARENTS WHO ATTENDED CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL	219

APPENDIX X. RANKED IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS VALUES REFERENCED TO FREQUENCY THAT PARENTS ATTEND CHURCH SERVICES.....	222
APPENDIX Y. FIVE MOST SIGNIFICANT RANKED RELIGIOUS VALUES BY RESPONDENTS' FAMILY INCOME	225
APPENDIX Z. THE RANKED MOST IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS FACTORS PARENTS ARE SEEKING IN CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST THE MOST SIGNIFICANT LOSS IF THEY WERE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND THE SCHOOL	227
APPENDIX AA. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT REASON PARENTS HAD A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST THE RANKED MOST IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS FACTORS THEY ARE SEEKING IN CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL.....	229
APPENDIX BB. IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS VALUES REFERENCED TO PARENTS' CHOICE TO SEND THEIR CHILD TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL IF IT WAS NOT CATHOLIC	231
APPENDIX CC. RANKED RELIGIOUS VALUES BY RESPONDENTS INDICATING THE HIGHEST CONCERN WITH TUITION COSTS.....	234
APPENDIX DD. RELIGIOUS VALUES BY RESPONDENTS INDICATING THE HIGHEST CONCERN WITH TUITION COSTS	236
APPENDIX EE. THE LEVEL OF CONCERN WITH THE COST OF TUITION FOR THE PARENTS' YOUNGER CHILDREN THAT MAY ATTEND A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST RANKED FACTORS MOTIVATING PARENTS TO SENT THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL.....	238
APPENDIX FF. THE LEVEL OF CONCERN WITH THE COST OF TUITION FOR THE PARENTS' YOUNGER CHILDREN THAT MAY ATTEND A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST RANKED RELIGIOUS FACTORS MOTIVATING PARENTS TO SENT THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL	243
APPENDIX GG. THE EXTENT TO WHICH TUITION WAS A FACTOR IN DECIDING TO SEND THE PARENTS' SON OR DAUGHTER TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST FAMILY INCOME.....	246
APPENDIX HH. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE RISING COST OF TUITION WILL AFFECT THE PARENTS' DECISION TO SEND THEIR SOPHOMORE CHILD TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR THEIR JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEARS REFERENCED AGAINST FAMILY INCOME	248
APPENDIX II. THE LEVEL OF CONCERN WITH THE COST OF TUITION FOR THE PARENTS' YOUNGER CHILDREN THAT MAY ATTEND A	

CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST FAMILY INCOME	250
APPENDIX JJ. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE ONGOING COSTS OF THE SCHOOL ARE A SACRIFICE FOR THE FAMILY REFERENCED AGAINST FAMILY INCOME.....	252
APPENDIX KK. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE RISING COST OF TUITION IS A CONCERN REFERENCED AGAINST FAMILY INCOME	254
APPENDIX LL. INCREASE IN TUITION THAT WOULD CAUSE PARENTS TO RECONSIDER SENDING THEIR CHILD TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED TO THE MOST IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE FOR CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL	256
APPENDIX MM. INCREASE IN TUITION THAT WOULD CAUSE PARENTS TO RECONSIDER SENDING THEIR CHILD TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED TO THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE FOR CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL	258
APPENDIX NN. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CURRENT ECONOMIC DOWNTURN IS CAUSING THE PARENTS TO RECONSIDER SENDING THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST FAMILY INCOME	260

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. A Comparison of Catholic High School Tuition Increases in the San Francisco Bay Area and the United States Over 10 Years	2
Table 2. Tuition and Fees of San Francisco Bay Area Catholic High Schools	4
Table 3. Selected Church Documents Addressing Catholic Education	23
Table 4. Goals in Support of Catholic Education	44
Table 5. Summary of Research Studies on Parent Choice.....	52
Table 6. Distribution of Single-Gender and Coeducational Schools by (Arch)Diocese	72
Table 7. Alignment of Survey Questions to the Research Questions	75
Table 8. Cross Tabulations of Survey Questions to Assess the Research Questions	82
Table 9. Order of Importance of 10 Values Ranked by Religious Preference of Respondents	97
Table 10. Ranked Religious Values by Religion of Respondents	1022

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. A comparison of the average yearly percent rate of increase of tuition, inflation and wages from 1997 to 2007. 2

Figure 2. Religious affiliation of survey respondents and their spouses/partners. 86

Figure 3. Frequency of parent and son/daughter church attendance together. 86

Figure 4. Ethnicity of survey respondents and spouses/partners. 87

Figure 5. Gross family income of respondents 88

Figure 6. Level of importance of factors affecting parent choice to select Catholic secondary school. 89

Figure 7. Ranked level of importance of factors influencing the parents’ decision to send their son/daughter to a Catholic secondary school. 92

Figure 8. Importance of religious factors affecting parent choice to select Catholic secondary school. 99

Figure 9. Ranked importance of religious factors affecting parent choice to select Catholic secondary school. 100

Figure 10. Reasons that survey respondents indicated that their attendance at a Catholic school was somewhat positive or very positive. 107

Figure 11. The most significant loss if parents were unable to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. 107

Figure 12. Ranked parental assessment of factors influencing son or daughter to attend a Catholic secondary school. 110

Figure 13. Personal assessment of the impact of tuition costs on parents. 113

Figure 14. Yearly tuition increase that would cause reconsideration of Catholic secondary school attendance. 116

Figure 15. Sources of funds for tuition payments. 118

CHAPTER I

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB; 2005), in its most recent statement concerning Catholic education, *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium*, highlighted some disturbing trends. The Bishops noted,

Since 1990, the Church in the United States has opened more than 400 new schools. Regrettably, there has been a net decline of more than 850 Catholic schools in the country during the same period of time. Almost all of this loss has been in urban, inner-city, and rural areas of our nation. In the last decade of the twentieth century, Catholic schools experienced a period of growth in enrollments. Since the year 2000, however, that trend slowed, then reversed, and now shows a net loss of over 170,000 students . . . Since 1990, the average tuition of both elementary and secondary Catholic schools has more than doubled; in that same time, the portion of the total cost of educating a student which parents pay in tuition has risen by almost 13 percent. (p. 5)

The Bishops indicate their concern with key issues in the Catholic school system: the decrease in the number of schools, particularly in the inner city; the decrease in student populations; and rises in tuition costs borne by parents.

Increasing tuition rates represent one of the most significant challenges parents face when considering a Catholic high school for their son or daughter. In California's San Francisco Bay Area, the rising tuition burden may be seen most clearly at the high school level, where a typical Catholic secondary school charges an average of \$14,538 per year, representing a 113% increase in tuition over the last 10 years (see Table 1). The average tuition of San Francisco Bay Area Catholic high schools in the 2007-2008 school year of \$14,538 dramatically exceeded the national average of \$6,906 for Catholic secondary schools (see Table 1).

Table 1

A Comparison of Catholic High School Tuition Increases in the San Francisco Bay Area and the United States Over 10 Years

	Catholic high school tuition		Total percent increase	Average yearly tuition rate increase	Average yearly tuition increase in dollars
	1997	2007			
National	\$4,100	\$6,906	68.4%	5.4%	\$280
San Francisco Bay area	\$6,801	\$14,538	113%	7.8%	\$772

Note. Data from NCEA, 2008; Archdiocese of San Francisco Catholic High School 2007-2008 Information; school websites; personal communication; Diocese of Oakland High School Information Guide.

The rate of tuition increase at both the national and San Francisco Bay Area levels has outpaced increases in inflation as well as wage growth over the last 10 years (see Figure 1).

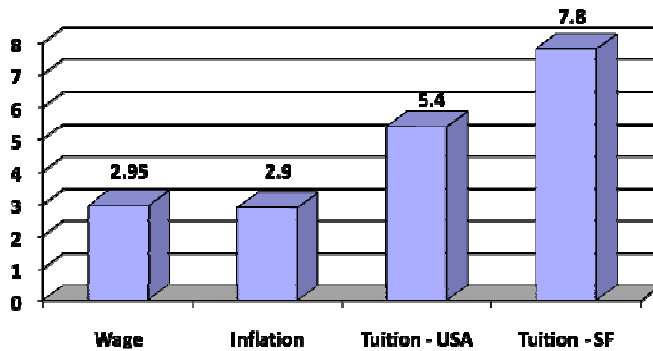


Figure 1. A comparison of the average yearly percent rate of increase of tuition, inflation and wages from 1997 to 2007. From Archdiocese of San Francisco Catholic High School 2007-2008 Information; school websites; personal communication; Diocese of Oakland High School Information Guide; Bureau of Labor Statistics.

While all of the San Francisco Bay Area Catholic high schools have increased tuition over the last 10 years, the data reveal significant differences among the individual schools and among the three dioceses of the San Francisco Bay Area (see Table 2). Individual school tuition costs range from \$8,550 to \$28,050, and diocesan averages range from the low in Oakland of \$10,692 to a high in San Francisco of \$18,288 (see Table 2). The higher tuition costs present an ongoing challenge to school administrators. With increased tuition comes increased expectations on the part of parents for services, including excellent academic and extracurricular programs, state-of-the-art facilities, and highly qualified teachers. These services come at a price, and this researcher found no discussion in the literature of future tuition reductions.

Escalating tuition has changed the landscape of Catholic education over the last 10 years. John Huber (2004), in his dissertation, *The Accessibility of Catholic Secondary Schools in the United States to the Various Socioeconomic Levels of Catholic Families*, noted that rising tuition costs are pushing the demographic composition of Catholic schools toward families of higher socioeconomic classes who can afford the tuition (p. 142). Huber voiced concern that this change may result in a lessened focus on the “Catholic character and values” of the Catholic schools in favor of “non-religious variables” (p. 4). While Huber did not find that families from higher socioeconomic classes were dismissive of the Catholic mission of the schools (p. 145), he noted that many parents who chose not to send their child to a Catholic school did not perceive the value as worth the cost (p. 144). This finding raises the question of the parents’ prioritization of the school’s Catholic mission as a central value, an issue not directly pursued in Huber’s research. The United States Catholic Bishops (2005) have repeatedly

Table 2

Tuition and Fees of San Francisco Bay Area Catholic High Schools

School	1997-98	2002-03	2007-08	% increase
Diocese of San Francisco				
Archbishop Riordan	\$6,380.00	\$9,095.00	\$12,600.00	97%
Convent of the Sacred Heart	\$12,430.00	\$18,500.00	\$27,800.00	124%
Junipero Serra	\$6,295.00	\$9,300.00	\$13,100.00	108%
Immaculate Conception Academy	\$5,000.00	\$7,950.00	\$10,150.00	103%
Marin Catholic	\$6,950.00	\$12,525.00	\$14,250.00	105%
Mercy-Burlingame	\$6,025.00	\$9,425.00	\$15,008.00	149%
Mercy-San Francisco	\$5,700.00	\$8,200.00	\$12,150.00	113%
Notre Dame	\$6,395.00	\$10,500.00	\$14,550.00	128%
Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory	\$6,575.00	\$9,300.00	\$13,200.00	101%
Sacred Heart Preparatory	\$12,000.00	\$9,300.00	\$26,885.00	124%
San Domenico Upper School	\$13,386.00	\$9,300.00	\$26,000.00	94%
Saint Ignatius College Prep	\$6,795.00	\$9,300.00	\$14,500.00	113%
Stuart Hall ^a	NA	\$9,300.00	\$27,800.00	NA
Woodside Priory	\$12,510.00	\$9,300.00	\$28,050.00	124%
Average of Diocese	\$8,187.77	\$9,300.00	\$18,288.79	123%
Diocese of San Jose				
Archbishop Mitty	\$5,740.00	\$8,170.00	\$12,100.00	111%
Bellarmino College Preparatory	\$5,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$12,800.00	133%
Notre Dame	\$5,750.00	\$7,340.00	\$11,300.00	97%
Presentation	\$5,690.00	\$8,129.00	\$11,164.00	96%
Saint Francis	\$5,560.00	\$7,950.00	\$11,400.00	105%
Saint Lawrence Academy	\$5,925.00	\$8,868.00	\$10,575.00	78%
Average of Diocese	\$5,694.17	\$8,159.50	\$11,556.50	103%
Diocese of Oakland				
Bishop O'Dowd	\$5,694.17	\$8,800.00	\$11,950.00	110%
Carondelet	\$5,500.00	\$7,900.00	\$11,300.00	105%
De La Salle	\$6,080.00	\$8,200.00	\$11,400.00	88%
Holy Names	\$5,050.00	\$8,545.00	\$10,550.00	109%
Moreau	\$5,532.00	\$7,980.00	\$10,476.00	89%
Salesian ^b	\$5,092.00	\$6,200.00	\$9,675.00	90%
St. Elizabeth	\$5,250.00	\$6,550.00	\$8,550.00	63%
St. Joseph Notre Dame ^{b,c}	\$5,471.00	\$7,400.00	\$10,395.00	90%
St. Mary's College	\$6,180.00	\$9,220.00	\$11,940.00	93%
Average of Diocese	\$5,538.80	\$7,532.00	\$10,692.89	93%
Average	\$6,801.00	\$9,001.00	\$14,538.00	113%

Note: a. Stuart Hall was founded in 2000 b. Salesian and St. Joseph tuition data for 1997-1998 are estimates based on average tuition increase in the Diocese of Oakland. c. St. Joseph figures are an average of Catholic and non-Catholic tuition figures Data from Archdiocese of San Francisco Catholic High School 2007-2008 Information; school websites; Diocese of Oakland High School Information Guide.

emphasized the centrality of the Catholic mission of the schools. Given the Bishops' clear direction on this issue, the impact of tuition affordability on the parents' assessment of Catholic character in decision making assumes importance.

The issue of affordability is not limited to a family's financial ability to pay the tuition. Affordability reflects a relationship between the families' ability to pay and their desire, or willingness, to pay the yearly costs. The choice to spend money on Catholic education may vary widely depending on how parents assess the value of the Catholic school in the context of their broader value system.

Huber (2004) cited the "lack of perceived value equal to the amount of sacrifice necessary in order to pay the tuition" (p. 144) as an additional reason that eighth grade parochial school families were not continuing on to a Catholic high school. The statement illustrated a frame of reference for these parents in which they evaluated tuition costs relative to the perceived value of the Catholic high schools. Given the option of free public education or the commitment of approximately \$14,538 a year, totaling approximately \$60,000 over 4 years (Table 1), parents make a strong value statement when they select the latter.

In spite of the significant cost increases, a review of the scholarly literature did not reveal how the financial environment of the last 10 years has impacted parents' process of deciding to send their children to Catholic secondary schools. It is not clear how parents are framing the decision in light of tuition increases and how parents are assessing value within this decision-framing process. With tuition increases continuing to exceed wage increases, parents choosing to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school must commit a greater percentage of their income to this choice. For

the rising number of families whose income is stretched by tuition payments, this financial reality will necessitate a continual assessment of the values associated with Catholic education.

While administrators may be able to cite anecdotal data in response to these issues, the relative lack of knowledge in the area of parent choice suggested the need for an investigation into the parents' decision-making process. This information is critical to school leadership in program design, marketing efforts, institutional development and facility planning.

Purpose of the Study

This study explored how parents made the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic high school in the San Francisco Bay Area. This research explored how parents framed the decision and the central values that influenced this framing process. In *To Teach as Jesus Did*, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (1972) stated that the "integration of religious truth and values with life distinguishes the Catholic school from other schools" (¶105).

As the school's Catholic character forms the central philosophical basis of the school's existence, this study probed the degree to which Catholic character and values were a factor in parents' decision-making process. With the tuition of San Francisco Bay Area Catholic schools escalating at a rate exceeding income growth and inflation (Table 1), this study investigated the extent to which these costs affected the parents' decision-making process.

Background and Need for the Study

The Catholic school system in the United States forged its identity in the 1800s amidst a developing nation. Large numbers of Catholics emigrated from Europe

throughout the century, and this influx threatened the established anti-Catholic residents of the colonies. Walch (1996) noted that the Protestant-dominated country viewed the Catholic ideology as a threat to the social order of the new democracy. There emerged a movement to develop a public education system, “common schools,” that would provide a unifying element to the country (p. 26).

The Catholic community perceived that the burgeoning public education system reflected ingrained Protestant prejudices against Catholicism that threatened Catholic identity (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993, p. 24). In response, the American Catholic Bishops issued a series of pastoral statements intended to support the development of Catholic schools. The Bishops instructed the clergy to develop schools in each parish and encouraged parents to send their children to the schools. The pastoral letters encouraging Catholic parents to support the schools became increasingly strong throughout the 1800s. Addressing the development of Catholic schools, the United States Bishops (1884) promulgated the following in their pastoral letter developed in the Third Plenary Council:

Two objects, therefore, dear brethren, we have in view, to multiply our schools, and to perfect them. We must multiply them, till every Catholic child in the land shall have within his reach the means of education. There is still much to do ere this be attained. There are still thousands of Catholic children in the United States deprived of the benefit of a Catholic school. Pastors and parents should not rest till this defect be remedied. No parish is complete till it has schools adequate to the needs of its children, and the pastor and people of such a parish should feel that they have not accomplished their entire duty until the want is supplied. (§ 34)

The Bishops’ pastoral statements reflected a theology that connected Catholic schooling to the appropriate role of parents as guardians of the spiritual and moral development of the child. While the Bishops did not make Catholic school attendance

compulsory among Catholic children, many interpreted this as a requirement. In his book *Parish School*, Timothy Walch (1996) stated the subtle coercion as follows:

Catholic parents had a moral responsibility to provide for the spiritual lives of their children, and the best means of providing that spiritual life was through parish schools. Catholic parents were never required to send their children to parish schools until 1884, but not to do so was to incur the displeasure of the organized church. (pp. 31-32)

The choice to send a child to a Roman Catholic school, as Walch intimated, was less than free if a parent were to take seriously the official teaching from the Third Plenary Council. The Bishops' encouragement of the schools resulted in the sustained development of a Catholic school system that by 1965 comprised 13,000 schools and educated 5.5 million students, a full 12% of the school-age population (Bryk et al. 1993, p. 33). The Church provided indirect financial support to the school system through the minimal remuneration paid to the clergy and religious that staffed the schools.

The situation began to change rapidly in the latter half of the 1960s when the number of both Catholic schools and Catholic students began a "cataclysmic" decline (Convey, 1992, p. 36). A number of factors contributed to the change. Convey cited shifting demographics, including a drop in the school-age population and Catholic migration to the suburbs, where Catholic schools were less established, as major contributors. In addition, priests and religious, the inexpensive teaching force of the school system, exited religious life and their teaching roles in large numbers (Bryk et al., 1993). Schools supplanted the loss of ordained and religious instructors by recruiting lay teachers (Walch, 1996). This, in turn, increased operating costs, and school officials began increasing tuition to pay for the wages required by a lay work force.

The Second Vatican Council, extending from 1962 to 1965, brought significant theological changes to the Church. The Council was the first in the modern era that was not convened in response to an outside threat. Bryk et al., (1993) noted that the theological shift of Vatican II impacted the American Bishops' statements on Catholic schools (p. 51). In contrast to the siege justification of the previous century, the American Bishops' pastoral letters positioned Catholic education relative to the central evangelization mission of the Church. (USCC [USCCB], 1972, ¶7; USCC [USCCB], 1990, ¶2; USCCB, 2005, p. 3). The documents no longer included either direct or indirect language requiring parents to send their children to Catholic schools to guard against the influence of the public school system.

The convergence of these two trends – diminishing institutional pressure to attend a Catholic school and rapidly escalating tuition costs – highlights the importance of parents' decision to send their child to a Catholic high school. This choice reflects the parents' values and offers the researcher insights into how parents prioritize values and frame the decision. Scholars have researched a variety of topics related to parent choice and decision making over the past 10 years. Studies have investigated choice in relation to parental financial support of schools (Bauch & Gao, 2000); culture, values and class issues (Bulman, 1999; Petrillo, 2003); Catholic identity (Collins, 2001); reasons against selection of a Catholic school (Ryan, 2005); choice in relation to public school alternatives (Rittmeyer, 2002; Van Camp, 2003); the financial implications to the school (Garvey, 2000); and general selection attributes (Puccio, 2000).

Additional studies have addressed choice in relation to selection criteria for public schools (Hu, 1996; Thofern, 1997); magnet school options (Johnson, 1997); culture,

values and class issues (Schneider, Marschall, Teske, & Roch, 1998); the relationship between parental characteristics and school choice (Hsieh, 2000); reasons for selecting an independent boys school (Weller, 2006); and an analysis of parental preferences (Szombathova, 2005).

The researcher did not uncover significant regional studies of parent choice in Catholic secondary schools, particularly in the last 10 years. These investigations did not examine how parents frame the decision relative to the values that they seek from the school. In addition, the studies did not evaluate how values are prioritized in the light of increasing financial pressure due to escalating tuition. This financial pressure figures most prominently at the high school level, where the average tuition cost exceeds the elementary cost by 160% (National Catholic Education Association, 2009).

The San Francisco Bay Area Catholic high schools, with their particularly high tuition costs referenced in Table 1, provided a unique opportunity to examine parent choice issues on a regional scale. They range from urban to suburban schools, single and mixed-gender schools, and diocesan and religious schools. Tuition costs start at \$8,550 and go as high as \$28,050, as documented in Table 2. These schools serve a diverse student body representing the vast range of socioeconomic strata of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Regional data on parent choice in light of rising tuition costs may provide important information to school administrations. The socioeconomic composition of each school's sphere of influence varies. The schools' marketing to their potential constituencies should reflect the institutions' unique identity and circumstance. The

schools must be able to hone their message of Catholic education and identity in terms relevant to their target population.

Viewed from this perspective, the framing of the decision assumes greater significance. How parents frame the decision to send their child to a Catholic school offers insight into the relationship and prominence of core values that parents associate with a Catholic high school. Insight into these core values may help schools tailor the message of their unique expression of Catholic education and identity in a manner that addresses the parent and student communities that they serve.

Regional data may further assist school administrations in evaluating how anticipated tuition raises will affect their target populations given their socioeconomic environment. Catholic schools must address the issue of tuition affordability and the impact that the issue will have on parents deciding to send their children to these schools. This data may further inform decisions on tuition assistance to applicants unable to afford tuition costs.

Catholic schools accept non-Catholic students. School administrations need a clear understanding of the value system motivating non-Catholic students to seek a Catholic education. These research data will help administrations evaluate the Catholic mission relative to their non-Catholic populations. The conceptual framework provided a theoretical basis to investigate these issues. The combined theories address how people assess value, make choices, and frame decisions.

Theoretical Framework

In 1974, Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky developed a theory of human judgment to explain the intuitive responses people make in situations of uncertainty. Working in a related area of study, Kahneman and Tversky (1979) later developed a

theory of decision making, prospect theory, that explained how people make decisions when the possible outcomes provide a level of risk. After Tversky's death in 1996, Kahneman (2003) proposed an integration of the theories of judgment and decision making. Kahneman and Tversky's theories of judgment and decision making, and Kahneman's (2003) synthesis of the two theories, provided the conceptual framework for this study.

Kahneman and Tversky (1982, 2002)¹ published their work and other researchers' explorations of their theory of judgment in two separate publications. The first volume, *Judgment Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases* (1982), contained research related to the theory dating through the previous two decades. The second collection of articles, *Heuristics and Biases: The Psychology of Intuitive Judgment* (2002), reflected the application and development of the theory in the interval between the two publications.

Kahneman and Tversky (1982) postulated that people make judgments in situations of uncertainty by "rely[ing] on a limited number of heuristic principles which reduce the complex tasks of assessing probabilities and predicting values to simpler judgmental operations" (p. 3). The heuristic principles function as "mental shortcuts" (Gilovich & Griffin, 2002, p. 4) that simplify judgment as part of an intuitive process.

In addition to their theoretical work on judgment, Kahneman and Tversky (1979) developed a theory of decision making that joined cognitive psychology and economic theory. Through their research, Kahneman and Tversky (1979) discovered that people made decisions in a manner that contradicted the prediction of prevailing economic

1. While Amos Tversky died in 1996, he was credited with the authorship and editing of additional articles and texts in conjunction with Daniel Kahneman. This accounts for references dated after his death.

models (p. 18). Their research led to their development of prospect theory, an alternative theory of decision making that more closely “accounts for observed human behavior” (Nobel Foundation, 2002). In 2000, Kahneman and Tversky edited *Choices, Values and Frames*, which documented numerous researchers’ applications of prospect theory since its inception.

Kahneman and Tversky (2000) postulated that “Decision making under risk can be viewed as a choice between prospects or gambles” (p. 18). Their observations of human decision making using this optic led to a central finding of prospect theory. Kahneman and Tversky noted that people perceive decisions in terms of gains or losses from a neutral starting point. In addition, Kahneman and Tversky (2000) noted that “Decision problems can be described or framed in multiple ways that give rise to different preferences” (p. 1). The framing of the decision’s potential outcome as a gain or a loss played a critical role in the observed decision.

In 2003, Kahneman published a thesis that “made an attempt to provide an integrated framework for the analysis of judgment and choice” (personal communication, May 3, 2006). Kahneman (2003) observed,

The analysis of intuitive thinking and choice . . . provides a framework that highlights commonalties between lines of research that are usually studied separately. In particular, the psychology of judgment and the psychology of choice share their basic principles and differ mainly in content. (p. 23)

In his attempt at synthesis, Kahneman articulated a dual process of decision making. The first stage involves perception and judgment at the intuitive level. The second phase of the decision involves a more deliberative review of the intuitive judgment.

The work by Kahneman and Tversky (1979, 2003) on human judgment and decision making provides a theoretical framework for this investigation. Their insights

into the intuitive processes that influence human judgment, the significant role that fear of loss plays in decision making, and the influence of the decision frame on the outcome provide insight into parents' school-choice decisions. The research assessed the use of heuristic shortcuts, loss aversion and the framing of the decision. The following research questions explore parent decision making and the impact of increasing tuition on the decision process.

Research Questions

This study investigated the following research questions:

1. What are the core values influencing how parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school?
2. To what extent is the Catholicity of the Catholic secondary school a component in the decision framing process?
3. To what extent is the rising tuition cost influencing the manner in which parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school?

Limitations

The research was conducted entirely on-line with no option for a paper response. This methodology restricted the response to those having access to both a computer and a valid email address, limiting potential research subjects within the target group. It is unclear if the nonrespondents chose not to respond or did not complete the survey due to access issues. The availability of high-quality computer and internet access that enables a smoother on-line experience may have skewed the data toward those of higher economic means.

The research was conducted through the principals at the local high schools, and the researcher did not have direct access to the email databases. This methodology offered the greatest opportunity to encourage the participation of the schools in the study area. However, the methodology presented possibilities for error in administration in the survey instrument. The school site was responsible for receiving the email from the researcher, properly formatting it according to the researcher's instructions, and sending it to the sophomore parent community within the requested time frame. The researcher was unable to control for errors in terms of the high school administration's handling of the survey according to the researcher's instructions.

The study relied on the accuracy of the schools' parent email database. This accuracy varied based upon the local school's process of solicitation, monitoring, and updating of the email addresses of its parent community. The accuracy of the database can vary throughout the year based upon the school's workload and system of monitoring and could not be verified by the researcher. The survey was conducted entirely in English and was not translated into other languages. Parents with limited English fluency may not have been able to understand the survey or chose not to participate due to the language barrier. An English-only survey might have impacted ethnic groups at differing rates.

The research relied on self-reporting on the part of the survey respondents. Parents may have felt pressure to respond to the survey because their son or daughter was under the jurisdiction of the local high school administration. Students and their families who were experiencing any form of conflict within the school setting due to academics, the social environment, or disciplinary issues may have felt undue pressure to complete

the survey or to opt out when receiving the survey communication from the high school administration. The survey posed a series of questions designed to assess the parents' willingness to pay tuition. While the subjects were informed that the survey results would be kept confidential, they may have been concerned that their responses could have an impact on future tuition rates at their high school. This perception could have skewed the data.

Self-reporting presents a challenge in assessing income data and motivation for attending a Catholic school. Respondents may have felt awkward or embarrassed about their level of income, whether it was objectively high or low. Parents were asked for the sources of income used to pay tuition fees. Respondents may have felt awkward or embarrassed about their source of income and the challenge it takes to support their son or daughter in the school. This factor may have had a disproportionate impact on parents for whom financing a Catholic secondary education was difficult.

Self-reporting presents a challenge in assessing motivation for attending a Catholic school. The respondents may have felt inclined to answer in a manner that they felt was appropriate or in a manner that they might be expected to respond given the nature of a Catholic school.

The target survey population was defined as the parents of sophomore students attending one of 28 schools that reside in the Dioceses of Oakland and San Jose, and the Archdiocese of San Francisco, excluding the school in which the researcher is employed. Of the schools in the research area, 13 agreed to participate in the study. This research population represented a small urban and suburban area of the United States, and the population could not be considered to represent all dioceses accurately. The target

population was limited to the parents of sophomore students in Catholic secondary schools. This population excluded the parents of children from three other grade levels. The research findings may not accurately represent findings drawn from a broader statistical sampling. Extrapolation of the research findings to the broader population of the U.S. Catholic school system is limited by these conditions.

The researcher is an administrator at a Catholic secondary school in the Archdiocese of San Francisco. Many of the schools and their administrators in the survey region are well known to the researcher. These data, along with the intimate knowledge of practical issues reflected in the research questions, may have subjected the research design and the interpretation of the data to bias.

A number of questions probed the parents' willingness to pay tuition at a later time. This information is both subjective and hypothetical based upon the person's current assessment of his or her economic situation and makes extrapolation to a later date or to a broader population more difficult. The difficulty of eliciting accurate responses to these questions may have been exacerbated by the significant decline in the American economy at the time of the survey. The current recessionary environment has had a significant and direct impact on consumer spending.

The telephone follow-up survey was conducted with 10 subjects randomly chosen among those indicating a willingness to discuss the survey with the researcher. The limited number of interviews was necessary to enable the researcher to complete the work while fully employed. The small sample size may not have been representative of the larger population. Answers solicited from these parents added depth to the study, but the sample size limited the extent to which findings could be extrapolated.

Significance

While it is clear that the price of Catholic secondary education is increasing, there is little data assessing the impact that this rising tuition has on the consumers of Catholic education, the parents. Information that reveals what parents value in Catholic education and how parents are framing the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic school in light of rising tuition costs will be significant to Catholic school leaders in a range of areas. Programmatic decisions, including tuition pricing, program development, and admissions marketing strategies, will be influenced through an authentic and current understanding of parental decision making. The study may help Catholic school leaders understand the elasticity of demand for Catholic secondary education in an environment of increasing tuition costs and a national economic recession.

Catholic school leaders are challenged to create budgets that both furthers the mission of the school and that meet the needs of parents who are choosing to send their son or daughter to the school. The research elucidated factors motivating parents to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. This insight will aid schools in allocating resources in all aspects of the school program that align with the school's mission and that address parental desires. While parental motivation may vary regionally, the findings have applicability to Catholic schools throughout the country.

The research offered insight into how parents define and interpret the "Catholicity" of the school. In their role as leaders, secondary school Presidents and Principals are charged with developing an educational community reflective of Church teaching and collaborating with parents in the education of their children (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education [SCCE], 1997). Catholic schools are grounded in an understanding of the human person and his or her formation as a member of the Body

of Christ (SCCE, 1997). The Bishops teach that this theological understanding should be embodied in all aspects of the Catholic schools' program of study (National Council of Catholic Bishops [NCCB], 1972). The alignment between the Church's intent for its Catholic schools and the parents' understanding of the Catholic nature of the school can provide information critical to the pastoral role of leadership. Thus, the insights into parents' understanding of Catholicity will assist the leadership in carrying out its role.

The information provided by the research may help schools market Catholic education to potential families. The research indicates some of the central factors motivating parents to choose San Francisco Bay Area Catholic schools. Within this choice, the research highlights the extent to which parents explicitly identify Catholicity as a factor in their choice for high school education.

The research will contribute to the body of knowledge of Catholic schools. Statistics published by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA, 2009) indicated that the population of Catholic schools is continuing on a downward trend. In 2008–2009 the NCEA (2009) reported that 31 schools opened and 162 schools closed or consolidated. The student population dropped from 2,648,844 in 1999 to 2,192,531 in 2009 (NCEA, 2009). These trends indicate an ongoing need to understand factors influencing how parents make the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. Insights into the parental decision-making process may support the long-term viability of Catholic schools.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were foundational to this study:

Catholicity and Catholic Character

The terms *Catholicity* and *Catholic character* were used interchangeably in this study. The document *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* by the [Sacred] Congregation for Catholic Education (SCCE, 1988) elucidated the meaning of this terminology.

On October 28, the Second Vatican Council promulgated the Declaration on Christian Education *Gravissimum educationis*. The document describes the distinguishing characteristic of a Catholic school in this way, “What makes the Catholic school distinctive is its attempt to generate a community climate in the school that is permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and love. It strives to guide the adolescents in such a way that personality development goes hand in hand with the development of the ‘new creature’ that each one has become through baptism. It strives to relate all of human culture to the good news of salvation so that the light of faith will illumine everything that the students will gradually come to learn about the world, about life, and about the human person.”

The Council, therefore, declared that what makes the Catholic school distinctive is its religious dimension, and that this is to be found in a) the educational climate, b) the personal development of each student, c) the relationship established between culture and the Gospel, d) the illumination of all knowledge with the light of faith. (§1)

Framing

Framing refers to the perspective that one takes in evaluating a situation.

Kahneman and Tversky (1999) noted that description and interpretation of the decision problem can either be one that people “are exposed to” or that people “construct for themselves” (pp. xi-xii). As used in this study, *framing* refers to the decision makers’ formulation of the beliefs, attitudes and desires that provides the context for the decision.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Restatement of the Problem

Over the past century, a Catholic education system of elementary and secondary schools has played a significant role in education in the United States, teaching over 5.6 million students at its height in 1965 (NCEA, 2007). Over the last 40 years, however, Catholic schools have declined significantly in both the number of schools and in students attending the institutions (Table 2). Scholars cite numerous factors that have contributed to this decline, including theological changes in the Catholic Church, demographic shifts, social changes in the United States, rising tuition costs and a “crisis of confidence” (Walch, 1996, p. 182).

Tuition costs for Catholic high schools in the San Francisco Bay Area have risen at a pace exceeding inflation or wage growth over the last 10 years (Table 1). Parents continuing to choose Catholic secondary education must pay an increasingly large percentage of their income to support their choice. The issue is most acute at the secondary level, where the average freshman high school tuition exceeds elementary school cost by 125% (National Catholic Education Association, 2006).

In this environment of rising costs, parents must continue to assess the value of Catholic education. Huber (2004) indicated that a percentage of parents are determining that the value of Catholic secondary education is not worth the cost. Yet 2,270,913 students were enrolled in Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the 2007–2008 school year (NCEA, 2008), indicating ongoing support for Catholic schools. There is relatively little research that explores the impact of escalating tuition on the parent decision-making process. This research will explore the values that parents are seeking

from Catholic high schools, the role that Catholicity plays in the decision, and the impact that rising costs have on how parents frame the decision to send their child to a Catholic secondary school.

Overview of Review of Literature

The literature review is organized into three sections. It begins with an evaluation of Catholic documents addressing education to assess the Church's perspective on the values underlying a Catholic school, the role of parental choice in education, and the issue of affordability. The documents provide a context for interpreting the primary issues of the investigation. The second section examines recent research into parent choice and the decision-making process. The literature review ends with a presentation of the theoretical framework that will be used to assess parental decision making in the choice of Catholic secondary schools.

Catholic Church Documents

Over the last 140 years, the Catholic Church at both the international and national levels has promulgated teachings addressing Catholic schools. These writings comprise papal encyclicals, documents of the Second Vatican Council, statements from the Sacred Congregation for Christian Education (SCCE), and pastoral letters from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), as indicated in Table 3. While set in different historical, cultural and national contexts, the documents nonetheless present themes that form a philosophical basis for Catholic schools in the United States.

Papal Documents

Spectata fides: On Christian Education

Pope Leo XIII (1885) wrote the encyclical *Spectata fides* as a letter to the Bishops of England in support of their Catholic schools. While very brief, the document

Table 3

Selected Church Documents Addressing Catholic Education

Document	Author	Date
Papal Encyclicals		
<i>Spectata fides: On Christian Education</i>	Leo XIII	1885
<i>Divini illius magistri: On Christian Education</i>	Pius XI	1929
Vatican Documents		
<i>Gravissimum educationis: Declaration on Christian Education</i>	Vatican II	1965
<i>The Catholic School</i>	SCCE ^a	1977
<i>Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith</i>	SCCE ^a	1982
<i>The Religious Dimension of the Education in a Catholic School</i>	SCCE ^a	1988
<i>The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium</i>	SCCE ^a	1997
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops		
<i>To Teach as Jesus Did</i>	USCC ^b	1972
<i>Teach Them</i>	USCC ^b	1976
<i>In Support of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools Principles for Educational Reform in the United States</i>	USCC ^b	1990
<i>Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium</i>	USCCB ^b	2005

^aSCCE - Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education

^bUSCC, NCCB and USCCB - The United States Catholic Conference (USCC) and The National Council of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) were combined organizationally in 2001 and were named the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

foreshadows two themes that will emerge in subsequent statements, the right of the parents to choose their child's education and the Church's heightened concern that this choice take into account the child's moral development. Pope Leo XIII wrote,

In these schools the liberty of parents is respected; and, what is most needed, especially in the prevailing license of opinion and of action, it is by these schools that good citizens are brought up for the State; for there is no better citizen than the man who has believed and practiced the Christian faith from his childhood. (¶4)

The Pope continued,

The wisdom of our forefathers, and the very foundations of the State, are ruined by the destructive error of those who would have children brought up without religious education. You see, therefore Venerable Brethren, with what earnest forethought parents must beware of intrusting their children to schools in which they cannot receive religious teaching. (§4)

The cautionary tone of the letter for parents reflects the protectionist role of Catholic education in safeguarding the moral development of its children. This point held particular significance at a time when public education was perceived as anti-Catholic, as was the case in the United States during this period (Walch, 1996). *Spectata fides* entered the public domain in the year following the United States Catholic Bishops' publication of the documents of the Third Plenary Council (1884). Both pastoral teachings cast Catholic education in the role of guardian of the faith in the context of a world hostile to Catholic teaching.

The similarity in tone between the two documents should be noted. The American Bishops (1884) in the Third Plenary Council stated,

It cannot be desirable or advantageous that religion should be excluded from the school. On the contrary, it ought, therefore, to be one of the chief agencies for molding the young life to all that is true and virtuous, and holy . . . therefore, the school, which principally gives the knowledge fitting for practical life, ought to be pre-eminently under the holy influence of religion. (§32)

They further stated,

Nor is it any antagonism to the state; on the contrary, it is an honest endeavor to give to the state better citizens, by making them better Christians. The friends of Christian education do not condemn the state for not imparting religious instruction in the public school as they are now organized; because they will know it does not lie within the province of the state to teach religion. They simply follow their conscience by sending their children to denominational schools, where religion can have its rightful place and influence. (§33)

Both the American Church and its European counterparts were addressing the exclusion of religion from public education. The response was an articulation of the value of education to the state as a whole in forming good citizens, and the value of having a school separate from the public school system in which religion was an integral part of the curriculum.

Divini illius magistri: On Christian Education

Writing over 40 years after *Spectata fides*, Pope Pius XI (1929) issued the first comprehensive document on Christian education to address a world audience, *Divini illius magistri*. The Holy Father outlined a theological position on Christian education that wove its way through all subsequent Papal and Episcopal documents. Education of the human person is a theological endeavor oriented toward developing the human being in his relationship to God and is fundamentally an exercise in developing his true nature. Pius XI stated,

It is therefore as important to make no mistake in education, as it is to make no mistake in the pursuit of the last end, with which the whole work of education is intimately and necessarily connected. In fact, since education consists essentially in preparing man for what he must be and for what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created, it is clear that there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end, and that in the present order of Providence, since God has revealed Himself to us in the Person of His Only Begotten Son, who alone is "the way, the truth and the life," there can be no ideally perfect education which is not Christian education. (¶7)

The Pope further outlined the fundamental right and duty of the family to educate and to guide their sons' and daughters' development as children of God. The document continued,

The family therefore holds directly from the Creator the mission and hence the right to educate the offspring, a right inalienable because inseparably joined to the strict obligation, a right anterior to any right whatever of civil society and of the State, and therefore inviolable on the part of any power on earth. (¶32)

The document continued,

The wisdom of the Church in this matter is expressed with precision and clearness in the Codex of Canon Law, can. 1113: “Parents are under a grave obligation to see to the religious and moral education of their children, as well as to their physical and civic training, as far as they can, and moreover to provide for their temporal well-being.” (§34)

Pope Pius XI (1929) specifically referred to the challenges facing the Catholic Church in America at the time that the document was written:

This incontestable right of the family has at various times been recognized by nations anxious to respect the natural law in their civil enactments. Thus, to give one recent example, the Supreme Court of the United States of America, in a decision on an important controversy, declared that it is not in the competence of the State to fix any uniform standard of education by forcing children to receive instruction exclusively in public schools, and it bases its decision on the natural law: the child is not the mere creature of the State; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right coupled with the high duty, to educate him and prepare him for the fulfillment of his obligations. (§37)

The document’s considerable argumentation supporting a family’s fundamental right to oversee a child’s education reflected the controversy occurring on the international stage at the time of the document’s publication. Indeed, the “one recent example” to which the document referred to is the 1925 landmark case of *Pierce v. Society of Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary*, in which the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed parents’ rights to choose a school for their child as a liberty protected under the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution (Beutow, 1970). This right was under attack by the State of Oregon which sought to prohibit Catholic and parochial schools in favor of a unified public school system that guarded against societal discord (Beutow, 1970). The case effectively ended the debate over the right of the Catholic Church to have separate schools and for parents to be able to choose education for their child in the United States.

The fact that this case was brought to the Supreme Court 40 years after the Third Plenary Council's encouragement to develop Catholic schools, however, sheds light on the contentious atmosphere of Catholic school development in the country. The Third Plenary Council (1884) acknowledged this struggle:

But many, unfortunately, while avowing that religion should be the light and atmosphere of the home and of the Church, are content to see it excluded from the school, and even advocate as the best school system that which necessarily excludes religion. (§32)

Given this strident polemic, the Bishop's (1884) direction to pastors "to multiply our schools, and to perfect them" and strong admonitions to parents to "not hasten to take their children from [Catholic] school, but to give them . . . the capacity to profit by, so that, in the after life, their children may 'rise up and call them blessed'" appears understandable (§34).

Vatican Documents

In 1959, Pope John XXIII announced his desire for a Second Vatican Council, using the word *aggiornamento*, literally, "an updating," to describe the need to renew the Church's teaching (Bryk, et al., 1993, p. 46). In contrast to all preceding Church Councils, the Second Vatican Council was not called to address a specific doctrinal error or political conflict, but as a means of formulating Church teaching in light of contemporary scholarship (Bryk, et al., 1993). In his opening address to the Bishops attending the Second Vatican Council, Pope John XXIII (1962) framed their task as follows:

the whole world expects a step forward toward a doctrinal penetration and a formation of consciences in faithful and perfect conformity to the authentic doctrine which, however, should be studied and expounded through the methods of research and through the literary forms of modern thought. The substance of the ancient doctrine of the Deposit of Faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another. And it is the latter that must be taken into great consideration

with patience if necessary, everything being measured in the forms and proportions of a magisterium which is predominantly pastoral in character. (§27)

The documents produced during the 3-year Council provided a broad exploration of the theological and pastoral issues to be addressed.

The Bishops of the Second Vatican Council (1965) presented two key documents, *Gaudium et spes* [*The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*] (1965) and *Lumen gentium* [*The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*] (1964), which reinterpreted the role of the Catholic Church as it moved toward the end of the second millennium. The opening words of *Gaudium et spes* expressed the mission of the “Pilgrim Church” referred to in *Lumen gentium*.

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man. That is why this community realizes that it is truly linked with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds. (1965, ¶1)

The Vatican Council (1965) further approved *Gravissimum educationis* [*Declaration on Christian Education*] (1965) that addressed the meaning of Christian education in light of *Lumen gentium* and *Gaudium et spes*. The [Sacred] Congregation for Catholic Education subsequently published three important writings on Catholic schools in light of the Vatican II statements, *The Catholic School* (1977), *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (1988), and *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1997).

Gravissimum educationis: Declaration on Christian Education

Reflecting earlier documents but developing them in greater depth, the Second Vatican Council (1965) centered Catholic education on the theological understanding of

the human person. All efforts of the school are subsumed into this broader vision.

Writing in *Gravissimus educationis* [*Declaration on Christian Education*] (1965) the

Church developed this perspective:

The influence of the Church in the field of education is shown in a special manner by the Catholic school. No less than other schools does the Catholic school pursue cultural goals and the human formation of youth. But its proper function is to create for the school community a special atmosphere animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity, to help youth grow according to the new creatures they were made through baptism as they develop their own personalities, and finally to order the whole of human culture to the news of salvation so that the knowledge the students gradually acquire of the world, life and man is illumined by faith. So indeed the Catholic school, while it is open, as it must be, to the situation of the contemporary world, leads its students to promote efficaciously the good of the earthly city and also prepares them for service in the spread of the Kingdom of God, so that by leading an exemplary apostolic life they become, as it were, a saving leaven in the human community. (§20)

The document articulated values central to a Catholic education: a community animated by the Gospel, illuminating knowledge in the context of faith, and preparing students for service to the Kingdom of God. These values undergird the purpose of the Catholic school and offer a compelling reason for a parent to choose the school.

Gravissimus educationis (1965) referred to previous papal publications in affirming the right of the Church to develop Catholic schools, stating, “this sacred synod proclaims anew what has already been taught in several documents of the magisterium, namely: the right of the Church freely to establish and conduct schools of every type and level” (§21), and it affirmed *Divini illius magistri* in identifying the parents “as the primary and principal educators” (§9). However, the document reached beyond this theme. The historical context had changed, and the language of the document emphasized to a greater extent the true freedom of parents to choose a school for their children, as follows:

Parents who have the primary and inalienable right and duty to educate their children must enjoy true liberty in their choice of schools. Consequently, the public power, which has the obligation to protect and defend the rights of citizens, must see to it, in its concern for distributive justice, that public subsidies are paid out in such a way that parents are truly free to choose according to their conscience the schools they want for their children. (§15)

The respect for the “true” freedom of the parents in choosing their school provides a marked contrast to the earlier papal encyclicals of *Spectata fides* and *Divini illius magistri* and to the direction given by the American Bishops at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. While the Vatican Council (1965) still “remind[s] Catholic parents of the duty of entrusting their children to Catholic schools where and whenever it is possible” (§22), the direction moved from advocating a Catholic education as a response to a subversive worldly ideology to articulating the choice of a Catholic school on its merits.

The Catholic School

In 1977, the [Sacred] Congregation for Catholic Education published *The Catholic School*, the first address to Catholic schools written in the context of post-Vatican II theology. Following the direction of Vatican II, the pastoral letter situated Catholic education within the core evangelistic mission of the Church. The SCCE offered this analysis:

The Catholic school forms part of the saving mission of the Church, especially for education in the faith. Remembering that “the simultaneous development of man's psychological and moral consciousness is demanded by Christ almost as a precondition for the reception of the befitting divine gifts of truth and grace,” the Church fulfills her obligation to foster in her children a full awareness of their rebirth to a new life. It is precisely in the Gospel of Christ, taking root in the minds and lives of the faithful, that the Catholic school finds its definition as it comes to terms with the cultural conditions of the times. (§9)

The document further indicated that education and knowledge are not ends unto themselves, but must be seen in the larger context of humankind’s meaning to love and

serve others (§56). The school provided a community where students examine culture, values, and truth in the context of the teachings of Jesus. The document maintained, “For it is Christian thought which constitutes a sound criterion of judgment in the midst of conflicting concepts and behavior: ‘Reference to Jesus Christ teaches man to discern the values which ennoble from those which degrade him’” (§11).

The Catholic School (SCCE, 1977) revealed the evolution in the Bishops’ rationale for Catholic schools following *Gravissimus educationis*. Whereas previous documents argued for the right of Catholic schools to exist, *The Catholic School* articulated the Catholic school’s relevance in a pluralistic society. The Bishops offered the following analysis of Catholic education in the modern world:

Thus, while policies and opportunities differ from place to place, the Catholic school has its place in any national school system. By offering such an alternative the church wishes to respond to the obvious need for cooperation in a society characterized by cultural pluralism. Moreover, in the way she helps to promote that freedom of teaching which champions and guarantees freedom of conscience and the parental right to choose the school best suited to parents’ educational purpose. (§14)

This shift reflected the changed circumstances of the schools themselves. By the time the SCCE published the document in 1977, enrollment in Catholic schools was on a clear downward trend, losing 2.5 million students by the end of the decade from its height in 1965 (NCEA, 2008). In the context of dramatic enrollment declines and questionable relevance, the assertion of a fundamental right to exist appeared irrelevant. Rather, the Church was compelled to assert the Catholic schools’ fundamental value in the midst of competing societal ideologies and choices.

The Catholic School (SCCE, 1977) developed the relationship among the formation of the individual, the community in which this individual is formed, and the

theological values at the core of the school. The SCCE perceived the school as a “center for human formation” (§25). The document submitted an analysis of this concept:

Either implicit or explicit reference to a determined attitude to life (Weltanschauung) is unavoidable in education because it comes into every decision that is made. It is, therefore, essential, if for no other reason than for a unity in teaching, that each member of the school community, albeit with differing degrees of awareness, adopts a common vision, a common outlook on life, based on adherence to a scale of values in which he believes. This is what gives teachers and adults authority to educate. It must never be forgotten that the purpose of instruction at school is education, that is, the development of man from within, freeing him from that conditioning which would prevent him from becoming a fully integrated human being. The school must begin from the principle that its educational program is intentionally directed to the growth of the whole person. (§29)

This concept was further explained by the Bishops’ articulation of the community’s role in the transmission of the school’s central values. The Bishops continued,

When seen in this light, a school is not only a place where one is given a choice of intellectual values, but a place where one has presented an array of values which are actively lived. The school must be a community whose values are communicated through the interpersonal and sincere relationships of its members and through both individual and corporative adherence to the outlook on life that permeates the school. (§32)

The school’s mission is focused on the “critical, systematic transmission of culture in the light of faith and the bringing forth of the power of Christian virtue by the integration of culture with faith and of faith with living” (SCCE, 1977, §49). To this end, the role of the teacher became a primary focal point. It is the teacher who reflects that the “integration of culture and faith is mediated by the integration of faith and life” (§43).

The Bishops addressed the affordability of a Catholic school in the context of societal justice (§58). Writing on an issue emerging at the time of the document’s publication, the Bishops acknowledged the schools’ need to be “financially self-supporting” (SCCE, 1977, §58). To the extent that this need resulted in access to

Catholic school being limited predominately to wealthier social classes, the SCCE cautioned that it could lead to the perpetuation of societal injustice (§58). The role of parents in the decision-making process was not a focal point of the document.

Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith

The SCCE (1982) turned its attention to the teaching community of the school, publishing *Lay Catholics in School: Witnesses to Faith*. The document focused on the role of the teacher in imparting the central values of the Catholic school. The SCCE reiterated themes that were presented in earlier documents centering Catholic education on a theological view of the human person (SCCE, 1965, 1977). In *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, the Bishops (1982) delineated this perspective of the human person in detail:

It is a concept which includes a defense of human rights, but also attributes to the human person the dignity of a child of God; it attributes the fullest liberty, freed from sin itself by Christ, the most exalted destiny, which is the definitive and total possession of God Himself, through love. It establishes the strictest possible relationship of solidarity among all persons through mutual love and an ecclesial community. It calls for the fullest development of all that is human, because we have been made masters of the world by its Creator. Finally, it proposes Christ, Incarnate Son of God and perfect Man, as both model and means; to imitate Him, is, for all men and women, the inexhaustible source of personal and communal perfection. Thus, Catholic educators can be certain that they make human beings more human. (§18)

The document situated the role of the educator as one who teaches human dignity in both a formal and informal manner, thus proffering a definition of teacher that goes beyond a secular understanding of the term. The SCCE (1982) defined this role as follows: “The teacher under discussion here is not simply a professional person who systematically transmits a body of knowledge in the context of a school; ‘teacher’ is to be understood as ‘educator’- one who helps to form human persons” (§16).

Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith (SCCE, 1982) used this understanding of the educator to lay the foundation for understanding the teacher as a role model. The educator is one who gives witness to the Catholic understanding of the human person in all aspects of his or her existence in the school and nonschool setting. Furthermore, the educator gives witness to a critical value of the Catholic school, that of bringing together a relationship between culture and faith. The SCCE proposed the following vision for this relationship:

For the accomplishment of this vast undertaking, many different educational elements must converge; in each of them, the lay Catholic must appear as a witness to faith. An organic, critical, and value-oriented communication of culture clearly includes the communication of truth and knowledge; while doing this, a Catholic teacher should always be alert for opportunities to initiate the appropriate dialogue between culture and faith - two things which are intimately related - in order to bring the interior synthesis of the student to this deeper level. It is, of course, a synthesis which should already exist in the teacher. (§29)

With the document's focus on the role of the professional staff, the SCCE (1982) did not substantially address the parental role in education, except to affirm previous teachings (SCCE, 1965) that the "parents are the first and foremost educators of their children, and that the rights and duties that they have in this regard are 'original and primary with respect to the educational role of others'" (SCCE, 1982, §12). The SCCE (1982) further acknowledged the right of parents to choose an educational system for their child:

If the school is such an important educational instrument, then the individual being educated has the right to choose the system of education - and therefore the type of school - that he or she prefers. When a person does not yet have the capacity to do this, then the parents, who have the primary rights in the education of their children, have the right to make this choice. From this it clearly follows that, in principle, a State monopoly of education is not permissible, and that only a pluralism of school systems will respect the fundamental right and the freedom of individuals. (§14)

This statement of the SCCE was directed to countries that restricted educational choice on the part of parents. It did not address factors affecting parent choice in education as a separate issue.

While the Bishops did not address tuition affordability, the issue was clearly emerging at the time that the Bishops developed the teaching. The SCCE's (1982) insight foreshadowed issues currently burdening Catholic schools, as follows:

If the directors of the school and the lay people who work in the school are to live according to the same ideals, two things are essential. First, lay people must receive an adequate salary, guaranteed by a well defined contract, for the work they do in the school: a salary that will permit them to live in dignity, without excessive work or a need for additional employment that will interfere with the duties of an educator. This may not be immediately possible without putting an enormous financial burden on the families, or making the school so expensive that it becomes a school for a small elite group; but so long as a truly adequate salary is not being paid, the laity should see in the school directors a genuine preoccupation to find the resources necessary to achieve this end. (¶78)

The emerging tension regarding tuition affordability in the Catholic school system is clearly evidenced in this statement by the SCCE. The document went no further in addressing this issue.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School

Eleven years after publishing *The Catholic School*, the SCCE (1988) promulgated *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*. The SCCE reiterated the central values of a Catholic school:

The Council, therefore, declared that what makes the Catholic school distinctive is its religious dimension, and that this is to be found in *a*) the educational climate, *b*) the personal development of each student, *c*) the relationship established between culture and the Gospel, *d*) the illumination of all knowledge with the light of faith. (¶1)

While the SCCE reiterated these core values, it did so cognizant of the tensions that faced youth, including: superficial human relationships, loneliness, a search for meaning,

worry about “an uncertain future,” depression, and a society that allowed easy escapes (§12, §13). The SCCE reemphasized the importance of the “school climate” as defined by “persons, space, time, relationships, teaching, study” (§24) and argued that schools must look at these issues as factors that shape the holistic formation of a student, so that

From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illumined by the light of faith, and having its own unique characteristics. The Council summed this up by speaking of an environment permeated with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom. (§25)

The SCCE (1988) reiterated themes developed in *The Catholic School*, noting the cultural role teachers played in shaping the climate of the school, both as individuals and as members of a community (§26). Within this context, the young person can learn in an environment that nurtures him or her amidst the challenges outlined above. The SCCE emphasized this theme in its exploration of the religious aspects of the Catholic school:

The educational value of Christian anthropology is obvious. Here is where students discover the true value of the human persons: loved by God, with a mission on earth and a destiny that is immortal, as a result they learn the virtues of self-respect and self-love, and of love for other – a love that is universal. In addition, each student will develop a willingness to embrace life, and also his other own unique vocation, as a fulfillment of God’s will. (§76)

The SCCE further noted the central theme of community that Vatican II emphasized, asserting,

The declaration *Gravissimum educationis* notes an important advance in the way a Catholic school is thought of: the transition from the school as an institution to the school as a community. This community dimension is, perhaps, one result of the new awareness of the Church's nature as developed by the Council. In the Council texts, the community dimension is primarily a theological concept rather than a sociological category; this is the sense in which it is used in the second chapter of *Lumen gentium*, where the Church is described as the People of God. (§31)

The idea of a community as a theological, in contrast to a sociological concept, permeated all of the post-Vatican II documents. Reflecting the trinitarian nature of God, the Church emphasized the role of the Christian community in which the human person encounters and learns faith. This understanding of community provides a value that distinguishes the Catholic school from its public school counterparts.

The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium

Twenty years after *The Catholic School*, the SCCE (1997) published *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, its most recent document addressing Catholic education. The SCCE reiterated key themes developed in previous documents, but placed the themes in the context of a sharp critique of contemporary culture. Thirty-two years after the high point in school enrollment, and amidst a sharp decline in student population, argumentation on the right of a Catholic school to exist was noticeably absent. Rather, the SCCE (1997) continued the trajectory toward articulating an intrinsic value of the Catholic school in response to societal confusion. The opening paragraph of the document framed the discussion:

On the threshold of the third millennium, education faces new challenges which are the result of a new socio-political and cultural context. First and foremost, we have a crisis of values which, in highly developed societies in particular, assumes the form, often exalted by the media, of subjectivism, moral relativism and nihilism. The extreme pluralism pervading contemporary society leads to behavior patterns which are at times so opposed to one another as to undermine any idea of community identity. (§1)

In response to this critique, the SCCE asserted the intrinsic value of a school:

Such an outlook calls for courageous renewal on the part of the Catholic school. The precious heritage of the experience gained over the centuries reveals its vitality precisely in the capacity for prudent innovation. And so, now as in the past, the Catholic school must be able to speak for itself effectively and convincingly. It is not merely a question of adaptation, but of missionary thrust, the fundamental duty to evangelize, to go towards men and women wherever they are, so that they may receive the gift of salvation. (§3)

The Bishops offered an understanding of contemporary culture that encouraged a reassertion of the core values of a Catholic school. They recognized that parents were under no obligation to choose a Catholic school and that the value of the school must be articulated on its own merits.

The SCCE (1997) reflected on the challenges of the past 20 years and encouraged the educational community to focus on the salvific dimension of the school. They again emphasized the foundational theme that the school is essentially a theological endeavor that understands the human person in the context of his relationship with Christ. The SCCE (1997) affirmed its previous teaching:

The Catholic school sets out to be a school for the human person and of human persons. “The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: this is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school.” This affirmation, stressing man's vital relationship with Christ, reminds us that it is in His person that the fullness of the truth concerning man is to be found. For this reason the Catholic school, in committing itself to the development of the whole man, does so in obedience to the solicitude of the Church, in the awareness that all human values find their fulfillment and unity in Christ. This awareness expresses the centrality of the human person in the educational project of the Catholic school, strengthens its educational endeavor and renders it fit to form strong personalities. (§9)

In a context of “extreme pluralism” (1997, ¶1) that mitigates against community and a transmission of life-giving values, the SCCE reemphasized the centrality of Christ at the heart of the Catholic school. This understanding focused Catholic education on the development of the whole person.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Following the Vatican II publications and in reference to their direction, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) developed a series of writings addressing Catholic education in the United States: *To Teach as Jesus Did* (1972), *Teach*

Them (1976), *Principles for Educational Reform in the United States* (1995), *In Support of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* (1990), and *Renewing our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* (2005).

To Teach as Jesus Did

The National Council of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) published their first major document addressing Catholic education in 1972, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, 9 years after the close of the Second Vatican Council. The document built on central theological themes promulgated at the Council and *The Declaration on Christian Education*. While *To Teach as Jesus Did* addressed all forms of Catholic education in the United States, the Bishops (1972) singled out Catholic schools as “afford[ing] the fullest and best opportunity to realize the threefold purpose of Christian education among children and young people” (§101). The Bishops’ rationale for this position provides an important context for understanding their statement on the value of Catholic schools. They offered the following analysis of the significance of Catholic schools:

Schools naturally enjoy educational advantages which other programs either cannot offer or can offer only with great difficulty. A school has a greater claim on the time and loyalty of the student and his family. It makes more accessible to students participation in the liturgy and sacraments, which are powerful forces for the development of personal sanctity and for the building of community. It provides a more favorable pedagogical and psychological environment for teaching Christian faith. With the Second Vatican Council we affirm our conviction that the Catholic school “retains its immense importance in the circumstances of our times” and we recall the duty of Catholic parents “to entrust their children to a Catholic school, when and where this is possible, to support such schools to the extent of their ability, and to work along side them for the welfare of their children.” (NCCB, 1972, §101)

With this understanding of the unique role of the Catholic schools, the NCCB (1972) reiterated a central theme developed throughout the education documents: One of the schools’ primary goals is the “integration of religious truth and values with the rest of

life” (§104). This effort “distinguishes the Catholic school from other schools” (§105), and it provides a foundational value by which the success of a Catholic school could be evaluated.

To Teach as Jesus Did further developed the centrality of the community within the schools. Basing their teaching on a theological concept of community emanating from the teaching of Christ (§22), the NCCB (1972) positioned community at the center of the educational experience:

Community is at the heart of Christian education not simply as a concept to be taught but as a reality to be lived. Through education, men must be moved to build community in all areas of life; they can do this best if they have learned the meaning of community by experiencing it. Formed by this experience, they are better able to build community in their families, their places of work, their neighborhoods, their nation, their world. (§23)

The NCCB (1972) followed this statement with a specific reference to Christian formation within Catholic schools. They stated that the educational program

can contribute to making Catholic schools true communities of faith in which the formational efforts of Catholic families are complemented, reinforced and extended. Within such communities, teachers and pupils experience together what it means to live a life of prayer, personal responsibility and freedom reflective of Gospel values. Their fellowship helps them grow in their commitment to service of God, one another, the Church, and the general community. (§107)

The Bishops continued,

Building and living community must be prime, explicit goals of the contemporary Catholic school. (§108)

The NCCB (1972) noted that “financial problems” contributed to the enrollment decline in the Catholic school system (§115). Yet the NCCB did not connect this to an issue of tuition affordability; it directed its comments toward the issue of public support for Catholic education. The document encouraged the Church to continue exploring

avenues in which the schools might receive public financial aid without conflicting with court interpretations of the First and Fourteenth Amendments (§16). At the same time, *To Teach as Jesus Did* advocated that the schools serve “the poor and disadvantaged of our nation,” continuing, “Generous sustained sacrifice is demanded of those who God has favored in order to make available educational programs which meet the needs of the poor” (§121). This statement was not coupled with statements on affordability, tuition costs, or parent choice issues.

The NCCB (1972) affirmed the role of parents as the primary educators of their children (§52). They further asserted the right of parental choice in education and admonished any state movement in which “educational efforts [are] subsumed in one educational system” (§149). At this point in the American Bishops’ reflection on Catholic education, the issue of parent choice remained in the context of the right to choose an alternative educational system for the child.

Teach Them

In order to provide a specific focus on Catholic schools, the NCCB (1976) published *Teach Them*, only 4 years after its pastoral address on Christian education, *To Teach as Jesus Did*. The NCCB (1976) emphasized its previous statements with a clear articulation of the central values of the Catholic School:

Four years ago we reaffirmed our commitment to Catholic schools; we now do so again. For we hold that “Catholic schools which realize the threefold purpose of Christian education, to teach doctrine, to build community, and to serve, are the most effective means available to the Church for the education of children and young people.” (§8)

They further stated:

The integration of religious truth and value with the rest of life, which is possible in these schools, distinguishes them from others. (§9)

In support of this assessment, the NCCB noted that the Catholic school “is an effective vehicle of total Christian formation” (§21). The statement by the NCCB supported the value of community in which the central values of the Christian life are lived and modeled in all aspects of a Catholic school’s program.

The NCCB (1976) reiterated the importance of Catholic schools in serving underprivileged minority groups in the United States and acknowledged the cost in doing so. The NCCB (1976) indicated that this was a burden to be addressed by the larger Catholic community, asserting, “The challenge confronting the total Catholic community is to approximate the self-sacrifice of poverty belt parents by increasing its contributions to interparochial and diocesan funds for the ongoing and expanded support of schools in need of annual subsidy” (1976, §25). They followed this statement with a prescient analysis of future issues when they encouraged the Catholic community to “make realistic predictions of future enrollment and estimates of future costs, notably for teachers’ salaries” (1976, §38). They further cited the challenges of “soaring expenses and tensions in governance” (1976, §38) in running the schools.

While not addressing the relationship between the school and the parents in detail, *Teach Them* departed from the normal assertion of the parents’ right to choose a Catholic education. The NCCB (1976) offered the following assessment of a Catholic school: “Today’s Catholic school is more than a means for safeguarding faith and virtue; it is a center in which parents and teachers, guided by the Holy Spirit, collaborate in giving children a complete Catholic education” (28). In making this statement, the NCCB demonstrated its critical movement past the position of the Third Plenary Council, in which a Catholic education provided protection against secularism, and into an embrace

of the theology of the Second Vatican Council, in which the school was perceived as a “center for human formation” (SCCE, 1977, ¶25). While *Teach Them* did not address parent choice directly, the philosophical foundation for the choice was beginning to emerge.

In Support of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools

The USCCB (1990) published *In Support of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* 7 years prior to and in preparation for the 25th anniversary of *To Teach As Jesus Did*. The document affirmed previous publications of the SCCE (*The Catholic School* [1977], *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* [1988] and their previous address on Catholic education, *To Teach As Jesus Did* (1972). The NCCB (1990) specifically noted survey results indicating that graduates of Catholic schools demonstrated qualities associated with a faithful response to the Gospel, indicating that the community reflective of Gospel values desired by the church was effective in transmitting the values (¶14). Indeed, that was the first of the four goals set by the Bishops (see Table 4).

Goals 2–4 indicated the shifting priority of the Bishops as they surveyed their school system and addressed parental rights, access, and finances. The goals clearly revealed that financing a Catholic school education and the impact of this financing had emerged as a critical issue for the Bishops.

The NCCB (1990) specifically called out the disparity in inflation and the cost of Catholic schooling, noting that “Costs have increased 50 percent in the last 20 years, over twice the Consumer Price Index” (¶17). In response, the Bishops (1990) advised that, “Rising costs may call for new approaches, new forms of partnership and sharing, new uses of financial resources” (¶5). However, there was a further and potentially more

Table 4

Goals in Support of Catholic Education

Goal	Description
1	That Catholic school will continue to provide high quality education for all of their students in a context infused with Gospel values
2	Serious efforts will be made to ensure that Catholic schools are available for Catholic parents who wish to send their children to them
3	New initiatives will be launched to secure sufficient financial assistance from both private and public sectors for Catholic parents to exercise this right
4	That the salaries and benefits of Catholic schoolteachers and administrators will reflect our teaching as expressed in Economic Justice for All

Note. From *In Support of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* (USCCB, 1990, ¶20).

ominous issue on the horizon noted by the Bishops. The rising costs were causing parents to reassess the value of a Catholic education. Parents were evaluating the perceived value of the school relative to costs and comparing that to the value of public education. The NCCB (1990) offered the following concern:

In many wealthy suburban areas, some parents perceive that the “free” public schools are better than Catholic schools, in spite of the research to the contrary. Other parents perceive that the public schools offer their children a broader cultural experience, and as a result they opt for the public school education. (¶17)

In these brief statements, the NCCB (1990) identified critical issues facing Catholic schools as they moved toward the end of the century: the cost of a Catholic education to the parents, the Church and the larger community, and the parents’ perception of value.

In responding to the role of parents, the NCCB (1990) again affirmed its position that parents are “the first and foremost educators of their children” and that parents have the right to choose their children’s education (¶25). The NCCB (1990) connected the

support of parental rights with financial support to make the choice as “Recognizing the long-term nature of convincing the nation that parents should have not only a choice in selecting educational opportunities for their children, but also financial support to exercise that choice” (§27). In this context, the issue of parent choice is both a right and a financial issue, but one in which the Bishops, the community, and the State play a role in supporting parents' rights to choose an education for their child.

Principles for Educational Reform in the United States

In 1995, the American Bishops published *Principles for Educational Reform in the United States*. The NCCB (1995) intended its comments to contribute to the broader discussion of education in the United States in order “to make a positive and lasting contribution to the discussion that is currently taking place on the national, state, and local level of our nation as to how best to produce true, comprehensive and lasting educational reform” (§3). Yet the *Principles for Educational Reform in the United States* drew heavily from the Catholic experience and perspective of education. The following principle outlined a fundamental perspective of the Bishops:

No single model or means of education is appropriate to the needs and desires of all persons. Therefore, our nation should make available the broadest variety of quality educational opportunities for each individual to choose from, including public, private and religious models (1995, §10)

The statement indicated a view woven through the documents; the Church has been and continues to argue for the validity of Catholic schools to be considered among all of the educational opportunities of the United States. This view applied to parents' rights as well.

The NCCB (1995) again affirmed that parents are the “first and foremost educators of their children” (§11). Consistent with the belief that the State should support

alternative forms of education, including Catholic schools, the NCCB (1995) tied its discussion of parents' rights to financial support for parents deciding to choose Catholic schools. The NCCB argued that "Parents have the right to choose the kinds of education best suited to the needs of their children, and they should not be burdened economically for choosing a private or religious school in the exercise of this fundamental right" (§14). They indicated that this support should include "where, necessary, economic assistance" (§15). The Bishops (1995) further proposed that "Since children and parents do not surrender their rights to receive and choose an education because of their economic status, the equitable financing of education must be a primary goal of education policy at all levels" (§43). The principles tacitly acknowledged the costs of Catholic schooling relative to the parents' ability to pay but did not address this issue directly.

While the *Principles for Educational Reform in the United States* (1995) avoided the explicitly theological language found in other pastoral directives, the document still articulated a holistic view of the student educational program. The Bishops (1995) asserted as a central belief that

The goal of all education is to foster the development of the total person. Education policy decision makers, including boards of education and system administrators, need to provide students with opportunities for moral and spiritual formation to complement their intellectual and physical development. (§35)

This principle aligned with the American Bishops' foundational document on Catholic education, *To Teach as Jesus Did* (1976), in which the school is a formative environment for the student.

Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium

The USCCB published its most recent document addressing Catholic education, *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third*

Millennium, in 2005. Echoing themes found *In Support of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* (1990), the Bishops (2005) delineated collaboration with the parents, the foundation of the school in the person of Christ, the teaching of this in a community that embodies the interrelationship of “faith and culture,” and the development of “schools for the human person” (§5). Referencing the SCCE’s document, *Catholic Schools on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1997), they noted that the “Catholic schools are at once places of evangelization, of complete formation, of inculturation, of apprenticeship in a lively dialogue between young people of different religions and social backgrounds” (2005, §6). They further noted the role of Catholic education in providing for the economically and socially disadvantaged as the fundamental service of the church.

The document faced the issue of school finances directly. In a significant leap from *Teach Them*, in which the NCCB (1976) suggested a role for the larger church in financing Catholic education, *Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* delineated a more prescriptive view. The Bishops (2005) proposed,

The burden of supporting our Catholic schools can no longer be placed exclusively on the individual parishes that have schools and on parents who pay tuition. This will require all Catholics, including those in parishes without schools, to focus on the spirituality of stewardship. The future of Catholic school education depends on the entire Catholic community embracing wholeheartedly the concept of stewardship of time, talent, and treasure, and translating stewardship into concrete action. (§26)

The statement tacitly acknowledged a number of issues: Catholic schools are a fundamental value to the Catholic Church in America; tuition has exceeded families’ ability to pay for education; and it is incumbent upon the Church as a whole to support the system.

Following this statement of support for sharing the financial burden of the schools, the USCCB (2005) suggested financial pathways such as tax free bonds, reaching out to the civic community, and articulating the wider communities' vested interest in the success of Catholic schools. The Bishops (2005) further highlighted the issue of financial support for teachers, acknowledging the critical financial issues that face professional staff.

As with previous documents, the USCCB (2005) challenged the legitimacy of State action that does not allow funding for Catholic schools. The USCCB argued that restricting funding indirectly limited parents' free-will choice to send their child to a Catholic school. They advocated the following analysis of political action:

As the primary educators of their children, parents have the right to choose the school best suited for them. The entire Catholic community should be encouraged to advocate for parental school choice and personal and corporate tax credits, which will help parents to fulfill their responsibility in educating their children. (USCCB, 2005, ¶26)

This statement follows the clearly trajectory of parent-choice issues evaluated in the context of State support for Catholic education.

Summary

The early writings of the Church on the relevance of Catholic education were conditioned by the theological perspective of the Church and an oftentimes contentious relationship with the secular world. The Catholic school system in the United States developed amidst tensions with secular authorities who advocated for a common school system to educate the populace for the new nation. With strong undercurrents of anti-Catholicism in the tone of the debate, the Catholic Church encouraged the development of a separate school system as a means of safeguarding the faith. In concert with this

massive school development effort, the American Bishops strongly encouraged parents to enroll their children in Catholic schools.

Pastoral documents written during this period (Third Plenary Council, 1884; *Spectata fides*, 1885; *Divini illius magistri*, 1929) grounded this encouragement in the parents' role as guardian of their children's faith and moral development. Given the context of the time, the instruction to attend Catholic schools was widely interpreted as a faith mandate. The organization and financial structure of the schools at the time differed from current practice. Priests and religious brothers and sisters staffed the schools. Paid by the diocese or order, this church subsidy, both in terms of financial support and personnel, rendered tuition costs extremely low. Thus, the issue of tuition costs and affordability received little attention in the early pastoral writings.

The historical situation changed dramatically in the second half of the 20th century. After enrollment peaked in 1965, Catholic schools entered a long period of enrollment decline that remains unabated to this day (NCEA, 2007). Beginning in the mid-1960s, significant numbers of clergy and religious left active ministry (NCEA, 2009). Lay professional teachers entered the Catholic schools to take their place and now constitute 96% of the teaching ranks (NCEA, 2009). The American Bishops advocated high-quality academics, adequate facilities, and living wages for teachers. The loss of the indirect subsidy through personnel support and the consequent shift in financial burden to the schools resulted in a precipitous increase in tuition rates, outpacing both inflation and cost of living indexes (see Figure 1).

The 1960s brought significant changes to the Catholic Church. The Bishops of the Second Vatican Council abandoned the historically confrontational polemic and

articulated theological support for Christianity on its merits. Subsequent pastoral writings of the Vatican and the American bishops aligned their teaching to both the theological vision of the Vatican II documents and the changing historical situation of the Catholic schools in the United States. The document *Gravissimus educationis* (1965) provided a foundation for later church teaching, asserting that a Catholic school's

proper function is to create for the school community a special atmosphere animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity, to help youth grow according to the new creatures they were made through baptism as they develop their own personalities, and finally to order the whole human culture to the news of salvation to the knowledge the students gradually acquire of the world, life and man is illumined by faith. (§25)

Subsequent documents of the SCCE and the USCCB developed these themes in various contexts. The central values of the pastoral letters included the centrality of faith in all learning, the role of the community in reflecting the Gospel values, the teacher as role model of core values, the importance of interpreting culture in the light of faith, the importance of promoting the dignity of the human being, and the role of service and of doctrinal learning.

The documents revealed a shift from instructing parents to send their children to Catholic schools as part of a faith directive, to articulating a compelling case for parents to send their son or daughter to a Catholic school. *Gravissimus educationis* (1965) again provided a central theme that would be echoed by subsequent documents. "Parents who have the primary and inalienable right and duty to educate their children must enjoy true liberty in their choice of schools" (§6). Parents were still encouraged to send their children to Catholic schools, but the articulation of this teaching focused on encountering the core values of a Catholic school - ultimately an encounter of faith. In the United States, the issue of "parent choice" remained intimately connected with the issue of

public financing for Catholic education. The USCCB (1990) did acknowledge the critical issue of parent perception of the costs and value of public schools relative to a Catholic education.

The issue of affordability garnered increasing attention among the American Bishops toward the end of the century. The Bishops (1990) noted the importance of affordability to all Catholic parents desiring their children to attend Catholic schools and the importance of pursuing multiple private and public avenues for financial support of the schools (§20). In their most recent document, the USCCB (2005) acknowledged that the issue of affordability had exceeded parents' ability to pay, and they called on the entire Catholic community to support the Catholic school system (§26).

Parent Choice

The survey of the literature on parent choice used Convey's (1992) analysis of studies completed prior to the 1990s as a baseline for this research. The analysis provided data with which to compare current research. The survey of the literature focuses primarily on the findings of studies completed within the last 10 years (Table 5). This researcher believes that this time period is the most significant relative to dramatic changes in Catholic school tuition costs. Table 5 summarizes the purpose, methodology and population used in the studies outlined in this review of literature.

By the 1980s, the official mandate to attend Catholic schools had been abandoned, tuition costs had escalated significantly, and the theological and pastoral environment was impacting the practice of the Catholic faithful. Evaluating Catholic school research during the 1980s, Convey (1992) noted,

As the costs of attending Catholic schools continued to rise, most Catholic parents no longer automatically enrolled their children in Catholic school, but viewed Catholic school attendance as a choice to be made among alternatives. The

Table 5

Summary of Research Studies on Parent Choice

Author, Year, Title	Purpose	Methodology	Population
Convey (1992) <i>Catholic School Make a Difference: Twenty Five Years of Research</i>	To assess studies of parent choice in studies covering 25 years	Meta-analysis of research studies	Not applicable
Martin (1993) <i>Choosing a Secondary School: Can Parents' Behavior Be Described as Rational?</i>	To assess parents' decision to send their child to a secondary school in light of rational choice theory	Parent interviews in longitudinal study spanning 18 months	Eight families attending two secondary schools in London, England
Schneider, Marschall, Teske, & Roche (1998) <i>School Choice and Culture Wars in the Classroom: What Different Parents Seek From Education</i>	To assess factors affecting parents' decision to send their child to a secondary school, with a specific goal to understand socioeconomic differences	Parent surveys (paper)	Parents of children in two suburban and two inner-city school districts
Bauch & Gao (2000) <i>Contribution of Parents' School Opinions and Reasons for Choice to Their Willingness to Support Catholic High Schools: A Structural Model</i>	To assess factors affecting parent choice of a Catholic school, including finances, reasons for choice and opinions of school	Parent surveys (paper)	1,843 parents in stratified sample of 10 schools in the Cleveland Diocese
Garvey (2000) <i>Parent Choice of Elementary Schools Within the Cleveland Catholic Diocese and its Implications for the Financial Policies of Diocesan Schools</i>	To assess parent choice of Catholic elementary schools: the most important elements and the decision process	Mixed methodology of parent surveys (paper) and focus group interviews	140 parents from 18 schools in the Diocese of Cleveland
Hsieh & Shen (2000) <i>The Effects of Parental Characteristics on School Choice</i>	To assess factors influencing parents to choose a public or private school	Mixed methodology including evaluation of national data and parent interviews	Interviews comprising parents with children in 3 rd through 12 th grades throughout the United States
Collins (2001) <i>The Catholic School Effect and Catholic Identity</i>	To assess effectiveness of Catholic schools, the underlying reasons, and the relationship between the school's Catholicity and parent satisfaction	Mixed methodology including a principal and school assessment survey and interviews of parents	220 elementary schools and interviews—parents in 9 Catholic elementary schools in the Los Angeles Archdiocese

Table 5 (continued)

Author, Year, Title	Purpose	Methodology	Population
Moe (2001) <i>Hidden Demand</i>	To assess the motivation of parents who send their children to private schools, and to assess the implications for society	Parent survey (paper)	Random selection of 4,700 parents in the United States
Rittmeyer (2002) <i>Why Some Chicago Parents Choose Academically Focused Public Magnet or Catholic High Schools Instead of Neighborhood Public High Schools</i>	To assess factors causing parents to choose private schools and opt out of public schools with the intent to identify critical parent concerns in education	Mixed methodology of parent survey (paper) and follow-up interviews	Parents of freshman and sophomore students in 3 high schools in the Chicago area
Bulman (2004) <i>School Choice Stories: The Role of Culture</i>	To assess school selection of parents in different socioeconomic strata	Parent interviews	88 parents of students in private and public schools in 2 suburban communities
Bisset & Jackson (2005) <i>Gender and School Choice: Factors Influencing Parents When Choosing Single-Sex or Co-Educational Independent Schools for Their Children</i>	To assess parents' motivation for choosing private schools in terms of gender and socioeconomic status of the middle class	Mixed methodology of parent surveys and interviews	225 parents of students in three schools (single-gender boys, single-gender girls, and co-educational), 15 parent interviews
Ryan (2005) <i>Factors Associated with Decision Making Concerning Catholic High Schools</i>	To assess critical factors influencing parents to have their children attend public instead of Catholic high schools	Parent survey (paper)	156 parents of eighth grade graduates of Catholic schools in Virginia
Weller (2006) <i>Why a School for Boys? An Inquiry Into Why Parents Choose Independent Boys' Schools.</i>	To assess why parents send their sons to boys' schools and gain insight on the perceptions of single-gender education	On-line survey of quantitative and qualitative data	Parents of 13 students at an independent school for boys

reasons for making that choice still included religious considerations, but academic quality and discipline were very important for virtually all parents and the most important consideration for many parents. (p. 145)

Clearly, the changing social, theological and financial environment impacted parents' perspective on the decision-making process relative to Catholic schools.

Values

Convey (1992) noted that parents selecting the “religious nature” (p. 150) as the most important feature of their school decision dropped in studies conducted after 1975 to a level comprising 20%-30% of the parents. Academic factors rose to the most significant value for parents. Yet the studies further concluded that the academics were “not a sufficient reason for most parents to select Catholic schools” (p. 150). The additional factors of “religious education, discipline, and the reinforcement of values” (p. 150) were a part of the decision. This finding constitutes an important nuance supported by more recent research.

Garvey (2000) conducted focus-group research and tested for the strength of a variable over a period of time, which he termed *durability*. In his study of parent reasons for selecting a Catholic elementary school in the Diocese of Cleveland, Garvey (2000) found that the “moral proposition of these schools remains as the factor most valued by parents” (p. 111). Non-Catholic parents valued the moral proposition highly when tested for durability (p. 121).

This work resonated with the work of Collins (2001), who found a high degree of affinity for the religious character of the schools. In her study *The Catholic School Effect and Catholic Identity* (2001), Collins offered that while academics held high importance for the parents, “they seem most satisfied when academics, values and religion are thoroughly integrated” (p. 146). Puccio (2000) similarly found that academics were

perceived as part of a larger grouping of factors affecting the decision. Thus, the religious nature of the school, while often tested for as a separate identifier in studies, must be perceived as part of a multi-faceted frame from which parents evaluate the schools.

McLellan and Youniss (1999) noted that Catholic schools throughout the United States offered a strong Catholic environment. The incorporation of religious instruction through formal classes, the requirements of service and the participation in the sacramental life of the church were strong components of the schools surveyed. In addition, the majority of principals ranked “religious development” as a central goal of the school, and 88% of the faculty identified themselves as Catholic (1999, p. 4).

These findings may play a role in the support of the community environment of the schools. Collins (2001) found that the schools created “functional communities” (p. 145) among the parents and student community. “Adults at school and in the parish are closely linked to the children’s families, providing intergenerational closure, a rich source of social capital” (p. 145). Collins continued,

Because of the religious affiliation of Catholic schools, they have value consistency as well. Families know one another and attend the same religious services. In such a setting the values children are exposed to are those of adults who are closely linked to their families. As a result, value consistently develops naturally among parents, between parents and their children, and between children and their friends. (p. 146)

This community that Collins described appears to reflect the community of faith called for by the Second Vatican Council (1965), in which the school community reflects a “special atmosphere animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity” (§20). While this expanded community may not have been intentionally created by the school, Collins’

(2001) research would indicate that it may be the result of the community's broader relationships in the parish, neighborhood and school.

Cost

Cost remains a significant issue for families considering sending their children to a Catholic school. Recent research (Bauch & Gao, 2000; Bulman, 2004; Garvey, 2000; Hsieh & Shen, 2000; Ryan, 2005) has suggested that there is a critical level of income that supports the choice to attend a Catholic or private school. These studies indicated that the best predictor of families' willingness to pay for a Catholic school education was their income level. "In the last analysis," Bauch and Gao (2000) noted, "parent income is the most powerful predictor of parents' willingness to pay higher levels of tuition" (p. 15). Bulman (2004) offered that "those with more financial resources, higher educational attainment, and more information are more likely to actively choose their child's school" (p. 498). Consistent with previous research, Rittmeyer (2002) found that parents not choosing Catholic schools cite cost as a central factor.

The act of choosing implies an evaluative dimension to the process. Given the higher costs, parents are having to assess the value of Catholic education. Ryan (2005) noted, "it appears that the Catholic school parents approach secondary education of their children much as they approach the purchase of any valuable commodity – as discerning consumers" (p. 92). Garvey's (2000) research found that parents' willingness to sacrifice and pay for the education of their child increased with the parents' emphasis on values in education. In other words, the parents were willing to pay more for an education that fostered important values. Their willingness to pay correlated to their value assessment.

Bauch and Gao (2000) found similar themes. They offered the following conclusion:

Our results add to the growing body of financial research on Catholic school by documenting a “customer satisfaction” relationship between the school and their clients based on parents’ view of school quality and the willingness to pay increasingly high rates of tuition to support them. These Catholic schools appear to be in an era in which Catholic schools have more of an external, functionalist value to parents than an internal relational value. (p. 16)

Bulman (2004) appeared less convinced regarding market-based applications in the evaluation of consumer choice. He asserted,

The market analogy that pervades much of the school-choice debate does not capture the cultural complexity and contradictions involved in how educational choices are perceived, evaluated, and acted upon by a diverse group of families in diverse educational contexts. (p. 513)

Bulman (2004) argued that parents “draw heavily upon the tools of their past educational experiences (and often religious faith) as they interpret the educational world and take action within it” (pp. 493-494). Martin (1993) noted the complexity of the decision-making process as well, and argued against a rational-choice model of assessing decision making.

Bulman’s critique may be understandable given that his research, *School-Choice Stories: The Role of Culture* (2004), looked specifically at the cultural context of the decision. Yet it may be that the researchers are highlighting different dimensions of the decision process. His critique does not exclude a market analysis, nor do the other researchers exclude culture-based influences on the decisions.

Culture may lead to the different school choices among parents. Schneider et al. (1998) reported that different socioeconomic groups emphasized different values in the choice process, as follows:

Parents of lower SES [socioeconomic status] and parents who identify themselves as racial minorities indeed want something different from their school than do parents who are white or who have higher education levels. These parents are

more likely to value schools that perform the bedrock function of providing safe environment in which the fundamentals of education are delivered. (p. 498)

The researchers continued,

An emphasis on values and diversity may be luxuries that middle-class and white parents are more in a position to emphasize than are less educated parents or parents who are racial minorities. (p. 498)

Hsieh and Shen (2000), in their study *The Effects of Parental Characteristics on School*

Choice, found differences in the values emphasized among socioeconomic classes.

These data would indicate that the framing of the decision by the parents assumes

considerable importance in the assessment of the school's benefits.

Moe (2001) evaluated the issue of parent educational choice in the context of the national discussion concerning vouchers for private school education. His assessment was straightforward, and it delineated the variables of cost and value.

Under the current system, going private is costly, and parental choice is governed by a simple calculus. Parents tend to go private if they can afford the tuition, and if the value they associate with going private – whether it derives from performance, religion, ideology, race, or other concerns – exceeds the cost. This calculus does not tell us what parents actually value. ¶6

Moe (2001) continued,

Performance is by far the most powerful influence on the desire to go private. When satisfaction with public school performance drops from high to low, the probability that a public school parent is interested in going private increases by 37% - which dwarfs all other variables. ¶39

While the study was not restricted to Catholic school parents, the findings suggest that powerful variables influence the framing of the choice decision.

Summary

The reasons parents choose Catholic schools have shifted over time. In the last two decades of the 20th century, academic reasons emerged as the most significant motivator for parents, while religious factors experienced a significant decline. Research

further indicated that this shift was a change in emphasis and that parents valued schools that offered academics, religious education and values as part of the entire educational experience. The literature suggests that the cost of Catholic education is influencing a more market-based approach to the decision of choosing a Catholic school. There further appears to be a critical baseline income that affects parents' ability to choose a school. However, the decision is not based solely on finances and represents a balancing of values and costs. Parents who value the education may be willing to pay higher costs associated with a Catholic school. It appears that cultural and socioeconomic groups emphasize different values in the decision to select a Catholic school.

Theoretical Framework: Theories of Judgment and Decision Making

The literature review will present an overview of Daniel Kahneman's and Amos Tversky's theories of judgment and decision making (prospect theory). The review will examine the critique of utility theory to which the authors responded in developing prospect theory.

In 2002, the Nobel Committee awarded Daniel Kahneman the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences for his work on human judgment and decision making (Nobel Foundation, 2002). In presenting the award, the Committee praised Kahneman as one of the "new generation of economists [that] is the catalyst in a gradual amalgamation of two previously distinct research traditions in experimental economics and economic psychology" (Nobel Foundation, 2002). The work of Kahneman and his partner Amos Tversky challenged the assumptions of utility theory, the dominant theory of decision making in conditions of uncertainty.

Utility Theory

The roots of utility theory can be traced to the work of Jeremy Bentham whose philosophical work supported the assumptions that “the goodness or badness of experience is quantifiable, and the quantities so obtained can be added across people” (Read, 2004, p. 1). This foundational principle has provided the basis for assessing human behavior and choice theory, as Read indicated: “Choice behavior was assumed to reflect, however, roughly, the quality of utility derived from a choice” (p. 2). This assumes rationality in making choices that are clearly quantifiable.

The ability to quantify human choice offers significant implications to the field of economics, where people make decisions to maximize profit (pleasure) and reduce loss (pain). Economists quantify and mathematically model decision choices to predict profit and loss in developing business strategies. Of particular interest to economists is the change in a benefit or a loss that focuses the analysis on the added benefit or loss. Daniel Read (2004), a researcher at the London School of Economics, offered the following application to utility theory:

While the concept of total utility, meaning the total pleasure or pain that choices brought, was central to normative economic thinking, only marginal utility, meaning the pleasures or pain from an additional unit or “dose” of a good was needed in their economic analysis. (pp. 3-4)

Modeling to quantify marginal utility has been used extensively in assessing economic decision making and has played a significant role in models associated with stock-market investing.

Kahneman and Tversky (1984), however, noted that the way people actually make decisions in a number of circumstances did not correspond to what would be predicted from an application of utility theory. They asserted, “We argue that deviations

of actual behavior from the normative model are too widespread to be ignored, too systematic to be dismissed as random error, and too fundamental to be accommodated by relaxing the normative system” (1986, p. 210). Kahneman and Tversky (1979) observed two specific violations of the theory. In the first case,

people overweight outcomes that are merely probable in comparison with outcomes that are obtained with certainty. This tendency, called the certainty effect, contributes to risk aversion in choice involving sure gains and to risk seeking in choices involving sure losses. (p. 17)

Second, Kahneman and Tversky (1979) noted that “people generally discard components that are shared by all prospects under consideration. This tendency, called the isolation effect, leads to inconsistent preferences when the same choice is presented in different forms” (p. 17). Thus, both risk aversion and an analysis of how choices are presented play a key role in the development of a theory of decision making.

Theory of Judgment

In contrast to utility theory, Kahneman and Tversky noted “that people are incapable of fully analyzing complex decision situations when the future consequences are uncertain” (Nobel Foundation, 2002). Kahneman and Tversky (1982) postulated that people make judgments in situations of uncertainty by “rely[ing] on a limited number of heuristic principles which reduce the complex tasks of assessing probabilities and predicting values to simpler judgmental operations” (p. 3). The heuristic principles function as “mental shortcuts” (Gilovich & Griffin, 2002, p. 4) or “rules of thumb” (Nobel Foundation, 2002) that simplify judgment as part of an intuitive process. Kahneman (2003) offered the assessment of the place of judgment: “From its earliest days, the research Tversky and I conducted was guided by the idea that intuitive

judgments occupy a position – perhaps corresponding to evolutionary history – between the automatic operations of perception and the deliberate operations of reasoning” (p. 2).

Kahneman and Tversky (1984) identified a number of heuristic principles, two of which will be referenced in this study, *representativeness* and *availability*. Numerous researchers used the theory of Kahneman and Tversky to explore human judgment. The work of Slovic, Finucane, Peters, and MacGregor (2002), who later proposed an *affect* heuristic, will be employed in this investigation (p. 397). The heuristic labels, *representativeness*, *availability*, and *affect*, indicate the nature of the intuitive judgment.

In the *representativeness* heuristic, the individual draws on an underlying stereotype that best “represents” the judgment to be made. Kahneman and Tversky (1984) asserted that “*Representativeness* is an assessment of the degree of correspondence between a sample and population, an instance and a category, an act and an actor, or more generally, between an outcome and a model” (p. 22). The researchers conducted numerous experiments to test how people use this heuristic.

In one experiment, Kahneman and Tversky asked a population of college students to select the occupation most likely to correspond to a fictitious job description. The experiments resulted in an overwhelming identification of stereotypical profiles with specific job descriptions. This conclusion, replicated in numerous experiments, indicated that the representative stereotypes were operative in the conceptions of the college undergraduates. This led the students to categorize an individual’s occupation with relatively little information.

In the *availability* heuristic, the judgment reflects the person's ability to recall an example that corresponds to the decision. Kahneman and Tversky (1974) proposed the following explanation:

There are situations in which people assess the frequency of a class or the probability of an event by the ease with which instances or occurrences can be brought to mind. For example, one may assess the risk of heart attack among middle-aged people by recalling such occurrences among one's acquaintances. (p. 11)

The knowledge of someone who has had a heart attack facilitates the mental shortcut to judging the likelihood of heart attacks in middle-aged men.

Slovic et al. (2002) used the work of Kahneman and Tversky and proposed an *affect* heuristic - a judgment that occurs in response to a person's positive or negative feeling towards the stimulus. The researchers offered the following delineation of this term: "affect means the specific quality of 'goodness' or 'badness' (1) experienced as a feeling state (with or without consciousness) and (2) demarcating a positive or negative quality of a stimulus. Affective responses occur rapidly and automatically" (Slovic et al. p. 397). The authors further noted that "reliance on affect and emotion is a quicker, easier, and more efficient way to navigate in a complex, uncertain, and sometimes dangerous world. Many theorists have given affect a direct and primary role in motivating behavior" (Slovic et al. p. 398). Experiences contain powerful emotional components that are embedded in our world-view. Kahneman (2003) noted that "the idea of an affect heuristic is probably the most important development in the study of judgment heuristics in the past few decades" (p. 16).

Kahneman and Tversky (2002) further hypothesized that the use of heuristic principles is characterized by "systematic errors," or biases, "that reveal the underlying

heuristic being employed” (p. 3). The researchers used the term *bias* to indicate a normative and predictable component of using a heuristic principle. Biases do not result from an intentional disregard of data or a desire to deceive. Rather, the biases are a constitutive element of heuristic judgments.

The authors offered the following example: “when asked to evaluate the relative frequency of cocaine use in Hollywood actors, one may assess how easy it is to retrieve example celebrity drug-users – the *availability* heuristic piggybacks on highly efficient memory retrieval process” (Gilovich & Griffin, 2002, p. 3). In this case, the authors noted that the person using the *availability* heuristic will be constrained by the limited number of examples he is able to retrieve relevant to the judgment.

The bias results from the following: “a class whose instances are easily retrieved will appear more numerous than a class of equal frequency whose instances are less retrievable” (Kahneman & Tversky, 1974, p. 11). The person will tend to recall the situation that has made the greatest impact on him or her and use this to extrapolate meaning. Neither one retrieved example of a celebrity cocaine user nor a sample size of one serves as an appropriate statistical sample for the broader category. Yet, the recalled situation has a powerful impact on the person’s judgment that is clearly disproportionate to the sample size.

Theory of Decision Making: Prospect Theory

In work closely related to their theoretical exploration of judgment, Kahneman and Tversky (1979) developed a theory of decision making that joined cognitive psychology and economic theory. Through their research, they discovered that people made decisions in a manner that contradicted the prediction of prevailing economic models (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979, p. 18). Their research led to their development of

prospect theory, an alternative theory of decision making that more closely “accounts for observed human behavior” (Nobel Foundation, 2002).

In 2000, Kahneman and Tversky edited *Choices, Values and Frames* which documented numerous researchers’ applications of prospect theory since its inception. Kahneman and Tversky (1979) postulated that “Decision making under risk can be viewed as a choice between prospects or gambles” (p. 18). Their observations of human decision making using this optic led to a central finding of prospect theory. Kahneman and Tversky noted that people perceive decisions in terms of gains or losses from a neutral starting point. They furthered noted variations in peoples’ toleration of risk when making decisions – extreme risk aversion when confronted with loss and conservative behavior in the possibility of a gain. They offered a summary of their critique of utility theory and asserted their central thesis:

Standard applications of utility theory assume that the outcomes of risky prospects are evaluated as states of wealth. This assumption was the cornerstone of the version of utility theory that Daniel Bernoulli offered in 1738; and it has been retained ever since. The proposition that the carriers of utility are states of wealth is accepted as a matter of course in economic analysis and in the prescription of decision analysts. However, casual observation suggests that this assumption must also be modified. In the vernacular of decision making, financial outcomes are almost always described as gains and losses; states of wealth are rarely mentioned unless death or ruin is a possibility. The argument appears to have been closed by Mathew Rabin’s demonstration that no utility function for wealth can accommodate the extreme risk aversion that people exhibit when they face gambles for small stakes. (Kahneman & Tversky, 2000, p. xii)

Kahneman and Tversky’s (1979) research initially focused on economic decisions. They observed that financial investors typically evaluated the value of their portfolio relative to gains or losses from their initial investment, not in terms of their overall portfolio value, as contemporary economic models assumed. The researchers explained a key implication of this finding:

If the effective carriers of subjective value are changes of wealth rather than ultimate states of wealth, as we propose, the psychophysical analysis of outcomes should be applied to gains and losses rather than to total assets. This assumption plays a central role in a treatment of risky choice that we called [prospect theory]. (1984, p. 3)

In their analysis of outcomes, Kahneman and Tversky (1979) further observed that these investors evaluated gains and losses of their portfolio differently. The researchers found that people tended to avoid risk when presented with the potential for sure financial gain but made highly risky choices when confronted with the potential for sure loss (p. 17). Put simply, “losses loom larger than corresponding gains” (Kahneman & Tversky, 1991, p. 2). This behavior demonstrated a significant “loss aversion” in decision making that plays a key role in prospect theory.

The authors designed a number of experiments in which they compared the price at which a group was willing to purchase a product against the price they were willing to sell the same product when they already owned it. The authors noted “the large disparity often observed between the minimal amount that people are willing to accept to give up a good they own and maximal amount they would be willing to pay to acquire it” (Kahneman & Tversky, 1999, p. 155). The aversion to loss was constant and pervasive.

Kahneman and Tversky (1984) further noted that “Decision problems can be described or framed in multiple ways that give rise to different preferences” (p. 1). Consistent with the issue of loss aversion, the framing of the decision’s potential outcome as a gain or a loss played a critical role in the observed decision. This position is critical to the theory, and it contradicts a central axiom of utility theory, the principle of invariance. Kahneman and Tversky (1984) noted that:

Invariance requires that the preference order between prospects should not depend on the manner in which they are described. In particular, two versions of a choice

problem that are recognized to be equivalent when shown together should elicit the same preference even when shown separately. (p. 4)

In other words, whether a choice is framed as a gain or a loss, the response should be the same. They found this not to be the case.

Experiments continually revealed that people made decisions based on how the issue was framed. Kahneman and Tversky (1984) noted,

Risky prospects are characterized by their possible outcomes and by the probabilities of these outcomes. The same option, however, can be framed or described in different ways. For example the possible outcomes of a gamble can be framed either as gains and losses relative to the status quo or as asset positions that incorporate initial wealth. (p. 4)

The principle of loss aversion indicated that groups favored options that presented the decision in the light of a sure gain instead of a sure loss. Kahneman (2003) observed that the key to the framing “is the passive acceptance of the formulation given” (p. 9). The presented frame is accepted by the person, and the decision is made accordingly.

The researchers further observed common trends in making choices that revealed how people ascribe value in the decision process. They noted

that the carriers of value are changes in wealth or welfare, rather than final states. This assumption is compatible with basic principles of perception and judgment. Our perceptual apparatus is attuned to the evaluation of changes or differences rather than to the evaluation of absolute magnitudes. (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979, p. 32)

Writing much later, Kahneman (2003) supported this idea, as follows: “Because the reference point is usually the status quo, the properties of alternative options are evaluated as advantages or disadvantages relative to the current situation, and the disadvantages of the alternatives loom larger than their advantages” (p. 11). Kahneman and Tversky (1992) asserted that the framing and valuation in the decision processes were distinct elements of the decision. In 2003, Kahneman “made an attempt to provide

an integrated framework for the analysis of judgment and choice” (personal communication, May 2006). The model proposes a decision process that includes the initial judgment and then the evaluative stage.

Summary

Variations of utility theory, a theory that people make decisions in their interest based on a rational weighting of gains against losses, have dominated choice theory over the past century. Kahneman and Tversky observed that the way people actually make decisions differed substantially from this system of rational choice. The researchers observed that a decision often involves a multi-step process that includes both judgment and evaluation. In the judgment phase, people make initial intuitive assessments based on past experience. Using heuristics, or “mental shortcuts” (Gilovich & Griffin, 2002, p. 4), people simplify the decision-making process by automatically retrieving past experience and applying it to the current situation. This research discussed the heuristics of *representativeness*, *availability* and *affect*.

In a related area of research, Kahneman and Tversky proposed prospect theory, a theory of decision making developed through close observation of human behavior. Kahneman and Tversky identified critical elements of the decision-making process. Key aspects of the theory include the following:

1. Decisions are evaluated relative to a neutral starting point. As a result, people are highly sensitive to the potential of gains and losses in a decision. This factor tends to be counterintuitive. For example, a person deciding on a portfolio investment will weight the potential gain or loss in the portfolio to a much greater degree than the ultimate state of wealth attained by the investment.

2. People are highly loss averse. They will make conservative choices in the face of a sure gain and will make highly risky choices in the face of a potential loss.
3. People are highly influenced by the framing of the decision, and they tend to passively accept the framing of the decision as it is offered. The frame has a significant impact on their assessment. Related to the issue of loss aversion, decisions framed as a gain are favored over decisions framed as a loss.

The two areas of Kahneman's and Tversky's research on judgment and prospect theory will provide the model to explore the parents' choice of a Catholic secondary school.

Summary of the Review of Literature

The Catholic Church has consistently promulgated the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. The Church's perspective on how parents should exercise this choice, however, has changed over the years. Until the 1960s, official church teaching was interpreted as a mandate for Catholic families to send their children to Catholic schools to safeguard their faith. The teaching of the Second Vatican Council and subsequent Episcopal documents moved beyond this view and now encourage Catholic education based on the intrinsic value of participating in an educational community that reflects Gospel values.

The Second Vatican Council coincided with significant social changes in the United States. Catholic schools rapidly transitioned from a system led by ordained or religious men and women to a model of lay leadership. Costs significantly increased, and the Catholic school population decreased substantially. In this environment tuition costs

have risen rapidly over the last decade. Thus, the choice for a parent to send a child to a Catholic secondary school involved substantial costs tied to an assessment of value.

The work of Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky would suggest that a parent's choice of a Catholic secondary school is not based on a rational evaluation of options, as popular models of decision making would assume. Kahneman's and Tversky's research would indicate that parents make the decision using intuitive assessments of the schools that simplify the decision-making process. These intuitive processes can be highly influenced by emotional connection to the school, their knowledge of students who attend the school, and their extrapolation of the school's attributes based on their relationships. Their work indicates that the manner in which the decision is viewed, what they term *framing*, significantly impacts the process of decision making.

Research on school decision making over the last 10 years indicates that parents select academic reasons most often as the significant factor in their choice of a Catholic education. While religious education has decreased significantly since the latter part of the 1900s, it still plays an important role in the decision process. It appears that parents are balancing a number of factors, including religious education, values and academics as they assess the value of a Catholic education. Research suggests that tuition costs are influencing the choice of a Catholic school, supporting a market-based approach to evaluating the parent decision-making process.

Chapter III describes the mixed methodology comprising parent surveys and follow-up interviews used to evaluate current issues affecting parent decision making.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Restatement of the Purpose

This study sought to identify the values influencing parents to choose a Catholic secondary school for their son or daughter, the role that the Catholicity of the school played in that choice, and the impact of tuition costs on the decision. The study focused on how parents prioritized these values in a manner that indicated how they framed their decision. The study was conducted in the three (arch)dioceses of the San Francisco Bay Area, comprising the Archdiocese of San Francisco, and the Dioceses of Oakland and San Jose.

Research Design and Methodology

The investigation incorporated a mixed methodology to collect the data. The first phase included a researcher-designed on-line survey (see Appendix A) that asked parents to identify and prioritize the values they sought when choosing a Catholic secondary school for their son or daughter. The survey explored how finances impacted the parents' decision-making process. The second phase included interviews of randomly selected respondents to the on-line survey. The interview questions (see Appendix B) sought to provide a greater understanding of the data collected from the survey. This mixed methodology research design of the survey and follow-up interviews provided greater richness in responding to the research questions. The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) reviewed and approved the proposed research design (see Appendix C).

Population

The universal population for the study included the parents of sophomore students in the Catholic secondary schools within the boundaries of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, and the Dioceses of Oakland and San Jose. Since the researcher was employed by Junípero Serra High School in the Archdiocese of San Francisco at the time of this research, this institution was excluded from the investigation to reduce the potential for bias ($N = 28$).

The study area included 14 coeducational schools, 10 single-gender female schools, and five single-gender male schools, as indicated in Table 6. The 28 high schools represented both urban and suburban environments and drew students from the diverse socioeconomic strata of the San Francisco Bay Area. The superintendents of the three (arch)dioceses granted permission to conduct the research study (see Appendixes D and E).

Table 6

Distribution of Single-Gender and Coeducational Schools by (Arch)Diocese

Demographic	San Francisco	San Jose	Oakland	Total
Boys	3 ^a	1	1	5
Girls	6	2	2	10
Coeducational	5	3	6	14
Total	14	6	9	29 ^a

^aJunípero Serra High School is included in this number but will not be part of the investigation.

The researcher identified parents of 10th-grade students as the sample population to be surveyed. These parents were in a unique place within their commitment to Catholic secondary education. The parents made their initial decision to send their child to a Catholic secondary school, and they made a second decision to re-enroll the student for the sophomore year. These parents had one year of experience by which to evaluate their decision. This experience enabled parents to comment on the characteristics of the institution and the values they sought in choosing the school. Parents were further able to comment on how they assessed their values relative to the cost of the yearly tuition, thus how they framed the decision.

The sophomore year constituted a critical juncture in this framing process. The parents committed significant financial resources for their children in the freshman and sophomore years, and they have the costs of the junior and senior years on the horizon. With their recent decision to send a child to a Catholic secondary school, their recommitment to the decision in the sophomore year, and with their anticipated payments for two additional years, parents were in the midst of their decision and value assessment.

Instrumentation

The researcher-designed survey sought to identify the core values desired by parents when choosing a Catholic secondary school and to assess the importance of Catholicity in this decision. The survey further investigated how the parents framed their decision to send their child to a Catholic secondary school in relation to the tuition costs. The researcher-designed survey, *Parent Choice in Catholic Secondary Education* (see Appendix A), was designed to elicit data investigating the research questions:

1. What are the core values influencing how parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school?
2. To what extent is the Catholicity of the Catholic secondary school a component in the decision framing process? and,
3. To what extent is the rising tuition cost influencing the manner in which parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school?

Previous research on parent choice contributed to the survey content and design (Bauch & Gao, 2000; Bisset & Jackson, 2005; Bulman, 1999; Collins, 2001; Convey, 1986; Garvey, 2000; Hausman & Goldring, 1997; Hu, 1996; Hsieh, 2000; Johnson, 1997; Petrillo, 2003; Puccio, 2000; Rittmeyer, 2002; Ryan, 2005; Schneider et al., 1998; Szombathova, 2005; Thofern, 1997; Van Camp, 2003; Weller, 2006).

The administrators of the 28 secondary schools in the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the Dioceses of Oakland and San Jose were invited to have their schools participate in the research (see Appendix F). Fifteen schools agreed to distribute the survey to the parents of their sophomore students (see Appendix G). The participating schools were sent the parent letter and link to the survey (see Appendix H) via email. The individual school administrators were asked to send the email with the survey link to all sophomore parents with email addresses.

The survey was subdivided into four sections addressing the religious dimensions of the parents' choice, the impact of finances, general factors influencing the decision and demographic factors. Each survey and oral interview question has been aligned with a

specific research question, as indicated in Table 7. Some questions addressed more than one research question.

Table 7

Alignment of Survey Questions to the Research Questions

Research questions	Survey questions	Oral interviews
1. Core values	1-4, 14-24	Question 1
2. Catholicity	1-4, 14-18, 22	Question 2
3. Tuition costs	5-13	Question 3

A central element of the research questions concerned how the parents framed the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. Four components were used to assess how parents framed the school-choice decision.

1. The survey asked parents to evaluate the importance of value choices in their decision process and to rank the three most important items. These questions helped assess the core values at the heart of the parents' decision.
2. The answers to survey questions were cross-tabulated to identify key influences and relationships in the data that would elucidate the relative importance of factors to different groups (see Table 8). For example, the prioritized list of values, question 15, was cross-tabulated against question 22, which asked the parent to identify the most significant loss if their son or daughter did not attend the Catholic secondary school. These two items provided insight into how parents conceived of the school-choice decision, both in terms of central values to be obtained and losses to be avoided.

3. The theoretical rationale proposed that the framing of the decision as a loss or a gain influences the outcome of the choice. Questions 14, 15 and 21 incorporated survey items that involved a negative frame. The theoretical rationale proposed that loss aversion is a significant part of the decision process. Question 22 addressed the question of loss aversion, and this survey item was cross-referenced, as indicated in Table 8.
4. The oral interviews probed the findings of the survey data to identify critical relationships among the values, to assess negative framing, and to assess loss aversion as a method of understanding the decision frame.

Validity

A validity panel consisting of 12 Catholic educators was selected to evaluate the face, content and construct validity of the researcher-designed survey. The experts' qualifications have been identified in Appendix I. The members of the validity panel were sent an email cover letter identifying the title of the investigation, its purpose, background and research questions (see Appendix J). The email contained a link to the on-line survey, and two attachments: a list of the phone interview questions and a Validity Panel Evaluation form (see Appendix K). The evaluation contained questions for the validity panel designed to evaluate the face, construct and content validity of the survey. The panel members were requested to evaluate whether the survey questions supported the design of the study indicated by the research questions. The validity panel was asked to email the Validity Panel Evaluation form back to the researcher.

The researcher identified 12 educators to serve on the validity panel. Eleven returned the information referenced in this study. The time to take the survey ranged from 10 minutes to 22 minutes, with the average being 15 ½ minutes.

Panel members identified a number of areas concerning the content of the survey. Three panel members suggested combining survey choices that appeared similar in items 14 and 15. However, the survey choices, such as 15. b. *Safety* and 15. n. *Less safe environment in local public schools*, were an integral part of the survey design to assess whether the motivation for attending the school was toward the positive aspect of the Catholic school or to avoid perceived negative elements in other schools. This element of the survey design was retained. Two panel members critiqued the lack of clarity in items 14 and 15 concerning the role of the teacher. The researcher edited this answer choice to indicate the *Teacher as a Catholic role model*. This edit sharpened the answer choice and tied it to a central component of the Episcopal documents outlining the role of the teacher in a Catholic school.

One panel member noted that the survey left out areas critical to the choice of a Catholic school, including assistance in the college-counseling process, the use of technology, the role of retreats in Campus Ministry, and the positive impact of the peer group. The researcher added additional survey choices and edited existing choices for greater clarity in exploring these issues. The oral interview questions were edited to offer the respondent greater latitude in addressing these themes.

Panel members noted minor issues concerning the construct of the survey. Respondents became confused when asked to choose the “three most significant factors” in items 2, 15, and 21, as the survey allowed them to respond to more than three choices. The researcher edited the text and headings for greater clarity to the reader to reduce the possibility of this error occurring among parent respondents. The researcher corrected minor typographical errors noted by the validity panel members.

Two panel members commented that the oral interview questions did not sufficiently address the survey respondent's understanding or definition of Catholicity. The researcher clarified the questions to address this concern.

Reliability

The researcher conducted a reliability study to evaluate the ability of the survey to assess parent responses over time. Reliability was assembled from parents of 10th-grade students at Junípero Serra High School, San Mateo, California. As a Catholic secondary school in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, Junípero Serra High School provided a representative environment of the target population of the study. This school was not included in the final research study.

A test-retest method was used to establish reliability. The researcher sent an email requesting participation in the reliability study to a random sample of 66 sophomore parents of Junípero Serra High School (see Appendix L). The email included a link to the survey and requested that the parents complete the survey responses. The results were compiled. After 2 weeks, the parents were sent an identical survey. Of the 66 parents, 11 completed the survey both times, a return rate of 16.7%

The reliability survey indicated a problem with items 2, 15 and 21. In each of these items, the respondents were asked to rank three choices in order of importance. However, the survey software did not limit the number of answer choices for the respondents. A number of parents answered more than three items, invalidating the results. The items were removed from the statistical analysis of reliability. The researcher adjusted the survey software to limit the respondents' choices to rank order no more than three items.

The researcher evaluated results from the two surveys using a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The reliability for the survey was .88 ($N = 11$), indicating a high degree of correlation between the respondents' survey answers. The reliability study provides a soft indication that survey respondents would answer in the same manner over time.

Interviews

The second methodology involved interview questions designed to explore the survey response data in greater depth. Initial questions were designed to help answer the research questions (see Appendix B). Parents were afforded the opportunity to offer comments that diverged from the questions. Ten parents were randomly selected for an interview from those survey respondents who indicated that they would be willing to participate ($N = 10$).

The interviews were conducted by phone and ranged in length from 14 to 32 minutes, with the average interview being 22.5 minutes in length. Each respondent was assigned a pseudonym, and permission was requested to record the interview electronically. The responses were transcribed from the recordings and bound as a reference text for the study. The identity and responses of the parents participating in the follow-up interviews were kept confidential. The electronic and hard-copy survey material records were stored in a secured and locked location, access to which is limited to the researcher.

Data Collection

The survey data were collected via an on-line survey and phone interviews. The researcher worked with the school principals to communicate with the parents of their students. The researcher sent the parent email correspondence to the school

administrations with an introduction to the researcher, a message from the researcher to the sophomore parents, and a link directing the parents to the survey site (see Appendix H). The email letter stated the purpose of the survey and indicated that the information would be kept confidential. The principal was asked to send the email to the target population, the parents of all sophomore students. The parents had 10 days to complete the survey. The principal was asked to send a second email to all of the parents after 10 days encouraging them to participate if they had not yet done so. The principal was asked to send a third email to parents after 7 days encouraging their participation if they had not yet done so. The desired response rate for the survey was 60% or higher. The response to the survey was 972 out of a total population of 2,927, a response rate of 33%.

The data-collection process was completed in two phases. Parents received an email inviting their participation in the first phase of the study. The email included a link connecting the recipient to the survey. The survey allowed respondents to indicate if they were willing to participate in an interview by phone as a follow-up. Of those willing to participate in the follow-up, 10 parents were randomly selected to interview by phone.

The follow-up interviews were conducted via telephone. The parents were oriented to the interview as indicated by the script (see Appendix B). They were informed about confidentiality, advised of the approximate time frame for the interview, and reminded that approval for the study had been granted by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of San Francisco. The interviewee was informed that the interview would be audiotaped for use by the researcher. The interviewee was further informed that the interview would be transcribed

and confidentiality maintained through the assignment of a pseudonym for the interviewee and his or her school.

Analysis of Data

The three research questions provided the structure for the analysis of the parent responses in both the researcher-designed survey and the follow-up interviews. The survey items were aligned to specific research questions (see Table 7) and were reported using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, ranked order, means and standard deviations. Frequencies were reported for all items of the survey. Items 1, 2, 15, 10, 18, 21 and 22 were presented in rank order to assess the relative importance of survey item choices. These data also provided information used in the oral interview questions. Item 8 was reported using the mean, median, and standard deviation to better understand the range of responses to tuition increases.

Key survey items were cross-tabulated to assess the influence of relationships among the data (see Table 8) and to answer the research questions. The data were further cross-tabulated against the demographic data for the sample population. This analysis was an important step to assess variations in the responses attributable to different socioeconomic groups, ethnic backgrounds and religious orientations. Items 2 (ranked order of religious factors affecting school choice) and 15 (ranked order of general factors affecting school choice) were an important component of this analysis to assess the responses of different socioeconomic groups. The survey software did not allow the items in a drop-down menu to be cross-referenced. This technical obstacle prevented the planned cross-referencing of survey items 8 and 28.

The oral interviews were designed to help the researcher interpret the data from the on-line parent survey. Three oral interview questions, one aligned to each research

Table 8

Cross Tabulations of Survey Questions to Assess the Research Questions

Research question	Questions to be cross-tabulated
1. Core values	(1, 2 with 16, 17, 18, 22, 25, 27) (2, 15 with 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 28, 29, 30)
2. Catholicity	(1 with 3, 4, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 25, 27) (2,15 with 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 28, 29, 30)
3. Tuition costs	(28 with 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12) (5, 6, 7, 8, 9 with 2, 15)

question, were prepared for the phone interviews. Information gleaned from the interviews was analyzed by applicability to the research question. The findings of the survey data were evaluated to assess the relationships among the values, to assess negative framing, and to assess loss aversion. Themes emerged from the interviews, and they were presented as they applied to the research questions and survey items.

Researcher Background

The researcher is currently employed as a principal of a Catholic high school in the Archdiocese of San Francisco. He taught theology for 6 years, served concurrently as the Theology Department Chairperson for 5 years, and held the position of Dean of Studies, an academic administrator role, for 6 years. The researcher has served on 3 accreditation teams for the Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), and chaired the accreditation process for his school. In these multiple roles, the researcher has had extensive experience interviewing potential students and their parents for admission to the school.

He has had extensive interaction with parents of Catholic secondary students when addressing academic matters, disciplinary issues and concerns affecting teachers.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This study investigated how parents make and frame their decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. Three factors were examined in the research: the central values sought by the parents, the role that the Catholicity of the school played in the decision, and the influence of finances on the choice. The research employed a survey of parents of sophomore students currently attending Catholic secondary schools in the San Francisco Bay Area. The study area encompassed the Dioceses of Oakland and San José, and the Archdiocese of San Francisco. Follow-up interviews with parents were conducted to help interpret the data collected in the on-line survey.

The survey instrument was composed of 24 questions aligned to the three research questions. An additional six questions gathered demographic data, and two questions asked for the survey respondents' willingness to participate in a follow-up phone interview. Fifteen schools of the 28 Catholic secondary schools in the San Francisco Bay Area agreed to participate in the research. A total of 972 parents responded to the survey, representing a 33% return rate on the survey. Ten parents were selected at random to participate in the follow-up interviews. The on-line surveys and the phone interviews were completed over a 5-month period from February through June, 2010.

This chapter reports data from the researcher-designed survey. The reporting begins with a demographic profile of the survey respondents. Following the demographic profile, the three research questions provide the structure for reporting the data collected for this study. The presentation begins by addressing survey items that apply to both research questions 1 and 2 (see Table 7). Survey items unique to research

question 1 will follow. Data applicable to the third research question are presented last. The survey items are arranged to provide the best presentation relative to the research questions. For this reason, the survey items are not addressed in the order in which they appeared in the survey. This presentation facilitates logical ordering of the survey items and data without unnecessary duplication.

Characteristics of Respondents

Survey items 25 through 30 queried basic demographic data. The predominant religious affiliation (see Figure 2) of the respondents was Roman Catholic (70.9%). Protestant religions from liturgical faiths, such as Lutherans and Episcopalians, and Protestant Christians accounted for 14.2% of those who took the survey. Thirteen (1.5%) Evangelical Christians responded to the survey. Members of non-Christian faiths, such as Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus, represented 4.3% of the survey takers. Of the total survey respondents, 8.6% claimed no religious affiliation. Slightly over half (52.1%) of the respondents attended religious services with their son or daughter on a regular - *weekly* or *twice monthly* - basis (see Figure 3). Twenty-eight percent attended services *every once in a while* or *on major feasts*. Almost 22% did not attend services (*rarely* or *does not apply*) with their son or daughter.

Survey item 29 queried the ethnicity of the respondent (see Figure 4). The majority of respondents (70.9%) were White. The second most prominent ethnic group included Asians-Pacific Islanders, comprising 13.2% of the survey takers. Hispanics followed at 9.3%. African Americans accounted for 3.2% of those participating in the research. One Native American took the survey.

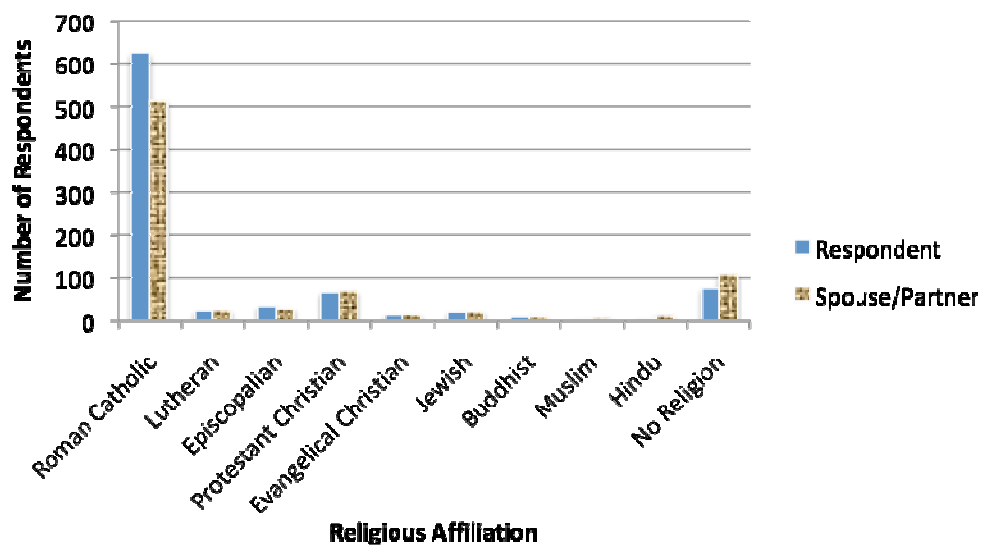


Figure 2. Religious affiliation of survey respondents and their spouses/partners.

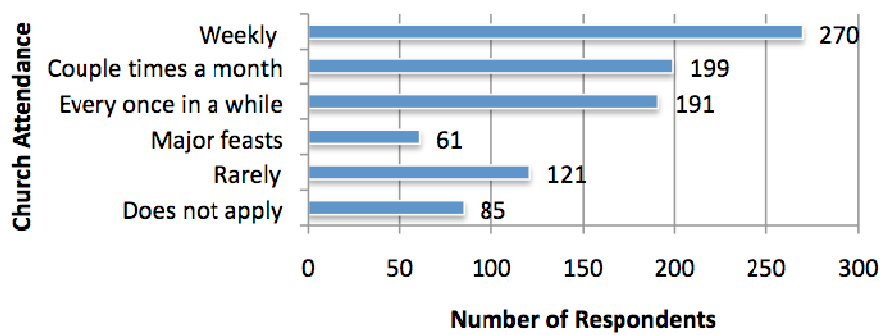


Figure 3. Frequency of parent and son/daughter church attendance together.

Of the survey respondents, 73.2% were women. Two hundred and fifty (28.9%) had children in Catholic elementary schools, and 207 (23.8%) had more than one child in Catholic secondary schools.

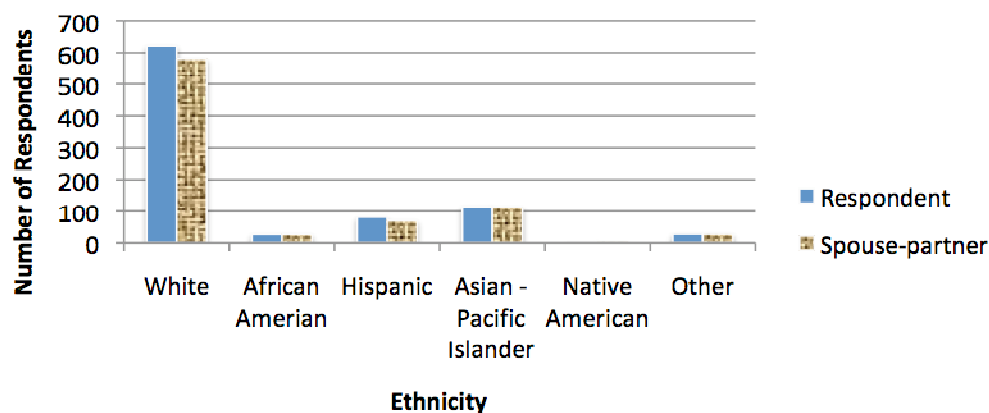


Figure 4. Ethnicity of survey respondents and spouses/partners.

The family income data of the survey respondents reflected a population substantially more affluent than the average family in the San Francisco Bay Area (see Figure 5). The median figure for the survey takers fell in the \$150,000 to \$175,000 income range, in contrast to the \$90,927 median income figure for the Bay Area (Census Bureau, 2008). Approximately 4.9% of the respondents made less than \$50,000, and 22.8% earned less than \$100,000. Forty-one percent fell between \$100,000 and \$200,000 in yearly income. Slightly over 36% of survey takers earned \$200,000 or more during the year.

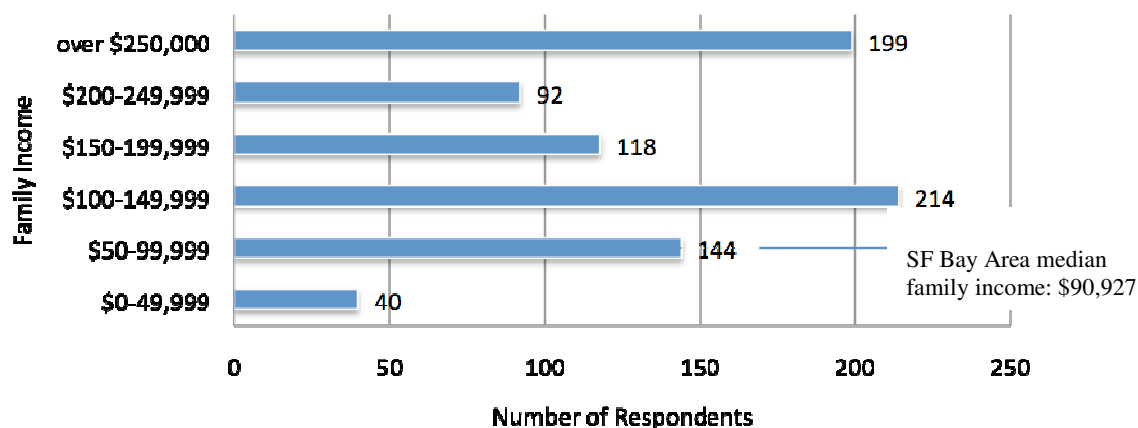


Figure 5. Gross family income of respondents

Research Questions 1 and 2

The first research question asked the following: What are the core values influencing how parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school? The second research question was as follows: To what extent is the Catholicity of the Catholic secondary school a component in the decision framing process? Survey items 1-4, 14-18, and 22 addressed these two research questions.

Survey item 14 queried the level of importance that a range of factors had in the parents' decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school (see Figure 6). When placed in order of frequency with which parents identified the factor as of *high importance*, a *high quality academic program*, *values education*, and a *safe environment* were the most significant factors to the study group. Over 87% of the parents ranked these factors as of *high importance*. The next grouping included *community*, *college counseling*, *personalized attention*, *teachers as role model*, *reputation* and *discipline*. Religious factors identified among the 10 most important values included: *values education* (second), *community* (fourth), *teachers as role models* (seventh) and *Catholic identity* (tenth).

Four answer choices were offered that portrayed public school negatively, including: *lesser academic quality of local public schools*, *lesser quality of extracurricular program in local public schools*, *lower overall quality of public schools*, and *less safe environment in local public schools*. These four values tested for loss aversion through a “negative” framing decision. None of these factors were identified in the 10 items ranked most often by the respondents as of *high importance*. However, negative motivation was clearly of importance to the parents. Of the four values, parents

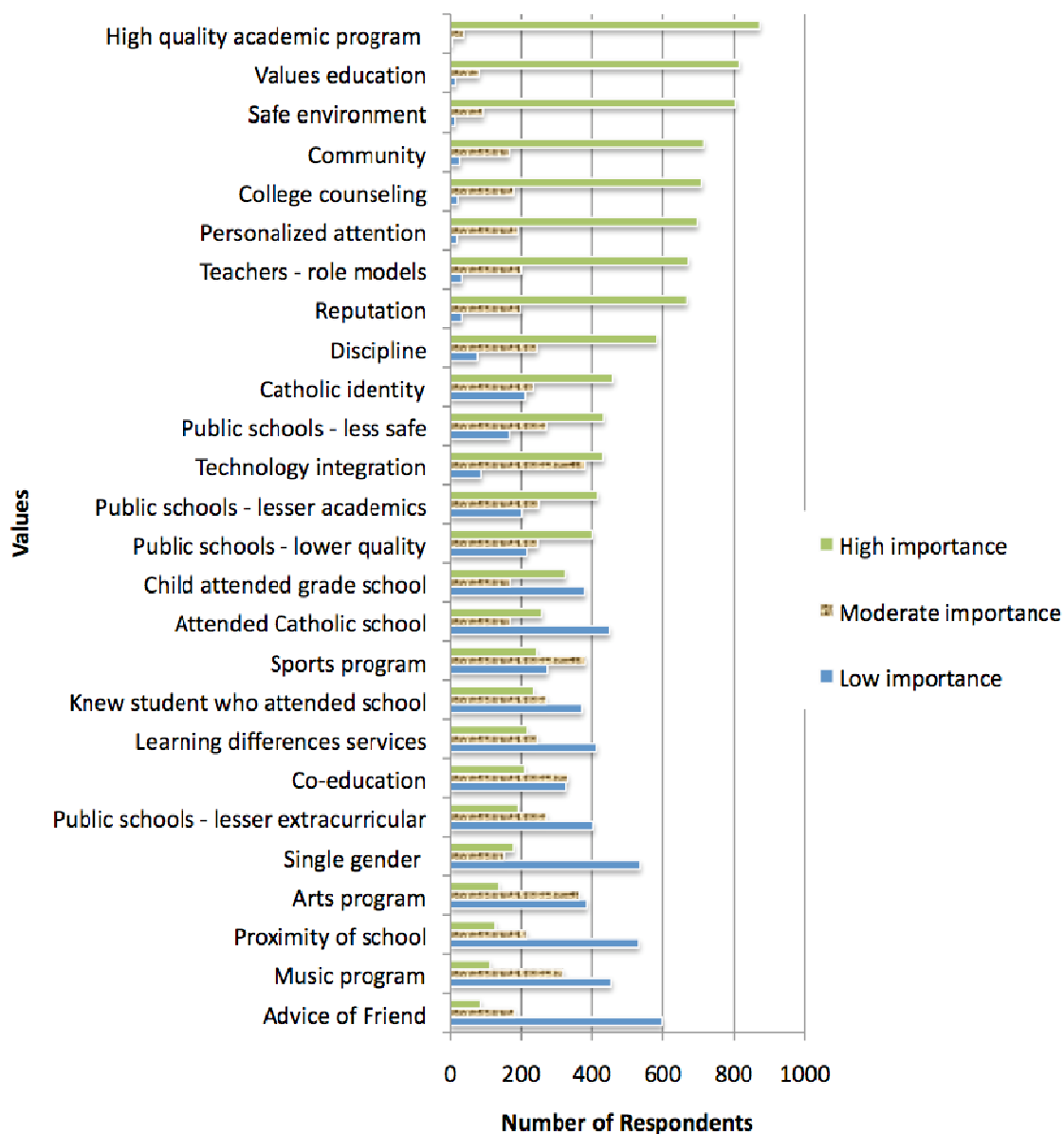


Figure 6. Level of importance of factors affecting parent choice to select Catholic secondary school.

cited concerns over *safe environment* as the most significant issue, with 46.6% ranking it as being of *high importance* and 31.1% citing it as of *moderate importance*. Thus, 81% considered this factor in their decision frame.

Over one-half (57.6%) of the parents acknowledged the importance to their decision process of knowing someone who attended the school. Of these parents, 26.8% indicated that knowledge of a student who attended the school was of *high importance* and 30.8% indicated that it was of *moderate importance*. Kahneman and Tversky (1984) noted the importance of the *availability* and *representativeness* heuristics in which the knowledge of a limited number of people impacts judgment in a manner disproportionate to the sample size.

All interviewed parents indicated that knowing someone was a factor in their decision process. Lori Watson spoke about the significant impact of knowing students and parents who went to the schools. This knowledge gave her information to evaluate what she was discovering through other means. Ms. Watson stated,

we went to the open houses, and then my son shadowed. We also have friends and neighbors whose kids are going or who have gone to the various schools that we looked at. So just kind of through the more formal process that way, and then informally, just talking to people . . . In the – whatever you call those things where you go and you listen to all the different schools – it was very interesting looking at the statistics of how many graduates go on to four-year colleges and all that kind of stuff. But I think it was really insightful to talk to parents who have kids there and learn about their experience. (Thornton, 2010, pp. 70-71)

This comment reflected the interplay between the informal process of gathering information through knowledge of families associated with the school and the formal process associated with the school admissions and marketing programs.

Survey item 15 asked the parents to look at the same factors assessed in item 14 and to rank the top three factors in order of importance (see Figure 7). The priority of a

high quality academic program became apparent in the number of parents (61.6%) who selected this choice as the most important value. The five most important factors in order of rank were *high quality academic program, values education, Catholic identity, college counseling, and a safe environment.*

Parent interviews indicated that these five values were intimately connected and mutually reinforcing. While identified as discreet items in the survey, they cannot be viewed independently in the decision-making process. Phone interviews (Thornton, 2010) indicated a constant interweaving of the academic emphasis of the school within a context of values-centered education. One Catholic parent narrated the decision frame in a manner in which academics, the Catholic faith community, and knowledge of teachers who practiced the faith were intertwined. Michelle Harris commented, “it actually was more about academics as our original decision factor, but it ultimately morphed into and changed into sort of the whole Catholic religious experience” (p. 40). She commented later in the interview,

we knew several of the teachers who were also parishioners. So it was . . . the community. It was the continuation of the community that we found at [Catholic elementary school] and moved us on to [Catholic high school]. And so, I think that helped out our daughter, those two things and the academics. (p. 44)

Another non-Catholic parent succinctly stated and summarized her values frame which involved moral decision making, academics, and college preparation, as follows:

I think what we’re gaining is putting him in an environment where his classmates and peers – he probably has a better chance of making good decisions with those peers than in our neighborhood school. I think we are providing him an opportunity to be more academically challenged than he would in our neighborhood school. I think we are hopefully making the transition from high school to college easier because he will be more prepared for college. (p. 72)

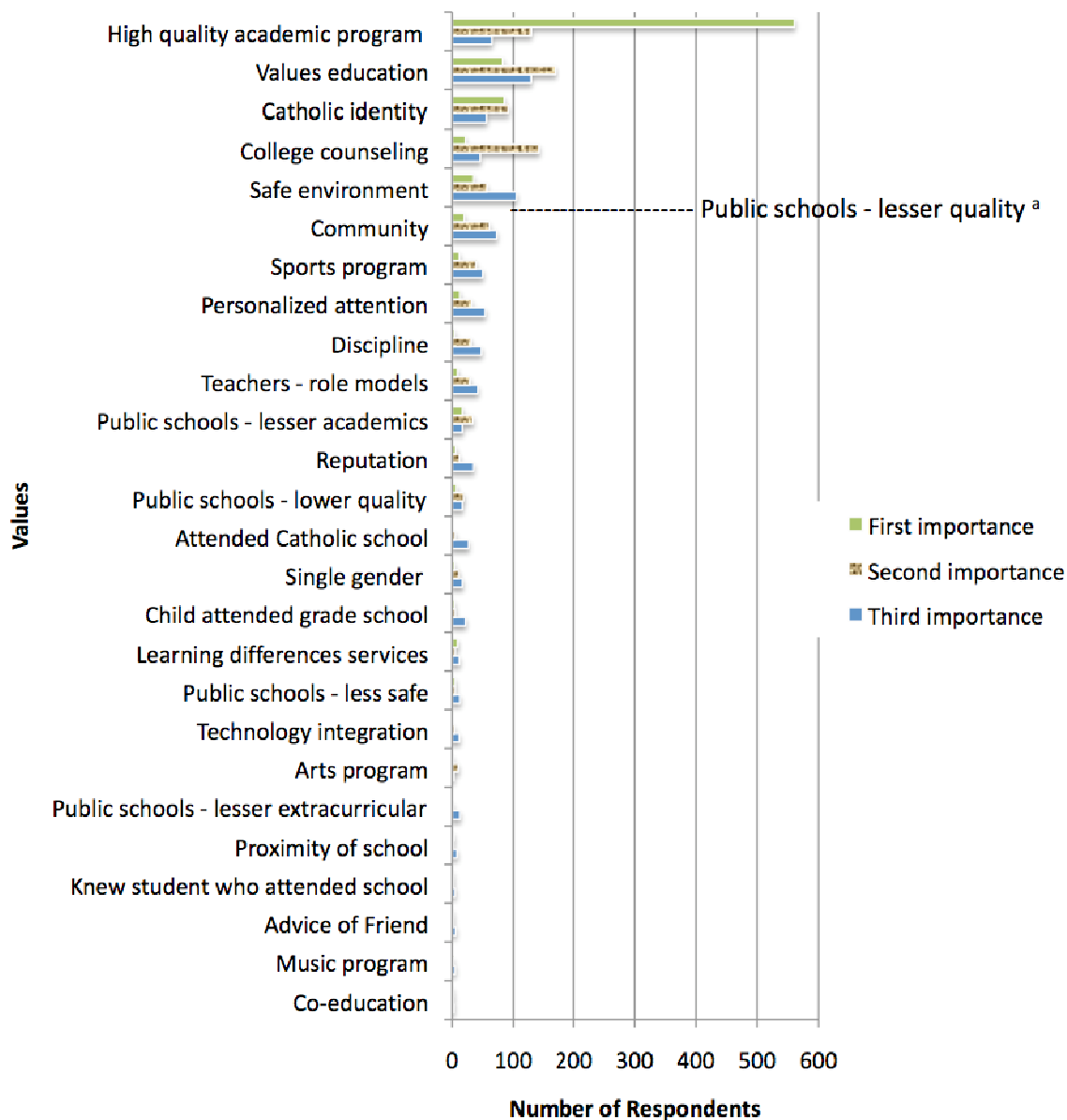


Figure 7. Ranked level of importance of factors influencing the parents’ decision to send their son/daughter to a Catholic secondary school.

^aRanking when responses to four answer choices addressing public schools (public schools – lesser academics, public schools – lower quality, public schools – less safe, public schools – lesser extracurricular) are added together

The interweaving of values-based education, solid academic preparation (which includes college preparation), and the community in which the values were formed characterized the position of the parents interviewed by phone.

The parents' rank ordering of the core values revealed the importance of religious values. Catholic identity moved from the 10th position to the third most important factor. In this ranking *values education* and *Catholic identity* placed in the number two and three spots, respectively, behind *high quality academic program*. The forced ranking revealed the priority of Catholic identity in the decision of 25.6% of the respondents who selected it as one of their three most important factors.

The relationship among academics, values and Catholicity was supported in the phone interviews (Thornton, 2010). Parents articulated a desire for academic instruction in the context of a values-based system. One parent expressed this understanding of the Catholic school mission as follows:

it wasn't that the public schools didn't have values; it was that the Catholic experience seemed to make it an intentional part of the curriculum in various forms. So whether that was going to math or study – having religious studies as part of the curriculum like Old Testament, New Testament, whatever; it just was more prominent. It wasn't a question of right or wrong, just that it was definitely more significant as part of the curriculum for us. (p. 39)

Another parent expressed the centrality of the Catholic faith as the frame for the inculcation of values.

both of us [parents] had agreed that the values that are in a Catholic school, the teachings of Jesus and having Jesus as your focus, God as your focus, and your values being based on those teachings. That was the No. 1 concern and the No. 1 priority for us to put our child in a Catholic school . . . we were part of the parish community, very strong community, very faith-oriented community. (p. 12)

Thus, the Catholic faith provided the expression of values that the parents sought. This was particularly true for Catholic parents and those who attended and had a positive

experience in a Catholic school (see Appendix M).

A number of parents referred to clear expectations on the part of the school to enforce a value system. Philip Wright referred to the expectation as a “social contract” (Thornton, 2010, p. 62). He contrasted the permissiveness of the public school with the Catholic school as follows:

That’s not going to happen; you guys aren’t going to let it happen. You know, it’s like you may kick kids out, but there’s a sense of a two-way . . . sort of a social contract or commitment both ways. We expect something from you as a child, as a student, but we’re also making a commitment. We’re not just here to get our ticket punched and deliver our lecture. (p. 62)

Another parent commented on the clear expectations that the Catholic school would enforce values:

I mean, there is an expectation that there’s a zero tolerance for not living a certain way or not. Kids are going to mess up, but there’s repercussions for messing up. And you may get warned or something like that, but there is zero tolerance. I mean, if you get caught with drugs, you don’t play ball; period. (p. 46)

A non-Catholic parent stated the same:

We’re not Catholic, and . . . we’re not affiliated with any church. I liked the idea of my son getting a background in religion. The Catholic school seemed to be able to focus more on life skills and values than on Catholicism. I liked the fact that the Catholic schools hold the kids to higher standards so that there’s zero tolerance for drugs. That was important to me too. (p. 69)

In each of these cases, the parents expressed an understanding that the school stood for a set of values and that the school would enforce those values.

A safe environment was a central value for the parents. Phone interviews (Thornton, 2010) indicated that parents used this term in reference to the total environment in which their child develops academically, socially, and spiritually. This environment includes the core values that the parents want for their children, the community in which their children will learn these values, association with peers that will

reinforce these values, and the academic context that will propel them into college and the future. Krista Matheson addressed this issue as follows:

I feel I'm buying peace of mind. I mean, that's a big factor for me . . . you mentioned several issues that were part of that decision-making process. Safety was definitely one of them, having a good experience, but it all was Christ-centered. So, I mean, if it was all those other things and not a Catholic education, that may not have worked for us. (p. 13)

She continued later in the interview,

I feel safe because you do have a strong principal and a strong leadership . . . I mean, when you think of safety, is it physical? No, it's not just physical, but part of that is . . . But the other part is having that social and mental security where you can meet people who you're comfortable with and meet people who share the same value system that your family shares. (p. 15)

A *safe environment* was both the opportunity to learn a set a values and the ability to keep one's child safe from alternate systems of education that might not be supportive of Catholic values.

Public schools were highlighted in some of these expressions of concern, stated often in terms of safety. Parents voiced concerns over values in the public-school system that conflicted with their core values. The most important negative factor motivating parent choice was *lesser academic quality of local public schools*. None of the four factors assessing for a negative frame (*academics, overall quality, safe environment, and extracurricular activities*) were selected in the 10 most important factors. However, when parent responses to these four factors were aggregated as one item, the importance of a negative frame became more pronounced for the parents and emerged as the sixth most important factor motivating the sample population of parents to select a Catholic school in the San Francisco Bay Area (see Figure 7).

The most common concern expressed by parents in the interviews related to a value system that conflicted with the parents' values, or a value system that was perceived as too permissive. One parent stated his concern with the neighborhood public schools in the context of values as follows:

I think that the values question versus public school is the fact that there are some values, period. That's my experience. I mean, our older daughter went to [public high school], which is a very well respected public high school here. At least there's clarity in terms of what the Catholic schools stand for. You can talk about religion in a Catholic school; you can talk about Muslims in a Catholic school; you can talk about Evangelical Protestants in a Catholic school; you can talk about Republicans in a Catholic school. These are not things you can talk about at [public high school]. So, in a way, it's liberating to be in a place where you can express yourself . . . I mean, if you haven't been in a public school environment in sort of an upper middle class community, you don't realize how incredibly PC it is. I mean, fine, but there are just some things you can't talk about and religion and spirituality are one of them, especially Christian. So there is freedom of speech, ironically, in Catholic school that you don't get in public school. (Thornton, 2010, p. 13)

While parents did not always express concern about the quality of the public schools, they articulated greater understanding of the Catholic schools' value system.

Demographic variables had little impact on the ranking of the most important values. The responses of men and women tracked one another closely with minor variations (see Appendix N). All ethnic groups ranked *high quality academic program* with the highest importance (see Appendix O). *Values education*, *Catholic identity*, *college-counseling preparation*, and *safe environment* were among the top five values sought by Whites, Hispanics and Asian-Pacific Islanders. For African Americans, *community* took the place of *Catholic identity* in the five most important values. Respondents of all income groups identified *high quality academic program* and *values education* in order as the two most important values (see Appendix P). Similarly, *Catholic identity*, *college-counseling preparation*, and *safe environment* were selected as

among the six most important values for all income levels. For families making less than \$50,000, *sports program* was as listed as the fourth most important value.

The families' current religious practices did not have an important impact on the ranking of the most important values, except when assessing the relative importance of *Catholic identity*. Table 9 indicates the ranking of 10 values among the 26 possible answer choices. For Catholics, *Catholic identity* was the third most important value. *Catholic identity* dropped to eighth place for Protestants and to the status of a non-factor for families from non-Christian religions and those without a religious practice.

Table 9

Order of Importance of 10 Values Ranked by Religious Preference of Respondents

Value	Catholic	Protestant	Non-Christian religions	No religion
High quality academic program	1	1	1	1
Values education	2	2	2	2
Catholic identity	3	8	21	17
College counseling	4	3	3	4
Safe environment	5	4	5	3
Community	6	5	6	5
Personalized attention	7	6	2	7
Discipline	8	9	7	14
Teachers - role models	9	10	8	10
Sports program	10	7	4	6

One non-Christian parent explained her family's prioritization of the values as follows:

I wanted the values even though we are not Catholic and we're not a practicing Muslim family. I am from the UK where religious instruction is part of the curriculum, and I do believe that they [my daughters] needed that broad education with religion because they weren't going to get it anywhere else. I also like the college prep aspect, but my overriding reason was I felt I was getting a better quality, more select education for my daughters than if I threw them in the public schools. (Thornton, 2010, p. 28)

For non-Christians and those without religious faith, *values education* remained the second most critical value for the education of their children.

Survey item 1 asked the parents to rate the importance of religious factors affecting their decision to send their child to a Catholic secondary school (see Figure 8). The five factors receiving the greatest percentage of respondents ranking them as of *high importance* were community and relational values, including *peers that share values* (76.6%), *a Christian community* (67.7%), *the ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective* (63.6%), *a Catholic environment* (57.2%) and *teachers that model the Catholic faith* (57.1%). More formal religious experiences (*formal religion classes*, *Christian service program* and *the opportunity to attend liturgy*) comprised the next grouping. Factors receiving the least importance included *the opportunity to attend reconciliation* and *church encourages attendance*.

Parents who attended Catholic high school (see Appendix Q) placed a higher priority on *a Catholic environment* and *teachers that model the Catholic faith* than did the general population. Similar results were found for parents whose experience in Catholic school was *very positive* (see Appendix R). Parents who attended mass on a weekly or bimonthly basis ranked the religious values higher than parents who attended church services less frequently (see Appendix S). The ranking of religious values was cross-referenced against three additional factors: the reasons parents had a positive experience in a Catholic high school (see Appendix T), the extent to which parents believed that their school embodied Catholic values (see Appendix U), and the parents' desire to send their child to a Catholic school (see Appendix V). This exercise did not yield further differences in how parents ranked the importance of the religious values.

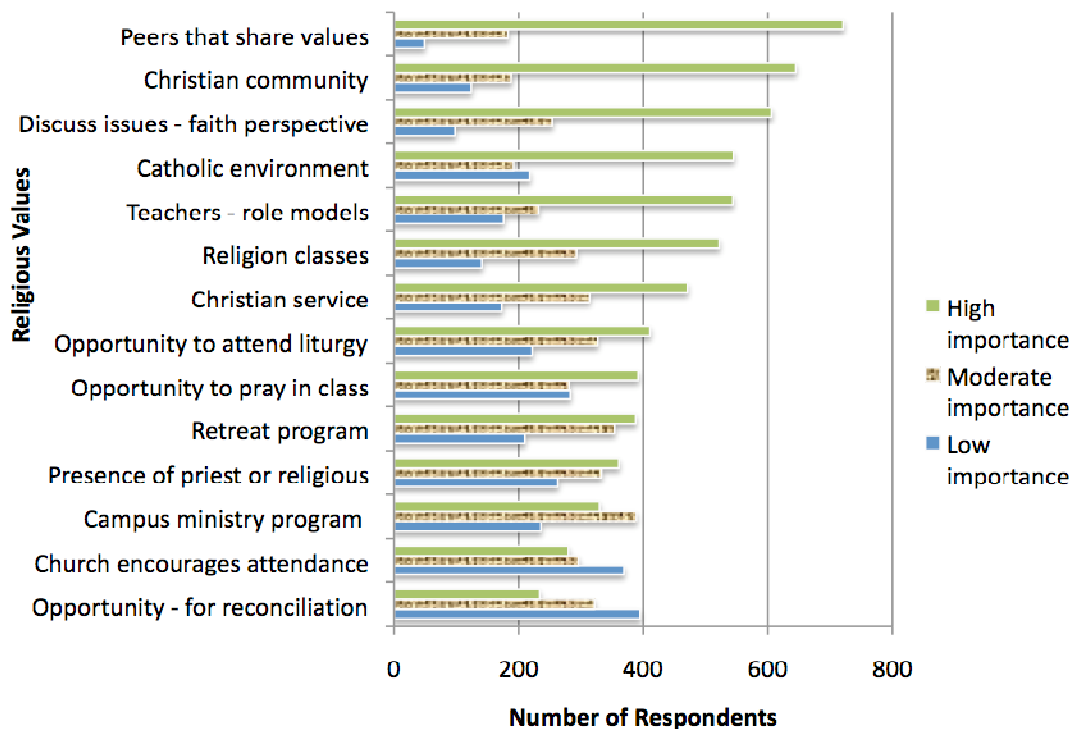


Figure 8. Importance of religious factors affecting parent choice to select Catholic secondary school.

Non-Catholics affirmed a more universal sense of values, as opposed to specific faith values, that influenced their decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school (see Table 9). A non-Christian parent offered the following insight:

I wasn't concerned, per se, with the Catholic religion. I felt there would be more of an interest in a moral background. I was interested in standards and a certain adherence to a common morality without being fundamentalist, because I'm not. . . I just felt that I wanted my girls to have that exposure and then they could choose. (Thornton, 2010, p. 29)

The parent trusted the Catholic school because it had a clear set of moral values that the family embraced, even though the religious basis of the values was not ascribed to by the family.

Survey item 2 asked the parents to rank in order of importance the same set of values addressed in the previous item (see Figure 9). Twenty-seven percent of the parents selected *A Catholic environment* as the first priority. However, the ranking highlighted the parental concern that their children were in an environment with peers who shared their values. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents selected this factor as their first, second or third most important religious value.

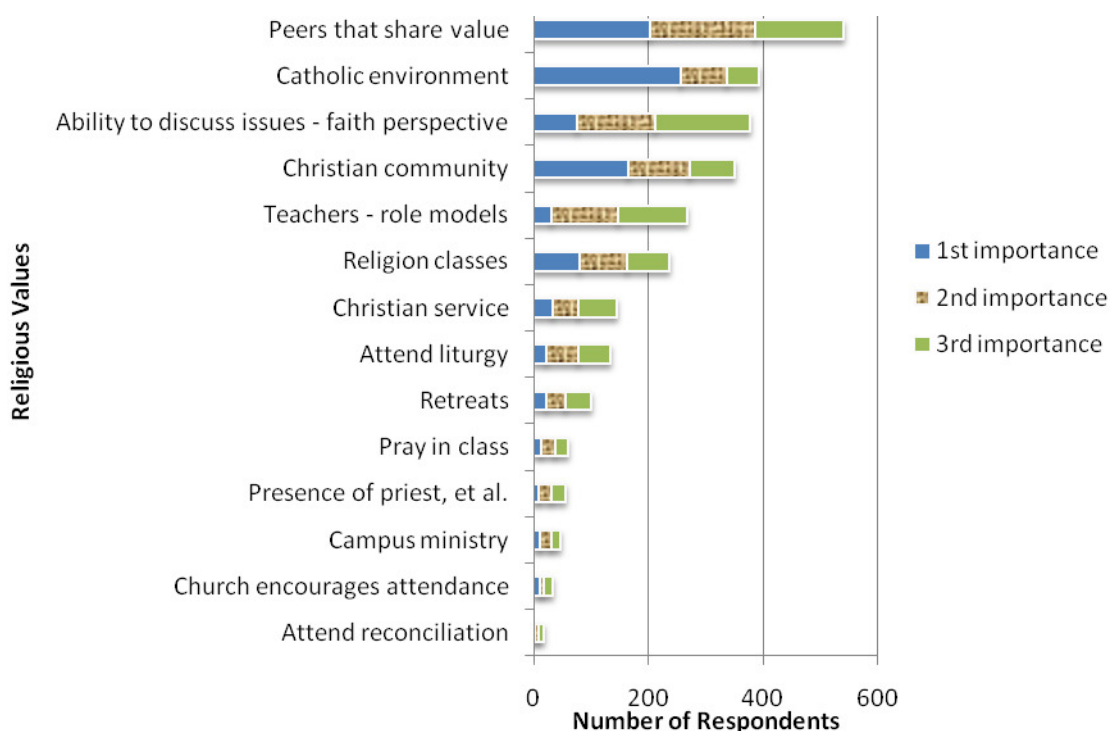


Figure 9. Ranked importance of religious factors affecting parent choice to select Catholic secondary school.

Parent interviews (Thornton, 2010) confirmed the importance of the peer group in parents' choice of a Catholic school for their child. All interviewed parents mentioned the role of peers in some form and emphasized its importance. Parents indicated the critical role that community plays in forming the values of their child. They

acknowledged the formative role that their child's peer group plays in shaping his or her values, and they voiced a connection to the parents with whom they would be associating.

One Catholic parent expressed this as follows:

It's a good group of girls, and they're all from [Catholic high school], and they're nice girls. And I feel like my daughter's safe with them because they have values and their parents have the values. I feel like my daughter's safe with these girls with the same values and the whole community. (p. 7)

Another Catholic parent articulated a similar point of view:

It is both the peers and the adult peers that share values; we care about the same things . . . we're mostly in sync with these parents, and definitely more so than our local public school. My kids had gone, actually, to private school. My wife had gone to private school . . . we didn't have a lot in common with the parents there either, so it was my kids' select peer group and we felt more at home with the [Catholic high school] peer group than we would with any other, in terms of parents and kids. (p. 64)

The Catholic father of a male student who had initially struggled with the idea of sending his child to a Catholic school stated the following:

There was a concern about a level of control of who the kids would be that my kids would be associating with, and that I didn't want to say that I felt that the kids at the Catholic high school are better than the kids at the public high school. But, I had a comfort level with what to expect, and who the families were, and what their parents were like, that I didn't have at all with the public school because it was an unknown. There is a highly selective process with respect to our kids' Catholic school that I felt afforded some higher level of comfort of the kids, and who they'd be associating with. I'm not ignorant. I know that [Catholic high school] has its share of substance abuse, drunk driving, relatively early teen, full-blown sexuality, and stuff. I mean, I know that's all going on, but nonetheless, I just felt that with the families that are going there, there's a greater control over who they are, and what they're more likely than not going to be about. They're all making an investment, too, and I think they just perhaps are going to be stricter with their kids. I mean, there's a lot of perhaps unfounded assumptions in all of that. (p. 25)

Thus, the parents interviewed expressed an inextricable connection between the values they were seeking and the community, both adult and peer, in which these values would be learned.

Parents who attended a Catholic high school (41.3%) selected the *Catholic environment* as the most important value, with *peers that share values* and the *ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective* as the second and third in importance (see Appendix W). Similarly, parents who attended church services on a weekly basis (30%) identified the same priority (see Appendix X).

The families' gross income did not substantially impact the results (see Appendix Y). The top five values remained the same with all income groups, with the exception of families making below \$50,000. For this income group, *religion classes* rose to the fifth in importance and *teachers as role models* moved to sixth place. For those making more than \$250,000, these same two values were ranked as the fifth selection. Similarly, gender did not impact the top five values, with both males and females selecting the same values (see Appendix N).

Cross-referencing the data from the prioritized religious values in survey item 2 to family religious practice did not significantly impact the ranking of religious values, except in relationship to a *Catholic environment* (see Table 10). For Catholics (70.9%), a

Table 10

Ranked Religious Values by Religion of Respondents

Value	Catholic	Protestant	Non-Christian religions	No religion
Catholic environment	1	11	7	7
Peers that share values	2	1	1	1
Discuss issues - faith perspective	3	3	2	2
Christian community	4	2	6	3
Teachers - role models	5	4	5	6
Religion classes	6	5	4	5

Catholic environment was the foremost value. Catholic parents expressed primarily a formational aspect to the Catholic education. Alice Johnson made a clear distinction between general Catholic values and more specific religious education, as follows:

I would rather send them [my children] to a Catholic school because that's our heritage, but as far as the teaching of the Catholic religion, honestly, I never expected them to get much of that in high school. And doubly honestly, I don't think they ever have. I think that's not a good age for kids to learn . . . you know I don't think they paid a lot of attention to religion. I do think they pay a lot of attention to their teachers and who they are as role models and all that. So yeah, I think that's very important, but the actual teaching of, you know, transubstantiation . . . I don't think that goes a long way to heal your soul . . . And that's why I say it wasn't for academic; it wasn't for safety; it wasn't for prestige; it was just sort of for this hodgepodge of I guess Catholic values; teachers; atmosphere; community; you know all those kind of things. (Thornton, 2010, p. 35)

Ms. Johnson's sentiment corresponds to the ranking of religious values by Catholics ahead of more formalized religious instruction (*religion classes, Christian service requirements* and the *opportunity to attend liturgy*).

At the same time, the desire for religious instruction was strong on the part of parents. The ranked religious values were cross-referenced against the most significant loss if the child was not able to attend the school (see Appendix Z) and the most significant reasons the parents had a positive experience in a Catholic school (see Appendix AA). The results indicated that parents who value a *Catholic faith environment* identify this factor with more formal elements of the program, such as religious instruction and sacramental opportunities within the school program.

For non-Catholics, the value of a *Catholic environment* held less importance and was not in the top six values of respondents who were Protestants, members of non-Christian religions, or those with no formal religion. *Peers that share values* was the

primary “religious” motivation for non-Catholics to send their child to a Catholic secondary school. This finding again emphasized the role of the peer group as a primary vehicle for the transmission of values.

Survey item 3 asked the parents to assess the extent to which their child’s school embodies Catholic values. The majority of parents *agreed* (38.4%) or *strongly agreed* (54.7%) with the statement. Only 6.9% did not believe that their school embodied Catholic values.

Survey item 4 asked if the parent would still choose the school if it was not Catholic but had all of the other components of the current program. A total of 62.8% of the parents indicated that they would continue to choose the school, while 37.9% indicated that they would not attend the school. The data suggest that Catholicity was a critical and deciding factor in the choice of a Catholic secondary school for over one third of the respondents. At the same time, the figure of almost 63% of the parents who would still send their child to a Catholic school even if the school was not explicitly Catholic may suggest a disconnect between the parents’ desire for certain values, and an understanding that many of these values emanate from the Catholic nature of the school.

The data from item 4 were cross-referenced with item 1, in which parents assessed the relative importance of religious variables (see Appendix BB). The results showed that parents who would not send their child to the school if it were not Catholic placed a higher priority on more formal religious factors, such as sacramental opportunities (liturgy and reconciliation), the campus ministry program, class prayer, formal religion classes and the presence of vowed religious. The parents also placed a much higher value on the Catholic environment of the school.

Item 16 asked if the spouse or partner attended Catholic schools. Slightly more than 58% of the respondents attended Catholic schools at the elementary, high school, college or post-graduate level. A lower percentage (52.7%) of the spouses/partners attended Catholic schools at some point in their education.

Item 17 queried the survey respondents' experience of the Catholic schools when they were students. The overwhelming majority of the survey respondents (95.2%) and their spouses/partners (94.7%) had a *somewhat positive* or *very positive* experience.

Parent interviews (Thornton, 2010) indicated a powerful affective response to a positive experience with a Catholic school education. One parent, when asked about her high school choice, repeatedly referred back to the experience of her Catholic elementary school as a baseline for interpreting the high school experience:

I love [Catholic elementary school]. That was my grammar school, and I met great people who had the same values, and they're all very kind, and they've all experienced the same Christian education whether here, or a lot of them are from Ireland . . . and they were all raised very staunch Catholics. And I don't think they would get the same in a public school. I think they would be – not that they would be less of a better person, but you instill these values that – I don't know how to put it. They just – I mean, I'm not saying that everybody that goes to Catholic school is a good person, but they have that knowledge, and so they have role models to follow and to know what you're supposed to do and how to act and how to be kind. I mean, it just emphasizes what you bring from home. (Thornton, 2010, pp. 2-3)

Another parent spoke of the strong emotional impact that the priests and instructors of his all-boys high school had on him:

I think it is that sense of values, that sense of caring that you get, it is the sense that there's a greater good here. The more that that's communicated, not in the mission statement, but in the real feeling, the vibe that you get in the place. . . You felt like you were part of something that was bigger than you; you were part of something . . . I mean, you felt like you belonged to something and that was communicated. It was very – I mean, I'm just babbling here, but it's very personal. (Thornton, 2010, p. 66)

He continued,

I mean, it's not a perfect school, but you feel like you're part of something. . . it is that the teachers aren't just there to fill in their time cards . . . but it's that vibe, that feeling that's communicated when you talk to people . . . That was Father Johnson and Father Bill. Those guys, they cared about you, and you knew it. So that to me is the quintessential value of Catholic school. It comes from the religious background. It didn't come from nowhere; it came from being a Catholic school, but that's the stuff that really impresses kids, and still impresses me. (Thornton, 2010, p. 67)

In each case, the frame for evaluating the Catholic secondary school was established by the experience that the parents had as children. While the parents often acknowledged that their children's current high school might not be "perfect," and they could name the shortcomings, the reference point for their evaluation was their Catholic school experience.

Item 18 further explored the reasons for the positive experience of those who attended Catholic schools (see Figure 10). *Values education* (26.4%) was identified as the most important factor. *A Catholic faith environment* (21.9%), *academics* (19.7%), and *community* (13.4%) followed in the grouping of the top four factors.

Item 22 asked the parents to identify the most significant loss if their child was not able to attend a Catholic secondary school (see Figure 11). Over 200 parents (24.2%) identified the *Catholic faith environment* as the most significant loss, followed by *values education* (20.1%), *academics* (16.4%), *community* (14.4%) and *college preparation* (10.3%). Over 58% of the respondents chose among *Catholic faith environment*, *values education* or *community* as the value that would constitute the greatest loss if their son or daughter was unable to attend the Catholic secondary school. The grouping of *academics* and *college preparation* (26.7%) fell into second place.

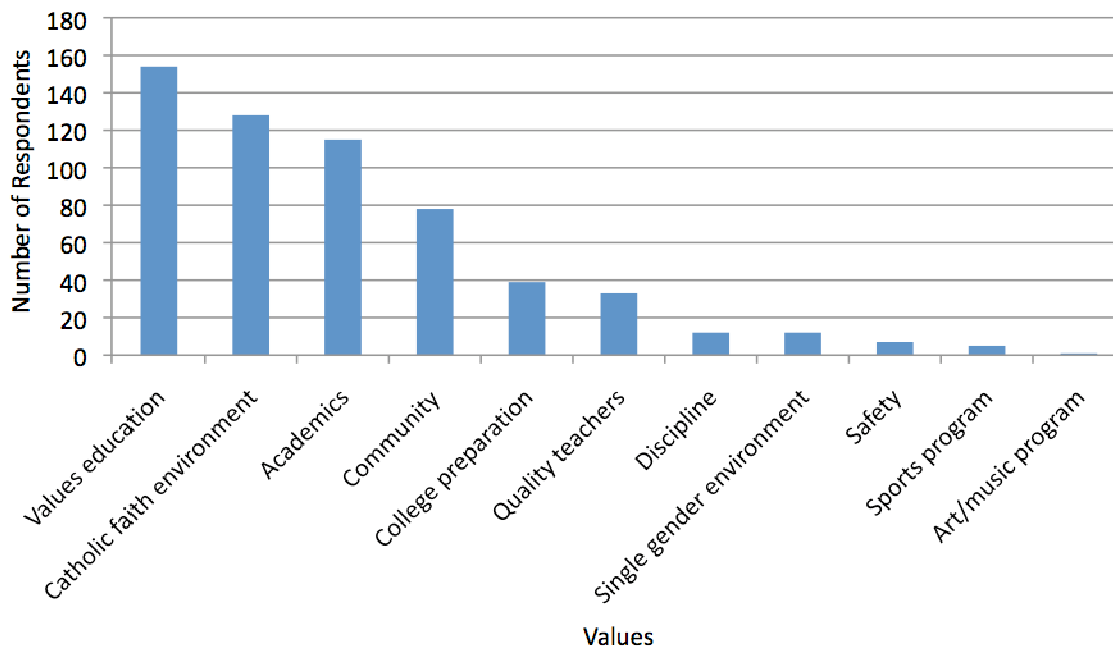


Figure 10. Reasons that survey respondents indicated that their attendance at a Catholic school was *somewhat positive* or *very positive*.

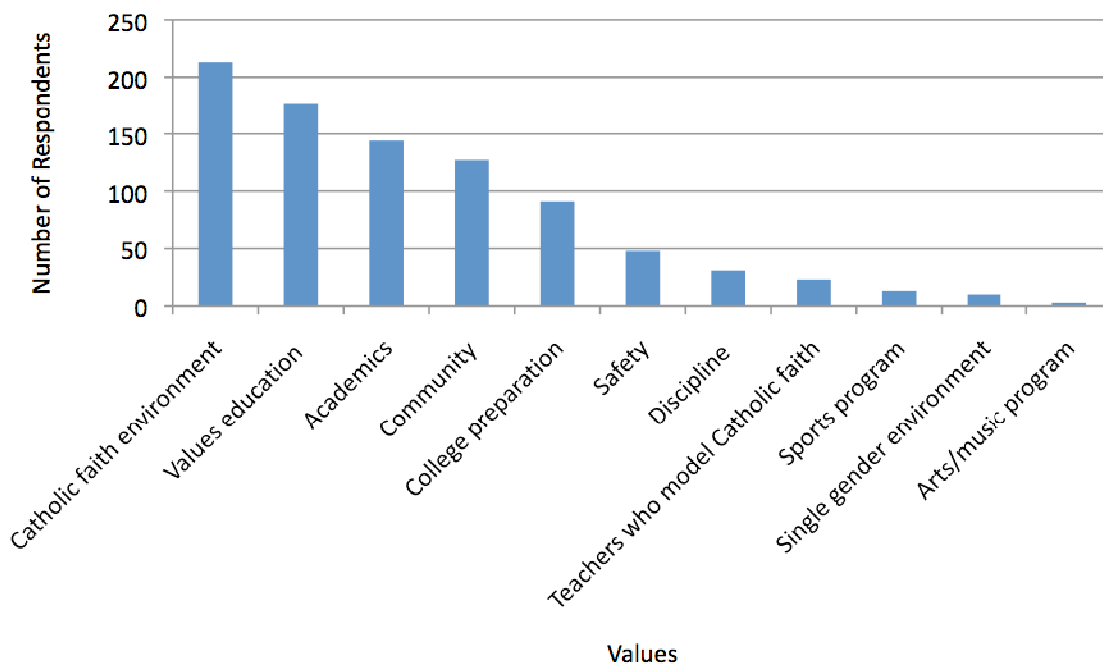


Figure 11. The most significant loss if parents were unable to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school.

These data present a reversal from the data gleaned in item 22, in which 61.6% of the parents selected a *high quality academic program* as the most important value in their decision for a Catholic school (see Figure 7). Parent interviews (Thornton, 2010) illuminated the apparent contradictions in the data. *Values, Catholic faith environment,* and *community* appeared to provide a critical lens through which the choice of a Catholic education was made. Thus, while the survey consistently indicated that academics were the highest priority in the choice of a Catholic school, parents articulated that this priority was seen in the context of a value-based system. The findings may suggest that parents were loss averse to the Catholic values of the school, and that this loss aversion played a role in their school-choice decision. One parent gave the following insight into what she did not want to lose:

I'm buying an experience that is a really important part of their lives. They're not going to have it back again. It is the foundation and it could so easily go wrong, and I think that by buying into a quality school with standards, I'm doing the best I possibly can, even though I can't guarantee anything. (Thornton, 2010, p. 31)

This sense of guarding against loss at such a critical time was echoed throughout the parent conversations.

Research Question 1

Items 19 through 21 and questions 23 and 24 were aligned with Research Question 1, which was as follows: What are the core values influencing how parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school? Item 19 asked the parents to rate their own desire to send their child to a Catholic secondary school. The majority of parents (64.4%) rated as *high* their desire to send their child to a Catholic high school. Twelve percent had a *low* desire to send their child to a Catholic

secondary school.

Item 20 asked the parents to rate their child's desire to attend a Catholic secondary school. The majority of the parents felt that their child's desire to attend a Catholic high school was *high* (59.8%). Twelve percent of the parents believed that their child had a *low* interest in attending the Catholic school. The similarity in the response of the parents in item 19 and the children in item 20 may reflect the number of respondents indicating that the family made the decision together regarding the child's attendance at a Catholic secondary school (item 23).

Item 21 asked the parents to assess and rank the factors that they felt influenced their child's desire to attend a Catholic secondary school (see Figure 12). *College prep environment* received the highest number of responses. *Values education* and the *lower quality public schools* followed in importance. When the numbers of first-, second- and third-place rankings are totaled, the school's *reputation* assumed a more prominent role as the second most important factor.

Item 23 asked who made the decision to send the child to the Catholic secondary school. The majority of families (56.5%) made the decision together. Just over 15% of the parents left the school-choice decision to the child. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents reported that the decision was made by either one of the parents or the parents together. Very few fathers (1.5%) exercised the sole responsibility for the school choice, in contrast to 7.7% of the mothers.

Many parents described a process by which they bracketed the decision for their children, letting the child choose among a number of schools of which the parents

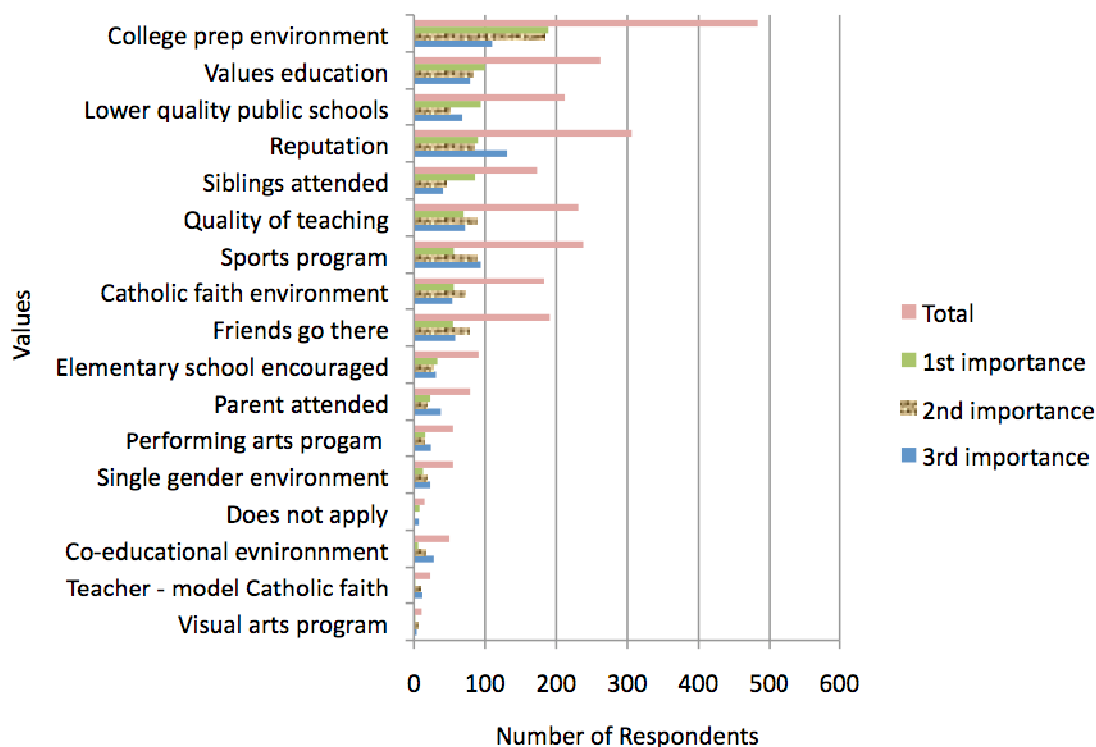


Figure 12. Ranked parental assessment of factors influencing son or daughter to attend a Catholic secondary school.

approved. Michelle Harris described the school-choice decision in the following terms:

well, I let my daughter pick the school that she wanted. So we applied to three high schools and she got into all of them, three Catholic schools, and it was sort of – there was no conversation. It was just going to be . . . Catholic . . . she applied at [Catholic high school 1], [Catholic high school 2], and [Catholic high school 3], and I let her really see where she liked and where her friends were, what teachers there were, and that thing. We weighed, or we were leaning towards [Catholic high school 1], but we wanted her to make that decision because we wanted her to be happy . . . we let her ultimately pick and that’s what she did . . . It was like, “These are the Catholic schools,” and she actually wanted to apply for [Catholic high school 4] which is a lovely great school, but that was sort of just geographically not going to be easy for us to – I didn’t want to do the whole commute thing and have her commuting, and we’re not over there. And so that was kind of like, “No, it’s geographically undesirable, so you’re not going to do that one.” (Thornton, 2010, p. 44)

None of the parents interviewed left the decision solely to the child.

Item 24 asked the respondents to indicate the extent to which the single-gender nature of the school was a positive factor in deciding to send their child to the school. One-third of the respondents (33.2%) indicated that this was a positive factor (*moderate* or *high*) in their decision. Parents of students in both boys' and girls' single-gender education voiced strong support for the role of a single-gender school. The parent of a young woman articulated her desire for:

a school where they would not have to deal with peer pressure on a daily basis with boys. I don't mean my girls don't live in a world devoid of male company; I just didn't want it in the classroom . . . I think the ages of 13 to 16 are very important for girls' development, and they can be very negatively affected by having boys in the class, and the way other girls behave to those boys in the classroom in the school. (Thornton, 2010, p. 30)

The father of a young man stated his understanding of the benefit of a Catholic school for his son as follows:

I want my son to have read the Bible. I want my son to have been able to talk about sexuality. I want my son to go to mass at least semi-annually . . . I think Catholic schools, even if they're coed, do a better job with boys than public schools do because the jock tradition is there . . . My son's an athlete and, you know, he's not going to be playing in the NFL or any of that, but he likes sports and he likes the gayness of it. You do get that in Catholic schools. You have more of that feeling in Catholic school. It's more supportive of boys, and that's value No. 1 that I am willing to sacrifice for . . . and then, secondly, I want my son to have his spiritual side at least acknowledged or addressed, or found. I want him to have a real education, which means you understand what's in the Bible, things that they just don't do in public school or in secular private schools either. (Thornton, 2010, pp. 65-66)

In each case, the parents expressed the understanding that the school would provide their child a better education specifically oriented towards their child's gender, and this was the preeminent value in the context of the broader values of Catholic education.

Research Question 3

The third research question was as follows: To what extent is the rising tuition cost influencing the manner in which parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school? Questions 5 through 13 were aligned with this research question.

Item 5 asked to what extent tuition was a factor in deciding to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. Only 24% of parents indicated that tuition was not a factor in the decision to send their child to a Catholic secondary school. Tuition was a factor for 76% of the families, and 37.4% of the respondents indicated that they seriously evaluated whether they could afford to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school.

Item 6 asked whether the rising cost of tuition would affect their decision to send their son or daughter to the Catholic high school for the remaining two years. Slightly over half (50.8%) of the respondents were committed to sending their child to the school regardless of tuition increases. Tuition increases were high enough for 16.6% of the families that they would assess on a yearly basis whether they would reenroll their child in the Catholic secondary school. One-third of the families (32.6%) indicated that they “may assess” the reenrollment decision in subsequent years.

Item 9 asked to what extent the tuition costs were an ongoing sacrifice for the family (see Figure 13). Only 12.3% indicated that the costs were not a sacrifice. Of the remaining respondents, 44.6% indicated that the costs were significant but that they could manage. Over 43% of the parents noted that the tuition costs were a significant and ongoing sacrifice.

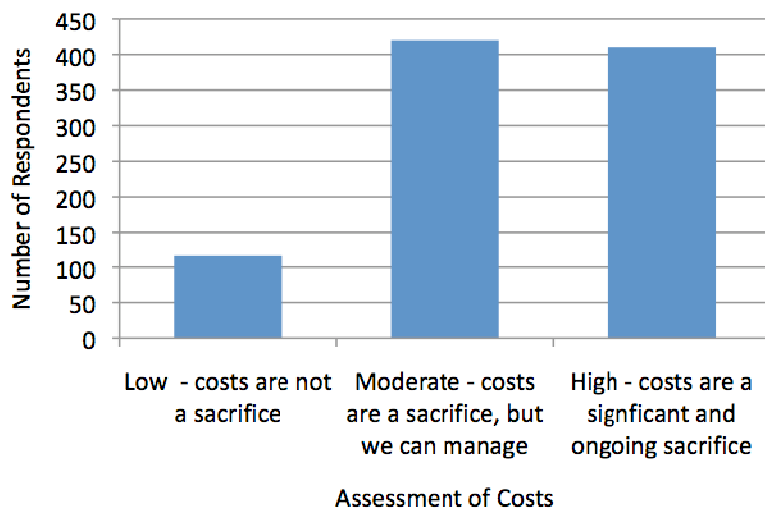


Figure 13. Personal assessment of the impact of tuition costs on parents.

Items 5, 6 and 9 assessed the extent to which the tuition had or is having an impact on the parents' decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. The answer choices of each item that indicated the most significant concern with tuition costs were cross-tabulated to the ranked choice of the most significant religious factors affecting the decision (see Appendix CC), and the ranked choice of the most significant factors influencing the decision (see Appendix DD). The most significant overall values and religious values remained consistent with the general population.

One parent noted that the tuition was a moderate sacrifice: "My kids have gone through a private school, so we're used to paying . . . Their tuition, plus afterschool care was about equal to what the high school tuition is, so we didn't have a big step increase" (Thornton, 2010, p. 72). Thus, she affirmed the findings of Kahneman and Tversky (2003) who noted that people assess risk from the perspective of a neutral starting point. For this parent, the neutral starting point was the payments already being made for the combined cost of elementary school tuition and child-care. With the high school tuition

payment being approximately the same, she judged the sacrifice as moderate. For another parent, the neutral starting point was Catholic education itself.

Well, because it was coming from a school like [Catholic elementary school] our tuition . . . was about a 300 percent increase. So that was a huge increase for us . . . We had a child in college and high school, so that was a stretch. But at the same time, we were committed to the Catholic education. And so having been through the . . . Catholic grammar school, it made it easier for us to transition even knowing that we were going to be stretched. It was still a commitment that we wanted to see happen. (Thornton, 2010, p. 12)

Another parent echoed a similar position that addressed the neutral starting point of Catholic education and hinted at loss aversion toward Catholic values:

I would say that I had made an investment in Catholic education, and it was not a small investment. I wanted to see it through to its sort of organic conclusion with secondary school. I didn't want to see that interrupted. I felt there was a progression in terms of their development, and what they would be able to incorporate in terms of their learning with respect to religion. I didn't want to cut that off at middle school. I wanted to see it through to high school. (Thornton, 2010, p. 19)

Both parents reflected that the cost of Catholic education was a clear monetary sacrifice, but one that they were willing to make as part of an ongoing commitment they had made to their children.

A number of parents used the specific language of investment when referring to the cost of Catholic education (Thornton, 2010). This perspective led one parent to compare two Catholic schools at which his son had been accepted:

Another factor was that they got into a highly-coveted secondary high school. The decision might have been different if they had gotten into [Catholic high school], and only [Catholic high school]. I have to be frank about that. The admissions to [Catholic high school] are highly desired. A degree, and having gone there, I think, means more than some other Catholic secondary school choices. I saw that as being worthy of the investment. So, I mean there was definitely an economics equation. I mean, am I getting a return on this considerable expense, because it really jumps when you go to secondary school. (Thornton, 2010, p. 19)

The perspective indicates an evaluative approach to balancing the cost and quality of the various schools.

Item 7 asked the parents to indicate their level of concern regarding the costs of tuition for their younger children to attend a Catholic secondary school. Only 18.4% were not concerned about future tuition costs for their child. The remaining 82.7% of the families were concerned about the affordability of Catholic secondary schools in the future for their younger children. Forty percent rated this concern as *high*, expressing that they were concerned that they would not be able to afford the future costs of tuition. Concerns regarding the cost of tuition did not impact how parents prioritized values influencing their decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school (see Appendixes EE and FF).

A number of items (5, 6, 7, 9 and 11) assessing the impact of tuition on the parents were cross-referenced to family income statistics of the respondents (see Appendixes GG, HH, II, JJ, and KK). The data indicated that the \$150,000 per-year family income level was the tipping point for San Francisco Bay Area families sending their children to Catholic secondary schools. Families who earned less than this figure more frequently indicated that tuition was a *high impact*. At an income exceeding \$150,000 per year, parents who indicated that the impact was *moderate* or *low* exceeded those who indicated a *high* impact.

Item 8 asked the parents to indicate the level of yearly tuition increase that would cause them to reconsider their decision to send their child to a Catholic secondary school (see Figure 14). The average tuition increase was \$1,498 with a standard deviation of \$622. The median fell in the \$1,001 - \$1,250 range. The data indicate that parents were

willing to tolerate significant tuition increases to continue sending their child to a Catholic secondary school. The level of tuition increase did not affect the most significant values sought by parents (see Appendixes LL and MM).

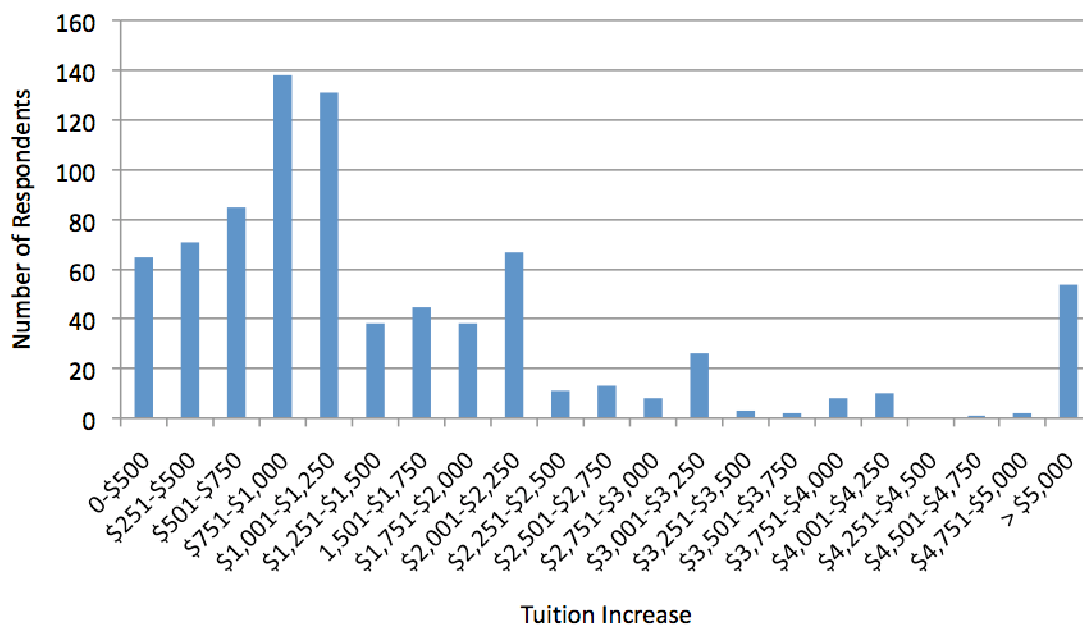


Figure 14. Yearly tuition increase that would cause reconsideration of Catholic secondary school attendance.

Parent interviews (Thornton, 2010) indicated that the tuition increase number was highly variable, and was dependent on the personal family situation and the extent to which the family valued Catholic education. All of the parents were highly invested in the schools that their children were attending, and the discussion of leaving prompted emotional responses. One parent stated that “Education is priceless. So even though I don’t want [Catholic high school] to put the tuition up, no matter how high it goes, I’m

not taking my daughter out” (Thornton, 2010, p. 30). Another parent spoke of the cost in terms of what she was getting for her expenditure:

for us it’s community, environment, and academics. So all of those things are in the mix, and that makes it so that we feel that we’re sort of getting the return on that investment, and that’s really what it is. You know, how much would it have to increase for us to maybe have to reconsider? I don’t know. I don’t know what that number is, but it’s a stretch, as it would be for anybody. (Thornton, 2010, p. 45)

A parent who was struggling over the decision to take her daughter out of a single sex Catholic secondary school commented,

we’re in a predicament and undecided whether she’s going to be able to attend in the fall, and they have no options for me, not one, not one option. And it’s kind of sad . . . and the cost has gone up. Every year, the cost goes up. (Thornton, 2010, p. 59)

For this parent, the decision was in process and dependent on financial aid that she might be able to receive.

Item 10 asked the respondents to identify the sources of income used for tuition payments (see Figure 15). Employment income, of which 46% came from two-parent incomes, generated the primary source for tuition payments. Over 36% of the families used savings for tuition. Of the 933 parents who responded to the survey item, 22.8% were receiving tuition grants or scholarships. Bank loans supported tuition payments for 17.3% of the families.

Item 11 asked the parents to indicate their level of concern with the rise in the cost of tuition. Of the 938 people who responded to the survey item, 854 (91%) expressed concern about tuition increases. Slightly more than 44% of the respondents were very concerned about how they could afford to pay for tuition increases. One parent’s

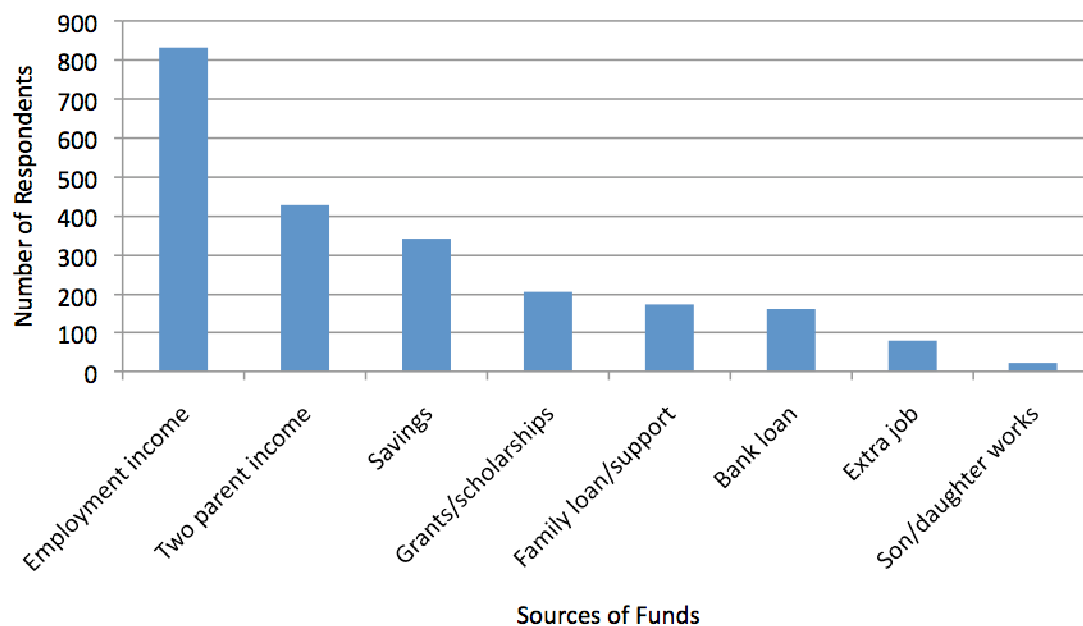


Figure 15. Sources of funds for tuition payments.

comment illustrated the careful discussion about allocation of funds that parents are having.

We have to cut other areas sometimes, and we're a two-income family. Luckily it's not a deal breaker for us. I've seen this for some people. I know a family that we're close to who have four children, and their youngest is not in a Catholic school yet. They just can't afford it; so they have to make that choice. So they decided, "Well . . . maybe we could wait and do it in the later years." So yeah, I mean I think everybody's feeling the crunch in the economy right now . . . I mean Catholic school is the same cost as the UC, so we're paying for college twice. (Thornton, 2010, p. 48)

While this parent decided to continue to pursue Catholic education, her friend was contemplating saving money relative to college. Another parent noted the sacrifice that he was making to send his son to a Catholic school. He commented on the spending priorities of the school.

I'd rather have first-class teachers . . . I mean, you got to remodel the classrooms . . . but before we get a new pool, a new gym, and a new this, that, and the other, I

want to see first-class teachers and I want to see action on other fronts before we build buildings . . . I have to tell you that impacts people. People will sacrifice when they see that the kids are engaged, the teachers are engaged; they're getting a good education. They will do a lot, but what they don't want to support is bureaucracy and, sort of, just building buildings because we got to keep up with the Jones'. (Thornton, 2010, p. 65)

This parent was not contemplating leaving the school, nor did he critique the quality of the institution. However, his statements revealed an assessment of the spending of the school relative to the core values for which he was paying.

Item 12 asked the respondents to assess the impact of the current economic recession on their decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. Over one-third of the families expressed a moderate concern sufficient to cause an evaluation of their financial situation relative to the tuition cost. Over 18% of the respondents were seriously impacted by the recession and were evaluating whether they could continue to send their son or daughter to the school. This figure jumped to 29% of those making less than \$150,000 (see Appendix NN). One parent voiced the stress that she was experiencing over the recession.

We're Democrats and Republicans and Union and non-Union, but we're a tight community. And a lot of us are losing everything. And it's heartbreaking, and it's kind of sad, because when I called up [Catholic high school] to let them know what's going on, it's almost like they don't care. They just want to know where the check is, and I understand that. They have bills to pay. They have people to take care of. And I have donated so much money to my Catholic church and to that school, and my last daughter's going through there. And it's just kind of heartbreaking and sad that they don't really care, but that's the reality of the world right now. So my youngest daughter may not be finishing at [Catholic high school]. (Thornton, 2010, p. 57)

Her husband had lost his job, and she was contemplating removing her daughter from Catholic high school due to the cost. Until financial aid options were fully evaluated, she was unsure about sending her daughter back to the school.

Item 13 asked the respondents to indicate their tuition and fee costs for the schools. Tuition ranged from \$8,000 to \$35,000, reflecting the schools participating in the research.

Summary

Nine hundred and seventy-two parents responded to the survey. The majority of the respondents were White, female and Catholic. The income of the average respondent exceeded the median income of the San Francisco Bay Area.

The survey responses indicated that a number of factors influenced parents' choice to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. Academics emerged as the single most important factor. Other values included a values-centered education, the Catholic identity of the school, college preparation, a safe environment and the community in which the child was educated. Parent interviews supported the conclusion that these factors were not viewed independently but were seen as part of a system of mutually reinforcing values. When the religious factors were examined as a separate category, *peers that share values* emerged as the most significant value. Parent interviews supported the conclusion that parents understand the influential role of peers in learning a value system. Socioeconomic factors did not appear to impact the values desired by parents. The data further indicated that the parents' Catholic faith and their attendance at a Catholic high school resulted in a higher emphasis on Catholic values.

The majority of respondents indicated that the cost of Catholic secondary education for their child was a sacrifice. This proved to be true in spite of the fact that the majority of the families had incomes well above the median for a family of four in the San Francisco Bay Area. Almost one-half of the parents afforded the tuition through the work of both parents. Family savings, family loans, and bank loans also provided

sources of income for education costs. The data suggested that the \$150,000 family income range provided a bench mark for affordability.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study explored the core values influencing how parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school, the role that Catholicity played in this choice, and the impact of rising tuition on the decision frame. The study noted that both the number of Catholic secondary schools and actual enrollment have declined over the last 10 years. During the same 10-year period, tuition increases outpaced inflation, particularly in the San Francisco Bay Area. In addition, as the study was being designed and administered, the nation experienced the most severe recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s, potentially further stressing families paying tuition to send their sons or daughters to Catholic secondary schools.

This mixed-methods study presented three research questions designed to focus on the core values that parents were seeking in a Catholic secondary school, the role of Catholicity in their choice, and the role that rising costs played in that choice. The theoretical framework for the research indicated that judgment and decision making involved a series of unconscious mental processes that exerted influence on the decision outcome. The use of mental shortcuts in the judgment process, a strong aversion to the potential for loss when considering alternative outcomes of a decision, and the perspective in which the decision was framed impacted the ultimate decision.

A review of the literature indicated that values desired by parents were interrelated. Academics and a supportive community were viewed as integral elements of the decision frame. The literature further suggested that parents' income and the affordability of the schools were the most critical elements of the parents' decision to

attend Catholic high schools, and that parents were adopting a consumer approach to the purchase of a Catholic school education.

The researcher developed an on-line survey to collect data relative to the research questions. Nine hundred and seventy-two parents from 15 Catholic schools in the San Francisco Bay Area responded to the on-line survey. Of the respondents, 10 were interviewed over the phone to help interpret the survey data. The full results of the data were presented in Chapter IV. In summary, the data indicated that parents viewed the choice of Catholic education through a multifaceted frame that included the academic strength of the school, the values that provided a context for the education and the community that supported their core values. The Catholic nature of the school, interpreted in different ways by the respondents, provided the basis for the value system. Parents placed a high priority on the peer relationships that supported their value system. Tuition costs clearly presented a challenge to the parents' ability to afford a Catholic education.

Conclusions

Research Question 1

The first research question asked the following: What are the core values influencing how parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school?

The data suggested a decision frame composed of three primary values: academic excellence, values-based education, and a community that supports the inculcation of core values. Interviews supported the conclusion that parents desired the integration of these values, which was consistent with previous research (Collins, 2001; Puccio, 2000). Collins noted that parents desire values that are mutually supportive and

integrated. Puccio found that parents perceive academics in the context of a larger grouping of values. The findings suggest that the primary values should not be viewed solely as discreet factors, but as components of a value system that provides the frame through which the decision is made. Parents seek solid academic preparation, which includes academic and counseling preparation for college. They desire that this academic work occur in an environment that reinforces their values. Parents fundamentally understand that the community in which the student lives supports these values and, thus, parents desire an educational community that shares and reinforces their values. This environment is characterized by personal attention to their child, effective discipline, and teachers who model values. The primary value areas will be examined separately.

Academic and college preparation. The survey data revealed that parents desire a strong academic program for their children that includes preparation for the rigors of college-level work. Within this frame falls an understanding that the school will provide excellent and engaging teaching. However, parent interviews (Thornton, 2010) further indicated that the desire for college preparation encompasses more than the ability to be academically successful in college. Parents perceived the strength of the Catholic high school program as providing a foundational social and moral education that prepares the student for all aspects of life.

Values-based education. The parent survey data and telephone interview data (Thornton, 2010) revealed that parents choose Catholic secondary schools for a strong values-based educational environment. Within this frame lays a number of criteria explored in the survey, including *Catholic identity*, *values education*, and *safe environment*, which were offered as survey choices.

Parents described a safe environment as one characterized by a community that shares their values and guards the moral, social, and emotional development of their child. Both the children's peer group and the parent community are integral components of a community that supports the parents' belief system. This conclusion supports the finding of Collins (2001), who noted the "functional communities" (p. 145) of the Catholic community in which parents, friends, family and community provide a social structure that reinforces core values. The community provides the opportunity to connect to other parents in addressing developmental issues of their children. Safety within this supportive community was also safety from the value system of public schools.

Catholic identity and values are a critical element of this frame. Catholic respondents overwhelmingly identified Catholic values as a major component of what they desire in the Catholic secondary school. Parent interviews supported the conclusion that these values ranged from doctrinal content to the faith environment in which their children would learn core religious beliefs. For non-Catholics, religious values were a critical element in choosing the Catholic school. While non-Catholic parents did not identify Catholic religious doctrine as a foundational base of their values, they nonetheless believed sufficiently in the fundamentals of the Catholic value system as a sound basis for the education of their children.

Parents had a clear understanding of the Catholic school value system and the expectation that the parents, students and school would be supportive of these values. One parent used the term "social contract" (Thornton, 2010, p. 62) to define the relationship between his family and the Catholic secondary school that his son attended.

This perception of clear expectations was voiced by many of the parents interviewed for the research.

Community. The value of community played an important role in the parents' decision to send their child to a Catholic secondary school and includes the values indicated in the survey as *community, safe environment, discipline, peers that share values, Catholic environment, and teachers as role models*. All parents interviewed for this study referenced the value of community in regard to their child's education. Parents articulated an understanding that the community creates the environment in which their children learn core values. Parents were aware of the influence the peer group had on their children; thus, *peers who share values* received heightened emphasis from the parent community.

The data indicated that parents were loss averse to the values of Catholicity and community. This finding is consistent with the research of Kahneman and Tversky (1984), who found that decision making was influenced by the manner in which the decision was presented. Their research indicated that people tended to choose decision alternatives that were framed in terms of a gain, and they demonstrated an aversion to decisions that framed the decision in terms of a loss, even though the outcomes of the decision were objectively equal. Both the on-line survey and phone interviews indicated that a combination of the attractive values of the school and a heightened concern about losing these values if their child did not go to the Catholic secondary school were influential in the parents' decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school.

The survey data suggested that heuristics of *availability, representativeness*

(Kahneman & Tversky, 1984) and *affect* (Slovic et al., 2002) were operative in the judgment process of parents. The parents were influenced by the personal knowledge of a small number of people connected to the school who provided them with information regarding school quality. The interview data revealed that knowledge of students who attended the school provided parental insight into the peer group that their child would encounter, a critical component of the decision frame. Parents extrapolated that the school embodied the values that they sought from personal knowledge of the students.

Research Question 2

The second research question asked the following: To what extent is the Catholicity of the Catholic secondary school a component in the decision framing process?

The conclusions presented for Research Question 1 noted that Catholic values played an important role for the parents in defining a values-based education and were an important dimension of the decision frame. Parents prioritized survey answer choices that reflected a desire for an environment in which Catholic values were learned, including *peers that share values, discuss issues from a faith perspective, Christian community, and teachers as role models*. Parent interviews supported this conclusion. Parents defined the Catholic environment as the ethos that pervades the school. It encompassed the overall value system, as one parent explained, “the hodgepodge of Catholic values: teachers, atmosphere, community” (Thornton, 2010, p. 35) that represents the Catholic environment. Formalized religious instruction was important to parents and was situated in the context of the Catholic faith environment. There was a high degree of satisfaction that schools were providing a strong Catholic environment.

For Catholics, the Catholic environment provided a primary value and a basic framework for understanding the Catholic school. This value rose in significance with the level of involvement in Church activities, such as attendance of religious services. Catholics involved in the Church were able to articulate the values they were pursuing and to relate them specifically to their Catholic faith. They were able to specify a full range of values, from the nature of the Catholic community to religious and doctrinal instruction. Parents who attended a Catholic school also placed a greater emphasis on the Catholic environment.

Non-Catholics prioritized the elements of a Catholic faith environment in a manner that was broader and less doctrinal, including factors such as *values, peers that share values, discuss issues from a faith perspective, Christian community, and teachers as role models*. The expression of the term *Catholic environment* was not important to non-Catholics, and the data from the survey and phone interviews did not indicate their understanding of the term. However, non-Catholics expressed an understanding that the Catholic secondary school stood for a values-based education, a primary component of the decision frame for the parents.

Parents identified *peers that share values* as a primary value that they were seeking among the religious values. As discussed for Research Question 1, parents recognized the influence that the peer group had on their children. Selecting a peer group that reflects their values and can support their child in his or her development emerged as a priority component of the decision-making frame. Interview data emphasized that parents desired a community reflective of Catholic values, and they understood that the peer group formed the community that provided the context for the transmission of these

values.

There was a powerful affective response to the Catholic culture from those who attended a Catholic school. Parents referred to the experiences they had as students in Catholic schools and spoke of their child's school through the lens of their past experience. One parent expressed deep emotion regarding the memory of his high school priest instructors: "those guys, they cared about you, and you knew it. So, to me, that is the quintessential value of Catholic school" (Thornton, 2010, p. 65). This was a statement of trust in the current teaching faculty that was based upon the parent's past educational experience in a Catholic secondary school. The values that parents experienced as Catholic school students reflected the values, "the quintessential values," that the parents expected in the present.

Survey and telephone interview data supported the parents' strong understanding of the values embodied by the Catholic school. However, about 63% of these parents indicated in the survey that they would still have their children attend the school even if it were not Catholic. These findings, when viewed together, are perplexing to the researcher and suggest that further research is necessary to understand the data.

Research Question 3

The third research question asked the following: To what extent is the rising tuition cost influencing the manner in which parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school? A number of findings were germane to this research question.

Approximately 84% of the respondents indicated that their income exceeded the median family income for the San Francisco Bay Area. This income figure suggested that affordability of Catholic school tuition is an important issue for parents.

The ongoing and rising cost of tuition in the San Francisco Bay Area is a significant concern for the majority of families who are sending their children to Catholic secondary schools. The current economic climate of the country has only exacerbated the financial stress for families. Both the survey data and the interview data uncovered families who were considering withdrawing their children for financial reasons.

The interview data suggested that parents evaluated Catholic high school tuition costs relative to what they were already spending for elementary school, including both tuition and after-school care. Parents further indicated that they assessed the value of Catholic high school education in comparison to the values being received at the elementary school. These data reflect the position of Kahneman and Tversky (2003), who noted that people evaluate gains and losses from a neutral starting point. As applied to high school tuition, the neutral starting point would be the amount parents were already paying for elementary education. Thus, parents may evaluate high school tuition only in terms of the tuition increase from elementary to secondary school, as opposed to the actual total cost of secondary tuition.

The data, however, were inconclusive regarding how the rising cost of tuition is affecting how parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. The data indicated that parents were clear on the values they were seeking from the Catholic high schools, and this clarity remained consistent regardless of demographic or financial variables.

The data suggested that affordability was the primary concern of the respondents. The parents knew the values they desired in a Catholic education, and they were willing to sacrifice for it. The larger question was whether the parents could afford the tuition.

This conclusion supports the findings of Moe (2001) regarding the calculus of choosing private schools being a function of simple affordability, and of Bauch and Gao (2000), who found that parents' income level is the best predictor for willingness to pay for Catholic education (p. 15). Many parents in this study had stretched financially to make Catholic education work for their families. However, many were considering leaving the Catholic school system.

The interview data indicated that parents were evaluating Catholic secondary schools more critically on the basis of their ability to provide core values. This corresponds to the investment return that parents seek for their expenditure on Catholic education. Parent knowledge of school decisions regarding administrative spending, facility expansion, and Catholicity indicate that parents are cognizant of the school's spending priorities. These data are supported by the research of Ryan (2005), who found parents to be "discerning consumers" (p. 15) of Catholic education. With the large number of Catholic secondary schools in the San Francisco Bay Area from which parents may choose, these data may indicate a competitive environment for students based on parents' perceptions of the school's ability to deliver on the core values.

Disappointment bordering on anger was expressed in some parent interviews regarding the rising costs of Catholic schools. While they understood the schools' economic challenges, parents felt that the tuition costs that excluded them or their Catholic friends from attending the Catholic schools appeared counter to the Catholic understanding of community that they embraced.

Implications

The findings of this research offer insight into how parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school, the role of Catholicity and the

impact of finances. These findings suggest a number of implications for Catholic schools.

Affordability is a critical issue to be addressed for the Catholic high schools in the San Francisco Bay Area. While parents are strongly supportive of the Catholic school system, the high financial cost portends a current and future problem for the schools. This research supported the findings of Huber (2004), who noted that the Catholic school system is moving beyond the reach of the middle-income Catholic family. The finding holds broader implications for the Catholic schools and the Church in the future. One may deduce from the data that Catholic parents who earn wages near or below the median family income in the region are simply opting out of Catholic secondary education.

It is not that the parents do not see the value of Catholic education; they cannot pursue enrollment for their children due to issues of cost. This would imply that financing arrangements will play an increasingly pivotal role in parent decisions to send their children to Catholic secondary schools in coming years. While this study did not explore the issue of financial aid, the data suggest the need for schools to explore innovative financing alternatives and programs that may attract interested students who might not otherwise be able to pay for a Catholic education.

The data suggest a second implication: Schools need to develop and implement sophisticated quality control and accountability systems. Consistent with previous research (Ryan, 2005), the study indicated that parents reflected a consumer-oriented view of Catholic education. Parents' reference to the "investment" made in Catholic education should be neither surprising nor alarming. Parents understand that they are

buying a commodity with a value that can be measured. Furthermore, the survey respondents were clear on how they assessed value: academic excellence, a clear set of values that are discernable to the community, and a mission-centered environment in which the values can be carried out and reflected in their children's lives.

This heightened focus on the schools' performance suggests that educational leaders need to develop systems to assess program effectiveness. Objective indicators of quality should be identified, and data should be systematically collected and evaluated to assess the school's overall performance. Student and parent perception data would play an important role in program effectiveness reporting. In addition, the schools need to be able to articulate the value proposition of the schools. Parents are willing to pay a high price to send their children Catholic secondary schools. This value must be communicated in terms of the data and the transformational nature of a Catholic community.

Communication strategies will assume an increasingly vital role in shaping both the message and the perception of the schools. It was clear from the research interviews that the parents' assessment of school quality was mediated through myriad forms of formal school communications and informal social networks. An effective school process to monitor school performance data can provide the basis for reporting information to the parent community. Effective messaging will clearly reflect the school's mission and articulate the factors of academics, values education, and formative community that are important to the decision frame of the parent community. The message must further penetrate the methods through which parents and peers alike communicate. Current trends in social media would indicate that networking through

technology will play an increasing role in student, parent and community perception of the schools.

A third implication of the findings suggests the importance for schools to clearly understand and support their mission as Catholic educational communities. The data indicated, not surprisingly, that parents who attended a Catholic school themselves valued Catholic education for their children, and they valued the schools precisely for their Catholic nature. Likewise, those with greater involvement in the life of the Church valued the Catholicity of the Catholic schools. Non-Catholics, while not identifying strongly with the Catholicity of the schools, still prized the values fostered in the Catholic educational community. These findings lend support to and interpretation of Catholic schools as places of evangelization, reflecting the Bishops' advocacy for a "true community of faith in which the formational efforts of Catholic families are complemented, reinforced and extended" (NCCB, 1972, ¶107).

Clearly, there is a considerable opportunity for evangelization to families regarding the nature of the Catholic school. The teaching of the Bishops on Catholic schools and the desire of the parents are surprisingly close. Parents appreciated Catholic schools for values that reflect what the Catholic Bishops advocate in their pastoral letters addressing Catholic education. They want and support a strong, value-based community that lives what it teaches. Parents value teachers that are effective role models, a community that is characterized by core moral values, and an educational environment that prizes excellence in all facets.

In this context, formation of both the adult and the student community assumes greater importance. The faculty, encompassing the teachers, coaches, counselors and

others with direct and ongoing student contact, comprises the most important role models for students. The school community will reflect the faculty's belief in the school's mission and their ability to articulate its meaning.

Similarly, the survey data indicated the high value that parents placed on the education of their child within a community of peers who support their values. The formational component of the school's program must consistently call students to aspire to the school's mission and explore how students can become partners in advocating the mission. The data further suggest that schools explore the role of the peer group in student enrollment and retention.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations are offered to educators to explore issues raised as a result of this research study:

1. Parent interviews indicated that parents evaluate spending among the educational choices of elementary schools, high schools and colleges. A study should explore how parents are evaluating the importance and value of Catholic schooling at the various grade levels (elementary, secondary, and college).
2. A study should explore the financial aid policies and practices being implemented at Catholic secondary schools across the country. The level of effectiveness and the impact of financial aid practices on parent decision making should be explored.

3. A study should explore the perspective of non-Catholics who have attended Catholic schools regarding their assessment of the core values of the schools, the transmission of values, and the experience of the Catholic faith.
4. A number of parents expressed an evolving sense of religion as a result of their children's experience in Catholic schools. A study should more closely explore the impact of Catholic schooling on the religious faith of the parents and their families.
5. A study should further explore the dissonance found in this research study between the parents' strong desire to send their son or daughter to a Catholic school due to its value system and parents' statement that they would send their child to the school even if it were not Catholic. The study should explore the understanding of the Catholic faith, doctrine, community and values.
6. This research suggests that loss aversion regarding Catholic values plays a strong role in the decision-making process for Catholic schools. This question should be further explored through a quantitative study.

Recommendations for Future Practice

The following recommendations resulting from the study are offered to school leaders and administrators relative to their unique (arch)diocesan and school settings:

To (Arch)dioceses.

1. (Arch)dioceses should evaluate tuition aid policies and practices. Parents who send their children to Catholic elementary schools are likely to prioritize Catholic secondary schools as a value to continue their children's Catholic education. The transition from elementary school to secondary school, where

a number of parents opt out of Catholic school education for their children due to high tuition costs, bears special attention.

2. There is an important role for communications at the (arch)diocesan level in support of Catholic schools. The (arch)dioceses should examine communication practices to ensure that the core messages regarding the nature and value of Catholic schools are reaching parents and families in the most effective manner.
3. (Arch)dioceses should develop a protocol and offer professional development support to schools in developing a system to assess school quality according to the mission of the school. As the population becomes more discerning regarding school quality, the Catholic schools must have norms for identifying, collecting and analyzing data for the assessment of school quality.

To secondary schools.

1. Catholic secondary schools should define, collect and analyze data that enable them to assess the school's performance. Both quantitative and qualitative data concerning academic performance and school culture need to be identified.
2. Schools should define, collect and analyze student and parent perception data. These data will provide information for the school's leadership to monitor the quality of the program and to assess its reputation in the community. Catholic school personnel (administration, faculty and staff) should be educated on the critical attributes that are vital to the success of the schools.

3. Ongoing formation programs should educate the adult community regarding the core attributes of a Catholic school and their unique role in fostering Catholicity among the community.
4. Schools should review their communication practices at all levels. School personnel must communicate the interweaving of values, academic success and a faith community that characterizes the school. Social media and the role they play in the communication among young adults should be a specific focus of this effort.
5. Schools should evaluate their internal financial aid policies and practices to ensure support of the Catholic community. Particular attention should be given to those who have attended Catholic elementary schools, members of the Catholic parishes and communities, and those who are supportive of the mission of Catholic education. The school should evaluate its policies and practices toward those who experience financial difficulty while attending the school to enable the students to complete their Catholic education.

Final Remarks

The desire to pursue this research study began over a decade ago as I interviewed parents and their children for entry to a Catholic secondary school. The parents spoke with deep passion about their desire for a Catholic education. Yet I was aware that tuition was increasing at a pace far in excess of the rise in parent income, and that this trend was unsustainable. These observations led to defining a study to evaluate how parents were valuing Catholic education, the specific role of Catholicity, and the impact of tuition increases.

There is a simplicity to the conclusions of this research. Parents know what they want, and they are willing to pay for it. They are framing the decision in terms of the interrelationship of academic strength, values and the community in which these values are learned. The Catholic character of the school provides a foundation for the value lens, even if the parents are not Catholic. The higher costs appear to be limiting Catholic schools to families with incomes far exceeding the median income of the area, and those pursuing a Catholic education are carefully considering the value of this education. The country's current economic recession has only exacerbated and quickened this trend.

Since the beginning of the decline in the Catholic school population in the mid-1960s, there have been many within the Catholic community asserting that Catholic education is at a crossroads. This might be the case, but it may be more correct to state that individual Catholic schools are at a crossroads. Catholic schools are not an assumed choice among Catholic or non-Catholic parents. Catholic secondary schools must demonstrate their worth relative to the schools in the area, integrate Catholic values throughout their programs, develop a leadership model that supports total school quality, and address affordability in their area. Catholic schools who can meet these goals will thrive. Schools falling short in any of these categories will begin to decline.

That presents the broad view. Parents, however, experience Catholic education on a very personal level. The parents whom I encountered in the interviews expressed a tremendous desire for Catholic education that comes from a place of deep faith. I was struck with the level of passion with which the parents spoke of the schools, teachers, and administrators of the schools that their children attended. They had been willing to sacrifice to a considerable degree for their child's Catholic education, and they believed

that the cost had been worth it. Those parents expressed deep gratitude for their child's Catholic education. At the same time, I spoke to parents who were on the edge of affordability, and their voices cracked with emotion as they reflected on the possibility of removing their children from Catholic school. Their desire for help in educating their children in the faith inspired and humbled me. The challenge for Catholic educators will be to provide schools that embody their Catholic foundation, to be deserving of the wonderful families who entrust their children to our care, and to keep the costs within the reach of the parents' sacrifice.

REFERENCES

- Bauch, P., & Gao, H. (2000, April). *Contributions of parents' school opinions and reasons for choice to their willingness to support Catholic high schools: A structural model*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Bryk, A.S., Lee, V.E., & Holland, P.B. (1993). *Catholic schools and the common good*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bulman, R. C. (2004). *School-choice stories: The role of culture*. *Sociological Inquiry*, 74, 492-519.
- Collins, M. (2001). The Catholic school effect and Catholic identity (Doctoral dissertation, Claremont Graduate University, 2001). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 62, 04.
- Congregation for Catholic Education. (1997). *The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium*. Vatican City: The Congregation for Catholic Education.
- Convey, J. J. (1992) *Catholic schools make a difference: Twenty-five years of research*. Washington, DC: National Catholic Education Association.
- Crawford, J., & Freeman, S. (1996). Why parents choose private schooling: Implications for public school programs and information campaigns. *ERS Spectrum Quarterly*, 14(3), 9-16.
- Garvey, E. (2000). Parental choice of elementary schools within the Cleveland Catholic Diocese and its implications for the financial policies of diocesan Schools (Doctoral dissertation, Case Western Reserve University, 2000). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 61, 07.
- Goldring, E., & Hausman, C. (1997). *Parent involvement and satisfaction in magnet schools: Do reasons for choice matter?* Paper presented at the annual convention of the university council for educational administration, Orlando, FL.
- Gilovich, T., & Griffin, D. (2002). Introduction – Heuristics and biases: Then and now. In T. Gilovich, D. Griffin, & D. Kahneman (Eds.), *Heuristics and biases: The psychology of intuitive judgment* (pp. 1-18). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Hsieh, C., & Shen, J. (2000, April). *The effects of parental characteristics on school choice*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

- Huber, J. B. (2004). The accessibility of Catholic secondary schools in the United States to the various socioeconomic levels of Catholic families. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 65(02). (UMI No. 3122956)
- John XXIII, Pope (1962). *Address at the opening of the Second Vatican Council*. Retrieved from <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/pope0261i.htm>.
- Kahneman, D. (2003). A perspective on judgment and choice: Mapping bounded rationality. *American Psychologist*, 58, 697-720.
- Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. In D. Kahneman & A. Tversky (Eds.), *Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases* (pp. 3–22). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1979). Prospect theory: An analysis of decision under risk. In D. Kahneman & A. Tversky (Eds.), *Choices, values, and frames* (pp. 17–43). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1984). Choices, values, and frames. *Choices, values, and frames* (pp. 1–16). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1986). Extensional versus intuitive reasoning: The conjunction fallacy in probability judgment. In T. Gilovich, D. Griffin, & D. Kahneman (Eds.), *Heuristics and biases: The psychology of intuitive judgment* (pp. 19–48). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1986). Rational choice and the framing of decisions. In D. Kahneman & A. Tversky (Eds.), *Choices, values and frames* (pp. 209-223). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kahneman, D. & Tversky, A. (1991). Loss aversion in riskless choice: A reference-dependent model. In D. Kahneman & A. Tversky, *Choices, values and frames* (pp. 143–158). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1992). Advances in prospect theory: Cumulative representation of uncertainty. In D. Kahneman & A. Tversky (Eds.), *Choices, values and frames* (pp. 44–66). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Leo XIII, Pope. (1885) *Spectata fides: On Christian education*. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_27111885_spectata-fides_en.html
- Martin, S. (1993). *Choosing a secondary school: Can parents' behavior be described as rational?* Retrieved September 15, 2009, from <http://0-search.ebscohost.com.ignacio.usfca.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED400036&site=ehost-ve&scope=site>

- McDonald, D. (2006). *United States Catholic elementary and secondary schools 2006–2007*. Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association.
- McDonald, D. (2007). *United States Catholic elementary and secondary schools 2007–2008*. Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association.
- McDonald, D. (2008). *United States Catholic elementary and secondary schools 2008–2009*. Washington, DC: National Catholic Educational Association.
- McLellan, J. A., & Youniss, J. (1999). Catholic schools in perspective. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *81*, 104–112.
- Moe, T. M. (2001). Hidden demand: Who would choose private schools? *Educationnext*, *1*, 1. Retrieved July 21, 2005, from <http://educationnext.org/hidden-demand/>
- National Conference of Catholic Bishops. (1973). *To teach as Jesus did: A pastoral message on Catholic education*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.
- National Conference of Catholic Bishops. (1976). *Teach them*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.
- National Conference of Catholic Bishops. (1990). *In support of Catholic elementary and secondary schools*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.
- National Conference of Catholic Bishops. (1995). *Principles for educational reform in the United States*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.
- The Nobel Foundation. (2002). *The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2002*. Retrieved from http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economics/laureates/2002/public.html
- Nolan, H. J. (1984). *Pastoral letters of the United States Catholic bishops. Volume I, 1792–1940*. Washington, DC: National Council of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Conference.
- Paul VI, Pope. (1965). *Declaration on Christian education: Gravissimum educationis*. Vatican City: Vatican Press.
- Pius XI, Pope. (1929). *Divini illius magistri: On Christian education*. Vatican City: Vatican Press.
- Puccio, T. (2000). Decision-making processes and factors in Catholic high school selection (Doctoral dissertation, Johnson and Wales University, 2000). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *61*, 12.

- Read, D. (2004). *Utility theory from Jeremy Bentham to Daniel Kahneman*. Unpublished manuscript, London School of Economics.
- Rittmeyer, M. I. (2002). Why some Chicago parents choose academically focused public magnet or Catholic high schools instead of neighborhood public high schools (Doctoral dissertation, Northwestern University, 2002). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 63, 04.
- Ryan, R. S. (2005). Factors associated with decision making concerning Catholic high schools (Doctoral dissertation, University of Virginia, 2005). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 66, 01.
- [Sacred] Congregation for Catholic Education. (1977). *The Catholic school*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.
- [Sacred] Congregation for Catholic Education. (1982). *Lay Catholics in schools: Witnesses to faith*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.
- [Sacred] Congregation for Catholic Education. (1988). *The religious dimension of the education in a Catholic school*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.
- [Sacred] Congregation for Catholic Education. (1997). *The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.
- Schneider, M., Marschall, M., Teske, P., & Roch, C. (1998, September). School choice and culture wars in the classroom: What different parents seek from education. *Social Science Quarterly*, 79, 489–501.
- Schrage, M. (2003). *Daniel Kahneman: The thought leader interview*. Retrieved from <http://www.strategy-business.com/press/article/03409?tid+230&pg=all>
- Slovic, P., Finucane, M., Peters, E., & MacGregor, D. (2002). The affect heuristic. In T. Gilovich, D. Griffin, & D. Kahneman (Eds.), *Heuristics and biases: The psychology of intuitive judgment* (pp. 397–420). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Thornton, P. B. (2010). *Interviews and survey comments*. Unpublished raw data.
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2005). *Renewing our commitment to Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the third millennium*. Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.
- Vatican. (1994). *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Retrieved from http://www.vatican.va/archive/eng0015/_index.html

Walch, T. (1996). *Parish school: American Catholic parochial education from colonial times to the present*. New York, NY: Crossward.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY: PARENT CHOICE IN CATHOLIC SECONDARY EDUCATION

Parent Choice in Catholic Secondary Education

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY

Please check the most appropriate response to each of the following questions.

The focus for your answers should be related to your son or daughter at a Catholic secondary school.

1. Religious Factors

1. How important are the following religious factors in having your son/daughter attend a Catholic Secondary School?

	Low Importance	Moderate Importance	High Importance
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Opportunity to take formal religion classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Campus ministry program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Retreat program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Christian Service hour requirement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Opportunity to pray in class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. A Catholic environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. A Christian community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Peers that share values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. The Church encourages attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Looking at the same set of religious factors, please check in order of importance the THREE MOST SIGNIFICANT factors influencing your choice to send your son/daughter to a Catholic Secondary School.

	1st Importance (CHOOSE 1)	2nd Importance (CHOOSE 1)	3rd Importance(CHOOSE 1)
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Opportunity to take formal religion classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Campus ministry program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Retreat program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Christian Service hour requirement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Opportunity to pray in class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. A Catholic environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. A Christian community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Peers that share values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. The Church encourages attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. To what extent would you agree that the school your son/daughter attends embodies Catholic values?

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

4. If the school was not a Catholic school, but it had all of the other components of the current program, would you still send your son/daughter to the school?

Yes
 No

2. Finances

5. To what extent was the cost of tuition a factor in deciding to send your son/daughter to a Catholic Secondary School?

Low (was not an issue, or was a minimal factor)

- Moderate (tuition was considered as part of the decision)
- High (we seriously evaluated if we could afford send our son/daughter to a Catholic school)

6. To what extent will the rising cost of tuition affect your decision to send your sophomore child to a Catholic Secondary School for their junior and senior years?

- We will evaluate the decision each year based on the cost of tuition.
- We intend to send him/her for the remaining 2 years, but we may assess the decision next year.
- We are committed to sending him/her for the remaining 2 years regardless of tuition increases.

7. Which of the following statements best reflects your level of concern with the cost of tuition for your younger children to attend a Catholic Secondary School?

- Does not apply
- Low concern (We are committed to sending our children to a Catholic Secondary School regardless of the cost)
- Moderate concern (We will carefully assess the affordability of tuition at that time)
- High concern (We are concerned that we will not be able to afford the future cost of tuition)

8. Indicate the yearly increase in tuition that would cause you to seriously reconsider sending your son/daughter to the Catholic Secondary School.

Yearly tuition increase

Choose one

9. To what extent are the ongoing costs of the school a sacrifice for your family?

- Low (costs are not a sacrifice)
- Moderate (costs are significant, but we can manage)
- High (costs are a significant and ongoing sacrifice)

10. What would best describe your source of income for Catholic Secondary School costs (tuition, fees, books, etc.)? Please check all that apply.

Sources of income

- a. Employment income
- b. Savings
- c. Mortgage – home equity loan
- d. Mortgage - refinance
- e. Bank loan
- f. Borrowed funds (family)
- g. Tuition grants
- h. Scholarships
- i. Son/daughter works
- j. Extra job
- k. Two parent income
- l. Other family members

Other (please specify)

11. To what extent is the rising cost of tuition a concern to you?

- Low (I have no concern regarding tuition increases)
 Moderate (tuition increases are a concern, but we will manage)
 High (I am very concerned about how I can afford to pay for tuition increases)

12. To what extent is the current economic downturn causing you to reconsider sending your son/daughter to a Catholic Secondary School?

- Low (we are not reconsidering our decision)
 Moderate (we are concerned and are evaluating our financial situation)
 High (we are seriously evaluating if we can continue to send our son/daughter to the school)

13. Please indicate the approximate yearly cost (tuition and fees) you currently pay for one child attending Catholic Secondary School.

Yearly cost	tuition/fees
	▼

3. Reasons for choosing Catholic Secondary School

14. Please indicate the level of importance each factor had in your decision to send your son/daughter to a Catholic Secondary School.

	Low importance	Moderate importance	High importance
a. High quality academic program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. College counseling - preparation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Lesser academic quality of local public schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Sports program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Arts program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Music program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Lesser quality of extracurricular program in local public schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Catholic identity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Values education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Teachers are role models	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Personalized attention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Technology integration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Lower overall quality of public schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Learning difference services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

p. Discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
q. Safe environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
r. Less safe environment in local public schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
s. Reputation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
t. Opportunity for single gender environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
u. Opportunity for co- educational environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. I went to Catholic school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
w. Advice of friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
x. Knowledge of student who attends school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
y. The school is close	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
z. Child attended Catholic elementary School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. Looking at the same set of factors, please rank in order of importance the THREE MOST SIGNIFICANT factors influencing your decision to send your son/daughter to a Catholic Secondary School.

1st importance (CHOOSE 1) 2nd importance (CHOOSE 1) 3rd importance (CHOOSE 1)

a. High quality academic program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. College counseling - preparation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Lesser academic quality of local public schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Sports program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Arts program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Music program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Lesser quality of extracurricular program in local public schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Catholic identity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Values education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Teachers are role models	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Personalized attention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Technology integration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Lower overall quality of public schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Learning difference services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. Discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
q. Safe environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

r. Less safe environment in local public schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
s. Reputation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
t. Opportunity for single gender environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
u. Opportunity for coeducational environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. I went to Catholic school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
w. Advice of friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
x. Knowledge of student who attends school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
y. The school is close	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
z. Child attended Catholic elementary School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. Did you or your spouse/partner attend a Catholic school? Please check all that apply.

	Survey respondent	Spouse/partner
Grade school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
High school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post-graduate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did not attend Catholic schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. How would you rate your experience in Catholic school when you were a student?

	Very negative	Somewhat negative	Somewhat positive	Very positive	Does not apply
You	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spouse/partner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. If your experience with a Catholic grade school, high school or college was "Somewhat positive" or "Very positive" please indicate the most significant reason.

Reason Choose one

▼

19. How would you rate YOUR desire for your son/daughter to attend the Catholic Secondary School prior to entering the 9th grade?

- Low Moderate High

20. How would you rate your son's/daughter's desire to attend the Catholic Secondary School prior to attending?

- Low Moderate High

25. On average, how often to you attend church services with your son/daughter?

- weekly
- a couple times a month
- every once in a while
- on major feasts
- rarely, if ever
- does not apply

26. How many children do you have in Catholic schools?

	Elementary	Secondary
Number of children	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

27. Please indicate religious affiliation.

	Survey respondent	Spouse/partner
Roman Catholic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lutheran	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Episcopalian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protestant Christian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evangelical Christian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)		
	<input type="text"/>	

28. Please indicate your gross yearly family income prior to taxes.

	Gross family income
Per year	<input type="text"/>

29. Please indicate your race.

	Survey respondent	Spouse/partner
Race	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

30. Please indicate gender of person taking the survey.

- Male
- Female

31. As part of this research I will be conducting telephone interviews with 10 parents randomly selected from those willing to participate. The information discussed in the interview will be kept confidential. Would you be willing to be contacted for a phone interview?

Yes

No

32. If you answered "Yes", please indicate your contact information

My name is:

My home phone is:

My cell phone is:

My business phone is:

My email is:

Other (please specify)

Thank you for taking time to answer the many questions! I appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Please submit your survey as indicated in the prompt below.

Survey Drop Down Menu Answer Choices

Question #8 - Indicate the yearly increase in tuition that would cause you to seriously reconsider sending your son/daughter to the Catholic Secondary School.

Answer choices:

0 - \$250
\$251 - \$500
\$501 - \$750
\$751 - \$1,000
\$1,001 - \$1,250
\$1,251 - \$1,500
\$1,501 - \$1,750
\$1,751 - \$2,000
\$2,001 - \$2,250
\$2,251 - \$2,500
\$2,501 - \$2,750
\$2,751 - \$3,000
\$3,001 - \$3,250
\$3,251 - \$3,500
\$3,501 - \$3,750
\$3,751 - \$4,000
\$4,001 - \$4,250
\$4,251 - \$4,500
\$4,501 - \$4,750
\$4,751 - \$5,000
More than \$5,000
Does not apply

Question #13 - Please indicate the approximate yearly cost (tuition and fees) you currently pay for one child attending Catholic Secondary School.

Answer choices:

\$8,000
\$9,000
\$10,000
\$11,000
\$12,000
\$13,000
\$14,000
\$15,000
\$16,000
\$17,000
\$18,000
\$19,000
\$20,000
\$21,000

\$22,000
\$23,000
\$24,000
\$25,000
\$26,000
\$27,000
\$28,000
\$29,000
\$30,000
\$31,000
\$32,000
\$33,000
\$34,000
\$35,000

Question #18 - If your experience with a Catholic grade school, high school or college was "Somewhat positive" or "Very positive" please indicate the most significant.

Answer choices:

Safety
Catholic faith environment
Values education
Academics
Sports program
Arts/music program
Quality teachers
Community
Discipline
College preparation
Single gender environment

Question #22 - If for any reason your child was unable to attend a Catholic secondary school, what would you judge to be the most significant loss?

Answer choices:

Safety
Catholic faith environment
Values education
Academics
Sports program
Arts/music program
Quality teachers
Community
Discipline
College preparation
Single gender environment

Questions # 26 - How many children do you have in Catholic schools?

Answer choices:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more

Question #28 - Please indicate your gross yearly family income prior to taxes.

Answer choices:

- Less than \$20,000
- \$20,000 - \$29,999
- \$30,000 - \$39,999
- \$40,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$59,999
- \$60,000 - \$69,999
- \$70,000 - \$79,999
- \$80,000 - \$89,999
- \$90,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 - \$109,999
- \$110,000 - \$119,999
- \$120,000 - \$129,999
- \$130,000 - \$139,999
- \$140,000 - \$149,999
- \$150,000 - \$174,999
- \$175,000 - \$199,999
- \$200,000 - \$249,999
- \$250,000 and above

Question #29 - Please indicate your race.

Answer choices:

- White
- African American
- Hispanic
- Asian - Pacific Islander
- Native American
- Other

APPENDIX B
TELEPHONE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND PROTOCOL

Questions for the Phone Interview

The interview questions are designed to probe the primary research questions that explore how parents frame the decision to send their child to a Catholic secondary school.

1. Research area – Primary Factors - Values

Statement to be shared with the interviewee:

The survey indicated that the primary factors influencing parents to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school are as follows:

1. _____ (to be completed based on survey results)
 2. _____ (to be completed based on survey results)
 3. _____ (to be completed based on survey results)
- a) How do you weigh values of the Catholic school relative to the values of a public school?
 - b) The survey indicated that the biggest loss that parents would experience if their son/daughter could not go to a Catholic school is as follows: (to be completed based on survey results)

Question for the interviewee:

- a) What is the most significant factor – the factors drawing you towards Catholic education or the loss that your son/daughter would experience if they did not attend a Catholic school? Please explain.

2. Research Area: Catholicity

Statement to be shared with the interviewee:

The survey indicated that the important religious factor in having your son daughter attend a Catholic school was (to be completed based on survey results), and the overall most important overall factor was (to be completed based on survey results).

Question for the interviewee:

- a) How do you as parent ascertain the catholicity/Christian nature of the school?
- b) How do you as a parent weigh the Catholic values relative to the other factors that you are seeking? Please explain.

3. Research Area: Affordability

Statement to be shared with the interviewee:

The survey indicated that the rising cost of tuition for Catholic secondary schools is a concern to (to be completed based on survey results) % of the people. It further found that the costs are a sacrifice to (to be completed based on survey results) % of the families.

Question for the interviewee:

- a) When you and your friends speak about making this sacrifice, what is the primary reason you are willing to sacrifice? Please explain.

- b) How is the cost of Catholic education being weighed against the benefits?
4. The researcher will ask follow up questions that arise in the conversation to help clarify the area of research.

APPENDIX C
IRBPHS APPROVAL LETTER

-----Original Message-----

From: irbphs [mailto:irbphs@usfca.edu]

Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2009 12:08 PM

To: Barry Thornton

Cc: rbvercruysse@usfca.edu

Subject: IRB Application #09-051 - Application Approved

June 25, 2009

Dear Mr. Thornton:

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your request for human subjects approval regarding your study.

Your application has been approved by the committee (IRBPHS #09-051). Please note the following:

1. Approval expires twelve (12) months from the dated noted above. At that time, if you are still in collecting data from human subjects, you must file a renewal application.
2. Any modifications to the research protocol or changes in instrumentation (including wording of items) must be communicated to the IRBPHS. Re-submission of an application may be required at that time.
3. Any adverse reactions or complications on the part of participants must be reported (in writing) to the IRBPHS within ten (10) working days. If you have any questions, please contact the IRBPHS at (415) 422-6091.

On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success in your research

-----Original Message-----

From: irbphs [<mailto:irbphs@usfca.edu>]
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2010 7:56 AM
To: Barry Thornton
Cc: Raymond James Vercruysse
Subject: IRB Modification Application #09-051 - Modification Approved

January 25, 2010

Dear Mr. Thornton:

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your modification request for human subjects approval regarding your study.

Your modification application has been approved by the committee (IRBPHS #09-051). Please note the following:

1. Approval expires twelve (12) months from the dated noted above. At that time, if you are still in collecting data from human subjects, you must file a renewal application.
2. Any modifications to the research protocol or changes in instrumentation (including wording of items) must be communicated to the IRBPHS. Re-submission of an application may be required at that time.
3. Any adverse reactions or complications on the part of participants must be reported (in writing) to the IRBPHS within ten (10) working days.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRBPHS at (415) 422-6091.

On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success in your research

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS REQUESTING
PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

Mr. Barry Thornton
 45 Mill St.
 San Francisco, CA 94134
 415-508-1046
bthornton@serrahs.com

February 24, 2009

Name
 Superintendent of Schools
 Diocese of San Jose
 900 Lafayette Street, Suite 301
 Santa Clara, California 95050

Dear _____:

My name is Barry Thornton and I have been a teacher and administrator in Catholic education for thirteen years. I am currently the Principal at Junípero Serra High School in San Mateo and a doctoral student at the Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership (ICEL) at the University of San Francisco. My dissertation chairperson is Br. Raymond Vercruysse, CFC, Ed.D, the Director of ICEL.

Throughout my tenure as a Catholic educator I have become fascinated by the reasons parents send their children to Catholic schools, the values they aspire to, and the financial challenges that they must address. This issue provides the focus for my doctoral dissertation research. My working title is, "Choices and Values of Catholic High School Education: a Study of Parent Decision Making in the San Francisco Bay Area." The San Francisco Bay Area provides a unique opportunity to evaluate the relationship among choice, values and costs. I plan to focus my research on the Catholic high schools within the San Francisco Bay Area, including the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the Dioceses of San Jose, and Oakland. I am asking your permission to conduct this research.

In order to gather the data I plan to conduct an online survey with parents of 10th grade students from each high school. I will follow up the survey with individual interviews among a sample of the parents that respond to the initial survey. Please be advised that the names of those who take the survey and the identity of those who are interviewed will be kept confidential. Naturally, I would be happy to share the results of my research with you.

I am currently writing the dissertation proposal and anticipate its completion in the summer 2009. The survey will be complete at that time, and I would be happy to send you a copy prior to administration. I plan on administering the survey to the parents in the summer or fall 2009. Please note that the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of San Francisco will not approve administration of the survey until I have written permission from the three superintendents. Once permission has been granted by your office, I will seek permission of the high school principals.

I appreciate your taking the time to review this request and hope that it meets with your approval. If the research within your schools is acceptable, please send written permission to me at your earliest convenience to at 45 Mill St., San Francisco, CA 94134. . Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns that you may have. I may be reached by phone at (H) 415-508-1046, (W) 650-345-8207 (x127), or via email at bthornton@serrahs.com.

Sincerely,
 Barry Thornton

APPENDIX E
PERMISSION LETTERS FROM SUPERINTENDENTS
GRANTING PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

-----Original Message-----

From: EDUCATION-MB [mailto:Education@DSJ.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2009 9:53 AM
To: Barry Thornton
Subject: FW: permission to do research

Dear Mr. Thornton,

Please see Marian's reply to you.

Thank you,
Clarissa

-----Original Message-----

From: Stuckey, Marian
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2009 3:10 PM
To: EDUCATION-MB
Subject: RE: permission to do research

I will approve its distribution but it is up to the school as to whether or not they choose to participate. Because there are so many requests for similar studies from across the county, we do not require participation of any school. That choice needs to be clear in the request for the distribution of the survey.

Marian

June 11, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: permission to do research in the Diocese of Oakland - Barry

Thornton

This letter serves as permission to do research in named high schools of the Diocese of Oakland as part of your doctoral studies while enrolled at the Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership, University of San Francisco. I understand from the description of the project that you will be conducting a survey of parents of sophomore students in the Catholic high schools in the Oakland Diocese. I further understand that to pursue the survey research with the parents you will be working with the principals of the local high schools. Please send me a signed copy of the Human Subjects Protocol before you begin your research. I look forward to completion of the research and the analysis of the findings. Please ensure that the findings are forwarded to my office upon completion of the study.

Sincerely,

Sr. Barbara Bray
Superintendent



THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN FRANCISCO
DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

ONE PETER YORKE WAY, SAN FRANCISCO,
CA 94109-6602 (415) 614-5660 FAX (415) 614-5664

March 2, 2009

Mr. Barry Thornton
Doctoral Candidate
San Francisco, CA 94134

Dear Mr. Thornton,

Thank you for your letter of February 24, 2009, requesting permission to conduct an online survey with parents of 10th grade students from each of the high schools in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, Dioceses of San Jose and Oakland. As I understand the scope of the project, it includes follow up individual interviews among a sample of the parents that responded to the initial survey.

Based on the information you submitted I am happy to approve this research project. I would be interested in the results as you conclude your dissertation.

Thank you for your interest in our Catholic high schools.

Sincerely yours

Maureen Huntington

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maureen Huntington".

Superintendent of Schools

APPENDIX F

LETTER TO PRESIDENTS/PRINCIPALS REQUESTING
PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY

Date

Dear (president and principals)

My name is Barry Thornton and I have been a teacher and administrator in Catholic education for fourteen years. I am currently the Principal at Junípero Serra High School in San Mateo and a doctoral student at the Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership at the University of San Francisco. My dissertation chairperson is Br. Raymond Vercruysse, CFC, Ed.D, the former Director of ICEL.

Throughout my tenure as a Catholic educator I have become fascinated by the reasons parents send their children to Catholic schools, the values they aspire to, and the financial challenges that they must address. This issue provides the focus for my doctoral dissertation research. My title is, "Choices and Values of Catholic High School Education: a Study of Parent Decision Making in the San Francisco Bay Area." The San Francisco Bay Area provides a unique opportunity to evaluate the relationship among choice, values and costs. I plan to focus my research on the Catholic high schools within the San Francisco Bay Area, including the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the Dioceses of San Jose, and Oakland. I am asking your permission to conduct this research.

In order to gather the data I plan to conduct an online survey with parents of 10th grade students from each high school. I will follow up the survey with individual interviews among a sample of 10 parents that respond to the initial survey. Please be advised that the names of those who take the survey and the identity of those who are interviewed will be kept confidential. My dissertation committee has approved the proposal and the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of San Francisco has approved the administration of the survey. Naturally, I would be happy to share the results of my research with you.

I attached a sheet that summarizes the survey proposal and process to this letter, along with all of the appropriate attachments. I appreciate your taking the time to review this request and hope that it meets with your approval. If the research within your schools is acceptable, please send written or email permission to me at your earliest convenience. My contact information is as follows: 45 Mill St., San Francisco, CA 94134. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns that you may have. I may be reached by phone at (C) 415-505-6576, (W) 650-345-8208, or via email at bthornton@serrahs.com.

Sincerely,

Barry Thornton

INFORMATION ON RESEARCH SURVEY

Dissertation Title

Choices and Values in Catholic High School Education: A Study of Parent Decision-making in the San Francisco Bay Area

Research questions

1. What are the core values influencing how parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school?
2. To what extent is the Catholicity of the Catholic secondary school a component in the decision framing process?
3. To what extent is the rising tuition cost influencing the manner in which parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school?

Survey area and schools

The Catholic high schools in the San Francisco Bay Area (Archdiocese of San Francisco, and Dioceses of Oakland and San José). Junípero Serra will be excluded from the survey area due to my role at the school. A total of 28 high schools, excluding Serra, reside within the survey area.

Survey overview

1. The survey will be conducted on-line via SurveyMonkey – the survey system used at the University of San Francisco.
2. All respondents will be anonymous.
3. The survey will be sent to the parents of the sophomore students.
4. The survey will be entirely under the control of the local school principal. I will have no access to the school's database in any form.
5. The researcher will access the responses sent to the SurveyMonkey site. All data will be compiled and shared in the same form with participating schools.

Survey process

1. February 1, 2010 - The target data for sending the survey to the parents.
2. I will send the principal (or his/her designee) an email with the email letter to the parents that includes a link to the survey.
3. The principal (or his/her designee) will send the email to the Sophomore parents.
4. Parents click on the link to take the survey on SurveyMonkey.
5. The principal (or his/her designee) will send 2 reminders sent at 1 week intervals.

Request from the principals

1. Permission to do the research
2. Contact with whom to work on the survey

Attachments

1. Paper copy of on-line survey
2. Copy of oral interview questions
3. Email correspondence from the school and research to the parents

APPENDIX G
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS
PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH STUDY

(Arch)diocese – School	Gender	Sophomore Students 2009-2010
Archdiocese of San Francisco		
Archbishop Riordan	Boys	146
Convent of the Sacred Heart	Girls	48
Marin Catholic	Coed	178
Mercy (Burlingame)	Girls	141
Mercy (San Francisco)	Girls	127
Notre Dame	Girls	124
St. Ignatius College Preparatory	Coed	378
Diocese of Oakland		
Bishop O'Dowd	Coed	317
De La Salle	Boys	268
Carondelet	Girls	192
Moreau Catholic	Coed	247
St. Mary's College	Coed	154
Diocese of San Jose		
Sacred Heart Preparatory	Coed	142
St. Francis	Coed	385
Woodside Priory	Coed	80

APPENDIX H
EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE TO PARENTS REQUESTING
PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY

Letters 1, 2 and 3 to parents

Letter 1 to Survey Respondents

email tag line: Parents of students at _____ high school

Dear Sophomore Parent:

Mr. Barry Thornton, an administrator at a Catholic high school, is conducting a study that evaluates why parents choose Catholic high schools. He is sending this survey to parents of all sophomore students in the Dioceses of Oakland and San Jose, and the Archdiocese of San Francisco. He has my permission to the research described in the following letter. Participation in this research is strictly voluntary.

Sincerely,

John Doe, Principal,
Holy Spirit High School

Please click on this link to
assist me in the study!: www.surveymonkey123456789.com

Dear Parent:

My name is Barry Thornton and I am a doctoral student at the Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership at the University of San Francisco. I have been a teacher and administrator in Catholic education for thirteen years, and throughout this period I have become fascinated by the reasons parents send their children to Catholic schools, the values they aspire to, and the obstacles that they must overcome to send their children to our schools. As a result I am doing research into key factors that motivate parents to send their son/daughter to Catholic secondary schools.

I am contacting the parents of all sophomore students in Catholic secondary schools in the San Francisco Bay Area. Your principal, Mr./Mrs. _____, has allowed me to contact you to help me with this important research project. Your participation will help Catholic leaders better respond to the needs of our Catholic and non-Catholic community who support our schools.

I would be deeply appreciative if you would spend 10 minutes of your time to answer some questions regarding your decision to send your son/daughter to a Catholic school. Please be assured that your responses will be kept confidential. In addition, I would be happy to share the results of my study with you.

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please feel free to contact me via email at catholicschoolsurvey@comcast.net. The Human Subjects Review Board at the

University of San Francisco has approved this project, and requires that I inform you of the following:

- If you agree to participate in this study you will take a survey on line. If you indicate on the survey that you are willing to be interviewed regarding the research, you may be contacted for a telephone interview.
- Participation in this research is strictly voluntary. You are free to decline to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable, and you may stop participation at any time.
- Study records will be kept as confidential as possible, although participation in research may mean a loss of confidentiality. To maintain strict confidentiality, the researcher will never have access to the email database, responses will be coded, and the research will be kept in a secure location.
- There will be no costs to you in taking this survey, and there will be no reimbursement for participating in the research.
- The benefit will be a great understanding of parents' motivation for the education of their sons/daughters.
- If you have a question regarding the study you may contact the researcher at catholicschoolsurvey@comcast.net. Further questions may be directed to the USF office (IRBHS) in charge of protecting volunteers in research 415-422-6091.

Again, thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Barry Thornton

Please click on this link to

assist me in the study!: www.surveymonkey123456789.com

Letter 2 to Survey Respondents

email tag line: Parents of students at _____ high school! – reminder!

Dear Sophomore Parent:

Mr. Barry Thornton, an administrator at a Catholic high school, is conducting a study that evaluates why parents choose Catholic high schools. He is sending this survey to parents of all sophomore students in the Dioceses of Oakland and San Jose, and the Archdiocese of San Francisco. He has my permission to the research described in the following letter. Participation in this research is strictly voluntary.

Sincerely,

John Doe, Principal,
Holy Spirit High School

Dear parent:

Two weeks ago I sent an email requesting your participation in a survey to assess parent motivation in sending their son/daughter to a Catholic secondary school. Your Principal, Mr. _____, has graciously allowed me to contact you to help me with this important research project. If you have already responded to the survey, please accept my thanks. If you have not had to opportunity to respond, I would love it if you would take a few minutes to respond to the on line survey at:

Please click on this link to
assist me in the study!: www.surveymonkey123456789.com

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please feel free to contact me via email at catholicschoolsurvey@comcast.net. The Human Subjects Review Board at the University of San Francisco has approved this project, and requires that I inform you of the following:

- If you agree to participate in this study you will take a survey on line. If you indicate on the survey that you are willing to be interviewed regarding the research, you may be contacted for a telephone interview.
- Participation in this research is strictly voluntary. You are free to decline to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable, and you may stop participation at any time.
- Study records will be kept as confidential as possible, although participation in research may mean a loss of confidentiality. To maintain strict confidentiality, the researcher will never have access to the email database, responses will be coded, and the research will be kept in a secure location.

- To will be no costs to you in taking this survey, and there will be no reimbursement for participating in the research.
- The benefit will be a great understanding of parents' motivation for the education of heir sons/daughters.
- If you have question regarding the study you may contact the researcher at catholicschoolsurvey@comcast.net. Further question may be directed to the USF office (IRBHS) in charge of protecting volunteers in research 415-422-6091.

Again, thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Barry Thornton

Please click on this link to
assist me in the study!: www.surveymonkey123456789.com

Letter 3 to Survey Respondents

email tag line: Parents of students at _____ high school! – Final reminder!

Dear Sophomore Parent:

Mr. Barry Thornton, an administrator at a Catholic high school, is conducting a study that evaluates why parents choose Catholic high schools. He is sending this survey to parents of all sophomore students in the Dioceses of Oakland and San Jose, and the Archdiocese of San Francisco. He has my permission to the research described in the following letter. Participation in this research is strictly voluntary.

Sincerely,

John Doe, Principal,
Holy Spirit High School

Dear parent:

On month ago I sent an email requesting your participation in a survey to assess parent motivation in sending their son/daughter to a Catholic secondary school. Your Principal, Mr. _____, has graciously allowed me to contact you to help me with this important research project. If you have already responded to the survey, please accept my thanks. If you have not had to opportunity to respond, I would love it if you would take a few minutes to respond to the on line survey at:

Please click on this link to
assist me in the study!: www.surveymonkey123456789.com

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please feel free to contact me via email at catholicschoolsurvey@comcast.net. The Human Subjects Review Board at the University of San Francisco has approved this project, and requires that I inform you of the following:

- If you agree to participate in this study you will take a survey on line. If you indicate on the survey that you are willing to be interviewed regarding the research, you may be contacted for a telephone interview.
- Participation in this research is strictly voluntary. You are free to decline to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable, and you may stop participation at any time.
- Study records will be kept as confidential as possible, although participation in research may mean a loss of confidentiality. To maintain strict confidentiality, the researcher will never have access to the email database, responses will be coded, and the research will be kept in a secure location.

- To will be no costs to you in taking this survey, and there will be no reimbursement for participating in the research.
- The benefit will be a great understanding of parents' motivation for the education of heir sons/daughters.
- If you have question regarding the study you may contact the researcher at catholicschoolsurvey@comcast.net. Further question may be directed to the USF office (IRBHS) in charge of protecting volunteers in research 415-422-6091.

Again, thank you for your time!

Sincerely,
Barry Thornton

Please click on this link to
assist me in the study!: www.surveymonkey123456789.com

APPENDIX I
VALIDITY PANEL MEMBERS AND QUALIFICATIONS

VALIDITY PANEL

	Leadership						Teachers		Parent			Marketing	
	Sptdnt	President	Principal	EdD/PhD	MA/MS	Professor	Sec Educ.	Elem Educ.	Parent	Board	Marketing	Alum. Rel	Admissions
Lars Lund	X- Assoc	X	X		X		X		X	X	X	X	X
Maureen Huntington	X		X		X	X- Adjunct	X	X		X			X
Tim Cook Ed.D.				X		X							
Ken Hogarty Ed.D			X	X	X	X- adjunct	X		X	X			
Fran Dunleavy Ed.D.				X	X	X- adjunct		X	X	X			
Steven Phelps Ed.D				X			X				X	X	X
Sr.Glen Anne McPhee	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Dotti McCrae Ed.D.				X		X	X			X	X	X	X
Sr. Mary Peter Traviss Ed.D.	X			X		X	X	X		X			
Br. Robert Wichman		X	X		X		X			X	X	X	X

APPENDIX J
LETTER TO VALIDITY PANEL

Barry Thornton

45 Mill St.
San Francisco, CA 94134
415-508-1046

*Dissertation Title: Choices and Values in Catholic High School Education:
of Study of Parent Decision Making in the San Francisco Bay Area*

Dear _____ :

Thank you for agreeing to be a member of my validity panel. As you are aware, I am a doctoral student at the Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership at the University of San Francisco. Your insight will help me design a questionnaire that elicits responses in line with my research questions. I am exploring factors underlying parents' choices to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school. My hope is that in better understanding parental motivation for sending students to our schools we can better respond to their needs.

I am interested in your comments on my proposed survey instrument. I have included the following: a link to the on-line survey that will be sent to the research participants, an attachment entitled Phone Interview Questions, and an attachment entitled Validity Panel Evaluation with questions for you to address regarding the survey. Please be aware that the respondents to the survey will be asked to take the survey on-line. The survey may be accessed at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=7H0IRx_2bAWUk7vbJfJwALkA_3d_3d.

Please evaluate the on-line survey and the attached Phone Interview Questions, and make your comments on the Validity Panel Evaluation. I expect that it will take you 30 minutes to assess the survey and complete the evaluation. You may return the Validity Panel Evaluation to me via an email attachment, or via fax. If possible, I would like to receive your response by Monday, March 16. If you would prefer to receive this information in hard copy form via mail, please respond accordingly to this email and I will send you the information immediately.

Again, I know that you are very busy, particularly at this time of year, and I am deeply appreciative of your willingness to assess my survey and help me in this research. If you have any questions regarding the survey or the research I am conducting, please feel free to contact me via phone at 415-508-1046, or via email at bthornton@serrahs.com. I would be happy to share the results of my research with you once the study has been completed.

Sincerely,
Barry Thornton

APPENDIX K
VALIDITY PANEL EVALUATION

VALIDITY PANEL EVALUATION

INFORMATION ON THE RESEARCH

Dear member of the Validity Panel:

As I stated in my letter, I am deeply grateful for your willingness to offer both your time and your insight in reviewing my survey instrument. Your critique will help me improve the quality of the survey instrument, and as a result, the quality of the research that will be accomplished.

The purpose of the study is to assess parental motivations for sending their son or daughter to a Catholic Secondary School. Through a better understanding of parental motivation, schools will be in a better position to evaluate their programs in light of the needs of their students' families. The study is titled "Choices and Values of Catholic High School Education: a Study of Parent Decision Making in the San Francisco Bay Area." The emphasis of the study is indicated by the following research questions:

1. What are the core values influencing how parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school?
2. To what extent is the Catholicity of the Catholic secondary school a component in the decision framing process?
3. To what extent is the rising tuition cost influencing the manner in which parents frame the decision to send their son or daughter to a Catholic secondary school?

The survey will be sent to parents with children in the 10th grade of all Catholic secondary schools in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, and the Dioceses of Oakland and San Jose. The schools represent single sex male, single sex female, and coeducational environments. In addition, follow-up interviews will be conducted of parents randomly selected among those who indicated on the survey form that they would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview.

1. Please take the survey on line at:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=7HOIRx_2bAWUk7vbJfJwALkA_3d_3d
2. Please note how long it took you to take the survey.
3. Please read the telephone interview questions.
4. After completing the survey and reading the telephone questions, please complete the following Validity Panel Evaluation form.
5. After completing the Validity Panel Evaluation, please return it to me via email or fax, as follows:
 - email to bthornton@serrahs.com or,
 - fax to 650-573-6638

**VALIDITY PANEL EVALUATION
OF SURVEY INSTRUMENT**

**“Choices and Values of Catholic High School Education:
a Study of Parent Decision Making in the San Francisco Bay Area”**

Length

- a) How long did it take you to complete the survey? _____ minutes

PART 1: ON-LINE SURVEY

CONTENT VALIDITY

1. Do the survey questions appear relevant to the research questions?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

2. Are there any items missing?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

3. Are there any items that should be deleted?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

4. Are there any items that should be modified?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

1. Do the questions appear to adequately measure parental motivation for choosing a Catholic secondary school?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

2. Do the questions present appropriate choices for parents completing the survey?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

3. Do you have suggestions for improving any aspect of the survey: content, layout, or questions?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

FACE VALIDITY

1. Are the instructions for completing the survey clear?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

2. Is the on-line presentation of the survey easy to follow?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

PART 2: PHONE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Are the telephone interview questions related to the research questions?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

2. Do the telephone interview questions appear to explore the meaning of the dissertation topic?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

Please check all that apply to you or in which you have expertise:

- President- Secondary Education
- Principal – Secondary Education
- Ed. D.
- MA/MS
- Superintendent
- University Professor
- Secondary Educator
- Elementary Educator
- Parent
- Board Member
- Marketing Experience
- Alumni Relations Experience
- Admissions Experience
- Other - please indicate _____

Would you like to receive a copy of the research findings?

Yes _____ No _____

Comment: _____

I am deeply appreciative of the time you have taken to critique my survey as a member of the Validity Panel. The survey instrument and the quality of the research will be improved as a result of your comments.

Again, please return the above Validity Panel Evaluation form to me as follows:

- via email at bthornton@serrahs.com or,
- via fax at 650-573-6638

APPENDIX L

LETTER REQUESTING PARTICIPATION IN RELIABILITY STUDY

Dear Parent:

While I am the Principal of Junípero Serra High School, I am also student at the Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership at the University of San Francisco. I am currently working on my doctoral dissertation which is focused on the reasons parents send their children to Catholic secondary schools, the values they aspire to, and the role that finances plays in the decision-making process. I will be surveying all of the parents of sophomore students in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, and the Dioceses of San Jose and Oakland. Junípero Serra High School will not be included in the research due to my association with the school.

As part of the research I am required to conduct a test to assess the reliability of the survey information. This test involves sending the same survey to individuals on 2 separate occasions about 2 weeks part. The responses between the 2 surveys will be compared for consistency. The surveys will be kept confidential, and none of the data collected for this reliability study will be published in any form.

Your email address has been randomly selected among those of parents who have sophomore sons at Serra. I would appreciate it if you would be willing to participate in this reliability study. If you are willing to participate, please click on the link below to take the on line survey. It should take about 15 minutes. There will be a question for you to enter your email address at the end of the survey. If you complete the survey and put in your email address at the end, you will be sent this survey again in about 2 weeks.

Please feel no obligation to participate in the reliability study! And, please accept my deepest thanks for considering my request to assist in this research.

Take survey by clicking on this link: [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com)

Sincerely,
Barry Thornton
Principal

The Human Subjects Review Board at the University of San Francisco has approved this project, and requires that I inform you of the following:

- If you agree to participate in this study you will take a survey on line.
- Participation in this research is strictly voluntary. You are free to decline to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable, and you may stop participation at any time.
- Study records will be kept as confidential as possible, although participation in research may mean a loss of confidentiality. To maintain strict confidentiality, the research will be kept in a secure location.
- There will be no costs to you in taking this survey, and there will be no reimbursement for participating in the research.
- The benefit will be a great understanding of parents' motivation for the education of their sons/daughters.
- If you have question regarding the study you may contact the researcher at bthornton@serrahs.com Further question may be directed to the USF office (IRBHS) in charge of protecting volunteers in research 415-422-6091.

APPENDIX M

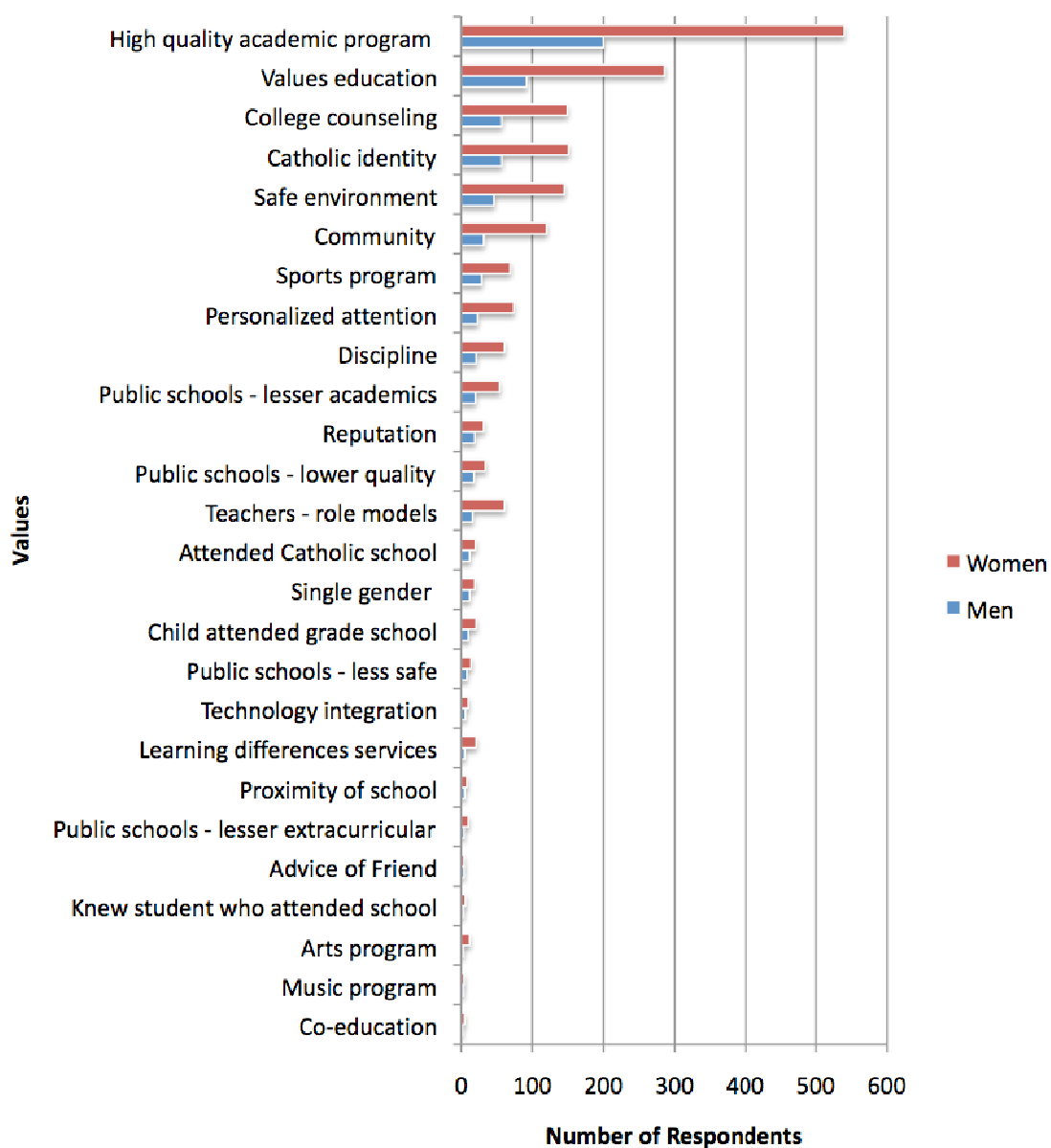
RANKED VALUES BY RESPONDENTS WHO HAD A VERY
POSITIVE EXPERIENCE IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*Importance of Religious Values Assessed by Parents whose Experience
in Catholic School was Very Positive*

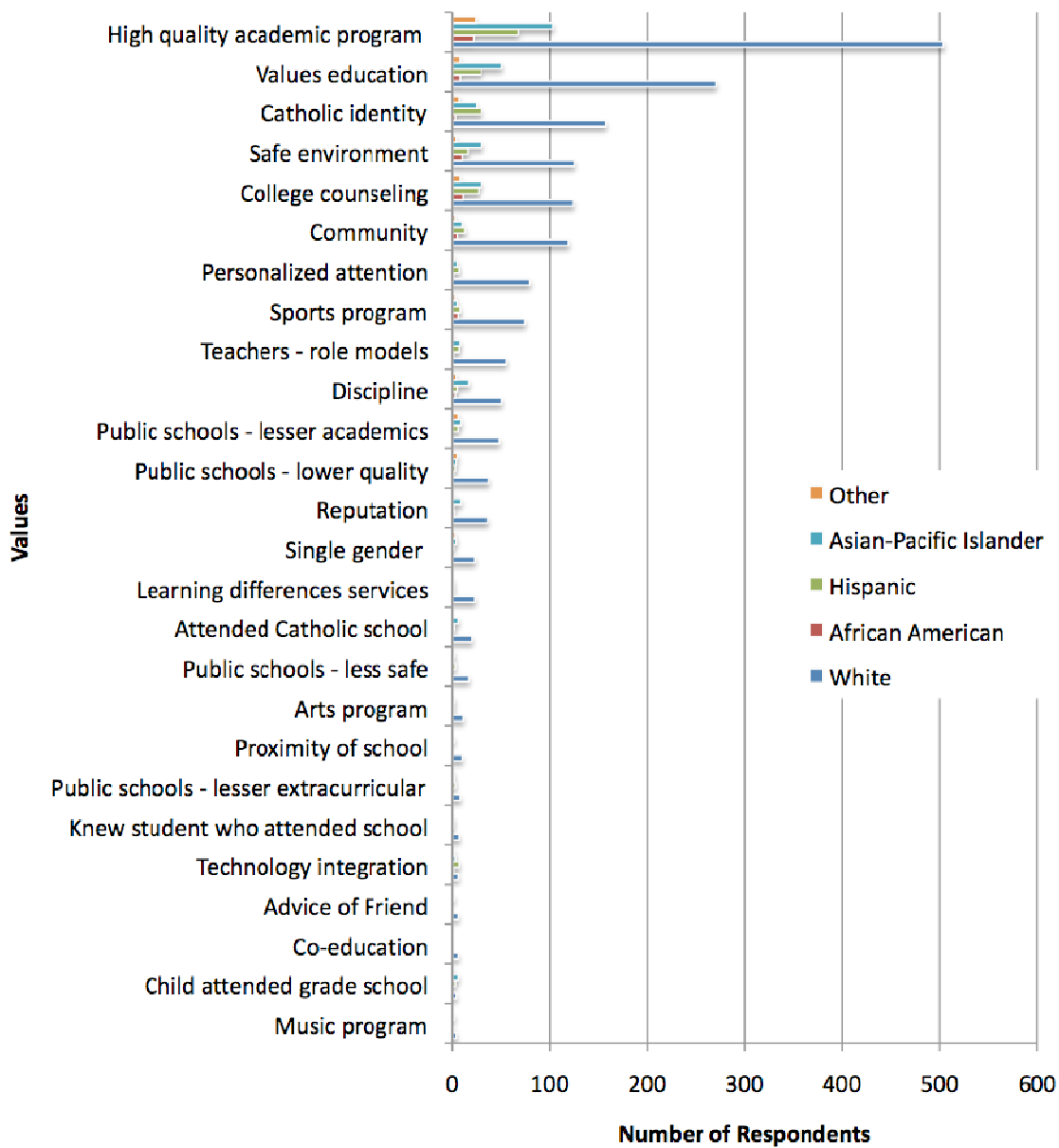
Answer options	Parents' experience in Catholic school			
	Very negative	Somewhat negative	Somewhat positive	Very positive
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services				
Low Importance	1	5	23	41
Moderate Importance	1	7	36	113
High Importance	2	8	40	223
	4	20	99	377
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation				
Low Importance	3	9	50	96
Moderate Importance	1	7	27	153
High Importance	0	4	22	126
	4	20	99	375
c. Opportunity to take formal religion classes				
Low Importance	1	4	17	19
Moderate Importance	1	4	33	91
High Importance	2	12	49	265
	4	20	99	375
d. Campus ministry program				
Low Importance	2	3	32	54
Moderate Importance	1	11	45	145
High Importance	1	6	23	176
	4	20	100	375
e. Retreat program				
Low Importance	2	4	30	52
Moderate Importance	0	7	38	135
High Importance	2	9	31	188
	4	20	99	375
f. Christian Service hour requirement				
Low Importance	2	3	27	40
Moderate Importance	0	8	24	105
High Importance	2	9	49	231
	4	20	100	376
g. Opportunity to pray in class				
Low Importance	2	9	36	64
Moderate Importance	0	6	29	112
High Importance	2	6	34	199
	4	21	99	375
h. A Catholic environment				
Low Importance	2	7	19	27
Moderate Importance	0	4	21	59
High Importance	2	9	59	290
	4	20	99	376

Answer options	Parents' experience in Catholic school			
	Very negative	Somewhat negative	Somewhat positive	Very positive
i. A Christian community				
Low Importance	2	4	13	14
Moderate Importance	0	5	22	61
High Importance	2	11	63	302
	4	20	98	377
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith				
Low Importance	2	7	17	19
Moderate Importance	1	6	24	76
High Importance	1	7	57	278
	4	20	98	373
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain				
Low Importance	2	6	34	50
Moderate Importance	0	10	35	143
High Importance	2	4	30	183
	4	20	99	376
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective				
Low Importance	1	2	13	11
Moderate Importance	2	9	25	86
High Importance	1	9	61	278
	4	20	99	375
m. Peers that share values				
Low Importance	1	3	2	4
Moderate Importance	0	3	22	63
High Importance	3	14	74	308
	4	20	98	375
n. The Church encourages attendance				
Low Importance	3	10	50	95
Moderate Importance	1	6	29	126
High Importance	0	5	18	148
	4	21	97	369

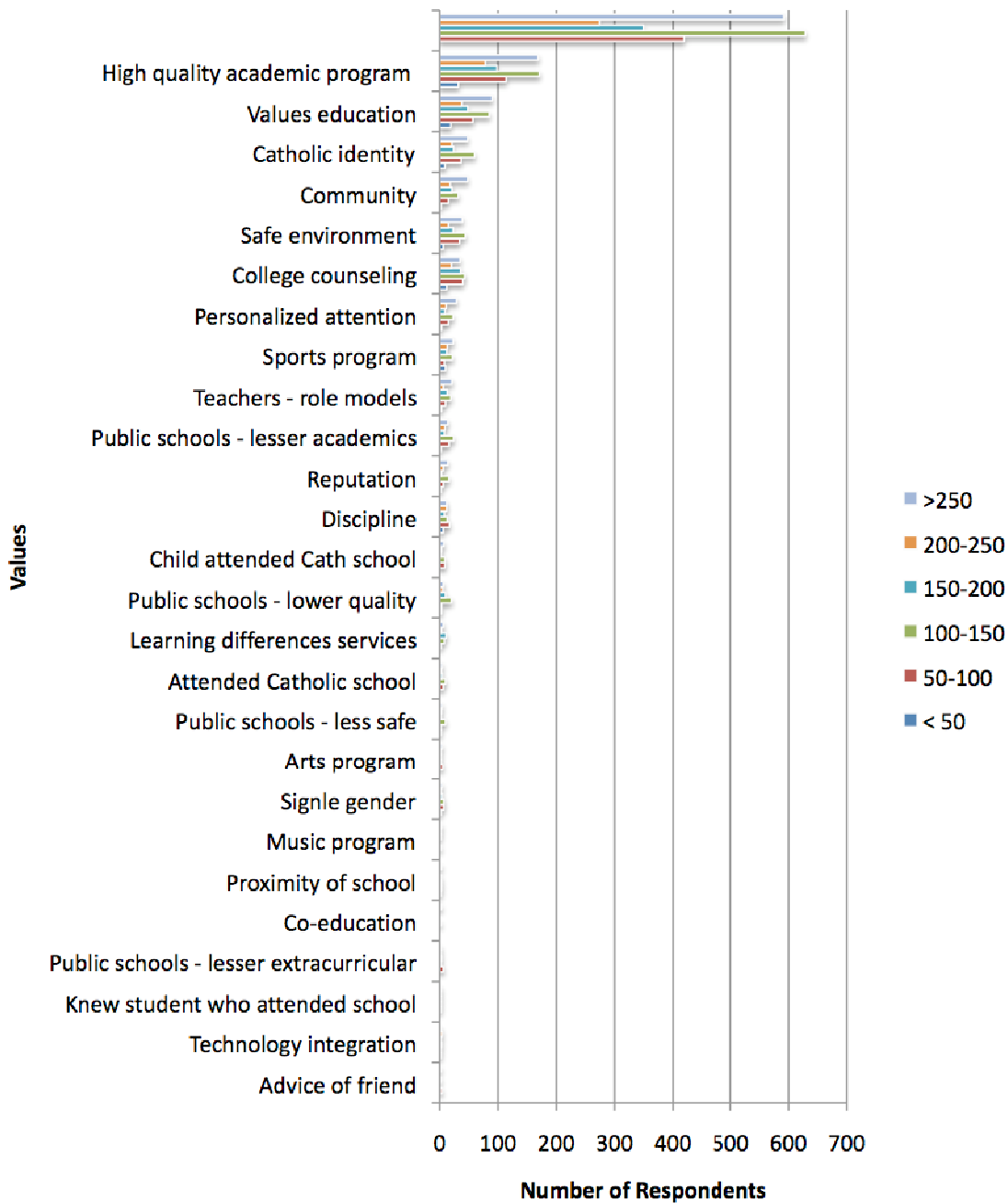
APPENDIX N
RANKED VALUES BY RESPONDENTS' GENDER



APPENDIX O
RANKED VALUES BY RESPONDENTS' ETHNICITY



APPENDIX P
RANKED VALUES BY RESPONDENTS' FAMILY INCOME



APPENDIX Q

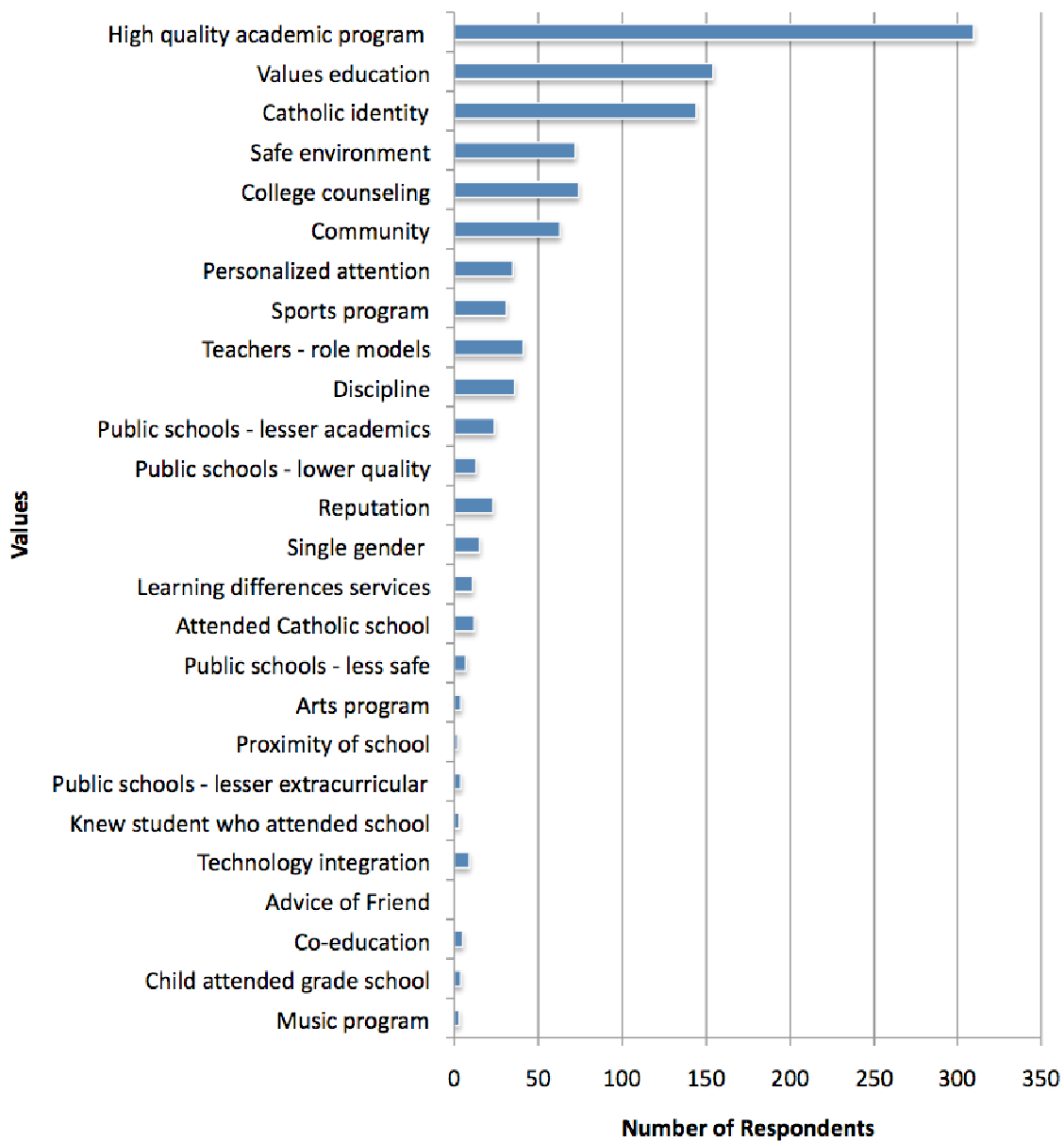
IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS VALUES BY PARENTS
WHO ATTENDED CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Answer options	Attended Catholic school	
	Survey respondent	Spouse/partner
Low Importance		
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services		
Low Importance	38	35
Moderate Importance	117	102
High Importance	205	150
	360	287
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation		
Low Importance	99	94
Moderate Importance	149	108
High Importance	112	83
	360	285
c. Opportunity to take formal religion classes		
Low Importance	26	25
Moderate Importance	88	76
High Importance	246	184
	360	285
d. Campus ministry program		
Low Importance	57	46
Moderate Importance	152	125
High Importance	150	114
	359	285
e. Retreat program		
Low Importance	61	40
Moderate Importance	123	105
High Importance	175	139
	359	284
f. Christian Service hour requirement		
Low Importance	49	36
Moderate Importance	110	91
High Importance	201	157
	360	284
g. Opportunity to pray in class		
Low Importance	65	60
Moderate Importance	111	94
High Importance	186	131
	362	285
h. A Catholic environment		
Low Importance	29	38
Moderate Importance	59	51
High Importance	272	196
	360	285

Answer options	Attended Catholic school	
	Survey respondent	Spouse/partner
i. A Christian community		
Low Importance	19	20
Moderate Importance	58	49
High Importance	283	216
	360	285
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith		
Low Importance	26	31
Moderate Importance	69	63
High Importance	263	189
	358	283
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain		
Low Importance	61	53
Moderate Importance	138	109
High Importance	162	124
	361	286
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective		
Low Importance	21	17
Moderate Importance	83	75
High Importance	255	193
	359	285
m. Peers that share values		
Low Importance	6	9
Moderate Importance	56	50
High Importance	296	226
	358	285
n. The Church encourages attendance		
Low Importance	102	88
Moderate Importance	126	96
High Importance	129	99
	357	283

APPENDIX R

RANKED IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS VALUES ASSESSED BY PARENTS
WHOSE EXPERIENCE IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL WAS VERY POSITIVE



APPENDIX S

IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS VALUES ASSESSED BY PARENTS WHO
ATTEND MASS ON A WEEKLY OR BIMONTHLY BASIS

Answer options	Parent church attendance with son/daughter?				
	Weekly	Couple times a month	Every once in a while	Major feasts	Rarely
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services					
Low Importance	20	15	38	14	65
Moderate Importance	66	83	84	32	39
High Importance	183	99	69	15	15
	269	197	191	61	119
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation					
Low Importance	55	58	86	36	86
Moderate Importance	97	87	75	20	25
High Importance	118	50	29	5	7
	270	195	190	61	118
c. Opportunity to take formal religion classes					
Low Importance	12	9	20	7	42
Moderate Importance	47	62	77	28	48
High Importance	209	126	93	26	30
	268	197	190	61	120
d. Campus ministry program					
Low Importance	21	26	46	19	65
Moderate Importance	90	97	102	27	43
High Importance	156	74	44	14	11
	267	197	192	60	119
e. Retreat program					
Low Importance	30	32	41	15	38
Moderate Importance	91	62	86	24	60
High Importance	146	101	63	22	21
	267	195	190	61	119
f. Christian Service hour requirement					
Low Importance	20	22	36	13	35
Moderate Importance	76	66	75	22	43
High Importance	172	108	80	27	43
	268	196	191	62	121
g. Opportunity to pray in class					
Low Importance	22	27	63	24	77
Moderate Importance	62	76	68	21	30
High Importance	184	94	61	15	12
	268	197	192	60	119
h. A Catholic environment					
Low Importance	24	22	35	11	59
Moderate Importance	18	33	51	22	40
High Importance	227	141	103	28	21
	269	196	189	61	120

Answer options	Parent church attendance with son/daughter?				
	Weekly	Couple times a month	Every once in a while	Major feasts	Rarely
i. A Christian community					
Low Importance	10	6	15	4	35
Moderate Importance	21	24	52	19	45
High Importance	237	167	124	38	39
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith					
Low Importance	12	14	30	10	48
Moderate Importance	40	41	60	20	48
High Importance	215	141	101	31	23
	267	196	191	61	119
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith					
Low Importance	12	14	30	10	48
Moderate Importance	40	41	60	20	48
High Importance	215	141	101	31	23
	267	196	191	61	119
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain					
Low Importance	33	33	46	20	65
Moderate Importance	77	84	81	21	38
High Importance	159	79	64	20	17
	269	196	191	61	120
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective					
Low Importance	11	6	10	3	32
Moderate Importance	42	49	63	17	46
High Importance	217	141	118	40	42
	270	196	191	60	120
m. Peers that share values					
Low Importance	5	2	2	1	14
Moderate Importance	31	26	46	13	44
High Importance	232	168	143	46	61
	268	196	191	60	119
n. The Church encourages attendance					
Low Importance	58	56	73	22	81
Moderate Importance	81	69	71	24	29
High Importance	125	71	44	15	9
	264	196	188	61	119

APPENDIX T

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT REASON PARENTS HAD A POSITIVE
EXPERIENCE IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST
THE RELIGIOUS FACTORS THAT WERE OF THE HIGHEST
IMPORTANCE IN A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Answer choices	Single gender	College prep	Discipline	Community	Teachers	Arts/Music	Sports	Academics	Values education	Catholic faith	Safety
Peers that share values	5	26	7	54	18	0	5	54	77	55	3
A Catholic environment	10	21	7	39	6	0	1	45	83	88	1
Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective	5	21	3	30	18	1	1	43	52	33	1
A Christian community	6	16	3	30	11	0	2	37	52	42	2
Teachers that model the Catholic faith	3	10	5	18	11	0	2	34	39	53	2
Opportunity to take formal religion classes	5	5	3	13	5	0	1	35	43	38	2
Christian Service hour requirement	2	4	0	8	10	1	0	20	29	9	4
Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services	0	5	1	10	1	0	0	25	20	26	3
Retreat program	0	3	2	9	3	1	1	16	12	9	0
Opportunity to pray in class	0	0	2	3	3	0	0	5	14	9	0
Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother, or chaplain	0	2	2	4	2	0	0	10	11	5	2
Campus ministry program	0	0	0	7	1	0	1	7	6	8	0
The Church encourages attendance	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	4	4	0	0
Opportunity to attend reconciliation	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1

APPENDIX U

THE EXTENT TO WHICH PARENTS BELIEVE THAT THE SCHOOL
EMBODIES CATHOLIC VALUES REFERENCED AGAINST THE
IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS FACTORS IN SENDING THEIR
SON OR DAUGHTER TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Answer options	Extent that the school embodies Catholic values			
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services				
Low Importance	11	9	120	77
Moderate Importance	13	5	122	184
High Importance	21	6	122	260
	45	20	364	521
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation				
Low Importance	13	13	183	180
Moderate Importance	18	3	106	193
High Importance	14	4	73	143
	45	20	362	516
c. Opportunity to take religion classes				
Low Importance	11	8	75	44
Moderate Importance	6	5	126	154
High Importance	28	7	161	322
	45	20	362	520
d. Campus ministry program				
Low Importance	13	9	123	88
Moderate Importance	12	6	147	220
High Importance	20	5	93	211
	45	20	363	519
e. Retreat program				
Low Importance	11	11	110	73
Moderate Importance	15	5	131	202
High Importance	19	4	118	245
	45	20	359	520
f. Christian Service hour requirement				
Low Importance	9	8	92	61
Moderate Importance	13	8	132	160
High Importance	24	4	139	300
	46	20	363	521
g. Opportunity to pray in class				
Low Importance	13	8	149	108
Moderate Importance	10	9	99	162
High Importance	22	3	117	248
	45	20	365	518
h. A Catholic environment				
Low Importance	9	10	127	68
Moderate Importance	12	5	81	92
High Importance	24	5	156	358
	45	20	364	518
i. A Christian community				
Low Importance	8	5	73	34
Moderate Importance	10	5	89	84
High Importance	27	10	202	402
	45	20	364	520

Answer options	Extent that the school embodies Catholic values			
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith				
Low Importance	11	8	101	54
Moderate Importance	7	6	100	115
High Importance	27	6	160	349
	45	20	361	518
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain				
Low Importance	14	10	139	96
Moderate Importance	12	6	128	185
High Importance	19	4	97	239
	45	20	364	520
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective				
Low Importance	11	6	49	30
Moderate Importance	8	6	127	110
High Importance	26	8	188	381
	45	20	364	521
m. Peers that share values				
Low Importance	3	5	28	12
Moderate Importance	4	5	95	78
High Importance	38	10	238	429
	45	20	361	519
n. The Church encourages attendance				
Low Importance	18	13	166	167
Moderate Importance	14	4	107	170
High Importance	12	3	87	176
	44	20	360	513

APPENDIX V

THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS FACTORS IN SENDING
THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOL REFERENCED TO THE PARENTS DESIRE TO SEND
THEIR CHILD TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Parents' desire to send their child to a Catholic secondary school prior to 9 th grade			
Answer options	Low	Moderate	High
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services			
Low Importance	63	78	64
Moderate Importance	27	85	195
High Importance	15	47	315
	105	210	574
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation			
Low Importance	78	131	162
Moderate Importance	19	55	227
High Importance	5	22	183
	102	208	572
c. Opportunity to take formal religion classes			
Low Importance	43	51	35
Moderate Importance	38	82	154
High Importance	25	75	383
	106	208	572
d. Campus ministry program			
Low Importance	60	76	89
Moderate Importance	31	88	238
High Importance	14	44	246
	105	208	573
e. Retreat program			
Low Importance	47	67	80
Moderate Importance	37	84	208
High Importance	20	58	283
	104	209	571
f. Christian Service hour requirement			
Low Importance	51	45	66
Moderate Importance	22	81	180
High Importance	32	82	330
	105	208	576
g. Opportunity to pray in class			
Low Importance	65	109	93
Moderate Importance	25	47	187
High Importance	15	53	293
	105	209	573
h. A Catholic environment			
Low Importance	68	83	51
Moderate Importance	21	63	88
High Importance	15	63	434
	104	209	573
i. A Christian community			
Low Importance	45	44	23
Moderate Importance	28	61	86
High Importance	33	104	463
	106	209	572

Answer options	Parents' desire to send their child to a Catholic secondary school prior to 9 th grade		
	Low	Moderate	High
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith			
Low Importance	57	60	41
Moderate Importance	26	72	121
High Importance	21	75	410
	104	207	572
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain			
Low Importance	61	99	89
Moderate Importance	31	62	210
High Importance	14	48	274
	106	209	573
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective			
Low Importance	33	32	23
Moderate Importance	39	63	139
High Importance	34	115	411
	106	210	573
m. Peers that share values			
Low Importance	22	15	7
Moderate Importance	30	56	82
High Importance	53	137	482
	105	208	571
n. The Church encourages attendance			
Low Importance	70	116	157
Moderate Importance	24	56	196
High Importance	11	33	214
	105	205	567

APPENDIX W
RANKED RELIGIOUS VALUES BY PARENTS WHO
ATTENDED CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Ranked Religious Values by Parents who Attended Catholic High School

Answer options	Attended Catholic high school	
	Survey respondent	Spouse/partner
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services		
1st importance	10	9
2nd importance	28	22
3rd importance	28	13
	66	44
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation		
1st importance	0	0
2nd importance	1	0
3rd importance	2	1
	3	1
c. Opportunity to take formal religion classes		
1st importance	41	28
2nd importance	31	23
3rd importance	26	22
	98	73
d. Campus ministry program		
1st importance	2	5
2nd importance	10	8
3rd importance	6	5
	18	18
e. Retreat program		
1st importance	6	5
2nd importance	8	9
3rd importance	16	14
	30	28
f. Christian Service hour requirement		
1st importance	6	11
2nd importance	16	8
3rd importance	26	22
	48	41
g. Opportunity to pray in class		
1st importance	4	3
2nd importance	9	10
3rd importance	6	6
	19	19
h. A Catholic environment		
1st importance	136	96
2nd importance	43	25
3rd importance	26	16
	205	137
i. A Christian community		
1st importance	50	45
2nd importance	41	40
3rd importance	29	19
	120	104

Answer options	Attended Catholic high school	
	Survey respondent	Spouse/partner
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith		
1st importance	18	11
2nd importance	38	30
3rd importance	54	43
	110	84
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain		
1st importance	1	1
2nd importance	11	5
3rd importance	8	7
	20	13
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective		
1st importance	25	19
2nd importance	43	33
3rd importance	54	53
	122	105
m. Peers that share values		
1st importance	49	44
2nd importance	73	63
3rd importance	63	55
	185	162
n. The Church encourages attendance		
1st importance	4	2
2nd importance	0	2
3rd importance	5	4
	9	8

APPENDIX X

RANKED IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS VALUES REFERENCED TO
FREQUENCY THAT PARENTS ATTEND CHURCH SERVICES

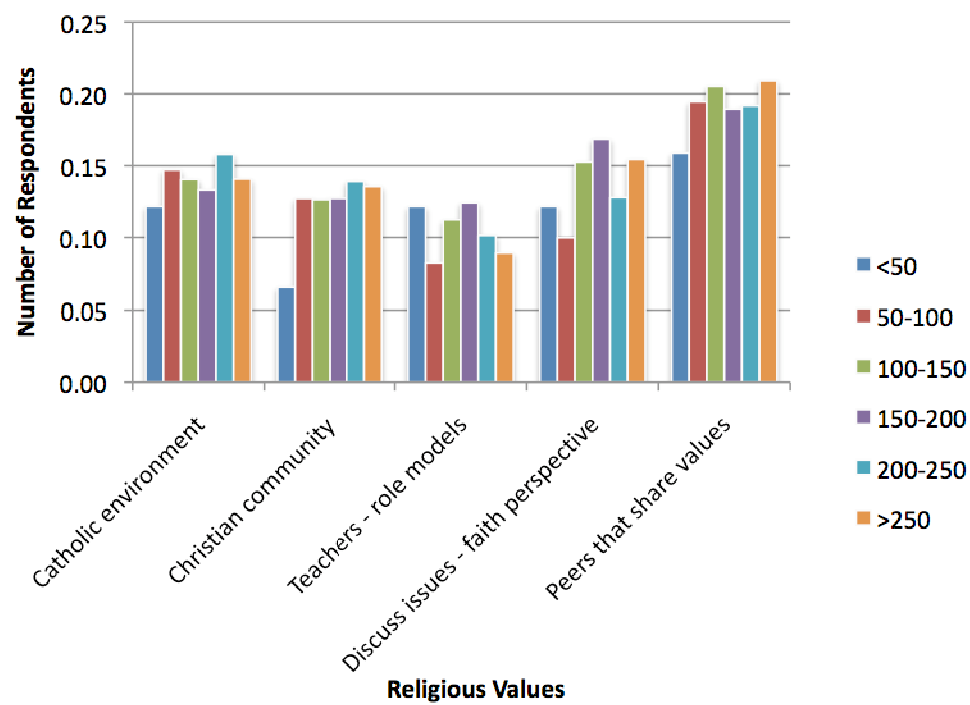
*Ranked Importance of Religious Values Referenced to Frequency
that Parents Attend Church Service*

Answer options	Parent church attendance with son/daughter?				
	Weekly	Couple times a month	Every once in a while	Major feasts	Rarely
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services					
1st importance	8	6	1	2	2
2nd importance	23	9	15	1	3
3rd importance	24	7	9	3	6
	55	22	25	6	11
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation					
1st importance	1	0	0	0	0
2nd importance	2	1	1	0	1
3rd importance	0	1	4	1	0
	3	2	5	1	1
c. Opportunity to take formal religion classes					
1st importance	30	14	14	4	12
2nd importance	26	11	16	8	11
3rd importance	17	21	12	6	8
	73	46	42	18	31
d. Campus ministry program					
1st importance	2	1	1	1	4
2nd importance	7	6	3	0	2
3rd importance	5	3	3	3	2
	14	10	7	4	8
e. Retreat program					
1st importance	2	1	4	1	6
2nd importance	7	7	0	5	10
3rd importance	6	9	13	4	7
	15	17	17	10	23
f. Christian Service hour requirement					
1st importance	4	5	5	1	10
2nd importance	8	6	8	1	17
3rd importance	11	12	21	5	8
	23	23	34	7	35
g. Opportunity to pray in class					
1st importance	8	2	2	0	0
2nd importance	9	6	3	1	1
3rd importance	9	8	3	0	2
	26	16	8	1	3
h. A Catholic environment					
1st importance	118	57	41	17	11
2nd importance	23	22	19	3	7
3rd importance	17	18	13	5	3
	158	97	73	25	21

Answer options	Parent church attendance with son/daughter?				
	Weekly	Couple times a month	Every once in a while	Major feasts	Rarely
i. A Christian community					
1st importance	39	41	43	11	20
2nd importance	28	21	29	10	11
3rd importance	17	17	17	2	10
	84	79	89	23	41
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith					
1st importance	10	6	9	1	2
2nd importance	32	31	24	8	9
3rd importance	51	24	20	11	12
	93	61	53	20	23
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain					
1st importance	2	1	0	0	1
2nd importance	12	6	1	0	3
3rd importance	7	4	6	1	3
	21	11	7	1	7
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective					
1st importance	14	19	18	4	9
2nd importance	37	30	25	5	20
3rd importance	43	33	32	13	29
	94	82	75	22	58
m. Peers that share values					
1st importance	25	40	46	17	38
2nd importance	47	38	42	18	21
3rd importance	47	37	32	7	17
	119	115	120	42	76
n. The Church encourages attendance					
1st importance	3	1	2	1	1
2nd importance	4	1	0	0	0
3rd importance	6	3	2	0	2
	13	5	4	1	3

APPENDIX Y

FIVE MOST SIGNIFICANT RANKED RELIGIOUS VALUES BY
RESPONDENTS' FAMILY INCOME



APPENDIX Z

THE RANKED MOST IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS FACTORS PARENTS
ARE SEEKING IN CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED
AGAINST THE MOST SIGNIFICANT LOSS IF THEY WERE NOT
ABLE TO ATTEND THE SCHOOL

Answer choices	Single gender	College prep	Discipline	Community	Teachers	Arts/Music	Sports	Academics	Values education	Catholic faith	Safety
Peers that share values	9	56	16	87	9	2	10	73	107	93	30
A Catholic environment	1	23	12	40	9	0	0	54	67	139	17
Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective	6	40	12	58	13	1	5	61	76	67	14
A Christian community	6	37	11	58	3	1	6	44	69	65	14
Teachers that model the Catholic faith	1	21	9	35	11	1	2	39	44	68	16
Opportunity to take formal religion classes	1	20	7	13	7	1	2	43	39	69	14
Christian Service hour requirement	3	21	4	28	5	1	2	21	30	15	7
Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services	0	11	2	10	3	1	1	18	18	46	6
Retreat program	0	16	3	13	3	0	6	12	26	10	6
Opportunity to pray in class	0	4	3	9	3	1	1	9	10	13	2
Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother, or chaplain	0	2	1	6	0	0	0	9	11	19	2
Campus ministry program	0	3	3	8	1	0	1	7	8	11	3
The Church encourages attendance	1	5	0	2	1	0	1	7	2	5	3
Opportunity to attend reconciliation	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	1

APPENDIX AA

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT REASON PARENTS HAD A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE
IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST THE RANKED MOST
IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS FACTORS THEY ARE SEEKING IN
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Answer choices	Single gender	College prep	Discipline	Community	Teachers	Arts/Music	Sports	Academics	Values education	Catholic faith	Safety
Peers that share values	10	33	10	65	25	0	3	75	121	111	4
A Catholic environment	10	32	11	56	22	0	1	70	117	117	4
Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective	10	30	9	53	20	1	2	54	111	107	5
A Christian community	10	29	9	53	18	0	0	58	110	119	4
Teachers that model the Catholic faith	9	30	11	47	18	0	2	58	100	111	3
Opportunity to take formal religion classes	8	26	5	39	16	0	1	57	101	103	5
Christian Service hour requirement	7	20	5	45	19	1	0	53	95	83	4
Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services	5	22	6	34	12	0	0	37	82	100	4
Retreat program	7	19	6	32	12	0	1	31	76	88	5
Opportunity to pray in class	5	19	4	39	12	1	0	43	63	75	4
Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother, or chaplain	4	15	6	27	13	0	1	27	77	82	2
Campus ministry program	5	14	6	22	10	0	0	30	68	78	2
The Church encourages attendance	5	15	6	20	9	0	1	28	53	62	2
Opportunity to attend reconciliation	2	11	3	14	7	0	1	22	47	64	2

APPENDIX BB

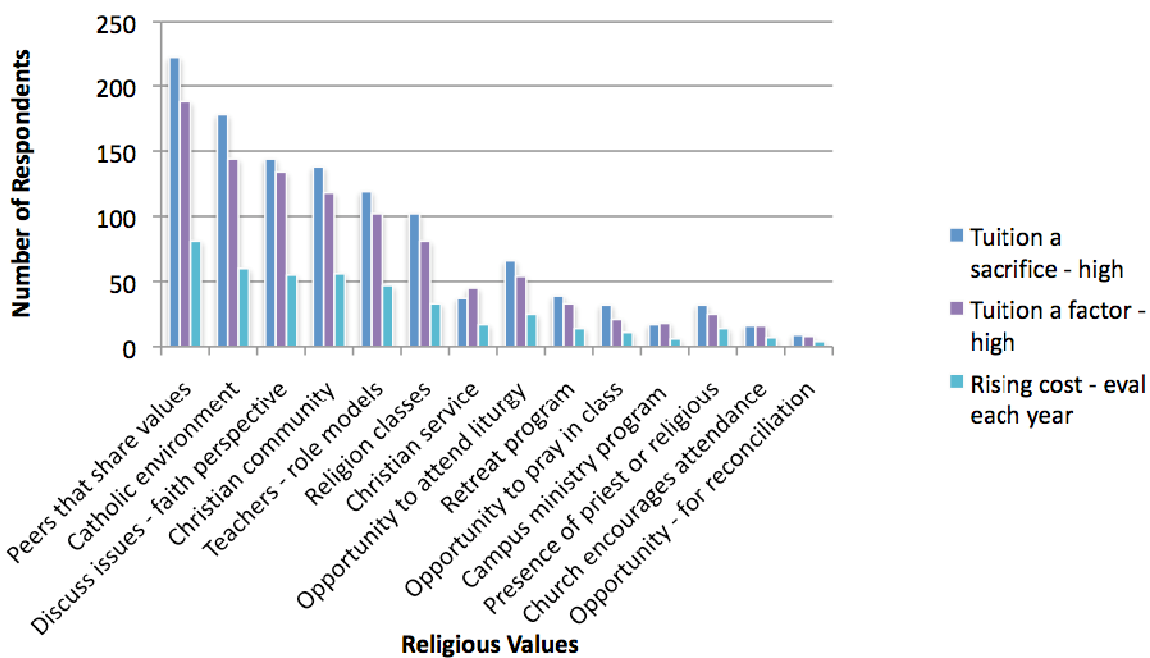
IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS VALUES REFERENCED TO PARENTS'
CHOICE TO SEND THEIR CHILD TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOL IF IT WAS NOT CATHOLIC

Answer options	If the school was not a Catholic school, but it had all of the other components of the current program, would you still send your son/daughter to the school?	
	Yes	No
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services		
Low Importance	200	18
Moderate Importance	216	108
High Importance	171	231
	587	357
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation		
Low Importance	329	62
Moderate Importance	169	150
High Importance	83	146
	581	358
c. Opportunity to take formal religion classes		
Low Importance	132	5
Moderate Importance	214	78
High Importance	238	273
	584	356
d. Campus ministry program		
Low Importance	207	28
Moderate Importance	234	146
High Importance	144	182
	585	356
e. Retreat program		
Low Importance	173	33
Moderate Importance	220	130
High Importance	190	192
	583	355
f. Christian Service hour requirement		
Low Importance	149	22
Moderate Importance	193	114
High Importance	245	221
	587	357
g. Opportunity to pray in class		
Low Importance	255	25
Moderate Importance	166	110
High Importance	165	222
	586	357
h. A Catholic environment		
Low Importance	209	4
Moderate Importance	155	34
High Importance	222	318
	586	356

Answer options	If the school was not a Catholic school, but it had all of the other components of the current program, would you still send your son/daughter to the school?	
	Yes	No
i. A Christian community		
Low Importance	121	1
Moderate Importance	142	45
High Importance	324	310
	587	356
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith		
Low Importance	168	4
Moderate Importance	172	54
High Importance	243	297
	583	355
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain		
Low Importance	229	32
Moderate Importance	204	120
High Importance	153	205
	586	357
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective		
Low Importance	92	4
Moderate Importance	185	65
High Importance	310	289
	587	358
m. Peers that share values		
Low Importance	47	0
Moderate Importance	134	44
High Importance	403	311
	584	355
n. The Church encourages attendance		
Low Importance	290	69
Moderate Importance	173	121
High Importance	117	162
	580	352

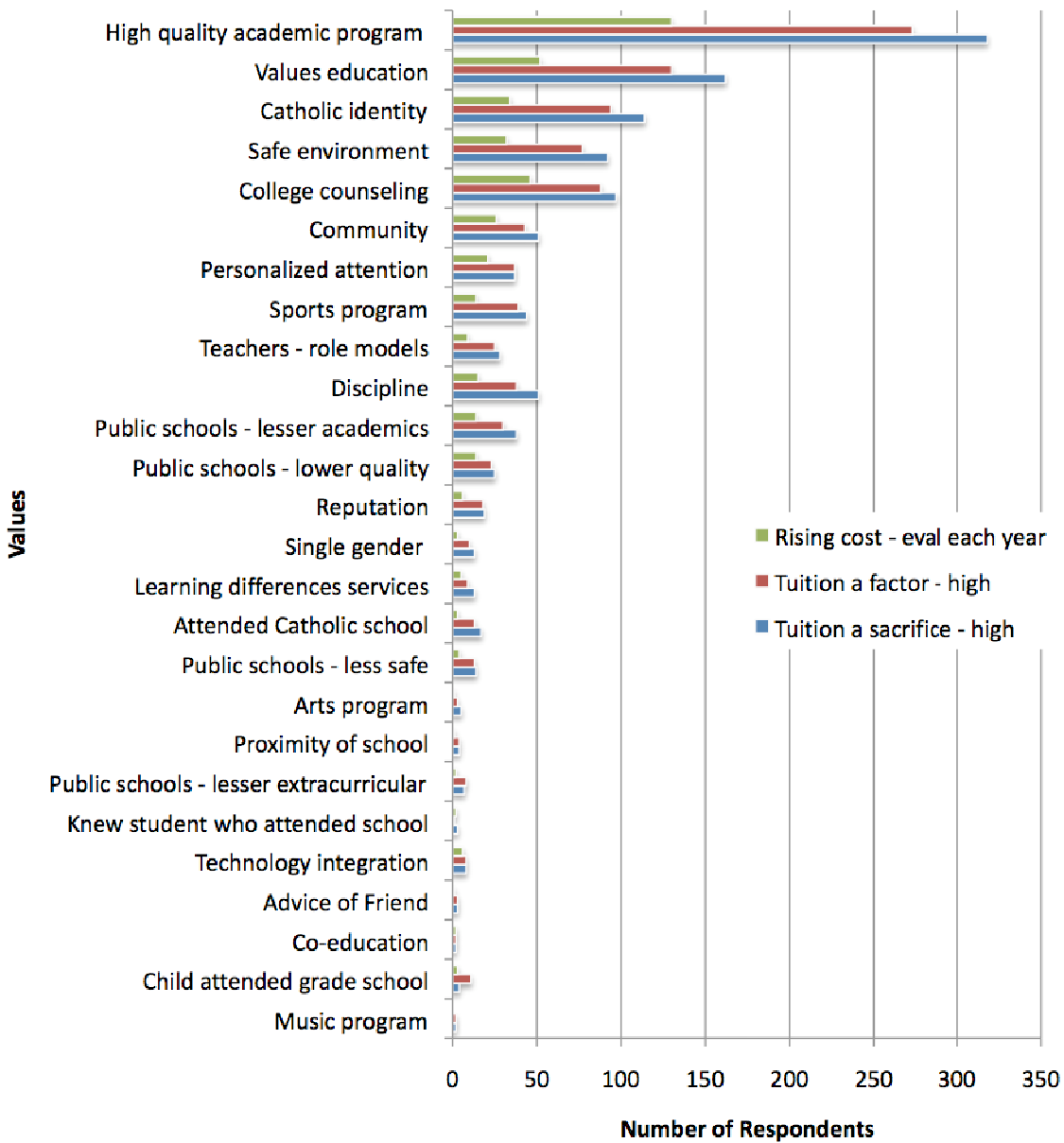
APPENDIX CC

RANKED RELIGIOUS VALUES BY RESPONDENTS INDICATING THE
HIGHEST CONCERN WITH TUITION COSTS



APPENDIX DD

RELIGIOUS VALUES BY RESPONDENTS INDICATING THE
HIGHEST CONCERN WITH TUITION COSTS



APPENDIX EE

THE LEVEL OF CONCERN WITH THE COST OF TUITION FOR THE PARENTS'
YOUNGER CHILDREN THAT MAY ATTEND A CATHOLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST RANKED FACTORS MOTIVATING
PARENTS TO SENT THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER TO A CATHOLIC
SECONDARY SCHOOL

Answer options	Level of concern regarding tuition costs of younger children that may attend Catholic high school				Total
	Does not apply	Low	Moderate	High	
a. High quality academic program					
1st importance	152	73	178	162	
2nd importance	36	20	38	36	
3rd importance	22	10	15	18	
	210	103	231	216	753
b. College counseling - preparation					
1st importance	4	1	10	7	
2nd importance	32	22	45	44	
3rd importance	10	6	14	17	
	46	29	69	68	209
c. Lesser academic quality of local public schools					
1st importance	3	0	5	9	
2nd importance	12	2	10	9	
3rd importance	5	3	8	11	
	20	5	23	29	76
d. Sports program					
1st importance	6	1	1	4	
2nd importance	13	6	12	9	
3rd importance	19	5	10	17	
	38	12	23	30	101
e. Arts program					
1st importance	0	0	2	0	
2nd importance	4	1	4	1	
3rd importance	1	0	0	2	
	5	1	6	3	15
f. Music program					
1st importance	0	0	0	0	
2nd importance	1	0	0	1	
3rd importance	2	0	2	1	
	3	0	2	2	7
g. Lesser quality of extracurricular program in local public schools					
1st importance	0	0	0	0	
2nd importance	0	0	1	0	
3rd importance	5	1	4	3	
	5	1	5	3	14
h. Catholic identity					
1st importance	19	16	20	32	
2nd importance	27	11	33	21	
3rd importance	16	6	19	15	
	62	33	72	68	233

Answer options	Level of concern regarding tuition costs of younger children that may attend Catholic high school				Total
	Does not apply	Low	Moderate	High	
i. Values education					
1st importance	25	13	24	21	
2nd importance	44	20	50	56	
3rd importance	41	26	33	31	
	110	59	107	108	381
j. Community					
1st importance	8	4	4	4	
2nd importance	24	9	18	11	
3rd importance	14	12	26	20	
	46	25	48	35	153
k. Teachers are role models					
1st importance	2	2	3	2	
2nd importance	9	6	6	8	
3rd importance	14	6	12	10	
	25	14	21	20	80
l. Personalized attention					
1st importance	5	3	3	2	
2nd importance	11	7	8	6	
3rd importance	17	2	16	19	
	33	12	27	27	99
m. Technology integration					
1st importance	0	0	0	0	
2nd importance	1	0	2	1	
3rd importance	0	1	6	5	
	1	1	8	6	16
n. Lower overall quality of public schools					
1st importance	4	0	2	1	
2nd importance	6	1	7	6	
3rd importance	8	1	9	9	
	18	2	18	16	53
o. Learning difference services					
1st importance	4	1	3	1	
2nd importance	1	2	0	2	
3rd importance	4	1	5	2	
	9	4	8	5	26
p. Discipline					
1st importance	2	1	1	0	
2nd importance	8	2	8	13	
3rd importance	17	6	11	14	
	27	9	20	27	83
q. Safe environment					
1st importance	17	1	8	9	
2nd importance	12	4	23	18	
3rd importance	20	14	44	26	
	49	19	75	53	196

Answer options	Level of concern regarding tuition costs of younger children that may attend Catholic high school				Total
	Does not apply	Low	Moderate	High	
r. Less safe environment in local public schools					
1st importance	2	0	1	2	
2nd importance	4	0	0	1	
3rd importance	5	1	3	5	
	11	1	4	8	23
s. Reputation					
1st importance	1	0	4	1	
2nd importance	4	3	3	2	
3rd importance	12	4	11	8	
	17	7	18	11	53
t. Opportunity for single gender environment					
1st importance	2	0	1	1	
2nd importance	4	3	0	5	
3rd importance	5	2	5	5	
	11	5	6	11	32
u. Opportunity for co-educational environment					
1st importance	0	1	0	0	
2nd importance	2	0	0	0	
3rd importance	2	0	0	1	
	4	1	0	1	6
v. I went to Catholic school					
1st importance	0	0	0	0	
2nd importance	1	0	2	2	
3rd importance	7	7	6	8	
	8	7	8	10	32
w. Advice of friend					
1st importance	0	0	1	0	
2nd importance	0	0	0	1	
3rd importance	2	1	2	1	
	2	1	3	2	8
x. Knowledge of student who attends school					
1st importance	0	0	2	0	
2nd importance	0	0	1	1	
3rd importance	3	0	1	1	
	3	0	4	2	9
y. The school is close					
1st importance	2	0	0	1	
2nd importance	0	0	1	1	
3rd importance	2	2	3	1	
	4	2	4	3	13

Answer options	Level of concern regarding tuition costs of younger children that may attend Catholic high school				Total
	Does not apply	Low	Moderate	High	
z. Child attended Catholic elementary school					
1st importance	0	1	1	2	
2nd importance	1	0	2	2	
3rd importance	5	3	7	8	
	6	4	10	12	32

APPENDIX FF

THE LEVEL OF CONCERN WITH THE COST OF TUITION FOR THE PARENTS'
YOUNGER CHILDREN THAT MAY ATTEND A CATHOLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST RANKED RELIGIOUS FACTORS
MOTIVATING PARENTS TO SENT THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER
TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Answer options	Level of concern regarding tuition costs of younger children that may attend Catholic high school				Total
	Does not apply	Low	Moderate	High	
a. Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services					
1st importance	2	2	5	10	
2nd importance	15	5	13	21	
3rd importance	15	12	11	19	
	32	19	29	50	130
b. Opportunity to attend reconciliation					
1st importance	0	0	1	0	
2nd importance	1	0	2	4	
3rd importance	2	0	2	2	
	3	0	5	6	14
c. Opportunity to take formal religion classes					
1st importance	33	11	16	20	
2nd importance	18	9	26	28	
3rd importance	18	11	20	23	
	69	31	62	71	231
d. Campus ministry program					
1st importance	2	1	2	4	
2nd importance	5	4	4	7	
3rd importance	6	3	7	1	
	13	8	13	12	46
e. Retreat program					
1st importance	10	2	8	1	
2nd importance	13	0	10	9	
3rd importance	16	5	15	10	
	39	7	33	20	98
f. Christian Service hour requirement					
1st importance	8	4	9	10	
2nd importance	18	7	14	8	
3rd importance	27	6	15	18	
	53	17	38	36	142
g. Opportunity to pray in class					
1st importance	4	1	3	5	
2nd importance	8	6	5	5	
3rd importance	2	3	7	9	
	14	10	15	19	58
h. A Catholic environment					
1st importance	67	37	74	78	
2nd importance	21	14	27	16	
3rd importance	11	12	14	19	
	99	63	115	113	388

Answer options	Level of concern regarding tuition costs of younger children that may attend Catholic high school				Total
	Does not apply	Low	Moderate	High	
i. A Christian community					
1st importance	41	21	53	47	
2nd importance	31	11	34	29	
3rd importance	17	13	27	19	
	89	45	114	95	340
j. Teachers that model the Catholic faith					
1st importance	6	6	7	13	
2nd importance	25	21	36	33	
3rd importance	31	17	40	34	
	62	44	83	80	265
k. Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother or chaplain					
1st importance	1	1	2	2	
2nd importance	4	2	9	10	
3rd importance	7	1	6	10	
	12	4	17	22	53
l. Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective					
1st importance	17	14	24	21	
2nd importance	40	16	42	36	
3rd importance	49	19	58	40	
	106	49	124	97	372
m. Peers that share values					
1st importance	60	22	71	47	
2nd importance	50	25	53	55	
3rd importance	41	18	43	48	
	151	65	167	150	529
n. The Church encourages attendance					
1st importance	4	0	2	5	
2nd importance	1	2	1	2	
3rd importance	3	2	6	5	
	8	4	9	12	33

APPENDIX GG

THE EXTENT TO WHICH TUITION WAS A FACTOR IN DECIDING TO SEND
THE PARENTS' SON OR DAUGHTER TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST FAMILY INCOME

Family income	Extent that tuition was a factor		
	Low	Moderate	High
less than \$49,999	3	6	23
\$50,000 - \$99,999	13	46	85
\$100,000 - \$149,999	38	81	95
\$150,000 - \$199,999	20	52	45
\$200,000 - \$249,999	39	35	28
over \$250,000	95	79	23

APPENDIX HH

THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE RISING COST OF TUITION WILL AFFECT THE
PARENTS' DECISION TO SEND THEIR SOPHOMORE CHILD TO A
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR THEIR JUNIOR AND
SENIOR YEARS REFERENCED AGAINST FAMILY INCOME

Impact of tuition on re-enrollment decision for junior and senior years			
Family income	Will evaluate decision yearly	Intend to re-enroll but may assess decision	Committed for junior and senior years
less than \$49,999	14	7	11
\$50,000 - \$99,999	29	55	60
\$100,000 - \$149,999	47	84	83
\$150,000 - \$199,999	12	42	64
\$200,000 - \$249,999	14	27	51
over \$250,000	11	38	149

APPENDIX II

THE LEVEL OF CONCERN WITH THE COST OF TUITION FOR THE PARENTS'
YOUNGER CHILDREN THAT MAY ATTEND A CATHOLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOL REFERENCED AGAINST FAMILY INCOME

Concern with tuition for younger children				
Family income	Does not apply	Low	Moderate	High
less than \$49,999	8	2	3	19
\$50,000 - \$99,999	39	8	32	65
\$100,000 - \$149,999	56	18	56	88
\$150,000 - \$199,999	25	17	45	32
\$200,000 - \$249,999	22	14	34	22
over \$250,000	72	54	62	11

APPENDIX JJ

THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE ONGOING COSTS OF THE SCHOOL
ARE A SACRIFICE FOR THE FAMILY REFERENCED
AGAINST FAMILY INCOME

Family income	Level of sacrifice		
	Low	Moderate	High
less than \$49,999	1	2	28
\$50,000 - \$99,999	3	39	104
\$100,000 - \$149,999	10	82	122
\$150,000 - \$199,999	7	66	45
\$200,000 - \$249,999	11	44	36
over \$250,000	69	113	17

APPENDIX KK

THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE RISING COST OF TUITION IS
A CONCERN REFERENCED AGAINST FAMILY INCOME

Family income	Level of sacrifice		
	Low	Moderate	High
less than \$49,999	1	2	28
\$50,000 - \$99,999	3	38	102
\$100,000 - \$149,999	7	82	129
\$150,000 - \$199,999	7	66	44
\$200,000 - \$249,999	3	51	37
over \$250,000	51	127	20

APPENDIX LL

INCREASE IN TUITION THAT WOULD CAUSE PARENTS TO RECONSIDER
SENDING THEIR CHILD TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL
REFERENCED TO THE MOST IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS
FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE FOR
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Answer choices	Less than \$750	\$751- \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,250	\$2,251- \$5,000	over \$5,000
Opportunity to attend liturgy, prayer services	41	42	18	6	5
Opportunity to attend reconciliation	5	5	2	0	1
Opportunity to take formal religion classes	52	75	47	20	9
Campus ministry program	4	16	8	3	2
Retreat program	19	31	15	10	6
Christian Service hour requirement	30	42	17	23	15
Opportunity to pray in class	19	17	7	1	1
A Catholic environment	86	132	69	26	26
A Christian community	70	126	54	28	21
Teachers that model the Catholic faith	70	77	47	24	9
Presence of a religious sister, priest, brother, or chaplain	17	16	4	5	4
Ability to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective	76	124	58	42	23
Peers that share values	122	170	90	51	32
The Church encourages attendance	11	10	1	3	3

APPENDIX MM

INCREASE IN TUITION THAT WOULD CAUSE PARENTS TO RECONSIDER
SENDING THEIR CHILD TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL
REFERENCED TO THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS
INFLUENCING THE CHOICE FOR CATHOLIC
SECONDARY SCHOOL

Answer choices	Less than \$750	\$751- \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,250	\$2,251- \$5,000	over \$5,000
High quality academic program	175	240	120	74	51
College counseling- preparation	53	78	37	13	10
Lesser academic quality of local public schools	17	28	15	9	3
Sports program	26	34	12	8	6
Arts program	5	3	4	1	1
Music program	2	5	0	0	0
Lesser quality of extracurricular program in local public schools	3	6	2	0	0
Catholic identity	60	77	33	15	9
Values Education	81	131	51	35	20
Community	25	50	24	20	13
Teachers are role models	20	19	11	6	5
Personalized attention	14	29	18	14	6
Technology integration	9	1	2	2	0
Lower overall quality of public schools	14	12	16	7	2
Learning difference services	4	13	5	0	1
Discipline	22	30	13	4	4
Safe environment	47	67	33	13	10
Less safe environment in local public schools	6	7	6	0	2
Reputation	13	13	6	7	5
Opportunity for single gender environment	7	13	5	2	2
Opportunity for co-educational environment	0	1	2	2	0
I went to Catholic school	3	14	4	3	4
Advice of friend	2	3	0	1	0
Knowledge of student who attends school	3	2	1	2	1
The school is close	3	1	4	2	1
Child attended Catholic elementary school	4	10	9	2	1

APPENDIX NN

THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CURRENT ECONOMIC DOWNTURN IS CAUSING
THE PARENTS TO RECONSIDER SENDING THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER
TO A CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL REFERENCED
AGAINST FAMILY INCOME

Family income	Impact of economic downturn re-enrollment		
	Low	Moderate	High
less than \$49,999	5	11	16
\$50,000 - \$99,999	30	67	44
\$100,000 - \$149,999	65	96	52
\$150,000 - \$199,999	49	48	21
\$200,000 - \$249,999	47	37	8
over \$250,000	156	39	2