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Andrews University

School of Education

A STUDY ON SELECTED FACTORS INFLUENCING SCHOOL
CHOICE AMONG THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
POPULATION IN SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Philip Omenge Mainda

May 2001

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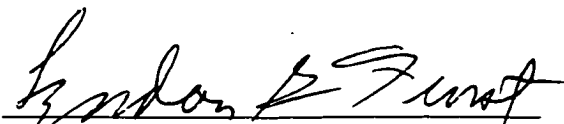
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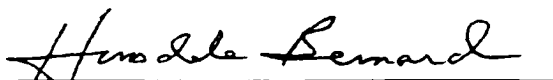
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ABSTRACT

A STUDY ON SELECTED FACTORS INFLUENCING SCHOOL
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POPULATION IN SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN

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Philip Omenge Mainda

Chair: Lyndon G. Furst

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

School of Education

Title: A STUDY OF SELECTED FACTORS INFLUENCING SCHOOL CHOICE
AMONG THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST POPULATION IN
SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN

Name of researcher: Philip Omenge Mainda

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Date completed: May 2001

The Problem

One of the most significant problems currently facing Seventh-day Adventist church schools in North America is declining enrollment in Grades K-12. In Southwest Michigan where this study was done, Seventh-day Adventist parents tend to make choices on where to send their children to school between Seventh-day Adventist schools and public schools. It was the purpose of this study to determine if a relationship exists between school choice and parental perception of selected causal factors.

Method

The design of the study was empirical ex post facto using a descriptive survey

research method with a Likert-type scale which was used to test eight hypotheses associated with the following select factors: Parental perception of spiritual values, cost of education, academic program, who influences choice decisions, social, proximity, safety, and awareness factors.

Data were analyzed using multiple regression-stepwise method, ANOVA, and descriptive statistics. Open-ended comments were analyzed using a 17-category dichotomous scale.

Results and Conclusions

There was a significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of spiritual value-based education, the cost of education, academic program, who influenced school choice, safety in school, and awareness.

There was no significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of social factors and school proximity. Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools differed most with the Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools in the area of academic program.

Recommendations were made in the areas associated with the academic program, cost of education, safety, and awareness.

Given the finding that both Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and parents with children in public schools believe in the superiority of the Seventh-day Adventist educational system over the public educational system, it is imperative that school administrators attempt to fully exploit any given potential to achieve objectives. However, the declining demand for Adventist education

is attributed to perceptual decline in its marginal value consequent to perceived improved image of public education as evidenced from the significant differences observed in this study.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction and Background of the Problem

The issues surrounding parental school choice are heatedly debated in the educational and political circles in the United States. However, the argument is not simply a matter of being for or against parental choice, but rather it is part of the schooling issues in the United States of America. The history of education in the United States of America reveals that many 19th-century Americans endorsed strong beliefs in laissez-faire government and the inalienable rights of individuals to control their own private lives, including the education of their children (Biggs & Porter, 1994).

In the 20th century, advocates of compulsory schooling in the United States of America assumed that all students in a pluralistic society needed similar experiences that would allow them to become responsible citizens with a sense of commitment to a common set of virtues. Biggs and Porter further state that parental choice as a result of creating diversity in educational experiences was seen as a potential threat to the public good and, therefore, school choice needed to be limited to schools that provided instruction in a common set of values and skills. The question for advocates of parental choice was whether or not parents should have the right to choose the type of education

they wanted for their children. If so, a parent should be able to select schools which support their values.

Contemporary advocates of parental choice in schooling have received increasing visibility in the United States. Educational and political communities, as a result of Coons and Sugarman's *Education by Choice* (1978), argue that public schools, because they aimed to socialize children in particular ways, were not neutral and did not foster the development of autonomy in future citizens.

Various reasons were given as to why choice in education has become such an important contemporary political issue in the United States of America. These include the argument that, in a democracy, parents should have the right to choose the type of education they want for their children and the freedom to select schools that reinforce their traditions and values. Accordingly, parents need to be able to choose among schools that reflect the diversity of values in a pluralistic society. Parents should be able to choose schools that best fit the educational needs of their children, and that freedom to choose should result in greater competition for students, thus leading to improvements in school achievement. Educational vouchers, which provide families with certificates that can be used to pay tuition through the state at any school that meets minimal parental requirements, have been introduced as a market-based approach to school choice. The plan has the potential to satisfy parental needs because it is governed by competitive forces (Levin, 1991, pp. 137-158).

Following the above developments in recent years there has been an increase in the number of choices parents can make as to which school would be best for their

children. Among such schools that have been open to parents are Seventh-day Adventist schools, other private schools, and public schools. Further, with advances in technology there is also a growing demand for a home-schooling system of education.

Parental choice is a principle according to which parents have the right to decide which school to send their children. Writing on school choice, Michael Chen (1997) suggests that parents and society in general are interested in values, needs, and goals. He argues that expectations relating to academic achievements, occupational opportunities, costs, and involvement are usually considered as secondary. Schools, on the other hand, are mainly interested in developing their unique educational identity. School choice requires educational diversity among schools so that there is a basis for choice other than simply 'good' and 'bad', and that parents have the right to choose schools best suited for their children (Biggs & Porter, 1994).

Seventh-day Adventist church schools in the United States of America and worldwide provide a Christian faith-based educational system offering options from which parents may choose to educate their children. In this system of education, there are formal classroom schools as well as a home schooling program (Biggs & Porter, 1994, p. 47) from which parents may choose, and through which children may receive Christian education.

The Seventh-day Adventist church places emphasis on religious education with the Bible as an integral part of the curriculum (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1997) through which specific objectives are emphasized.

The Seventh-day Adventist schools provide a distinctive Christian approach to

every part of school life and the curriculum, and parents are expected to have a continuing role in the management and organization of the schools. This approach is supported by the biblical text found in Prov 22:6 which states: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” This text is directly addressing parents and, therefore, Seventh-day Adventist schools encourage a close relationship between home and school. On this basis, parents have a major responsibility and accountability in the choice of school they make.

The Seventh-day Adventist church, through its Department of Education, has several schools in Southwest Michigan where this study focused. Owing to the availability of these options, and giving due recognition to possible demographic decline in student population, most Seventh-day Adventist schools in Southwest Michigan have in recent years experienced an overall declining trend in student enrollment. This decline in enrollment has been a matter of concern to school educators and has prompted leaders in private schools, and particularly Seventh-day Adventist institutions, to ask some penetrating questions about the causes of the shift from high enrollment to lower levels and what could be done to ensure attainment of goals and objectives of the organization.

In enrolling students, a school’s major interest is to enlist students with the hope that they can be retained until they graduate. It is also hoped that when they graduate from a Seventh-day Adventist elementary school, they will enroll with a Seventh-day Adventist high school in order to benefit from what the Adventist school system offers.

The benefits to be derived from the Seventh-day Adventist system of education include the transmission of religious values and information to children in an

environment that does not conflict with the family values system. Through such a system, children are expected to enhance moral judgment and the potential for sustaining these values for the rest of their lives.

In a study conducted by Epperson (1990) in the Southeastern United States of America on the relationship between attending Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist church membership, it was found that students attending Seventh-day Adventist schools had a higher probability of becoming a Seventh-day Adventist church member without increasing or diminishing the chances of remaining a Seventh-day Adventist in the long term. The research also found that the probability of retaining church membership was increased through school attendance, which in turn increases school enrollment.

Minder (1985) conducted a study on the relationship between church-sponsored Grades K-12 education and church membership in the Seventh-day Adventist church. The study, conducted in the Lake Union Conference covering the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin, found that attendance in Seventh-day Adventist K-12 schools substantially increased the probability of a student being baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist church and retaining membership. According to the study, the major benefit of Seventh-day Adventist education is the substantial influence in becoming practicing Seventh-day Adventist church members. It also found that as students develop high moral standards with positive spiritual lives, scholastic achievement was enhanced.

Academic institutions owned by non-profit religious organizations primarily rely

on tuition and philanthropic contributions to run operations. Tuition income constitutes the substantive part of the school budget. School enrollment is, therefore, a critical factor in ensuring that the institution has ongoing viability.

Before parents select a school in which to enroll their children, certain factors are likely to influence their choice. It is the purpose of this study to identify and examine such factors that may be significantly associated with parental school choice.

Statement of the Problem

The specific problem toward which this study was directed is that the Seventh-day Adventist church, which sponsors elementary and secondary education, has observed that there is a declining trend in student enrollment as supported by the data shown below. According to the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in the North American Division, Department of Education (1997), there is concern in the downward trend in enrollment in Grades K-8 that is likely to impact on both the Grades 9-12 and college enrollment trends in future years. The report indicates overall decline in enrollment in elementary schools (ages 5-13) from 66% of the expected levels in 1980 to 42% in 1997, and in secondary school (ages 14-18) from 38% in 1980 to 24% in 1997. During the same period, however, colleges were found to have maintained the same overall level of enrollment. The report further suggests that these enrollment trends indicate that the educational system needs to give serious study to ways in which the declining trends can be reversed.

On February 11, 1998, a meeting was held at Andrews Academy attended by

Southwest Michigan Seventh-day Adventist educators, including principals, teachers, representatives from the six Seventh-day Adventist elementary schools and academies in the region, and this researcher. It was agreed that there was an overall declining trend in enrollment in the Seventh-day Adventist schools in the region. While there were no clear explanations offered for the decline in enrollment, administrators in District 9 expressed concern that, should the trend continue, critical levels may be reached which might affect the smooth running of the schools. It was clear that no substantive research had been carried out in Southwest Michigan on enrollment problems in Grades K-12 studies, especially as they relate to parental school choice.

Looking at the overall picture in the Lake Union Conference covering the states of Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin, there was clearly a steady decline in enrollment over the last 30 years. As of 1998/99, there was a total of 93 Grades K-12 schools in the Lake Union Conference of which 23 were academies with Grades 9-12 (Lake Union Conference, 1969-1999). Table 1 shows a decline of about 20% enrollment in Grades K-8 and an average decline of 15% in Grades 9-12 per decade, or a net average enrollment loss of 113 annually for Grades K-12 combined. From the data, it can be seen that there is a steady decline in enrollment at an alarming rate over the last 30 years during which time enrollment has declined by about half. There is clearly a linear relationship between enrollment level and time. By extrapolation, if no remedial action is taken, the enrollment level can be expected to reduce as follows:

1. By the year 2009 enrollment reduces to 3,530 students
2. By the year 2019 enrollment reduces to 2,406 students

TABLE 1

LAKE UNION ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL
ENROLLMENT SUMMARY 1968-1999

Year ending	Grades 1-8	Grades 9-12	Total
1968	5,597	2,393	7,990
1969	5,742	2,286	8,028
1970	5,668	2,342	8,010
1971	5,628	2,248	7,876
1972	5,513	2,251	7,764
1973	5,381	2,217	7,598
1974	5,295	2,388	7,683
1975	5,287	2,318	7,605
1976	5,378	2,413	7,791
1977	5,515	2,362	7,877
1978	5,483	2,207	7,690
1979	5,437	2,180	7,617
1980	5,372	2,062	7,434
1981	5,257	2,041	7,298
1982	5,256	1,989	7,245
1983	4,959	1,828	6,787
1984	4,760	1,741	6,501
1985	4,571	1,820	6,391
1986	4,261	1,766	6,027
1987	4,186	1,687	5,873
1988	4,120	1,639	5,759
1989	3,884	1,548	5,432
1990	3,827	1,442	5,269
1991	3,742	1,407	5,149
1992	3,624	1,328	4,952
1993	3,594	1,356	4,950
1994	3,530	1,341	4,871
1995	3,575	1,338	4,913
1996	3,673	1,234	4,907
1997	3,548	1,075	4,623
1998	3,373	1,245	4,618
1999	3,414	1,241	4,655

3. By the year 2029 enrollment reduces to 1,239 students

4. By the year 2039 Adventist schools are at the verge of extinction.

As the figures continue to decline, it can be predicted that several schools will close by the end of the first decade of the new millennium as enrollment declines below the critical level.

The all-time cherished statement by all administrators under school mission statements that “it is a privilege to be in an Adventist school” is now questionable, because it is unclear whether it is indeed the students who are privileged to be in an Adventist school, or the school that is today privileged to enroll a student! Where has the pendulum swung and why? It is, therefore, in the interest of Seventh-day Adventist school administrators to be aware of what may be the causes of this trend of a steady decline in enrollment and what possible solutions may be found to reverse the trend to acceptable levels. School choice is considered as a major issue because of increased alternatives that parents have as to where they can send their children.

The statistics shown in Table 2 do indicate that church membership has steadily grown over the last 9 years. However, in comparison with school enrollment (Table 1), it is clear that although church membership is steadily growing, enrollment in schools in the same area is declining. Rational thinking would suggest that as church membership grows, school enrollment levels should also increase on the assumption that the new members of the Adventist faith would have children of school age who would be enrolled in Seventh-day Adventist schools. The inverse relationship between enrollment and

church membership is, therefore, a cause for concern and is a problem that reflects issues related to school choice that must be addressed.

The statistics shown in Table 2 do confirm that Seventh-day Adventist membership continue to grow. This is further strengthened by the fact that during the meeting attended by principals of Seventh-day Adventist schools in Southwest Michigan, it was reported that in this area, there were over 400 children from Seventh-day Adventist families attending public schools. The number was an estimate by the Department of Transport in Southwest Michigan. The main problem still was, What factors influenced these parents to make the choices they made?

Parents have the freedom and power to choose schools to which to send their children, and there are several options open to such parents. This would suggest that

TABLE 2
CHURCH MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

Year	Lake Union Conference	Lake Region Conference	Michigan Conference
1989	6,5670	2,0060	2,2074
1990	6,5750	2,0175	2,2183
1991	6,6414	2,0782	2,2399
1992	6,6497	2,1158	2,2466
1993	6,7371	2,1642	2,2615
1994	6,7676	2,1891	2,2826
1995	6,8511	2,2375	2,3075
1996	6,9311	2,2733	2,3390
1997	6,9758	2,3244	2,3332
1998	7,0065	2,3039	2,3462

when enrollment declines, the most probable cause is that parents have opted to take their children elsewhere. Choice of school is, therefore, a relevant issue, as a clear understanding of the causal factors would help school administrators to respond to those factors that have significant influence on school choice.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the factors influencing school choice among Seventh-day Adventists in Southwest Michigan. It is the choice of school that is directly perceived to affect the level of enrollment in schools. A careful study of the predictors of school choice is therefore vital. Over the last 10 years, administrators of the Seventh-day Adventist schools have voiced concern in general declining trends in enrollment. Some students graduating from Grade 8 never join Seventh-day Adventist academies. Reasons for the loss of enrollment must therefore be found to counterbalance any perceived weakness.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the underlying causes of declining school enrollment in Adventist schools in the Southwest Michigan region of the Lake Union Conference of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. The results of this analysis will help to identify the measures needed to make private/Adventist education a preferred option in North America and worldwide. It is the purpose of this study to contribute towards long-term efforts to make private, faith-based, Adventist education a desired and achievable option in the upbringing of children.

Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, certain fundamental questions influencing school choice must be addressed:

1. What are the factors influencing parents in their choice of schools? What are the possible factors influencing Seventh-day Adventist parents to choose schools other than the Seventh-day Adventist schools?
2. If indeed there are factors causing parents to choose other schools, how can these factors be identified?
3. To what extent do parents consider the select factors important in their school of choice?
4. What is the relationship between school choices made by parents and the select factors including parental perception of the cost of education, academic program, spiritual values, peer influence, social impact, proximity, safety, and awareness of information about the school?

Whereas schools enroll students on the basis of academic qualification and character, the decision as to which school to enroll is the combined effort of the parent and the student. With this assumption, it is logical to attempt to establish what makes the choice makers decide what school the student should join.

Rationale

Although some research has been done on Seventh-day Adventist boarding school enrollment problems as well as studies on general declining trends of enrollment in

Adventist schools in North America, such as done by Kromann (1982) and by Hunt (1996), which are discussed in the literature review, there has been no substantive research on Grades K-12 studies on enrollment problems in relation to parental school choice in Southwest Michigan. Therefore, this study provides new knowledge about perceptions of Seventh-day Adventists regarding Seventh-day Adventist schools in relation to public and other schools.

Administrators, including principals of Seventh-day Adventist schools in Southwest Michigan and the Director of the Department of Education. Lake Union Conference, expressed concern on declining enrollment trends in this region but no one has real answers to the problems other than speculation on the high cost of education. Little research has been carried out on parental reasons for choosing a preferred high school while still in elementary school; instead, most studies have concentrated on reasons given by the parents of children who have already started high school (Hunter, 1991; Petch, 1986; Stillman & Maychell, 1986).

Should the Grades K-12 level of enrollment continue to decline without reversing the trend, some schools may be forced to merge or close. This may also have a bearing on the Adventist higher education enrollment, thereby limiting the church's ability to carry out its evangelistic mission.

Theoretical Framework

In order to discover clear determinants of school choice, this study sought the opinion of parents, who are the decision makers regarding school choice. The opinions

of parents of children in Grades K-12 were, therefore, sought as decision makers as to which schools their children will attend. While making such decisions, it is assumed that there are criteria that will guide them. It was the purpose of this study to determine what these criteria are as predictors of parental choice.

Most private schools have strong academic traditions and have the advantage of small sized classes compared to those in public schools. Their influence and independence can be an asset, both for educational experience and as a competitive force to counterbalance the public-school dominance. Private schools also have better environments for the development of personal relationships and character. Despite these assets, their survival is threatened by countervailing forces working against them. (Esty, 1974, p. 230)

Seventh-day Adventist schools, like other private schools, are dependant upon fee revenue for survival. A parent must therefore consider whether to choose free education available in public schools or a private school where fees must be paid. It is therefore fair to predict that cost of education may influence school choice. The school administration may work out other alternative sources of funds to bridge the gap between the amount needed and what the parent is able to pay. The cost factor may inevitably force the parent to choose education elsewhere. The current initiative on the school voucher system is intended to provide government funds to enable parents to exercise school choice options without financial restriction (Biggs & Porter, 1994, p. 44). There is a correlation between enrollment loss and declining population growth rates in the age groups served by many private schools, and there is a direct bearing on adequacy of school finances (Esty, 1974, p. 232).

Concept of Diminishing Marginal Utility

Parents tend to have the prerogative in the choice of school that their children attend. Schools do not have that prerogative in determining which students they enroll. As a result, two forces work against the survival of private schools: declining student enrollment and the increasingly difficult financial conditions for the schools. Beneath these countervailing forces lies a possible basic fact of the declining marginal utility of the private schools (Esty, 1974, p. 231).

A marginal value is the change in a dependent variable (y) associated with a one-unit change in an independent variable (x) in the form $Y=f(X)$. If the cost of education was taken as an independent variable and the value of education as the dependent variable, the law of diminishing marginal utility would suggest that, as the cost of education increases by a dollar, the additional value in education would be influenced at a decreasing rate.

As the cost of education increases due to rising costs, the unit change in the value of education gained to the cost of education increases at a reducing rate. Consequently, there may be a declining demand for Seventh-day Adventist education so as to reach a point at which a parent chooses other alternatives that would appear to provide the same utility value. At this point the parent is considered to be indifferent (Hirschey & Pappas, 1993, pp. 172-175). The importance of this model is in the fact that a parent may have a positive attitude towards Seventh-day Adventist education, but chooses an alternative school, not merely because of the cost per se, but because the value of the education does

not compare to its cost. Depending on the level of income and the degree of interest in Seventh-day Adventist education, there is a level of cost at which a parent could be indifferent to various options and will make preference on any choice only when one of the options subsequently demonstrates a higher marginal utility.

Since social factors would influence choice of school (Archibald, 1996), it is necessary to test their significance to parents of potential students in Southwest Michigan. The choice of school may depend upon its reputation, the curriculum offered, and academic program (Neagle, 1991).

According to the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education, however, true education transcends mere acquisition of cognitive skills and entails the harmonious development of the mental, physical, and spiritual powers in a balanced manner in order to effectively prepare the learner for the present world and the world to come (White, 1903). God being the source of all true knowledge, the first object of education is to direct the mind to Him for revelation and perpetual guidance.

Biblical truths must therefore be integrated in the school curriculum of all subjects and taught within the framework of the biblical world view and creationist standpoint in such a way that they make sense and on the basis that the Bible, is a cosmic revelation that transcends the limited realm of humanity (Knight, 1989). Knight further suggests that subjects are found meaningful when taught in light of the Bible which is both foundational and contextual, providing a pattern of thought in all areas, in respect of which integration for all knowledge has a unifying perspective that comes from God, the

source of all truth. Perhaps this is the greatest strength of the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education. It is, therefore, important to determine the extent to which parents view Adventist Christian education as fundamental to their choice of school.

Buttrum (1994), on factors influencing parental school-choice decisions to enroll students in selected private schools, determined reasons parents chose to enroll their children in private schools during the 3 prior years. The results indicated that parental school choices were related to the degree students were disciplined, safer environment, and satisfaction with teachers. Safety and independence were listed as the greatest advantage of private school education.

Hypotheses

These issues raised under a theoretical framework provided the basis for development of hypotheses testing under research methodology with a view to finding significant variables. School choice between Seventh-day Adventist schools and public schools is the dependent measure. Eight select factors constitute the independent measures tested as predictors of school choice. The independent measures are discussed in detail below as hypotheses. The main hypothesis is that there is a significant relationship between school choice and each of the select variables. As indicated from the above discussion on theoretical framework, eight factors have been identified as being associated with school choice. These factors are the basis of the hypotheses that were proposed for testing as predictors of school choice:

Hypothesis 1. There is a relationship between school choice and parental

perception of Adventist education.

Hypothesis 2. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of cost of education.

Hypothesis 3. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of academic program.

Hypothesis 4. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of influence of choice.

Hypothesis 5. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of social factors.

Hypothesis 6. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of school proximity.

Hypothesis 7. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of safety.

Hypothesis 8. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of awareness of information about the school.

The first hypothesis answers the first research question regarding the extent to which parents agree to beliefs and value of Seventh-day Adventist-based education. The open-ended questions gave opportunity to responding parents to express their opinion on those issues they think are relevant that the questionnaire instrument might not have covered. It also accommodates alternative opinion and addresses the third research question regarding the extent to which parents consider the select factors important. The

other seven hypotheses answer research question 4. Hypothesis 4 above addresses the question as to who influences parents in school choice decisions.

Importance of the Study

This study is significant to the practice of educational administration in many respects. It will provide additional knowledge and understanding of factors that influence school choice, particularly as it relates to Seventh-day Adventist schools, by assessing the relationships and differences between school choice and eight select factors set out in the form of hypotheses testing. It will underscore the urgent need to understand what influences school choice, with the view to ultimately be able to use those factors that influence school choice to attract students to Seventh-day Adventist schools as well as to other private schools in order to improve enrollment figures to expected levels. The study examined the role of the school administration, faculty, parents, and students in a transformational approach to collectively meet the objectives and goals as well as to understand school choice theory, particularly on the decision-making process and factors which are associated with choice.

Definition of Terms

The following most frequently used terms must be understood in a limited context in this study as follows:

Seventh-day Adventist Church: A Christ-centered worldwide religious community of believers who keep the ten commandments, observe Saturday as the

Sabbath and believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

Lake Union Conference: The regional Seventh-day Adventist Church entity that includes the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church comprising congregations in four states, namely: Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana.

Public school: The State-owned schools financially supported by public funds and administered by public school districts.

Basic Assumptions

This research was carried out on the assumption that the sample subjects were willing to participate in the study as well as provide the useful information and that they could reasonably articulate the reasons for the choice regarding school. It also assumed that the selected sample studied permits generalization to a larger population and gives important insights into school choice theory.

Delimitations of the Study

The following limitations indicate factors and considerations that had a bearing on the outcome and conclusions of this study. The scope of the study is geographically limited to the Seventh-day Adventist population in Southwest Michigan. The study was done within a limited time frame, which is reflected in the research findings. The study was carried out during the fall of 1998, and no attempt was made to establish whether emerging trends in any way represented a pattern of behavior that has been there for some time, or one that will be observed in the future. Another consideration is subject

attrition, which constitutes one of the problems in data analysis as a result of loss of subjects due to geographical relocation, absenteeism, and nonparticipation (Maruyama & Deno, 1992).

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 covers the introduction, the background to the problem, a statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, rationale, theoretical framework, importance of the study, definitions, delimitations, and assumptions of the study.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the representative literature on school choice. The review is intended to support the methodology used in the study. Chapter 3 covers a description of the research methodology used in the study. It discusses the population studied and sampling procedures used. It also discusses the dependent and independent variables measured and hypotheses testing, instrumentation, pilot study, and procedures for data collection and analyses. Chapter 4 presents the research findings and analyses. Chapter 5 contains the summary, conclusions, and recommendations drawn from the study.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors influencing school choice among the Seventh-day Adventist population in Southwest Michigan. This chapter therefore contains related literature which provides the setting for the development of this study. The primary and secondary literature are the main source of information studied that contributes to a theoretical and practical perspective of school choice and its impact on school enrollment. The current and statistical data on schools and population were obtained from the Lake Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the James White Library of Andrews University. The computer internet search was a further source of significant information on recent research done on student enrollment.

Philosophical Approach

Many institutions of learning claim to offer quality education. However, very few do offer the type of education that is holistic, focusing on the whole life of the individual (White, 1903, p. 16). True education, therefore, must aim at providing a balanced curriculum for the learner's harmonious development of the mental, physical, moral, and spiritual powers to restore God's image as the ultimate goal. Based on the above

understanding, Seventh-day Adventists believe that faith must be integrated in all manner of learning. This is an approach that is drawn primarily from the Adventist philosophy of education which places emphasis on moral and spiritual development.

The Seventh-day Adventist system of education transcends mere acquisition of cognitive skills. Because learning takes place all the time, inside and outside the classroom, balanced education focuses on the whole life of the learner. A student grows to his/her full capacity in the mental, physical, and spiritual dimensions. Education, therefore, entails the development of cognitive, physical, social, and spiritual powers. Accordingly, there must be a harmonious development of these powers in a balanced manner in order to effectively serve society (White, 1903, p. 13).

Seventh-day Adventists believe that God created man for a purpose. He was created as a perfect being in His image. However, because of sin, the learner's divine likeness is marred and obliterated, the physical powers are weakened, and the spiritual vision dimmed. The purpose of education is, therefore, to restore in man this lost image of his maker to bring him back to salvation. Since creation and redemption were based on love, meaningful education must also operate on the basis of love (White, 1903, p. 15).

God being the source of all true knowledge, the first objective of education is to direct the mind of the learner to the revelation of God, so that a direct link with Him is established for perpetual guidance. The Bible, the source of all truth, is to be the focal point in the curriculum of all subjects, which must be taught within the framework of the

biblical world view. Accordingly, all the sciences are to be taught from the creationist viewpoint (Knight, 1989).

What is of most worth in education is leading the learner to the full restoration of God's image in the individual. When moral, intellectual, and physical culture are combined, the result is a well-balanced mind (White, 1923). True education aims at developing the powers with diligence and love to their very highest level of achievement. In addition to the school, other educational agencies influence the education process: these must work together. In this regard, the home, the church, and the community do play a major role in the educational process. These agencies must be involved in the most worthy activities designed by the school, and work harmoniously to the best advantage of the learner.

Adventist Education in Historical Perspective

Since the Seventh-day Adventist church opened its first official school in 1872 at Battle Creek and formally launched its system of education in 1887, the church has continued to place emphasis on Adventist education (Epperson, 1990). This was started in a fragmented way when small companies of Seventh-day Adventist families grouped together to provide church-oriented elementary schooling for their children. These small schools were basically run at the homes by individual families, while others held school in churches (Epperson, 1990).

In the early days of Adventist education, parents served as teachers, although many of them had little formal education. Subsequently, church-based schooling was

introduced in various parts of the United States by individual families or groups of families. The system was later established and based at different Seventh-day Adventist centers with a view to expanding it. It was considered important to establish a separate system of education because of the strong desire to retain the distinguishing marks of the Seventh-day Adventist faith, and to shield students from ridicule and abuse by non-Adventist children who attended public schools (Spalding, 1962).

In the 1890s the Seventh-day Adventist school system developed into an organization that sponsored more than 200 elementary schools, over 50 secondary schools, and five colleges. The main objective of these institutions was the transmission of values, which was considered critical (Spalding, 1962). As later studies indicated, the influence of teachers, as givers of instruction and counsel through which behavior and character are shaped, is central to the transmission of values (Gilbride, 1985).

Recent Studies on School Choice

In the Lake Union Conference, James Stephen (1979) carried out research to examine factors which might influence enrollment and finances in elementary and secondary schools. The study projected that, in general, there would be no growth for the Lake Union Conference if the trends observed continued. The study found that the most frequently cited reason for non-attendance in Seventh-day Adventist schools was distance to the school, while only 3.5% of respondents felt that Adventist schools were unsatisfactory.

Adventist schools, as private institutions, were established to provide academic

training for students who would be able to learn in a more congenial environment.

Parents desired to provide their children with the best education possible under the most conducive surroundings, which would be better than what public schools could offer (Esty, 1974). Esty further suggests that all schools and all families must look beyond mere academic concerns and simplistic moral structures. There must be a concern for the more infinitely complicated areas of personal growth and integration, confidence, self-esteem, moral strength, self-awareness, and group cooperation. These are the areas that private schools have never really understood, never really evaluated, and never wholly accomplished -, except by accident or by taking credit for the natural development of a child whose parents had already done the main job (Esty, 1974).

Esty (1974) suggested that private schools have tremendous contributions to make in education. However, their future is threatened by poor enrollment prospects. He predicted that by the year 2000 private schools will experience declining enrollment because of financial problems directly related to declining enrollment, although that has yet to happen across the board. As the cost of education continues to increase, there is no corresponding increase in marginal utility. In fact there is a declining marginal utility. Second, the new institutional structures--more interconnecting webs of learning centers--are a threat to private schools in the new millennium.

The Gallup survey (1969) taken for the study of some 2,000 parents on reasons for choosing private schools for their children had interesting results. Among Catholic parents, 72% gave their reasons as "religious influence," while 63% indicated better

training in diligence and study habits, and 61% indicated a stricter discipline. Among Protestant parents, 93% indicated religious influence whereas 80% suggested values, attitudes, and being closer to home. From this study it is clear that parents are generally interested in providing an education to their children that will not only provide sound training but also mold them for the future. While this study appears old, there is no evidence that similar studies have been carried out in subsequent years. Since then, studies have focused on cost issues. This study is therefore justified.

However, a later Gallup poll survey (1996) of some 1,329 parents nation-wide in a random sample, indicated that 69% opposed the idea of replacing the public school system with private and church-related schools whereas 25% were in favor of such a suggestion. Half of those who supported the suggestion gave the reason that private schools were of better quality and generally provide better education, better discipline, more control over students, while also paying more attention to student needs.

The same poll surveyed respondents on the issue of school uniforms. They were asked if they perceived that the use of school uniforms would reduce school violence and other disciplinary problems, and whether it would improve climate for learning by eliminating "label competition," contain peer pressure, eliminate gang clothes, and improve security. The results indicated that 53% of the respondents nation-wide approved the use of school uniforms whereas 44% disapproved. Among public school parents, 50% supported the suggestion whereas 46% were against it. Among private school parents, 73% supported the measure whereas 21% were against it. Among the

public school systems to document success with a mandatory uniform policy is the 83,000-student Long Beach District in California, which reported a drop in assault and battery cases in the K-8 schools by 34%, physical fights by 51%, and suspensions by 32% in 2 years.

The Gallup poll survey (2000) of a 1,093 nation-wide random sample documents significant trends in public attitudes toward public education. There is a downward trend in support for choice involving private or church-related schools. The reasons for the shift are attributed to an all-time high increasing level of satisfaction with public education, lack of financial support, and preference for balance in the curriculum over a focus on the basics.

Several other studies have been carried out on parental reasons for choosing schools. Hunter (1991) conducted a study of 289 parents of first-year secondary school pupils from 18 schools based on their own perception, and regardless of the source of information they had consulted prior to making school-choice decisions.

Respondents were interviewed in their homes using a semi-structured interview in preference to a questionnaire, in the hope that results would provide richer and more reliable information, particularly with regard to the source of information about schools, reasons for choosing the school, and their relative importance. Parents were first asked to give their reasons spontaneously and were then prompted with a list of 26 possible factors covering school characteristics, those of the pupils, the teachers and management, and the curriculum. Background information on the family, parents' educational

background, and their contact with the school was obtained. With the aid of frequency tabulation, the findings revealed that in choosing a school parents' main priorities were good standards of behavior, academic results, discipline, and proximity to the school. When parents were asked to elaborate the reasons for giving priority to the four most important factors, many explained that good discipline produced an orderly environment where the children would be able to learn. Good academic results were seen by parents as the most important outcome of good schooling and as evidence that their children had received good education. However, parents' comments also indicated that many were choosing schools which appeared to offer similar experiences to their own traditional-style schooling.

Goldhaber (1994) conducted a study on school choice and the consequences of choosing between public and private schools in New York State. Relative academic performance of public and private high schools was examined, as well as the mechanism for school selection and its potential effect on school choice. An estimate of separate models of achievement for schools in each sector was conducted, from which the estimated sector achievement differentials were calculated. These differentials were then used in a structural model of school choice to determine if parents chose schools which academically benefit their children.

The results did not support the hypothesis that private schools utilize resources more efficiently resulting in better outcomes for private school students. Upon controlling variables for school and family resources and sample selection, no

statistically significant differences between school sectors were found. Therefore, whereas school choice was influenced by the availability of financial aid (cost factor), it was not influenced by the extent to which schools efficiently utilized resources perceived to result in better outcomes of students.

Aggregate data from New York State was used to determine the relationship between public schools per pupil spending and private school enrollment rates. All aggregate models used in the study showed that private school enrollment rates were sensitive to private school tuition, suggesting that educational vouchers would result in significant increases in private school enrollment. In general, there was evidence that increases in private school enrollment do not result in decreases in public school per pupil expenditure. Private school enrollment rates were not found to respond to changes in public school quality, proxied by public school per pupil spending.

Daugherty (1991), using a select factors questionnaire, conducted a study of the relationship between enrollment changes and select factors in private secondary schools in San Francisco Bay, California. The select factors were student demographics, school finances, school educational programs, and the principal's role. The design of the study was exploratory, cross-sectional, and used a mailed survey. The study found that between 1984 and 1989 religious schools, with tuition as their main source of revenue, had increased their budgets by an average of 32% despite enrollment declines of 13.5%. He found that school choice was sensitive to cost of education, resulting in enrollment decline, indicating that parents' choice options were influenced by their financial

constraints.

Apart from cost, the most prevalent reasons that parents chose schools were on the basis of the quality of teachers and secure environment. However, for parents with children in public schools, decisions regarding choice of school were fundamentally driven by the quality of the academic program offered, followed by quality of faculty.

Dutton (1996) carried out a study on marketing and school choice to gather information from the parents of California public school children. The study found that feedback from the parents on a number of educational issues, including school-choice options, could be used by administrators to make more informed decisions. This was conducted among randomly selected parents of students attending public schools (K-12) in seven school districts (one elementary, three secondary, and three unified) across two counties in southern California. The returned completed surveys were 1,725 for the elementary school data set and 2,277 for the secondary school data set. It was hoped that the study would help to identify different segments of the parent population for marketing specific educational programs.

However, the results of this study demonstrate that there were no statistically significant differences among the public-school parent-population decisions to opt for voucher options based upon education, income, ethnicity, or religiosity variables, although they demonstrated a 70% preference for school-choice options. However, the smaller population of voters located within the larger parent population demonstrated statistically significant differences in preferences for intra-district, and voucher options

based upon education, income, and ethnicity, but not religiosity. The study found that both the better educated and higher income parents expressed most support for the existing public school system, and that parents with children in public schools were not influenced by religiosity in making school-choice decisions.

Hu (1996), in a study of parental information-seeking and implications for school choice in Williamsburg-James City County, Virginia, investigated information on the process through which parents chose private schools of preference. The study involved 40 parents from two middle schools who were interviewed by telephone. It investigated factors that influenced the decisions of parents and some of their selection criteria, and the kind of information that would be most critical in assisting them in making decisions regarding school selection for their children. It further explored the activities that parents undertake in gathering, interpreting, and applying information to help them in decision making. The researcher used a qualitative inquiry approach through which the common themes arising across responses by the respondents were analyzed and clustered. The study found that when parents were offered options, they made choices based on human, physical, academic, and atmospheric factors that were meaningful to them.

Price (1992) did a study on factors influencing enrollment changes in private, non-profit, church-related schools and investigated the effectiveness of a model in explaining change in enrollments. She used several variables that could affect such a change, including regional economy, population demographics, public relations, and marketing. Data were collected from Baptist school populations using a telephone survey method.

The study used a stepwise method of multiple regression and found two significant variables--a variety of promotion and publicity (marketing), and student teacher ratio--which were strongly correlated with positive school enrollment at a .01 level of significance. Other variables were not significant. The model accounted for only 20% of the variance in enrollment. This low variation was attributed to possible limited variability in the components tested such as possible minimal enrollment changes and highly uniform curriculum. The results of the study therefore suggest that school choice can be boosted through improvement in school promotion and in teacher student ratio.

Because parents continue to have options as to which school a child should attend, competition exists, and it is therefore fair to consider the interplay of market forces of supply and demand. Marketing must be considered in terms of awareness of the available information given to parents to facilitate school choice.

Archibald (1996), in a study of school choice in Catholic schools, analyzed demographic and socioeconomic and proximity predictors, using multiple-regression analysis which permits estimation of effects of each of the variables on others. The regression model indicated that peer influence, proximity, and other social factors had a significant correlation with the choice of school. Income showed a weak correlation with enrollment. The model explained 51% of the variance in enrollment that could be considered acceptable. The study suggests that equality of access to information by parents in a way that is adequately informative is critical in making school choice decisions. It was, therefore, fitting in this current research to assess the degree of

significance between school choice and peer influence.

Kromann (1982) conducted a study on parental attitudes toward secondary boarding-schools in the Mid-America Union of the Seventh-day Adventist church to determine if a relationship existed between declining enrollment and parental attitudes concerning boarding academies. Seven hypotheses were tested using a Likert-type scale on a selected sample of 339, out of which a response of 210 was attained (response usable rate of 67%) relating to financial costs, church attendance, socioeconomic levels, length of church membership, the dormitory concept, and the school's fulfillment of its mission. Chi-square analyses were conducted and found that inasmuch as parents liked the Adventist philosophy of education, there were no significant differences in attitude toward secondary boarding schools between parents of students attending Seventh-day Adventist high schools and parents of students attending non-Seventh-day Adventist schools. More specifically, there were no differences between the two groups in the areas of the school's fulfillment of its uniqueness of mission in regard to teaching beliefs and values from a Christian viewpoint. The reason for this was attributed to the parents stating that the faculty in Adventist schools was not considered unique in teaching by Christian example. This factor was considered to indicate that some parents viewed Seventh-day Adventist teachers and public-school teachers at par in Christian example. "Should this variable be true, it could result in a major overhaul of present recruiting strategies" (Kromann, 1982, p. 117).

Epperson (1990) conducted a study on the relationship between students attending

Seventh-day Adventist schools and the tendency of being baptized and retaining Seventh-day Adventist church membership. Using a sample of 300 families in a population of 51,000 Seventh-day Adventist families in the Southeastern United States, he found that attending Seventh-day Adventist schools increased the probability of a person becoming a church member, but, it did not increase or diminish the chances of remaining a Seventh-day Adventist. The research also found that the probability of retaining church membership was increased through school attendance, which in turn increases school enrollment. The study suggests that parents choose schools that promote strong preferred values that would shape a child's lifestyle.

Minder (1985) conducted a study on the relationship between church-sponsored K-12 education and church membership in the Seventh-day Adventist church. The study was conducted in the Lake Union Conference, covering the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin, and involved a sample of 400 families out of a population of 24,000 families. The study, which had a response of 287 (71.8% return rate), found that attendance in Seventh-day Adventist schools, K-12, substantially increased the probability of being baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist church and remaining a member. From the study, the major benefit of Seventh-day Adventist education is the substantial influence in becoming practicing Adventist church members. Moreover, as the students develop high moral standards with positive spiritual lives, student achievement is enhanced and its relation to choice.

Hunt (1996) studied factors that a prospective parent considers important in

determining whether or not to send one's child to a Seventh-day Adventist school. He investigated how those factors are related to a number of selected personal and demographic variables, particularly after applying and being accepted in the schools. The independent variables were geographical location, financial status, and church affiliation. The dependent measures were financial assistance, work opportunity, safety, student/teacher ratio, positive school environment, cost, academic rigor, and concerned and caring teachers. The population consisted of 2,000 randomly selected prospective parents who had children attending Seventh-day Adventist elementary and middle schools in the Southeastern United States. Using one-way ANOVA, parents considered a spiritual environment as the most important, followed by concerned and caring teachers, safety, and then the school climate. Using a post hoc *t*-test, the dependent measures of cost and availability of financial assistance had the most significant correlation. From the above study, a positive correlation between school choice and the spiritual environment and caring teachers was established.

Buttrum (1994) carried out research in Arkansas on factors influencing parental decisions to enroll students in selected private schools. The study sought to determine the reasons parents chose private schools during the 3 prior years. Parents were surveyed to determine if significant relationships existed between selected factors and school choice. Using a chi-square test, several null-hypotheses were tested. The results of the study showed that student discipline and safer environment ranked as the most significant factors, followed by satisfaction with teachers. Safety and independence were identified

as of greatest advantage associated with private school education.

West and Varlaam (1991) did a study on parents of junior school children (Grade 4 pupils) in England with regard to what factors they felt were important when choosing a secondary school. A total of 72 parents were interviewed before a final choice of school was made. Using frequency tabulation, the most significant factors influencing school choice were found to be good school discipline, children's desire to be in the same school as their friends, academic rigor (the school having good examination results), caring teachers, and proximity.

In comparison with other private religious schools, Catholic schools are said to be faced with financial challenges and, more particularly, as the cost of tuition continues to escalate, the schools are becoming less affordable to middle-and lower-income families (Baker & Riordan, 1998). The most recent studies indicate that one of the main reasons why many schools (e.g., Catholic schools) are declining in enrollment is related to the perceived lack of a sound academic program. Further, there is a continuous struggle to maintain their religious character as enrollment declines (Bauch, 2000).

The study further indicates that Catholic schools peaked in their enrollment in 1965, after which it declined by half in the subsequent 15 years. The survival of Catholic schools appears to depend on their ability to meet customer satisfaction rather than reliance on parental support based on overreliance on a traditional communitarian model that emphasized religious values, school loyalty, and volunteerism over and above other factors.

The literature discussed in this chapter supports the following eight hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of Adventist education.

Hypothesis 2. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of cost of education.

Hypothesis 3. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of academic program.

Hypothesis 4. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of influence of choice.

Hypothesis 5. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of social factors.

Hypothesis 6. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of school proximity.

Hypothesis 7. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of safety.

Hypothesis 8. There is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of awareness of information about the school.

The main ANOVA null hypothesis test is that there is no difference between group variable means, with the alternative that there is a mean difference between the two groups.

Summary

In summary, the review of relevant literature indicates that private schools came

into existence because of the parental desire to have their children attend schools that were smaller and had a religious influence, better training in diligence and study habits, and stricter discipline. From the literature, most parents indicated that values, attitudes, and being closer to home are significant in choosing a school for their children. From the studies it can also be seen that parents generally are interested in providing an education for their children that will not only provide academic training but also mold them for the future.

Christian education provides an option for parents to have their children attend schools that impart values that they view as best for their children, and in order to achieve this goal, education must integrate such values within its curriculum. The Seventh-day Adventist school system does provide an opportunity for such a transfer of values, while also attempting to achieve academic excellence and prepare the student for present life and the life to come.

Various research findings support the hypotheses that there is a relationship between school choice and parental perception of spiritual-based education, cost of education, academic program, peer influence, social factors, proximity, safety, and marketing.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Type of Research

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors influencing school choice among Seventh-day Adventists in Southwest Michigan. In chapter 1 the problem of declining enrollment was discussed and evidence was presented to support and substantiate declining trends in Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Lake Union Conference. Chapter 2 presented the primary literature on recent studies relevant to the problem under study and developed eight justified hypotheses for testing. This chapter now discusses how and where the study was done as well as the procedures followed.

The study was quantitative in nature and was carried out through descriptive methods using a survey questionnaire instrument having both fixed and open-ended questions. The design of the study was empirical ex post facto using a descriptive survey research method. Parents of students admitted to Seventh-day Adventist schools as well as those with children in public schools were surveyed. Appropriate statistics were used to analyze the information gathered while a 17 dichotomous scale was developed to measure the open-ended questions, to measure the perception of Seventh-day Adventist parents towards Seventh-day Adventist education.

The hypotheses tested by quantitative methods were structured in the null form and the variables identified together with statistics used to analyze them. The population and instrumentation are described. The focus group study and procedures are then discussed.

Description of the Population and Sampling

The population of this study was defined as Seventh-day Adventist parents of school-age children (K-12) attending schools in Southwest Michigan. The area falls in the Michigan Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and part of the Lake Region Conference, which are administrative offices responsible for needs of Seventh-day Adventists in Southwest Michigan. The specific population from which the study sample was drawn is therefore from Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children attending Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children attending public schools in the same area. Table 3 shows that the sample size represented 21.5% of the Lake Union Conference enrollment (larger population covering the five conferences--Michigan, Lake Region, Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin conferences).

In addition to the sub-population, parents of the estimated 400 Seventh-day Adventist students not attending Adventist schools, who opted to attend other schools such as public schools, were included in the total selected sub-population to bring the total to 1,422. The estimate of the 400 students was based on the Transportation Division of Southwest Michigan. However, the actual number of parents/family units was 1,063,

TABLE 3

POPULATION OF ADVENTIST STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS
K-12, SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN

School	Enrollment
Ruth Murdoch Elementary	337
Eau Claire Elementary	20
Edith B. Garrett Elementary	19
Glenwood Union Elementary	17
Niles elementary	71
Village Elementary	208
Calvin Center Elementary	31
Andrews Academy	319

Type of School	No. of Schools	Enrollment
K-8 Elementary	7	703
Academies (Grades 9-12)	1	319
Public Schools (estimated)		400
Total		1,422

Note. Total population of students in SDA schools was estimated to be 1,022.

which was higher than originally anticipated.

The purpose of including the group of Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools was to compare them with those attending the Seventh-day Adventist schools. At the same time we need to know why those attending Adventist schools opted for them.

The actual number of students attending Adventist schools was 955 and the number of Seventh-day Adventist students attending public schools was 492 giving a total of 1,447. Because of the larger number of students constituting a population beyond what was originally estimated, a systematic sampling procedure was done. The names of students/parents with the addresses of those attending Seventh-day Adventist schools were obtained from the schools directly. The names of students/parents with their addresses of Seventh-day Adventists attending public schools were obtained through Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist churches in the region. The reason for obtaining information from various sources was because there was no central place where data could be obtained. Whereas records of children attending Seventh-day Adventist schools are readily available, no clear record of Seventh-day Adventist children attending public schools is maintained. To determine those attending public schools it was assumed that after eliminating names of those attending Seventh-day Adventist schools the remainder would be those attending public schools and home schools. Only after receiving survey forms was it possible to determine those who were home schooled and then set aside their responses in order to have subjects purely associated with public

school attending or Seventh-day school attending as a necessary means of improving accuracy of the dependent measure.

Information was obtained with consent from the Human Subject Review Board of Andrews University, the Lake Union Department of Education as well as the Michigan Conference in conjunction with the Lake Region Conference. A systematically drawn sample was obtained from the sub-population. The sample taken was from the schools selected, all of which fall under Southwest Michigan, and the public schools selected were within that geographical region. Parents of students in the selected schools were requested to participate in the survey.

The other reason for selecting the sample is that the subjects were more homogeneous because of the more confined geographical region. In a more dispersed geographical area, especially among the states, there are various socioeconomic and other variables that give rise to different opportunities and challenges. The schools studied were fairly dispersed within the geographical region and include varying numbers of students in which some have as many as over 300 while others have as few as 17 students. Among these schools, Andrews Academy had the highest number of students. On the other hand, the Village Seventh-day Adventist school was selected because it is one of the very few schools with enrollment growth tendencies. The study was therefore aimed at Southwest Michigan in regard to the Seventh-day Adventist parents with school-age children (K-12) in Seventh-day Adventist schools as well as in public schools.

Upon obtaining mailing addresses of students' parents from various sources

described above, names were analyzed so as to eliminate duplicated addresses arising because of parents with more than one child in a school. Some parents had children in more than one school. The mailing addresses were therefore very useful in determining a final mailing list so that only one survey form was sent to parents. When this procedure was carried out, a total of 681 parents was generated, representing the Seventh-day Adventist families with children in only Seventh-day Adventist schools.

The same procedure generated a total of 382 net parent mailing addresses, representing Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools. A parental population of 1,063 was thus obtained. In coming up with this number, about 12 names did not have complete addresses and therefore were eliminated from the population. A systematic sampling procedure was then carried out by taking every other name so that 50% of the population constituted the final sample of 342 in respect to families with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and 193 families with children in public schools. The sample size was therefore 535. The findings of the study from the sample made generalization to a larger population possible.

Independent and Dependent Measures

It was hypothesized that there is a relationship between parental choice of school and select factors. School choice is the dependent measure, and the select factors are the independent measures. In order to carry out the testing of the independent measures, eight hypotheses were developed which are discussed below under hypotheses testing. The assumption is that the factors under these eight hypotheses positively influence

parental choice. The dependent variable (School choice) therefore represents the consequence of influence by the select factors.

The independent variables chosen were the cost of education, academic rigor, spirituality, peer influence, social factors, proximity, safety, and awareness. The dependent variables chosen were choice of attending Seventh-day Adventist schools and attending public schools. It was assumed that the choice of school was influenced by the above moderator variables, and as the moderator variables influence school choice, enrollment is in turn influenced.

The order in which the independent variables were set in the survey questionnaire was deliberate. In view of the Seventh-day Adventist education prioritizing spiritual values on the basis that the main purpose of education is to prepare a student for life on earth and beyond, spiritual value was therefore taken as the first factor for testing.

The cost of education was ranked second because one cannot attend a private school without funds. After funds are satisfied then one is able to consider the academic issues. Once the above three are satisfied then one would be influenced by those core issues. A parent would then consider whether the choice of school would be the kind the child would fit. If it is, the next logical question would be if it is readily accessible and whether safe for the children. Finally, a parent would assess whether he/she has all the information necessary to make the right choice. On the above sequence of thought, the order of factors was set in the instrument.

The data in Table 4 show the outcome of the responses to the surveys mailed out.

There were 381 surveys that were received, out of which 7 were returned undelivered, 2 were returned completed but indicated they were home schooling their children, and 2 were returned incomplete. Since there was no typing error in respect to the undelivered mail, it can be assumed that the mailing addresses given were either wrong or the family units had relocated. The mailing lists other than from schools had ages of children indicated, thus eliminating sending surveys to parents who had children falling outside

TABLE 4
RETURNED SURVEY DATA

Group	Parents Surveyed	% Surveyed	Returned Surveys	% Returned Surveys	Returned%
Parents With Children in SDA Schools	342	63.9	240	64.9	70.2
Parents With Children in Public Schools	<u>193</u>	<u>36.1</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>35.1</u>	<u>67.4</u>
Total	535		370 ^a		69.2

^a Total returned surveys were	381
Less: Surveys returned undelivered	7
Surveys returned but for home schooling	2
Surveys returned with missing values	<u>2</u>
Net usable surveys	370

the category of K-12 and rendering them unusable. The 11 surveys were therefore not usable, leaving 370, or 97%, usable data.

The Null Hypotheses

It was the purpose of this study to determine if a relationship existed between parental school choice and select factors. Eight factors have been identified to be possible predictors of school choice. In order to test if such a relationship exists, the following null hypotheses are studied:

1. There is no relationship between parental school choice and the perception of spiritual values in the Adventist-based education.
2. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of cost of education (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
3. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of academic program (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
4. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of who influenced school choice (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
5. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of social factors (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
6. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of school proximity (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
7. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception

of safety (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

8. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of awareness of information about the school (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

Instrumentation

In order to gather data from the selected Seventh-day Adventist families, a survey instrument was used. The questionnaire takes into consideration various variables being tested to determine the factors influencing parental school choice. In order to develop appropriate questions, a pilot study was done, details of which follow in the subsequent sections of the methodology. The questions were developed from themes of the transcribed data. The key issues constituting the main sections of the questionnaire are consistent with research findings discussed under the literature review. The questionnaire was structured using the Likert scale with fixed questions seeking responses in different ways. The fixed questions had different polarity thus making the subjects think about how they will respond. There was also an open ended comment section which gave the respondents an opportunity to comment in their own words on information beyond the fixed questions. The purpose of the pilot study and structuring the questionnaire in this form was to ensure that the issue of internal validity was fully addressed and therefore established that the instrument measured what it intended to measure.

The issue of external validity was addressed under sampling, on the basis that the sample taken was from schools fairly representative of the population under study. The

study was to cover Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children attending Seventh-day Adventist schools and public schools located in Southwest Michigan. Since the selected study sample was 535, responses were expected to exceed the recommended 200 for generalization purposes (Fowler, 1993).

The Lake Union Administration in conjunction with the Michigan Conference and Lake Region Conference sanctioned carrying out the survey and were generally supportive of the research. The administration in the eight schools as well as churches assisted in making available addresses of all the parents constituting the population.

The Focus Group Study

A focus group interview of three parents with students in both Seventh-day Adventist schools and public schools (elementary and high school) was undertaken. The field of study was on the issues influencing school choice. I examined parental attitudes toward Seventh-day Adventist education.

One parent had all three children in public schools, the eldest in 12th-grade high school. Another parent had one child in a Seventh-day Adventist school, and two in public school. The other parent had one child in a Seventh-day Adventist school, and two in public school. All three were students at Andrews University and are therefore not typical of all types of parents in Southwest Michigan.

The parents were asked key questions developed from a survey conducted by Andrews Academy, who engaged Community Research Center, an organization that provides marketing and independent survey services. The external organization did a

telephone interview in winter 1998 on parents who had decided to take their children to the academy and those who were undecided, totaling about 170. The main issues covered the barriers to enrollment decisions and included cost of tuition, spiritual values, academic standards, environmental safety, social, transportation, and caring teachers. From the study, cost of tuition and transportation were the most significant. Spiritual values, proximity, academic standards, and safety were also often mentioned by parents. For these reasons, I chose the common issues as a basis of discussion.

The following were the key issues of investigation in the pilot study:

1. the benefits gained from current school choice
2. attitudes of parents toward Adventist Christian education
3. reasons for choosing the current school(s) where children are enrolled
4. whether cost of tuition is a factor in school choice
5. whether academic rigor, safety, and proximity are relevant factors in school choice
6. intended future choice of school
7. perceived necessary changes in Adventist schools to make them more attractive.

The interview proceedings were tape recorded and transcribed, analyzed, and themes developed where parents had common ground.

The study used a qualitative approach and found that free education, free meals, free transport, and greater academic involvement were among the common factors attracting these parents to choosing public school. On the other hand, superiority of

Christian education (holistic education), vegetarian foods, character development, and proximity were the common strong factors attracting parents in taking children to Seventh-day Adventist schools. These common factors can therefore be tested under hypothesis for significance in a larger sample. As regards safety, the participants were more of the opinion that both Seventh-day Adventist schools and public schools are about the same.

The reason for lack of difference is attributed to the community influence which happens to be high among Seventh-day Adventist believers. In public schools there is a significant number of Seventh-day Adventist teachers, especially in Southwest Michigan schools. However, this may not be the case if a larger population is taken since there was a much higher concentration of a Seventh-day Adventist community around Southwest Michigan and may not be the case in areas beyond.

The group study was undertaken with the view of establishing the research questions developed from common themes emerging from the responses of the subjects interviewed. For this reason the focus group study was used to develop research questions as well as aid in the development of the research questionnaire instrument. The parents interviewed have lived around Southwest Michigan for periods ranging between 2 and 10 years.

It is significant to also note that some parents have children in both public schools and Adventist schools, others have them only in public schools, and others have them only in Seventh-day Adventist schools. The population under study therefore reveals the existence of these three groups. From the above analysis I summarize theme statements

developed from the interview in Table 5. From the above matrix analysis, four issues are unmistakably recurrent among all three respondents. They emerge as the top themes across the study:

First, all parents perceived that Seventh-day Adventist education is superior to public education. They finally agreed that it is better to have a child in an Adventist school than in public school. I say "finally" because one of the parents argued that in the development of a child, the school is not the sole party responsible. The church and home must be involved. However, the other parents suggested that because the child spends more active time in school compared to the time they were away from school, the teacher's influence on the child at school plays a greater role in molding the child.

Second, the strongest theme was cost of education. All three parents strongly agreed and identified cost of education as the major hindrance to enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools.

Third, free meals and school transport were also recognized as valued benefits. There was an inclination toward public education having more academic programs. All three parents agreed that public schools have more academic programs.

Fourth, safety of children was a major concern to all parents. Safety was considered very vital, but there was no significant difference between the public schools and the Seventh-day Adventist school, owing to their perception that in Southwest Michigan both Seventh-day Adventist schools and public schools are equally exposed to safety risks.

Academic rigor was the most vigorously debated issue. However, because

TABLE 5

SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES FROM THE FOCUS
GROUP INTERVIEW

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Parent 1</i>	<i>Parent 2</i>	<i>Parent 3</i>
Attitude toward Christian education	Feels it is superior, children prefer it, and like balanced education	Feels it is superior prepares one for heaven prefer balanced education	Feels it is superior positive on balanced education
Reasons for going to public school	Cost is too high	Cost is high	Cost beyond reach
Attitude toward Andrews Academy	Feels it is a good school	Children have better behavior	Negative due to cost "fees put me off"
Adventist curriculum	Attracted because of spiritual aspects	Same as public school but positive on spiritual	Satisfied with public educ. but lacks spiritual
Benefits in current school	Free meals. vegetarian diet in Adventist schools positive teacher influence	Free meals. but problem of vegetarian meals, parents value experience	Free school meals. free transport. better academic rigor
Children behavior	Children in Adventist schools are better, they come home singing	There is a difference. secular in public and lack Christian principles	Environmental influence on behavior > school
Reason for choice of school	Cost is too high, experience resent financial aid procedure invade privacy	Cost is too high in Adventist schools	Cost is unaffordable in Adventist schools
If cost is a factor- attitude toward work program	Church should fund the entire program	I like the idea of work study program	I like the idea of work study program
Academic rigor between Adventist & public school	About the same	More in public school because of more academic rigor	More in public school since they have more time
Safety in Adventist schools	About the same	About the same	Indifferent
Next year school choice	Adventist schools unless things change	Adventist schools	Public schools unless cost much reduced

they see that the rigor is due to students spending almost all day on academics, the time put in contributes to the difference, but in terms of balanced education and quality of education Seventh-day Adventist education surpasses public education. The superiority of Seventh-day Adventist education was attributed to them addressing the spiritual, social, and physical development of the students, in a wholesome manner within the biblical context, which public education does not offer.

The underlying reasons why the Seventh-day Adventist system of education is preferred to the public system of education are embedded in the parents' belief in the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education that advocates for a balanced education with regard to the cognitive, spiritual, physical, and social development of the child. Public schools were viewed to be better in their academic rigor than Seventh-day Adventist schools. Their belief is attributed to the fact that students in public schools focus more on the actual time spent on academics rather than focus on the quality of education.

Second, the three parents have seen significant differences between behavior of the children in the Seventh-day Adventist schools and those in public schools. Two of the parents seem to have also seen a difference in behavior in their children when in both systems of education.

Third, the three parents went through both systems of education themselves and they believe in the Seventh-day Adventist system of education as being superior in value. Comparing the older people who went through Seventh-day Adventist education and those who did not, on balance they are more inclined toward Seventh-day Adventist

education.

Two of the parents are rotating their children between Adventist schools and public schools so that as the bills accumulate in Seventh-day Adventist schools, they then take them to public schools to give them time to clear their debts. When they have cleared the debts, they then return their children to the Seventh-day Adventist schools. The parents perceive it as sad when Seventh-day Adventist children in public schools are not permitted to sing or learn religious songs, memorize Bible verses, participate in religious choirs, or pray in school any more, which deprives them of moral values and Christian principles. They inevitably are exposed to eating what they do not want and deprived of learning what they really want to learn, which they feel is important to their lives and beyond. There is also a feeling that the church can and should do something about reducing the cost of education, so that there is an equal opportunity for all children to gain a Seventh-day Adventist education.

The main reasons why cost is a major hindrance to joining Adventist schools is attributed to the fact that a large segment of the parents in Southwest Michigan who have children in both Seventh-day Adventist and public schools are low income earners or are themselves students. Due to time and partly legal constraints, they are unable to generate sufficient income to meet the cost of tuition even if it were subsidized through scholarships.

The parents' level of income compared to the cost of education renders Seventh-day Adventist education unaffordable to many families. They have strong feelings toward financial aid because, technically, even if the funds were given to the children,

because they are minors, their parents must guarantee their obligations. Given their anticipated low income as discussed above, subsequent repayment of their children's financial aid would be a problem. They would therefore opt for public education even though they feel that Seventh-day Adventist education is the best and they choose to do so against their inner conscience.

On the basis that the common issues expressed by the three parents, which include spiritual values, academic rigor, cost of education, social issues, parent peer influence, proximity, safety, and awareness indicate by parents, are consistent with the literature review findings, they can be tested on a larger population as selected potential factors influencing school choice.

Validation of the Questionnaire

In order to validate the survey instrument, it was necessary to pilot-test it. After the questionnaire was formulated, it was assessed by four Andrews University professors who made valuable suggestions that led to its refinement. The questionnaire was subsequently pilot-tested upon a group of 10 parents. Five of the parents had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and the other 5 had children in public schools. The purpose of the study was expounded and then they were asked to complete the questionnaire. After completing the questionnaires, the parents were then asked to make comments on any question they did not understand as well as suggest necessary amendments to the questions.

After analyzing the comments, amendments were effected and some questions added or rephrased to enhance understanding by respondents. The revised instrument

was subsequently discussed with Andrews University faculty members for evaluation and final refinement. The following are the major changes made following the pilot test: Some questions were found to be too long and were reduced so that the number of pages reduced from three and one half to only two pages. Some questions were considered similar. The number of structured questions was therefore reduced from 68 to 57. The open-ended structured questions were eliminated and substituted with a section just for comments in order to give respondents a free hand to comment as they deemed necessary. Consequently, the final survey instrument presented to respondents a more concise, shorter and less repetitive instrument.

The questionnaire contents were as follows:

Part 1: In this section hypothesis one on spiritual values was addressed, and respondents were asked about their own perception of Adventist education by indicating the degree of agreement or disagreement on a scale of 1-5 (strongly disagree = 1 and strongly agree = 5). In this section, there were nine fixed questions.

Part 2: In this section, hypothesis 2 was addressed, and parents were asked to tell how they feel about each statement regarding cost of education at an Adventist school on a scale of 1-5. In this question, there were six fixed questions.

Part 3: In this section, hypothesis 3 was addressed, and respondents were asked to grade Adventist education in general regardless of their knowledge about Adventist schools and on several aspects of their programs using the grading scale system schools use--A, B, C, D, F--where A is excellent and F is failure. In this section, there were 14 fixed questions.

Part 4: In this section, hypothesis 4 was addressed on perception of who influenced choice of school by stating the degree of agreement. In this section, there were three fixed questions.

Part 5: In this section, hypothesis 5 was addressed on various social factor influencing people's perception of Adventist schools. Parents were to indicate the degree of importance they attach to the seven fixed questions.

Part 6: In this section on proximity, hypothesis 6 was addressed, and parents were asked how they felt about nearness to school. Parents were asked to indicate the degree of agreement on a scale of 1-5 on the five fixed questions.

Part 7: In this section, hypothesis 7 was addressed, and parents were asked how they felt about safety in Adventist schools by indicating the degree of importance they attach to the seven fixed questions.

Part 8: In this section, hypothesis 8 was addressed, and parents were asked to state the degree of agreement on how well informed they were (awareness) about Adventist education based on the six fixed questions. The last section provided an opportunity to respondents to make any comments on the survey without restricting them in any way.

Data Collection and Recording Procedures

In order to gather data from the 535 selected parents, a survey instrument was used (appendix B). The questionnaires were sent to all the selected subjects using the addresses provided by the administration in the select schools. The area churches in,

addition helped to complete the needed list of all the subjects practically available especially those attending public schools. The questionnaires were mailed to the selected parents who received only one questionnaire regardless of the number of children.

In order to identify the family and school that children of the parents being surveyed attended, a code number was placed at the top corner of each questionnaire. In addition, the two groups of parents were sent different colors of the questionnaires. The parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were sent light green survey forms, and the parents with children in public schools were sent sky-blue-colored survey forms. The colors were useful for easy identification between the two principal groups. In the event that a code number was tampered with, for whatever reason, group identification was most critical, as failing to distinguish the two groups (dependent variables) would adversely affect the results.

Mailing Procedure

Five hundred thirty five envelopes were prepared by typing mailing addresses of each of the selected families. In each envelope an appropriate survey form was enclosed with a cover letter from the researcher. The letter indicated the purpose of the study and its importance, gave assurance of confidentiality, the purpose of the numerical code, and offered the opportunity to receive survey results as well as included instructions on completion of the survey form.

To ensure a reply or at least to increase the probability of response, each letter was

stamped with a special colorful commemorative issue stamp, and a self-addressed stamped envelope was provided. The researcher arranged with the post office to have the letters, which were all delivered in bulk, crossed with the traditional ink rounded stamp as a further distinguishing mark from the common mail referred to as junk mail. The letters were also mailed so as to be received by the respondents at home on weekends. It was assumed that during weekends the parents would be more available and have the time to read the letter, complete the survey, and therefore more likely to quickly respond.

Three weeks after mailing, a second mailing was done through redistribution of survey forms with a cover letter to those not responding. The survey forms were also given the same codes originally assigned to the respondents. All codes were written very discretely so as not to cause obvious attraction to respondents.

Data Processing and Statistical Analyses

The returned completed surveys were sorted out according to the two major groups. They include responses from parents of students attending Adventist schools and those attending public schools. The returned questionnaires were screened for errors, to detect missing values, multiple responses, and other errors prior to data entry.

Three survey forms were completed but the code numbers were deleted by the respondents. One response was completed but the top right hand corner where the code number was inscribed was cut off to conceal the subject's identity. However, because of the surveys' light blue and green colors, it was possible to distinguish the two groups representing the dependent variables. For research purposes the four responses were

usable. Three letters were returned undelivered. It was assumed that since the mailing addresses used were in accordance with the list, the subjects had since relocated. Two responses had missing values and since it was not practical to assign them values, they were excluded from usable data. Two other responses had a few missing values but with footnotes indicating that they “were undecided.” The responses were assigned a value of “3” representing “uncertain” on a scale of 1-5. There were no multiple responses or unreadable data. Total responses were 370 giving a response rate of 69.2%.

In order to determine the level of responses expected to be received from Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools, and the level of expected responses from Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools, a proportionate systematic stratified sampling method was adopted (Monette & Thomas, 1998). Their method suggests that when stratification is used for reducing sampling error, proportionate stratified sampling is normally used, in which the size of the sample taken from each stratum is proportionate to the stratum’s presence in the population. Since therefore in this research a net of 535 surveys were successfully mailed, out of which 342 were to Seventh-day Adventist parents of children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and 193 to Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools, then the sample proportions should be 63.9% and 36.1% respectively. Since one group had a relatively smaller number of subjects than the other, responses collected were also proportional to the above percentages. Similarly, the responses received are also expected to have about the same ratio.

Analysis of Comments Section

The survey instrument provided opportunity to respondents to write additional comments. Of those who responded, 140 or 37.9% took the time to make comments. The comments were considered valuable and therefore analysis of each statement was considered necessary. They were tabulated and analyzed using a dichotomous variable scale in the form of agree or disagree.

The comments made in connection with the survey were all read and separated into 17 categories based on commonality of the issues. The categories were then represented by 17 questions with a Likert-response scale (model developed by Kromann, 1982, pp. 31-34) that could be used as a grid to categorize each written comment. Each comment was read and given an appropriate rating based upon the 17 categories and scale.

Data developed from the comments were analyzed by use of dichotomous variables in the form of agree and disagree and a frequency table was created. The data were also transformed and recoded in order to change polarity as necessary so as to have a table showing comments that were positive about the Seventh-day Adventist system of education and comments that were negative about the same system of education.

Regarding the fixed questions, data transformation and recoding of questions that have reverse polarity were performed. This was essential because the questions were structured in a way that were intended to improve the internal validity. A coding sheet was prepared for data entry and data was entered and analyzed using the SPSS program.

Since there is only one dependent variable (school choice), against which there

are eight predictors to be tested, multiple regression analysis with a stepwise variable selection was used to determine which variables are most significant to each function. In the stepwise approach, all the predictor variables of the first factor were selected and entered as the first step. All variables of the second factor were then entered as second step. Similarly, at each subsequent step, variables of each factor were added. Regression analysis function was then run, such that after controlling for the previous predictors, new factor predictors are added to the model in a hierarchical manner and a significance test is conducted to determine the contribution of each of the previously selected predictor variables as if it were the last variable entered. Ultimately when all the predictor variables were entered, those predictors remaining were the ones that had demonstrated statistical significance starting with the one with the greatest proportion of variance to the least significant one. At this point all the non significant variables had been removed from the model and the operation was stopped. Since each factor had a block of variables, selection of variables within a block was preceded by eight steps representing the eight factors. At each step, variables already in the equation were evaluated according to the magnitude of their contribution to the dependent variable. According to this selection criteria, the variables which had no significant contribution were removed at each step, leaving the significant ones which subsequently participated with the next factor variables. All variables in the block that were already in were removed as a group if they ceased to make further significant contribution to the model (Norusis, 1997, pp. 445-472).

Interpretation of findings was based on the final outcome of those predictors that

demonstrate statistical significance. The model will show F -test at 0.05 level of significance to enter the variable and a probability of F - equal to or less than .100 to reenter. The coefficient of determination R squared with value increasing until there are no other statistically significant variables, or until all predictor variables included in the regression model were obtained in the process.

The coefficient of determination is the proportion of variance in the criterion variable that can be attributed to the variance of the combined predictor variables (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 1994, pp. 464-471).

Given that the proposed eight predictors have in past research shown correlation for the sample tests done, they were expected to be correlated with the dependent variable, but should have low correlation with each other. The correlation is necessary to justify carrying out the tests.

For the two groups of parents having children in Adventist schools and parents with children in non-Adventist schools, the paired group comparison on a single independent measure required the use of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test for differences between means of each of the two paired variables constituting the total of eight predictors. In making use of the measures of central tendency, I further computed and compared means of the two groups and obtained probabilities for each variable order to also test for significance.

The following scale was used:

1. Scores with means 0.0 - 2.0 were considered Low.
2. Scores with means >2.0 - 3.0 were considered Moderate Low.

3. Scores with means >3.0 - 4.0 were considered Moderate High.
4. Scores with means >4.0 - 5.0 were considered High.

Asterisks were used to indicate probabilities that were found to be significant in relation to the null hypotheses as follows:

$*p < \text{or} = .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$.

Probabilities associated with significant differences were also identified as follows:

$*p < \text{or} = .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$.

The comments obtained from respondents were analyzed into themes with clusters of similar responses, and then cross-tabulation statistical tests (use of frequency tables) were performed, to compare and contrast results on the basis of which conclusions and recommendations can be made.

Assumptions

For the purpose of this study, the following assumptions were made:

Parents tended to have the greatest influence concerning the choice of school although the degree of influence may differ among parents and grade of the child.

Therefore parental perception is important. To confirm this assumption, the influence factor was put to test as a variable.

As parental attitude becomes more positive toward Seventh-day Adventist schools, enrollment is anticipated to be positive, and as parental attitude becomes more negative, the impact on enrollment would be negative.

The selected variables would have an influence upon parental perception of

Seventh-day Adventist schools and public schools.

If mail was returned, it was assumed that the family had moved.

It was assumed that no more than one family shared a mailing address and last name.

It was assumed that those who did not respond to the survey were simply non-respondents but not constituting a third category of parents other than those identified as home schooling.

Limitations of the Study

1. The population under study is not typical of the rest of the United States.
2. The external validity was limited to the geographical area for generalization purposes.
3. An unusual factor to consider, which is not totally typical of the Seventh-day Adventist population, is the large number of Adventists from various parts of the world who may have been limited in terminology necessary to understanding questions.
4. The variables are continuous, taking an infinite number of values.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine if the selected factors influenced parental school choice between Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in K-12 Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in public schools in Southwest Michigan. Chapter 1 established the need for the study and delineated the problem. Research questions were raised, key variables were identified, and the eight hypotheses of the study were presented. Chapter 2 reviewed past recent literature regarding parental school choice. In chapter 3 the population and sample were described with the use of tables. The variables were defined and hypotheses stated. The research instrument used in gathering the data was discussed, and outlined procedures for gathering data and how it was analyzed. The eight hypotheses were stated to cover the selected factors on the basis of which a survey instrument was developed containing questions used to test each hypothesis. Comments concerning important observations were sorted out into 17 categories and analyzed using dichotomous variables.

This chapter reports the findings from the survey and provides detailed analyses of the data. Each null hypothesis was analyzed for each dependent variable and

independent variable. A .05 level of significance was selected as necessary to reject the nulls of all hypotheses. Analysis of data was referenced to the stated hypotheses and then presented as well as analyses of the written comments and other variables. Regression analyses, ANOVA, and frequencies were tabulated using information generated from responses from the survey. From the analyses, the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable was discussed, and general observations and facts arising from the data relevant to the study were made. Finally, a summary of the findings concludes the chapter. Chapter five presents a final synopsis of the study, discussion on findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Description of the Population

The population for this study was defined as parents of Seventh-day Adventist members with school-age children attending K-12 either in Seventh-day Adventist schools or in public schools within the geographical region of Southwest Michigan. Within the Seventh-day Adventist church administrative setup, it falls under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Conference and Lake Region Conference headed by the Lake Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Each family unit that was sent a survey form had at least one member of the family who is a Seventh-day Adventist. Mailing lists obtained from Seventh-day Adventist schools as well as churches in the region provided information necessary to identify the units. Since no conference in the geographical region maintained a databank of the Seventh-day Adventist children population apart from numbers of those attending Seventh-day Adventist schools, the

only logical way of obtaining a mailing list was through individual schools and churches. It was therefore through this approach that the population was established as the only way and the most appropriate basis of sampling for data gathering. There were 1,063 family units that were determined to be the population of Seventh-day Adventist families having 1,447 school-age children in K-12 giving a mean of 1.4 children per family. Out of the 1,447 children, 955 (66% of the population) were in Seventh-day Adventist schools and 492 (34%) in public schools. From this population a net usable sample of 535 family units was selected. The data are summarized in Table 6.

The data of Table 7 showing the number of children attending school should not be read in proportion to the number of parents across the table. As explained under methodology, many parents had children in more than one Seventh-day Adventist school, and even in the same school some parents had more than one child. For example, having started a mailing list with Andrews Academy parents, if a child in Ruth Murdoch Elementary had a similar address as one already listed under Andrews Academy, such a recurring address was not taken as it would be duplication. For the purpose of this research the assumption was that if two or more children had the same mailing address, the parents were the same. Therefore matching family units with individual schools would not be meaningful. The more meaningful figure is therefore the total sum of parents in comparison with the total sum of children attending K-12.

Given the small error rate of only 3.0%, it would indicate that the mailing lists maintained by the schools and churches were reasonably accurate and to date. Further, the timing of mailing the surveys was crucial to minimizing the error rate. By minimizing

TABLE 6
SURVEY POPULATION

Population	<i>N</i>
Number of children K-12 attending Adventist schools within Lake Union	4,655
Number of children K-12 attending Michigan and Lake Region Conferences	1,816
Population of K-12 children from Adventist families attending both Adventist schools and public schools in Southwest Michigan	1,447
Population of family units of the 1,447 children	1,063
Total net surveys selected for participation	535

unusable data, the response rate is enhanced.

This sample constituted 342 Seventh-day Adventist family units with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and 193 Seventh-day Adventist units with children in public schools. The proportionate sample of Seventh-day Adventist family units with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools was 63.9% and 36.1% of the sample constituted Seventh-day Adventist family units with children in public schools. The data are summarized in Table 8.

The surveys were compiled and sent towards the end of the first academic quarter, when mailing lists made were fairly recent thus further accounting for the low error rate.

TABLE 7

SURVEY POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

Adventist Schools K-12	Number of Children in Adventist Schools	Number of Children in Public Schools	Number of Parents with Children in Adventist Schools	Number of Parents with Children in Public Schools
Ruth Murdoch Elementary	303		182	
Eau Claire Elementary	31		21	
Edith B. Garrett Elementary	19		11	
Glenwood Union Elementary	17		11	
Niles Elementary	65		45	
Village Elementary	208		139	
Calvin Center Elementary	24		14	
Andrews Academy	<u>288</u>		<u>258</u>	
Public Schools		<u>492</u>		<u>382</u>
Total	955	492	681	382

The proportionate systematic sample selection of parents of children attending K-12 was therefore considered successful. The response rate of 69.2%, would also indicate further success, particularly as for generalization purposes a good response rate is necessary.

Review of the Null Hypotheses

It was the purpose of this study to determine which of the select factors influenced school choice and if a relationship existed between perceptions of Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and perceptions of Adventist parents with children in public schools. It was hypothesized that there was no significant

TABLE 8
SURVEY SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION

Adventist Schools	Number of Parents with Children in Adventist Schools	Number of Parents with Children in Public Schools	Selected Sample of Parents with Children in Adventist Schools	Selected Sample of Parents With Children In Adventist Schools
Ruth Murdoch Elementary	182		91	
Eau Claire Elementary	21		11	
Edith B. Garret Elementary	11		6	
Glenwood Union Elementary	10		5	
Niles Elementary	45		23	
Village Elementary	139		70	
Calvin Center Elementary	14		7	
Andrews Academy	<u>258</u>		<u>129</u>	
Public Schools		<u>382</u>		<u>193</u>
Total	680	382	342	193

relationship between school choice and the select factors. The null hypotheses were:

Hypothesis 1. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of spiritual values-based education.

Hypothesis 2. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of cost of education (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

Hypothesis 3. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of academic program (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

Hypothesis 4. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of who influenced school choice (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

Hypothesis 5. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of social factors (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

Hypothesis 6. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of school proximity (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

Hypothesis 7. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of safety (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

Hypothesis 8. There is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of awareness of information about the school (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

Analyses of the Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of spiritual values-based education. To test this hypothesis, nine questions were asked that would constitute the independent variables associated with the factor to determine if there is a significant relationship (on a scale of 1-5 on the degree of

agreement to the questions) between the factor and school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “religious values are important” was 4.72 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.81) was significantly higher ($p < .01$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.56). These data are summarized in Table 9.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .354 which was non significant. Since the variable had no significant contribution to the model, it was

TABLE 9
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE
OF RELIGIOUS VALUES IN SCHOOL CHOICE:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.81
Public Schools	<u>4.56</u>
Total	4.72

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	5.311	5.311	9.842	.002**
Within Groups	368	<u>198.570</u>	.540		
Total	369	203.881			

** Significant at $< .01$.

excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about religious values with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, religious values as a variable in itself had a non significant R square proportion of variance and therefore was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Seventh-day Adventist education is the best” was 3.89 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.93) was higher but not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.84). These data are summarized in Table 10.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .000 and a cumulative R square of .173 which was significant. Since the variable had a significant contribution, it was included in the model. Therefore although the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools was not significantly higher than public schools, both groups were fairly positive about Seventh-day Adventist education being the best. When compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “Seventh-day Adventist education is the best” had a significant R square proportion of variance and was therefore significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “school morning devotions are valuable” was 4.68 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.78) was significantly higher ($p < .01$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.51). These data are summarized in Table 11.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .987. Since the variable had no significant contribution in the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about school morning devotions being valuable, with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the

TABLE 10
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST EDUCATION BEING THE BEST:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.93
Public Schools	<u>3.84</u>
Total	3.89

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	.631	.631	.671	.413
Within Groups	368	<u>346.258</u>	.941		
Total	369	346.889			

regression collectively, "school morning devotions are valuable" as a variable in itself had non significant *R* square and therefore was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "teachers should be spiritual people" was 4.74 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement.

The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.86) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.52). These data are summarized in Table 12.

TABLE 11
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE VALUE
OF SCHOOL MORNING DEVOTIONS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.78
Public Schools	<u>4.51</u>
Total	4.68

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	6.215	6.215	12.309	.001**
Within Groups	368	<u>185.788</u>	.505		
Total	369	192.003			

** Significant at $< .01$.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .002 and *R* square of .047. Since the variable had a significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was included. Therefore both groups were very positive about teachers being spiritual people with Adventist schools higher than public schools; and when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "teachers should be spiritual people" in itself

TABLE 12

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER
TEACHERS SHOULD BE SPIRITUAL:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.86
Public Schools	<u>4.52</u>
Total	4.74

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	9.715	9.715	18.157	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>196.893</u>	.535		
Total	369	206.608			

*** Significant at <.001.

was also found to be significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “children attending Adventist schools are more likely to stay in church” was 3.97 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.08) was significantly higher ($p < .01$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.77). These data are summarized in Table 13.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .763. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution, it was excluded from the model. Therefore although both groups were quite positive about children attending Adventist schools with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "children attending Adventist schools" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

TABLE 13
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER CHILDREN
ATTENDING ADVENTIST SCHOOLS ARE MORE
LIKELY TO STAY IN CHURCH:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.08
Public Schools	<u>3.77</u>
Total	3.97

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	8.319	8.319	8.712	.003**
Within Groups	368	<u>351.410</u>	.955		
Total	369	359.730			

** Significant at < .01.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Seventh-day Adventist education helps build Adventist families” was 4.19 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.25) was not significantly higher ($p>.05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.06). These data are summarized in Table 14.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .455. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about Seventh-day Adventist education helping build Adventist families with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “Adventist education helping build Adventist families” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “I would recommend Seventh-day Adventist schools to others” was 4.40 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.53) was significantly higher ($p<.001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.15). These data are summarized in Table 15.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .549. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about recommending Adventist education to others, with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “recommending Adventist education”

TABLE 14

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER ADVENTIST
EDUCATION HELPS BUILD ADVENTIST FAMILIES:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.25
Public Schools	<u>4.06</u>
Total	4.19

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	3.129	3.129	3.543	.061
Within Groups	368	<u>325.004</u>	.883		
Total	369	328.132			

as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Seventh-day Adventist schools are an important part of the church's ministry" was 4.62 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.73) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.41). These data are summarized in Table 16.

TABLE 15

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER THEY WOULD
RECOMMEND ADVENTIST SCHOOLS TO OTHERS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.53
Public Schools	<u>4.15</u>
Total	4.40

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	11.878	11.878	17.575	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>248.719</u>	.676		
Total	369	260.597			

*** Significant at <.001.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .721. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were very positive about Adventist schools being an important part of the Church's ministry with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, the essentialness of Adventist schools as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

TABLE 16

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER ADVENTIST
SCHOOLS ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF
THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.73
Public Schools	<u>4.41</u>
Total	4.62

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	8.942	8.942	16.761	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>196.326</u>	.533		
Total	369	205.268			

*** Significant at $< .001$.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "A spiritual atmosphere should exist in school" was 4.76 on a 5 point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.86) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.57). These data are summarized in Table 17.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .616. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded.

TABLE 17

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER A SPIRITUAL
ATMOSPHERE SHOULD EXIST IN SCHOOL:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.86
Public Schools	<u>4.57</u>
Total	4.76

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	7.252	7.252	16.240	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>164.339</u>	.447		
Total	369	171.592			

*** Significant at $< .001$.

Therefore although both groups were very positive about the existence of a spiritual atmosphere in school, with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "spiritual atmosphere existing in school" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

Table 18 is a summary of mean scale scores for Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools, weighted mean total, ANOVA, and Regression probabilities for the nine variables for the first factor.

TABLE 18

SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVES AND REGRESSION ON
SPIRITUAL VALUES, FACTOR 1

Variables	Mean Scale Scores (Range 1-5)			ANOVA REGRES- SION	
	SDA Schools	Public Schools	Total	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>
Adventist beliefs	4.81	4.56	4.72	.002	.354
Adventist education best	3.93	3.84	3.89	.413	.000***
School devotions valuable	4.78	4.51	4.68	.001	.987
Teachers should be spiritual	4.86	4.52	4.74	.000	.002**
Children in Adventist Schools are likely to stay in church	4.08	3.77	3.97	.003	.763
Adventist education helps build Adventist families	4.25	4.06	4.19	.061	.455
I recommend Adventist schools to others	4.53	4.15	4.40	.001	.549
Adventist schools are an essential part of ministry	4.73	4.41	4.62	.000	.721
A spiritual atmosphere should exist in school	4.86	4.57	4.76	.000	.616

** Significant at < .01. *** Significant at < .001.

The first null hypothesis stated that there was no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of spiritual values-based education. Overall, two of the nine variables under the spiritual values-based education factor were found to contribute significantly to the model, and seven out of the nine variables under the factor were found to have significant variance between groups. The analysis of this hypothesis, as supported by Tables 9 to 17, provides evidence to reject the null hypothesis and concludes that there is a relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of spiritual values-based education.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of cost of education (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). To test this hypothesis, six questions were asked that would constitute the independent variables associated with the factor to determine if there is a significant relationship (on a scale of 1-5 on the degree of agreement to the questions) between the factor and school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost" was 3.91 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.15) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.48). These data are summarized in Table 19.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .003 and a cumulative R

TABLE 19

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER ADVENTIST
SCHOOLS ARE WORTH THE COST:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.15
Public Schools	<u>3.48</u>
Total	3.91

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	38.202	38.202	38.939	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>361.031</u>	.981		
Total	369	399.232			

*** Significant at $< .001$.

square of .115. Since the variable had a significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was included. Therefore both groups were moderately positive about the worth of Adventist schools with Adventist schools higher than public schools and when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, the worth of Adventist schools in itself as a variable was also found to be significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "I cannot afford the cost of Adventist schools" was 3.23 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high level of disagreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools

TABLE 20

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH ONE
CANNOT AFFORD THE COST OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.05
Public Schools	<u>3.56</u>
Total	3.23

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	21.707	21.707	11.917	.001***
Within Groups	368	<u>670.304</u>	1.821		
Total	369	692.011			

*** Significant at $< .001$.

(3.05) was significantly lower ($p < .01$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.56). These data are summarized in Table 20.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .083. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded.

Therefore, although both groups were moderately negative about the inability of affording Adventist schools with Adventist schools lower than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, inability to afford cost of Adventist education as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "If cost was lower in Seventh-day Adventist schools, more children would attend" was 4.27 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.27) was not significantly lower ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.28). These data are summarized in Table 21.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .281. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was

TABLE 21
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER LOWERING COST
OF EDUCATION IN ADVENTIST SCHOOLS WOULD
RESULT IN MORE CHILDREN ATTENDING:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.27
Public Schools	<u>4.28</u>
Total	4.27

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	8.870E-03	8.870E-03	.008	.928
Within Groups	368	<u>402.964</u>	1.095		
Total	369	402.973			

excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about lower cost of Adventist education with Adventist school mean scores marginally lower than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, lower cost of Adventist education as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Public schools are better regardless of cost” was 1.67 on a 5-point scale which indicates a low level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (1.48) was significantly lower ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (2.04). The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools believed more in Adventist schools being better than public schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools. However, on average, parents with children in public schools believed that Adventist schools were better than public schools regardless of cost. These data are summarized in Table 22.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .000 and a cumulative R square of .148. Since the variable had a significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was included. Therefore, both groups were fairly negative about public schools being better than Adventist schools with Adventist schools lower than public schools. When compared with other variables in the regression collectively, the perception of public schools being better than Adventist schools in itself was also found to be significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Financial aid is a critical factor in enrolling at Adventist schools” was 3.96 on a 5-point scale which indicates a

TABLE 22

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER PUBLIC
SCHOOLS ARE BETTER THAN ADVENTIST
SCHOOLS REGARDLESS OF COST:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	1.48
Public Schools	<u>2.04</u>
Total	1.67

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	26.772	26.772	29.439	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>334.658</u>	.909		
Total	369	361.430			

*** Significant at $< .001$.

moderate high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.83) was significantly lower ($p < .01$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.20). These data are summarized in Table 23.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .001 and a cumulative *R* square of .188. Since the variable had a significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was included. Therefore both groups were fairly positive about financial aid with Adventist schools lower than public schools, and when compared with other

TABLE 23

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER FINANCIAL
AID IS A CRITICAL FACTOR IN ENROLLING
AT ADVENTIST SCHOOLS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.83
Public Schools	<u>4.20</u>
Total	3.96

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	11.337	11.337	8.726	.003**
Within Groups	368	<u>478.133</u>	1.299		
Total	369	489.470			

** Significant at $< .01$.

variables in the regression collectively, financial aid in itself was also found to be significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Adventist schools are affordable for most families" was 2.29 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate low level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (2.35) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (2.18). These data are summarized in Table 24.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .667. Since the

TABLE 24

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER ADVENTIST
SCHOOLS ARE AFFORDABLE FOR MOST FAMILIES:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	2.35
Public Schools	<u>2.18</u>
Total	2.29

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	2.406	2.406	2.143	.144
Within Groups	368	<u>413.227</u>	1.123		
Total	369	415.632			

variable had no significant contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups shared similar views and were generally negative about Adventist schools being affordable for most families with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, the affordability of Adventist schools as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

Table 25 is a summary of mean scale scores for Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools, weighted mean total, ANOVA, and Regression probabilities

for the six variables for the second factor which were run with prior significant variables.

The second null hypothesis stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of cost of education, controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis. Overall, three out of the six variables under the cost of education factor were found to contribute significantly to the model, while four out of the six variables under the factor were found to be significantly varying between groups. The analysis of this hypothesis, as supported by Tables 19 to 24, provided evidence to reject the null hypothesis and to conclude that there is a relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of cost of education.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and their perception of the academic program, controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis. To test this hypothesis, 14 questions were asked that would constitute the independent variables associated with the factor to determine if there was a significant relationship (on a grading scale of A, B, C, D, and F) between the factor and school choice. The grades of F, D, C, B, and A were given values of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively to facilitate analysis of data.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Academic quality" was 4.15 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.28) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.92). These data are summarized in Table 26.

TABLE 25

SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVES AND REGRESSION ON COST
OF EDUCATION, FACTOR 2

Mean Scale Scores (Range 1-5)				ANOVA REGRES- SION	
Variables	SDA Schools	Public Schools	Total	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>
Adventist Schools are Worth the Cost	4.15	3.48	3.91	.000	.003**
I Cannot Afford the Cost of Adventist Schools	3.05	3.56	3.23	.001	.083
If Cost Were Lower in Adventist Schools, More Children Would Attend	4.27	4.28	4.27	.928	.281
Public Schools Are Better Regardless of Cost	1.48	2.04	1.67	.000	.001**
Financial Aid Is Critical in Adventist Schools	3.83	4.20	3.96	.003	.001**
Adventist Schools Are Affordable For Most Families	2.35	2.18	2.29	.144	.667

** Significant at $< .01$.

TABLE 26

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON ACADEMIC
QUALITY IN ADVENTIST SCHOOLS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.28
Public Schools	<u>3.92</u>
Total	4.15

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	10.905	10.905	21.130	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>189.919</u>	.516		
Total	369	200.824			

*** Significant at < .001.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .029 and a cumulative *R* square of .239. Since the variable had a significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was included. Therefore both groups were very positive about academic quality with Adventist schools higher than public schools, and when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "academic quality" in itself was also found to be significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Amount of homework assigned” was 3.64 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high rating. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.79) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools and, in fact, it was the same (3.79). These data are summarized in Table 27.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .051. Since the variable had only a marginal contribution with no significant proportion of variance to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were fairly positive about homework assigned with Adventist schools exactly the same as public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “amount of homework assigned” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Quality of classroom instruction” was 4.04 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.13) was significantly higher ($p < .005$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.88). These data are summarized in Table 28.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .671. Since the variable had no significant contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about the quality of classroom instruction with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “classroom instruction” in itself as a variable was not found to be significant in school choice. The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who

TABLE 27

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON AMOUNT OF
HOMEWORK ASSIGNED:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.79
Public Schools	<u>3.79</u>
Total	3.64

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	1.979	1.979	2.353	.126
Within Groups	368	<u>309.591</u>	.841		
Total	369	311.570			

had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more satisfied with classroom instruction than Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Quality of classroom instruction" was 4.04 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.13) was significantly higher ($p < .005$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.88). These data are summarized in Table 28.

TABLE 28

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON QUALITY OF
CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.13
Public Schools	<u>3.88</u>
Total	4.04

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	5.365	5.365	8.260	.004**
Within Groups	368	<u>239.027</u>	.650		
Total	369	244.392			

** Significant at $< .01$.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .671. Since the variable had no significant contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about the quality of classroom instruction with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "classroom instruction" in itself as a variable was not found to be significant in school choice. The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who

had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more satisfied with classroom instruction than Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Grading procedures” was 3.96 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.05) was significantly higher ($p < .005$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.78). These data are summarized in Table 29.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .726. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about grading procedures with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “grading procedures” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice. The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more satisfied with grading procedures in Seventh-day Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Variety of courses offered” was 3.96 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.07) was significantly higher ($p < .005$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.75). These data are summarized in Table 30.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .361. Since the variable had

TABLE 29

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON GRADING PROCEDURES:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.05
Public Schools	<u>3.78</u>
Total	3.96

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	6.127	6.127	9.707	.002**
Within Groups	368	<u>232.265</u>	.631		
Total	369	238.392			

** Significant at $< .01$.

no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded.

Therefore although both groups were fairly positive about the variety of courses offered with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "course variety" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice. The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more satisfied with the variety of courses offered in Seventh-day Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools.

TABLE 30

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON VARIETY OF COURSES OFFERED:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.07
Public Schools	<u>3.75</u>
Total	3.96

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	8.889	8.889	11.834	.001**
Within Groups	368	<u>276.419</u>	.751		
Total	369	285.308			

** Significant at $< .01$.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Textbooks used" was 4.03 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.13) was significantly higher ($p < .005$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.86). These data are summarized in Table 31.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .565. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded.

TABLE 31

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON TEXTBOOKS USED:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.13
Public Schools	<u>3.86</u>
Total	4.03

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	5.853	5.853	9.214	.003**
Within Groups	368	<u>233.758</u>	.635		
Total	369	239.611			

** Significant at $< .01$.

Therefore although both groups were very positive about textbooks used (with Adventist schools higher than public schools), when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "textbooks used" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice. The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were significantly more satisfied with text books used in Seventh-day Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Teaching materials used"

was 4.01 on a scale which indicates a high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.11) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.83). These data are summarized in Table 32.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .591. Since the variable had no significant contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about teaching materials used with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively.

TABLE 32
RESPONDENTS' RATING ON TEACHING MATERIALS USED:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.11
Public Schools	<u>3.83</u>
Total	4.01

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	6.693	6.693	12.812	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>192.239</u>	.522		
Total	369	198.932			

*** Significant at $< .001$.

“teaching materials” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice. The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more satisfied with teaching materials used in Seventh-day Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Teacher’s help to students outside the class” was 3.82 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.98) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.53). These data are summarized in Table 33.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .335. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were moderately positive about teacher’s help outside the class with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “teacher’s help” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Availability of academic counselors” was 3.51 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.60) was significantly higher ($p < .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.32). These data are summarized in Table 34.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .718. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded.

TABLE 33

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON TEACHERS' HELP
TO STUDENTS OUTSIDE CLASS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.98
Public Schools	<u>3.53</u>
Total	3.82

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	17.271	17.271	17.542	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>362.310</u>	.985		
Total	369	379.581			

*** Significant at < .001.

Therefore, although both groups were positive about availability of academic counselors with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "availability of academic counselors" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more satisfied with the degree of counseling offered in Seventh-day Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had

TABLE 34

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON AVAILABILITY OF
ACADEMIC COUNSELORS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.60
Public Schools	<u>3.32</u>
Total	3.51

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	6.663	6.663	5.868	.016*
Within Groups	368	<u>417.827</u>	1.135		
Total	369	424.489			

* Significant at $< .05$.

children in public schools. However, the statistics indicate a relatively weak degree of satisfaction compared to other variables and, more specifically among the academic issues, this variable had the weakest descriptive scores.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Relevance of courses" was 3.98 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.11) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.75). These data are summarized in Table 35.

TABLE 35

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON RELEVANCE OF COURSES:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.11
Public Schools	<u>3.75</u>
Total	3.98

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	10.596	10.596	16.027	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>243.306</u>	.661		
Total	369	253.903			

*** Significant at $< .001$.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .827. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were positive about relevance of courses with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "relevance of courses" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice. The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more satisfied on the relevance of courses offered in Seventh-day Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in

public schools.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Class size" was 4.01 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.09) was significantly higher ($p < .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.85). The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more satisfied with class size than Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools. These data are summarized in Table 36.

Regression analysis results indicated a significance of .666. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution in the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were positive about class size with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "class size" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice. The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Number of courses offered" was 3.90 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.05) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.62). These data are summarized in Table 37.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .005 and a cumulative R square of .224. Since the variable had a significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was included. Therefore both groups were very positive about the number of courses offered with Adventist schools higher than public schools, and when compared

TABLE 36

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON CLASS SIZE:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.09
Public Schools	<u>3.85</u>
Total	4.01

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	5.083	5.083	6.216.130	.013*
Within Groups	368	<u>300.906</u>	.818		
Total	369	305.989			

* Significant at $< .05$.

with other variables in the regression collectively, "the number of courses offered" in itself was also found to be significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Preparation for further education" was 4.22 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.31) was significantly higher ($p < .01$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.05). These data are summarized in Table 38.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .134. Since the variable had no

TABLE 37

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON NUMBER OF COURSES OFFERED:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.05
Public Schools	<u>3.62</u>
Total	3.90

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	15.071	15.071	23.010	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>241.027</u>	.655		
Total	369	256.097			

*** Significant at < .001.

significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were very positive about preparation for further education with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "preparation for further education" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Preparation for the real world" was 3.74 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high rating. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.83) was significantly

TABLE 38

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON PREPARATION OF
STUDENTS FOR FURTHER EDUCATION:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.31
Public Schools	<u>4.05</u>
Total	4.22

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	5.641	5.641	8.572	.004**
Within Groups	368	<u>242.186</u>	.658		
Total	369	247.827			

** Significant at $< .01$.

higher ($p < .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.56). These data are summarized in Table 39.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .510. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Both groups were therefore moderately positive about preparation for the real world, with Adventist schools higher than public schools. However, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "preparation for the real world" as a variable in

TABLE 39

RESPONDENTS' RATING ON PREPARATION OF
STUDENTS FOR THE REAL WORLD:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.83
Public Schools	<u>3.56</u>
Total	3.74

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	6.040	6.040	6.073	.014*
Within Groups	368	<u>366.004</u>	.995		
Total	369	<u>372.043</u>			

* Significant at < .05.

itself was not significant in school choice.

Table 40 is a summary of mean scale scores for Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools, weighted mean total, ANOVA, and Regression probabilities for the 14 variables for the third factor which were run with prior significant variables.

The third null hypothesis stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and their perception of the academic program (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). Overall, the ANOVA table shows that 13

TABLE 40

SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVES AND REGRESSION ON
ACADEMIC PROGRAM, FACTOR 3

Mean Scale Scores (Range 1-5)				ANOVA REGRES- SION	
Variables	SDA Schools	Public Schools	Total	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>
Academic Quality	4.28	3.92	4.15	.000	.029*
Amount of Homework Assigned	3.79	3.79	3.64	.126	.051
Quality of Classroom Instruction	4.13	3.88	4.04	.004	.671
Grading Procedures	4.05	3.78	3.96	.002	.726
Variety of Courses Offered	4.07	3.75	3.96	.001	.361
Textbooks Used	4.13	3.86	4.03	.003	.565
Teaching Materials Used	4.11	3.83	4.01	.000	.591
Teachers' Help Outside Class	3.98	3.53	3.82	.000	.335
Availability of Academic Counselors	3.60	3.32	3.51	.016	.718
Relevance of Courses	4.11	3.75	3.98	.000	.827
Class Size	4.09	3.85	4.01	.013	.666
Number of Courses Offered	4.05	3.62	3.90	.000	.005**
Preparation for Further Education	4.31	4.05	4.22	.004	.134
Preparation for the Real World	3.83	3.56	3.74	.014	.510

* Significant at < .05. ** Significant at < 01.

of the 14 variables under the academic program factor indicated significant differences between the two groups. However, two of the variables were found to significantly vary and, therefore, contribute to the model. The analysis of this hypothesis, as supported by Tables 26 to 39, provide evidence to reject the null hypothesis and to conclude that there is a significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of the academic programs offered in Seventh-day Adventist schools.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of who influenced school choice decisions (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). To test this hypothesis, three questions constituting the independent variables associated with the fourth factor were asked to determine if there was a significant relationship (on a scale of 1-5 on the degree of agreement to the questions).

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Other people influenced me to choose current school" was 2.40 on a 5-point scale which indicates a low level of agreement. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (2.35) was not significantly lower ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.49). These data are summarized in Table 41.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .164. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, while both groups were, on average, not positive about other people

TABLE 41

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER
OTHER PEOPLE INFLUENCED THEIR
SCHOOL CHOICE DECISIONS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	2.35
Public Schools	<u>2.49</u>
Total	2.40

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	1.809	1.809	.958	.328
Within Groups	368	<u>694.788</u>	1.888		
Total	369	696.597			

influencing school choice, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "other people's influence" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "School choice was influenced by my children" was 2.55 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate low level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (2.70) was significantly higher ($p < .01$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (2.28). These data are summarized in Table 42.

TABLE 42

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER
CHILDREN INFLUENCED THEIR
SCHOOL CHOICE DECISIONS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	2.70
Public Schools	<u>2.28</u>
Total	2.55

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	14.798	14.798	7.371	.007**
Within Groups	368	<u>738.827</u>	2.008		
Total	369	753.624			

** Significant at $< .01$.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .002 and a cumulative *R* square of .261. Since the variable had a significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was included. Therefore both groups had a moderately low positive perception about school choice being influenced by their children but, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “the influence of children in school choice” in itself was found to be significant.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “School choice was purely my decision” was 3.87 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high level of

TABLE 43

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER SCHOOL
CHOICE WAS PURELY OF PARENT:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.82
Public Schools	<u>3.97</u>
Total	3.87

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	1.963	1.963	1.246	.265
Within Groups	368	<u>579.810</u>	1.576		
Total	369	581.773			

agreement. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.82) was not significantly lower ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.97). These data are summarized in Table 43.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .670. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were moderately positive about school choice, Table 44 is a summary of mean scale scores for Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with

children in public schools, weighted mean total, ANOVA, and Regression probabilities for the three variables for the fourth factor which were run with prior significant variables.

TABLE 44
SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVES AND REGRESSION ON WHO
INFLUENCED SCHOOL CHOICE, FACTOR 4

Mean Scale Scores (Range 1-5)				ANOVA REGRES- SION	
Variables	SDA Schools	Public Schools	Total	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>
Other people Influenced me to choose current school	2.35	2.49	2.40	.328	.164
School Choice was Influenced by my Children	2.70	2.28	2.55	.007	.002**
School Choice Was Purely My Own Decision	3.82	3.97	3.87	.265	.670

** Significant at < .01.

The fourth null hypothesis stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of who influenced school choice, controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis. Overall, one of the three variables regarding who influenced school choice factor indicated significant variation between the two groups. In this case it was school choice having been influenced by children. The findings would suggest that although both groups were moderately high that school choice was

purely their own decision, the stronger the influence of children on their parents, the more likely they are to choose an Adventist school. The analysis of this hypothesis, as supported by Tables 41 to 43, provided evidence to reject the null hypothesis and to conclude that there was a significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of who influenced their choice of school.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and their perception of the social factor (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). To test this hypothesis, the subjects were asked to rate the importance of these variables in making school choice decisions. Seven questions constituting the independent variables associated with the factor were asked to determine if there is a significant relationship between social factors and school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Physical education" was 3.51 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high level of importance. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.58) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.38). These data are summarized in Table 45.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .170 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were moderately positive about the importance of physical education, when compared with other variables in the

TABLE 45

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOL CHOICE:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.58
Public Schools	<u>3.38</u>
Total	3.51

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	3.056	3.056	2.149	.144
Within Groups	368	<u>523.419</u>	1.422		
Total	369	526.476			

regression collectively, “physical education” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice

The mean response of the total sample to the statement “Extra curricular activities ” was 3.62 on a 5- point scale which indicates a moderate high level of importance. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.67) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.52). These data are summarized in Table 46.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .548 which was not

TABLE 46

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY IN SCHOOL CHOICE:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.67
Public Schools	<u>3.52</u>
Total	3.62

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	2.038	2.038	1.896	.169
Within Groups	368	<u>395.465</u>	1.075		
Total	369	397.503			

significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were positive about extracurricular activities, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "extracurricular activities" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice. The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Racial harmony at the school" was 4.40 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of importance. This would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents perceived racial harmony at the school as very important. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist

schools (4.53) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.15). These data are summarized in Table 47.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .607 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, both groups were positive about racial harmony at the school and consider it important. However, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "racial harmony" as a variable in itself, although very important, was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement "Being part of the school" was 4.12 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of importance. The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents perceived that being part of the school as very important. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.17) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.04). These data are summarized in Table 48.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .655 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, both groups were positive about being part of the school and viewed it as important. However, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "being part of the school" as a variable in itself, although very important, was not significant in school choice decisions.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Active social life" was 3.85 on a scale which indicates a moderate high level of importance. However, the

TABLE 47

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
RACIAL HARMONY AT THE SCHOOL:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.53
Public Schools	<u>4.15</u>
Total	4.40

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	2.080	2.080	1.689	.195
Within Groups	368	<u>453.153</u>	1.231		
Total	369	455.232			

mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.74) was not significantly lower ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.07). The findings would suggest that although Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools placed more importance on children having an active social life than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools, the difference was not significant. These data are summarized in Table 49.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .670 which was not

TABLE 48

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
BEING PART OF THE SCHOOL IN SCHOOL CHOICE:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.17
Public Schools	<u>4.04</u>
Total	4.12

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	1.478	1.478	1.634	.202
Within Groups	368	<u>332.804</u>	.904		
Total	369	334.281			

significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were fairly positive about active social life when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "social life" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "School spirit" was 4.17 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of importance. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.18) was not significantly

TABLE 49

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
ACTIVE SOCIAL LIFE IN SCHOOL CHOICE:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.74
Public Schools	<u>4.07</u>
Total	3.85

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	9.279	9.279	1.189	.276
Within Groups	368	<u>2872.839</u>	7.807		
Total	369	2882.119			

higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.17). These data are summarized in Table 50. The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools as well as Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools place equally high importance in school spirit.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .482 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the

TABLE 50

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
SCHOOL SPIRIT IN SCHOOL CHOICE:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.18
Public Schools	<u>4.17</u>
Total	4.17

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	2.807E-03	2.807E-03	.003	.955
Within Groups	368	<u>324.927</u>	.883		
Total	369	324.930			

model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about school spirit, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "school spirit" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement "Parental involvement" was 4.20 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of importance. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.22) was not

significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.16). The findings would suggest that both groups of parents placed very high importance on parental involvement in school activities. These data are summarized in Table 51.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .427 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the regression, it was excluded. Therefore while both groups were very positive about parental involvement, when compared with other variables in the model collectively, "parental involvement" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

TABLE 51
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL CHOICE:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.22
Public Schools	<u>4.16</u>
Total	4.20

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	.340	.340	.432	.512
Within Groups	368	<u>289.458</u>	.787		
Total	369	289.797			

Table 52 is a summary of mean scale scores for Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools, weighted mean total, ANOVA, and Regression probabilities for the seven variables for the fifth factor which were run with prior significant factors.

The fifth null hypothesis stated that there was no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of social factors, controlled for the independent

TABLE 52
SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVES AND REGRESSION ON
SOCIAL FACTORS, FACTOR 5

Mean Scale Scores (Range 1-5)	ANOVA REGRES-				
				SION	
Variables	SDA Schools School	Public School	Total	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>
Physical Education	3.58	3.38	3.51	.144	.170
Extra Curricular Activities	3.67	3.52	3.62	.169	.548
Racial Harmony at the School	4.53	4.15	4.40	.195	.607
Being Part of the School	4.17	4.04	4.12	.202	.655
Active Social Life	3.74	4.07	3.85	.276	.234
School Spirit	4.18	4.17	4.17	.955	.482
Parental Involvement	4.22	4.16	4.20	.512	.427

variables of the prior hypothesis. Overall, none of the seven predictor variables under social factors indicated significant variation between the two groups, and all seven variables were found not to significantly contribute to the model. The analysis of this hypothesis, as supported by Tables 45 to 51, provided evidence to retain the null hypothesis and to conclude that there is no significant relationship between parental school choice and their perception of the social factor in Seventh-day Adventist schools. However, several variables were rated very important.

Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and their perception of proximity to the school (controlled for the independent variables in the prior hypothesis). To test this hypothesis, five questions constituting the independent variables associated with the factor were asked to determine if there is a significant relationship (on a scale of 1-5 on the degree of agreement to the questions) between the factor and school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement “Children should attend schools that are close to home” was 3.89 on a 5-point scale which indicated a moderate high level of agreement. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.89) was not significantly different ($p > .05$) from that for parents whose children attend public schools (3.89). They were similar. The findings would suggest that both groups of parents equally placed a moderate high level of importance on children attending schools that are close to home. These data are summarized in Table 53.

TABLE 53

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE
OF CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOLS
THAT ARE CLOSE TO HOME:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.89
Public Schools	<u>3.89</u>
Total	3.89

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	3.465E-05	3.465E-05	.000	.996
Within Groups	368	<u>401.676</u>	1.092		
Total	369	401.676			

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .833 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were moderately positive about children attending schools close to home, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "nearness to school" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement "Lack of transportation is a problem to some parents" was 3.90 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high

level of agreement. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.89) was not significantly lower ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.91). The findings would suggest that both groups of parents placed a moderately high level of importance on transportation. However, Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools placed slightly higher importance on transportation than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools but not significantly so. These data are summarized in Table 54.

TABLE 54
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE LACK OF
TRANSPORTATION AS A PROBLEM
TO SOME PARENTS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.89
Public Schools	<u>3.91</u>
Total	3.90

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	2.166E-02	2.166E-02	.019	.891
Within Groups	368	<u>426.076</u>	1.158		
Total	369	426.097			

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .753 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were moderately positive about transportation, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “transportation” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Parents should have easy access to school” was 4.22 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.20) was not significantly lower ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.25). The findings would suggest that both groups of parents placed high importance on parental easy access to school. These data are summarized in Table 55.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .598 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about parental easy access to school, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “parental accessibility” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Nearness improves effectiveness among students and teachers” was 3.94 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderately high level of agreement. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.97) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.89). The findings would suggest that both

TABLE 55

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
PARENTS HAVING EASY ACCESS TO SCHOOL:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.20
Public Schools	<u>4.25</u>
Total	4.22

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	.180	.180	.223	.637
Within Groups	368	<u>296.523</u>	.806		
Total	369	296.703			

groups of parents placed high importance on parental involvement in school activities.

These data are summarized in Table 56.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .872 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were moderately positive about nearness improving effectiveness, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "nearness improving effectiveness" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

TABLE 56

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER NEARNESS
IMPROVES EFFECTIVENESS AMONG
TEACHERS AND STUDENTS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.97
Public Schools	<u>3.89</u>
Total	3.94

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	.520	.520	.497	.481
Within Groups	368	<u>385.288</u>	1.047		
Total	369	385.808			

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Living near school improves attendance" was 3.84 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate level of agreement. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.86) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.82). The findings would suggest that both groups of parents placed moderately high importance on living near school. These data are summarized in Table 57.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .583 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the

TABLE 57

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER LIVING
NEAR SCHOOL IMPROVES ATTENDANCE:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.86
Public Schools	<u>3.82</u>
Total	3.84

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	.156	.156	.120	.730
Within Groups	368	<u>478.753</u>	1.301		
Total	369	478.908			

model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were moderately positive about living near school, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "living near school" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

Table 58 is a summary of mean scale scores for Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools, weighted mean total, ANOVA, and Regression probabilities for the five variables for the sixth factor which were run with prior significant variables.

TABLE 58

SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVES AND REGRESSION ON
PROXIMITY FACTORS FACTOR 6

Mean Scale Scores (Range 1-5)				ANOVA REGRES- SION	
Variables	SDA Schools	Public Schools	Total	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>
Children Should Attend Schools Close to Home	3.89	3.89	3.89	.996	.833
Lack of Transportation Is a Problem to Some Parents	3.89	3.91	3.90	.891	.753
Parents Should Have Easy Access to School	4.20	4.25	4.22	.637	.598
Nearness Improves Effectiveness Among Teachers and Students	3.97	3.89	3.94	.481	.872
Living Near School Improves Attendance	3.86	3.82	3.84	.730	.583

The sixth null hypothesis stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and their perception of proximity (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). Overall, although parents of both groups placed a high level of importance on proximity, none of the five variables under the factors indicated significant variation between the two groups and all the five variables were found not to

significantly contribute to the model. The analysis of this hypothesis, as supported by Tables 53 to 57, provided evidence to retain the null hypothesis and to conclude that there was no significant relationship between parental school choice and proximity.

Hypothesis 7

Hypothesis 7 stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of safety (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). To test this hypothesis, subjects were asked to indicate their level of importance on safety. Seven questions constituting the independent variables associated with the factor were asked to determine if there was a significant relationship (on the degree of importance scale ranging from unimportant to very important) between the factor and school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "Reasonable dress code" was 4.05 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of importance. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.04) was not significantly lower ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.07). The findings would suggest that both groups of parents placed a high level of about equal importance on dress code. These data are summarized in Table 59.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .485 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about the importance of reasonable dress code, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively,

TABLE 59

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE
OF REASONABLE DRESS CODE IN
SCHOOL CHOICE DECISIONS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.04
Public Schools	<u>4.07</u>
Total	4.05

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	8.490E-02	8.490E-02	.092	.762
Within Groups	368	<u>339.039</u>	.921		
Total	369	339.124			

“reasonable dress code” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Strict rules related to school conduct” was 4.27 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of importance. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.29) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.24). The findings would suggest that both groups of parents placed very high importance on having strict rules related to school conduct. These data are summarized in Table 60.

TABLE 60

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF STRICT
RULES BEING RELATED TO SCHOOL CONDUCT:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.29
Public Schools	<u>4.24</u>
Total	4.27

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	.203	.203	.291	.590
Within Groups	368	<u>256.770</u>	.698		
Total	369	256.973			

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .299 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about strict rules related to school conduct, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "strict rules" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement "Fairness in disciplinary policies" was 4.61 on a 5-point scale which indicates a very high level of importance.

However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.66) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.52). The findings would suggest that both groups of parents placed very high importance on fairness in disciplinary policies. These data are summarized in Table 61.

TABLE 61
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE
OF FAIRNESS IN DISCIPLINARY POLICIES:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.66
Public Schools	<u>4.52</u>
Total	4.61

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	1.543	1.543	3.629	.058
Within Groups	368	<u>156.414</u>	.425		
Total	369	157.957			

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .815 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the

model, it was excluded. Therefore although both groups were very positive about fairness in disciplinary policies, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “fairness in disciplinary policies” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Personal safety/security at school” was 4.68 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of importance. However, the mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.72) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.60). The findings would suggest that both groups of parents placed a very high level of importance on personal safety at school. These data are summarized in Table 62.

Regression analysis results similarly indicated a probability of .549 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were very positive about personal safety at school, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “personal safety” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “Students feel safe” was 4.73 on a scale which indicates a high level of importance. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.78) was significantly higher ($p < .01$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.61). The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in Seventh-day Adventist schools as well as Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in public schools place a great deal of importance on children feeling safe in school. However, both groups significantly

TABLE 62

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
PERSONAL SAFETY/SECURITY AT THE SCHOOL:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.72
Public Schools	<u>4.60</u>
Total	4.68

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	1.318	1.318	3.168	.076
Within Groups	368	<u>153.050</u>	.416		
Total	369	154.368			

differ in the extent of their agreement. These data are summarized in Table 63.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .028 which was significant. Since the variable had a significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was included. Therefore both groups were very positive about students feeling safe in the school. When compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "students feeling safe" in itself was found to be significant.

TABLE 63

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE
OF STUDENTS FEELING SAFE AT THE SCHOOL:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.78
Public Schools	<u>4.61</u>
Total	4.73

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	2.854	2.854	6.975	.009**
Within Groups	368	<u>150.576</u>	.409		
Total	369	153.430			

** Significant at $< .01$.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "A requirement for school uniform" was 2.82 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate low level of importance. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (2.66) was significantly lower ($p < .01$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.12). The findings would suggest that although the means were moderately low, Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools were more positive on the requirement for school uniform than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools. These data are summarized in Table 64.

TABLE 64

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE
OF A REQUIREMENT FOR SCHOOL UNIFORM:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	2.66
Public Schools	<u>3.12</u>
Total	2.82

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	17.295	17.295	8.637	.004**
Within Groups	368	<u>736.932</u>	2.003		
Total	369	754.227			

** Significant at $< .01$.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .023 which was not significant. Since the variable had a significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was included. Therefore although both groups had a moderately low positive perception about a requirement for school uniforms, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "school uniform" in itself was found to be significant.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement "Students are well supervised" was 4.58 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of importance. The

mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.65) was significantly higher ($p < .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.45). These data are summarized in Table 65.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .584 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant proportion of variance contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, both groups were very positive about student supervision, with Adventist schools higher than public schools. However, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "student supervision" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

TABLE 65
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE
OF STUDENTS BEING WELL SUPERVISED:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.65
Public Schools	<u>4.45</u>
Total	4.58

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	3.649	3.649	6.767	.010*
Within Groups	368	<u>198.419</u>	.539		
Total	369	202.068			

* Significant at $< .05$.

Table 66 is a summary of mean scale scores for Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools, weighted mean total, ANOVA, and Regression probabilities for the seven variables for the seventh factor which were run with prior significant variables.

TABLE 66
SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVES AND REGRESSION ON
SAFETY FACTOR, FACTOR 7

Variables	Mean Scale Scores (Range 1-5)			ANOVA REGRES- SION	
	SDA Schools School	Public School	Total	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>
Reasonable Dress Code	4.04	4.07	4.05	.762	.485
Strict Rules Related to School Conduct	4.29	4.24	4.27	.590	.299
Fairness in Disciplinary Policies	4.66	4.52	4.61	.058	.815
Personal Safety/Security at the School	4.72	4.60	4.68	.076	.549
Student Feel Safe in the School	4.78	4.61	4.73	.009	.028*
A Requirement For School Uniform	2.66	3.12	2.82	.004	.023*
Students Being Well Supervised	4.65	4.45	4.58	.010	.584

* Significant at $< .05$.

The seventh null hypothesis stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of safety (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). Overall, three of the seven variables under safety factors indicated significant differences between the two groups and that two of the seven variables were found to significantly vary and therefore contributed to the regression model. The analysis of this hypothesis, as supported by Tables 59 to 65, provides evidence to reject the null hypothesis and to conclude that there is a significant relationship between parental school choice and safety.

Hypothesis 8

Hypothesis 8 stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of awareness of information about the school (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypotheses). To test this hypothesis, six questions constituting the independent variables associated with the factor were asked to determine if there was a significant relationship (on a scale of 1-5 on the degree of agreement to the questions) between the factor and school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "I am aware of the value of Christian education" was 4.76 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.82) was not significantly higher ($p > .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (4.68). The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools as well as Seventh-day Adventist parents who had

children in public schools were well informed about the value of Christian education to the extent that there were no significant differences on their perception about their awareness of the value of Christian education. These data are summarized in Table 67.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .291 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were very positive about awareness of the value of Christian education, with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "awareness of the value of Christian education" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

TABLE 67
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON AWARENESS OF
THE VALUE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.82
Public Schools	<u>4.68</u>
Total	4.76

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	1.291	1.291	3.512	.062
Within Groups	368	<u>135.253</u>	.368		
Total	369	136.543			

The mean response of the total sample to the statement "I am sure of the quality of education offered in Adventist schools" was 4.09 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.17) was significantly higher ($p < .05$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.96). The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools received better information about Seventh-day Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools. These data are summarized in Table 68.

TABLE 68
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER SURE OF
THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION OFFERED
IN ADVENTIST SCHOOLS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.17
Public Schools	<u>3.96</u>
Total	4.09

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	3.548	3.548	4.130	.043*
Within Groups	368	<u>316.141</u>	.859		
Total	369	319.689			

* Significant at $< .05$.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .670 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were very positive about the quality of education offered in Adventist schools with Adventist schools higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “the quality of education” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “I receive good information about Adventist schools” was 4.04 on a 5-point scale which indicates a high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (4.20) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.75). The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools received significantly better information about Seventh-day Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools. These data are summarized in Table 69.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .116 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were positive about how good the information received about Adventist schools was, with Adventist schools ranking higher than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “how good the information received” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement “I have been unable to

TABLE 69

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER INFORMATION
RECEIVED ABOUT ADVENTIST SCHOOLS IS GOOD:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	4.20
Public Schools	<u>3.75</u>
Total	4.04

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	17.689	17.689	18.726	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>347.619</u>	.945		
Total	369	365.308			

*** Significant at $< .001$.

obtain information about Adventist schools" was 1.93 on a 5-point scale which indicates a low level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (1.79) was significantly lower ($p < .01$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (2.18). The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more able to obtain information about Seventh-day Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools. These data are summarized in Table 70.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .411 which was not

TABLE 70

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER UNABLE
TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT
ADVENTIST SCHOOLS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	1.79
Public Schools	<u>2.18</u>
Total	1.93

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	13.020	13.020	9.485	.002**
Within Groups	368	<u>505.153</u>	1.373		
Total	369	518.173			

** Significant at $< .01$.

significant. Since the variable had no significant contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were very negative about their inability to obtain information about Adventist schools with Adventist schools lower than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, "inability to obtain information" as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, "I am not aware of financial assistance available in Adventist schools" was 2.40 on a 5-point scale which

indicates a low level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (2.17) was significantly lower ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (2.83). The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were significantly more aware of financial assistance availability than Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in public schools. These data are summarized in Table 71.

TABLE 71

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER NOT
AWARE ABOUT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
AVAILABLE IN ADVENTIST SCHOOLS:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	2.17
Public Schools	<u>2.83</u>
Total	2.40

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	37.190	37.190	21.133	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>647.610</u>	1.760		
Total	369	684.800			

*** Significant at $< .001$.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .077 which was not significant. Since the variable had no significant contribution to the model, it was excluded. Therefore, although both groups were on average negative about their level of awareness on availability of financial assistance available in Adventist schools, with Adventist schools lower than public schools, when compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “unawareness of financial assistance available” as a variable in itself was not significant in school choice.

The mean response of the total sample to the statement, “I receive information that is informative” was 3.64 on a 5-point scale which indicates a moderate high level of agreement. The mean response of parents whose children attend Adventist schools (3.85) was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than for parents whose children attend public schools (3.24). The findings would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in Seventh-day Adventist schools received more relevant information than Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in public schools although both groups place a moderately high level of how pertinent the information they received about Adventist schools was. These data are summarized in Table 72.

Regression analysis results indicated a probability of .003 and a cumulative R square of .297 which was significant. Since the variable had significant contribution to the model, it was included. Therefore, both groups were fairly positive about how pertinent the information they received was. When compared with other variables in the regression collectively, “information received” in itself was found to be significant.

TABLE 72

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WHETHER INFORMATION
RECEIVED ABOUT ADVENTIST
SCHOOLS WAS PERTINENT:
MEAN SCALE SCORES

Group	Mean
Adventist Schools	3.85
Public Schools	<u>3.24</u>
Total	3.64

ANOVA TABLE

Source	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1	31.967	31.967	30.202	.000***
Within Groups	368	<u>389.504</u>	1.058		
Total	369	421.470			

*** Significant at < .001.

Table 73 is a summary of mean scale scores for Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools, weighted mean total, ANOVA and Regression, probabilities for the six variables for the eighth factor which were run with prior significant variables.

The eighth null hypothesis stated that there is no relationship between parental school choice and their perception of awareness of information about the school (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). Overall, five of the six

TABLE 73

SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVES AND REGRESSION ON
AWARENESS FACTORS, FACTOR 8

Mean Scale Scores (Range 1-5)	ANOVA REGRES- SION				
Variables	SDA Schools School	Public School	Total	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>
I Am Aware of the Value of Christian Education	4.82	4.68	4.76	.062	.291
I Am Sure of the Quality of Adventist Schools	4.17	3.96	4.09	.043	.670
I Receive Good Information About Adventist Schools	4.20	3.75	4.04	.000	.116
I Am Unable to Obtain Information About Adventist Schools	1.79	2.18	1.93	.002	.411
Not Aware of Financial Assistance Available in Adventist Schools	2.17	2.83	2.40	.000	.077
I Receive Information That Is Pertinent	3.85	3.24	3.64	.000	.003**

** Significant at < .01.

variables under safety factor indicated significant variation between the two groups and that one of the six variables was found to significantly contribute to the model. The analysis of this hypothesis, as supported by Tables 67 to 72, provided evidence to reject the null hypothesis and to conclude that there is a relationship between parental school

choice and parents' perception of awareness of information about Adventist schools.

Multiple Regression Analyses Summary

There is a significant multiple correlation between school choice and a linear combination of parents' perception about spiritual values, cost of education, the academic program, who influences school choice, safety, and awareness.

Tables 74, 75, 76, and 77 present the SPSS extracts of the multiple regression analyses. Table 74 is a summary of the variables entered or removed during the regression. All together, 12 variables were entered, of which 1 was removed. The first of the eight steps in the regression found the variable "I recommend Seventh-day Adventist schools to others" to be significant. However, during the second step, it was found not to make any further significant contribution to the model and was therefore excluded from further participation in the regression hierarchy, thus leaving 11 of the 57 variables to be the only ones significantly contributing to the model. Therefore, only the 11 variables out of the 57 significantly contributed to the school choice dependent variable. The criteria for entry of a variable was at a probability of .05 or less, and to remove it, a probability of .10 or less was required.

The regression model summary indicates the *R* squared value of .297 which is considered to be a good model because the model is able to explain 29.7% of the variance in school choice. According to the model, at the *R* square value of .297 is the proportion of variance the 11 variables explained at the .05 level of significance and beyond which the remaining variables were not significant and therefore unable to contribute to the model.

TABLE 74

MULTIPLE REGRESSION VARIABLES
ENTERED OR REMOVED

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Teachers should be spiritual		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
2	I recommend SDA schools to others		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
3	SDA schools are worth the cost		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
4		I recommend SDA schools to others	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
5	Public schools better regardless of cost		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
6	SDA Education system is the best		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
7	Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
8	Number of courses offered		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
9	Academic quality		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
10	School choice was influenced by my children		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
11	A requirement for school uniform		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
12	Students feel safe in school		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).
13	I receive pertinent information		.Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-enter <= .050, Probability-of- <i>F</i> -to-remove >= .100).

TABLE 75

REGRESSION MODEL SUMMARY

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.217	.047	.044	.47
2	.247	.061	.056	.46
3	.340	.115	.108	.45
4	.340	.115	.111	.45
5	.385	.148	.141	.44
6	.416	.173	.164	.44
7	.434	.188	.177	.43
8	.473	.224	.211	.43
9	.489	.239	.225	.42
10	.511	.261	.245	.42
11	.519	.270	.252	.41
12	.528	.279	.259	.41
13	.545	.297	.276	.41

To develop the regression model, the “school attending” variable was selected as the dependent variable, and the following 13 resultant sets of significant predictors were progressively selected using the stepwise method in which the independent variables of the prior hypothesis were controlled:

1. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual.
2. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, I recommend Seventh-day Adventist schools to others.
3. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, I recommend Seventh-day Adventist schools to others, Adventist schools are worth the cost.

4. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost.

5. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools are better regardless of cost.

6. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools are better regardless of cost. Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best.

7. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools are better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best. Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Adventist schools.

8. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual. Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost. Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools, Number of courses offered.

9. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools, Number of courses offered, Academic quality.

10. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Adventist schools, Number of courses offered, Academic quality, School choice was influenced by my children.

11. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools, Number of courses offered, Academic quality, School choice was influenced by my children, A requirement for school uniform.

12. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools, Number of courses offered, Academic quality, School choice was influenced by my children, A requirement for school uniform. Students feel safe in school.

13. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools, Number of courses offered, Academic quality, School choice was influenced by my children, A requirement for school uniform, Students feel safe in school, I receive pertinent information.

The regression model summary indicates the coefficient of determination (R squared) of .297. The value is considered to be a good model because the model is able to explain 29.7% of the variance in school choice with the 11 predictor independent variables. Although there were 8 steps in the hierarchy, there were 13 entries including the variable “ I recommend SDA schools to others” which was entered but was removed from further participation in the regression ($p < .1$) leaving only the 11 variables.

TABLE 76

ANOVA SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT FACTORS

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
1	Regression	3.965	1	3.965	18.157	.000
	Residual	80.359	368	.218		
	Total	84.324	369			
2	Regression	5.137	2	2.568	11.903	.000
	Residual	79.188	367	.216		
	Total	84.324	369			
3	Regression	9.728	3	3.243	15.910	.000
	Residual	74.596	366	.204		
	Total	84.324	369			
4	Regression	9.726	2	4.863	23.924	.000
	Residual	74.598	367	.203		
	Total	84.324	369			
5	Regression	12.277	3	4.092	20.788	.000
	Residual	72.048	366	.197		
	Total	84.324	369			
6	Regression	14.292	4	3.573	18.621	.000
	Residual	70.033	365	.192		
	Total	84.324	369			
7	Regression	15.637	5	3.127	16.573	.000
	Residual	68.687	364	.189		
	Total	84.324	369			
8	Regression	18.656	6	3.109	17.188	.000
	Residual	65.668	363	.181		
	Total	84.324	369			
9	Regression	19.986	7	2.855	16.065	.000
	Residual	64.338	362	.178		
	Total	84.324	369			
10	Regression	21.864	8	2.733	15.796	.000
	Residual	62.460	361	.173		
	Total	84.324	369			
11	Regression	22.564	9	2.507	14.614	.000
	Residual	61.760	360	.172		
	Total	84.324	369			
12	Regression	23.328	10	2.333	13.730	.000
	Residual	60.997	359	.170		
	Total	84.324	369			
13	Regression	24.857	11	2.260	13.604	.000
	Residual	59.467	358	.166		
	Total	84.324	369			

The ANOVA table is also an SPSS extract from the regression model which indicates those variables that were found to be significant, using the stepwise method. The following are the 13 resultant sets of significant predictors that were progressively selected:

1. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual.
2. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, I recommend Seventh-day Adventist schools to others.
3. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, I recommend Seventh-day Adventist schools to others, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost.
4. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost.
5. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost.

It was during this fourth step that the variable “I recommend Seventh-day Adventist schools to others” that was excluded from the model and therefore not mentioned any more.

6. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best.
7. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist education

system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools.

8. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day schools: Number of courses offered.

9. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools. Number of courses offered, Academic quality.

10. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools, Number of courses offered, Academic quality, School choice was influenced by my children .

11. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools, Number of courses offered, Academic quality, School choice was influenced by my children, A requirement for school uniform.

12. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist Education

system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools, Number of courses offered, Academic quality, School choice was influenced by my children. A requirement for school uniform, Students feel safe in school.

13. Predictors: Teachers should be spiritual, Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, Public schools better regardless of cost, Seventh-day Adventist education system is the best, Financial aid is critical in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools, Number of courses offered, Academic quality, School choice was influenced by my children. A requirement for school uniform, Students feel safe in school, I receive pertinent information.

Table 79 (Appendix C) indicates the regression model coefficient in respect of which the progressive eight steps were processed. The 13 item indicates all the variables that were entered (less what was excluded), with their respective level of significance. The table therefore shows those variables that had the highest coefficients necessary to be recognized as significant in the school choice model.

Analyses of Written Comments

The survey instrument provided opportunity to respondents to write additional comments. There were 219 comments made by 140 (37.9%) of those who responded. The comments were tabulated and analyzed using a dichotomous variable scale in the form of agree or disagree.

The comments made in connection with the survey were all read and separated

into 17 categories. The categories were then represented by 17 questions with a Likert-response scale (model developed by Kromann, 1982, pp. 31-34) used as a grid to categorize each written comment. Each comment was read and then given an appropriate rating based upon a dichotomous scale.

Data developed from the comments were analyzed by use of dichotomous variables in the form of agree and disagree, and a frequency table was created. Table 77 presents the comments that were positive about the Seventh-day Adventist system of education and comments that were negative about the same system of education.

The following were the results of the analysis with examples of the quoted written comments as they were categorized:

1. *Seventh-day Adventist schools have a healthy spiritual environment.*

Example: "I attended S.D.A. schools, my 3 children have attended. I feel they are best because of upholding Christian values."

"I am concerned about the kids who attend. My children now know all the swear words from their class mates, as well as all the latest video games, T.V shows and movies. It has been disheartening to me. Some kids, so say my kids, discuss their taking drugs, having... yet this is not addressed as a problem in our Christian schools. Our kids aren't a whole lot different from other kids and therefore vulnerable to bad influence by others!"

2. *Our child is adequately prepared for the real world.*

Example: "I don't think that some kids are exposed to the real world and I don't know if that is an advantage or not."

"Preparation of children in Adventist schools for the real world has a big question!"

TABLE 77
SURVEY COMMENTS

<u>Category</u>	<u>Comments</u>		<u>Agree</u>		<u>Disagree</u>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
1. Adventist schools are spiritually healthy	16	7.3	7	44	9	56
2. Preparation for real world is adequate	6	2.7	1	17	5	83
3. I support Adventist schools despite shortcomings	20	9.1	18	90	2	10
4. Cost of education prohibitive	32	14.6	31	97	1	3
5. Financial aid discrimination has negative impact on child	10	4.6	9	90	1	10
6. Academic quality is positive	13	5.9	4	31	9	69
7. Counseling is adequate	5	2.3	0	0	5	100
8. Quality and level of homework is adequate	13	5.9	0	0	13	100
9. Some Adventist schools need improvement to justify sacrifice	10	4.6	8	80	2	20
10. My child has positive experience with faculty	10	4.6	4	40	6	60
11. Lack of equipment in Adventist schools limit child development ability	7	3.2	6	86	1	14
12. My child has positive cultural experience	10	4.6	1	10	9	90

3. *I support Seventh-day Adventist schools despite their shortcomings.*

Example: “Overall, Adventist schools are the best in the world! I am a product of our Adventist schools and some of my fondest memories are from early Adventist education, grades 1-8, but the school is only as good as the teachers and their spirituality.”

“I am a firm believer in Adventist education as it ought to be. Unfortunately, it has not always measured up in all aspects. However, I believe that the worst Adventist school is better than the best public school.”

4. *The expense of Seventh-day Adventist education makes it prohibitive.*

Example: “Please reconsider the cost, it’s too high. I have had to get a loan to pay off past-due balance at the academy so he could attend this year. . . . They are pricing themselves out of church school especially in regard to middle income earners.”

“We will continue to support Christian education where we have invested our children, no matter what the cost. There is no doubt in my mind that the outlay of funds is well worth the pay-back. God honors those who trust him. But we have done without a lot and deprived ourselves of essentials to keep our kids in church school. It would be wonderful if it weren’t so expensive.”

5. *Discrimination in financial aid has had a negative impact on my child.*

Example: “ If Adventist institutions indeed believe in Adventist education as a mission, then each child should have equal opportunity.”

“Financial assistance should not be based on child’s GPA as the child needs school support in his struggle to improve. Withdrawal of financial support gives wrong message to a child-punishment.”

6. *Academic quality in Seventh-day Adventist schools is positive.*

Example: “Academic content in Adventist schools is better than public schools.

But we still lack giving students a more solid foundation in the math, sciences and English language.”

“Students lack motivation to do excellent work. I believe that Adventist schools are well capable of providing better academics than some of current mediocre teaching.

7. *Counseling in Seventh-day Adventist schools is adequate.*

Example: “I am not aware of any counselors in the school where my children attend.” “There is poor counseling offered in the school and the system has too much legalism. Effort should be put more on effective counseling than penalty.”

8. *I am positive regarding homework assigned.*

Example: “Children need to be given homework that is challenging. Assignments tend to be more of occupying them than learning and get stuck with projects for months which I feel can be done in only two weeks.

“There is too much busy homework that is non quality.”

9. *Some Seventh-day Adventist schools need improvement to justify the sacrifice.*

Example: “I feel very fortunate to be in Berrien Springs area where there are quality Adventist schools. I do not believe that I would have answered questions the same way in some other Adventist schools.”

“Our children are in an excellent Adventist school. I realize that all Adventist schools are not as wonderful. My answers reflect our recent experience. Our children have been in an another Adventist school where we felt the level of education they were

receiving was very poor as they were all in one room school with very limited resources and few opportunities for them.”

10. *Our child has had a positive experience with the faculty.*

Example: “I enjoy the closeness my husband and I feel with my daughter’s teacher, other students parents and the church.

“I have been a teacher both in the Adventist system and in public school. I believe the majority of Adventist teachers are more dedicated than those in public schools.”

11. *Seventh-day Adventist schools tend to limit a child’s ability for lack of school-funded equipment.*

Example: “I think overall all Adventist schools are good, but lack some important things. Schools should not limit the child’s ability. I would love it if Adventist schools, like public schools at all grade levels, experience the same opportunities such as playing instruments without being asked to pay more. Now only those who have money can develop their child’s abilities.”

“Public schools can offer better teaching tools and programs because they are better funded. The church should support schools to fund all needed equipment.

12. *Our child has had a positive inter-cultural experience .*

Example: “I wanted my kids to become integrated into a community. The dominant culture tends to have more impact on the non-dominant even at Kindergarten level.”

“Essentially Adventist education is second to none. However, I feel that the package of it’s delivery needs to be more multi-cultural in certain areas.”

13. *School uniforms will improve present deplorable dress code problems.*

Example: “ School uniforms will improve school spirit and elevate student’s pride in their school.”

“I have increased concern for wearing what is in style so they don’t get teased and laughed at, which is hard when they don’t have a lot of money. I therefore strongly suggest school uniform so they can be more focused on academics.”

14. *We have had a positive experience with the school administration.*

Example: “I believe that our rules have relaxed to the extent that there is no difference between our schools and public schools. Parents should participate more in the school administration.”

“In my opinion, the administration of the public schools is much more supportive of their teachers than is the Adventist system.”

15. *We receive adequate information from/regarding Adventist schools.*

Example: “Is there such a thing as financial aid. I wish I could know? Please let me know.”

“Some Adventist schools have very good information system, e.g., weekly notes. Some give information but of little value, while others are very poor at providing information.”

16. *I am in agreement with the survey.*

Example: “ Some questions sound biased: i.e., presumes that Christian education having value is given, whether or not I am aware of it.”

“Answers ask about general impressions. Little exposure to a variety of SDA schools could be an influencing variable.”

“Wish you success in your survey. God bless you.”

17. *I am interested in receiving the survey results.*

Example: “ Thank you for sending us the results of this study.”

“SEND A COPY OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO ALL AREA CHURCHES!!!”

The data derived from the open-ended comments, indicate that about 70% of the comments were negative while 30% of the comments were positive. The purpose of the comments provided additional insights on parental perception of school choice decisions. About 19.2% of the comments were in the area of cost of education, with over 90% of the financial issues being negative. However, 9.1% of the comments were in support of Seventh-day Adventist education. Of those who commented on Seventh-day Adventist education, 90% indicated that they were prepared to support Seventh-day Adventist education despite their shortcomings.

The other area of interest was on the level of spirituality, where 7.3% of the comments were made. Of those, 56% disagreed that Seventh-day Adventist schools were healthy spiritually, but 44% were positive. Regarding adequacy of counseling, quality of homework, experience with the administration, and adequacy of information in regard to Seventh-day Adventist schools in Southwest Michigan, the parents indicated only negative comments with a low average of about 5.5% of the total comments.

Of the eight select factors, parents gave additional comments on five: 16.4% were on spiritual, 19.2% were on cost of education, 26.5% were on academic issues, 11.0% were on awareness; 5.5% on safety; and 4.6% on cultural; and 13.1% were

13. School uniform is OK for dress code	12	5.5	11	92	1	8
14. I have positive experience with the administration	12	5.5	0	0	12	100
15 I receive adequate information						
16. I agree with the survey	12	5.5	0	0	12	100
17. Send survey results	13	5.9	8	62	5	38
TOTAL	<u>18</u>	8.3	<u>18</u>	100	<u>0</u>	0
	219	100	126	58	93	42

on the survey mainly requesting results. It is clear that parents were more sensitive to academic quality, cost, spiritual issues, and awareness than other factors. The findings are consistent with the fixed questions analyses, on the basis that these same variables were found to be significant in school choice.

Summary

In this chapter, results of the survey were analyzed and statistical tables given on survey responses. Three analytical tools were used to determine which of the eight factors were significant to school choice. To measure common characteristics of the two groups (Seventh-day Adventist parents with children attending Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children attending public schools) as well as variations between the groups, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was done. To measure the

extent to which a variable contributed to the dependent variable (school choice) multiple regression was done using step-wise approach. To analyze the comments, a 17-category dichotomous scale was developed to group the common issues of concern in order to make a comparison in response with the fixed questions.

The hypotheses were reviewed and analyzed to test their null statements. In summary, a statement concerning their rejection or retention has been made.

Hypothesis 1: It was hypothesized that there is no relationship between school choice and parents' perception of spiritual values-based education (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). The null hypothesis was rejected based upon the findings of parental perception of spiritual values-based education in respect of which the two groups indicated significant variation and contribution to school choice model.

Hypothesis 2: It was hypothesized that there was no relationship between school choice and parents' perception of cost of education (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). The null hypothesis was rejected based upon the findings of cost of education in respect of which the two groups indicated significant variation between them and contribution to school choice model.

Hypothesis 3: It was hypothesized that there is no relationship between school choice and their perception of academic program (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). The null hypothesis was rejected based upon the findings of parental perception on the Seventh-day Adventist academic program. The two groups indicated significant variation between them and contribution to the school choice model.

Hypothesis 4: It was hypothesized that there was no relationship between school choice and parents' perception of who influenced school choice (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). The null hypothesis was rejected based upon the findings of parental perception of who influenced school choice. The two groups indicated significant variation between them regarding children's influence on school choice and that the factor had significant variation and contribution to school choice model.

Hypothesis 5: It was hypothesized that there was no relationship between school choice and parents' perception of social factors (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). The null hypothesis was not rejected based upon the findings of parental perception on the social factors. The two groups indicated no significant variation between them on any of the variables and none of the same variables had significant contribution to school choice model.

Hypothesis 6: It was hypothesized that there was no relationship between school choice and parents' perception of school proximity (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). The null hypothesis was not rejected based upon the findings of parental perception on school proximity. The two groups indicated no significant variation between them and none of the variables associated with the factor had significant contribution to school choice model.

Hypothesis 7: It was hypothesized that there was no relationship between school choice and parents' perception of safety (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). The null hypothesis was rejected based upon the findings of parental

perception of the importance of safety in choice of school.

The two groups indicated significant variation between them and therefore contributed to school choice model.

Hypothesis 8: It was hypothesized that there is no relationship between school choice and parents' perception of awareness of information about Seventh-day Adventist schools (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis). The null hypothesis was rejected based upon the findings of parental perception of the extent to which parents were informed about Seventh-day Adventist schools. The two groups indicated significant variation between them in nearly all the variables associated with the factor. One variable on not receiving pertinent information, which parents considered pertinent enough, made a strong contribution to school choice model.

The spiritual value factor had--2 out of 9 variables being significant. The cost factor had--3 out of 6, the academic program variable--2 out of 14, influence-- 1 out of 3, safety--2 out of 7, and awareness 1 out of 6 variables contributing to the model. Although some of the factors such as awareness had only 1 out of 6 variables being significant in the regression model, the respective factors were considered significant since they contributed also to the model. In the regression equation therefore, the social and school proximity factors had nil contribution.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors influencing school choice among the Seventh-day Adventist population in Southwest Michigan with respect to parents who have children in Grades K-12 Seventh-day Adventist schools and public schools. The study is useful to school administrators, faculty, parents, and students as stakeholders to mutually meet their objectives and goals as well as to contribute to school choice theory.

What prompted this study was the enrollment trends that had declined over the last 30-year-period at an average rate of 15% per decade in Grades K-12 in Southwest Michigan. In order to reverse this trend, administrators must consider the way the significant variables/factors associated with parental school choice can provide pointers to the solution. As a result of the existing alternatives that parents have as to where their children should attend, the research focused on the factors influencing school choice. Research questions were, therefore, raised to address the problem and key variables identified on the basis of which eight hypotheses were developed and stated as follows:

1. There is no relationship between school choice and parental perception of Adventist education (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

2. There is no relationship between school choice and parental perception of cost of education (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
3. There is no relationship between school choice and parental perception of academic program (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
4. There is no relationship between school choice and parental perception of influence of choice (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
5. There is no relationship between school choice and parental perception of social factors (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
6. There is no relationship between school choice and parental perception of school proximity (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
7. There is no relationship between school choice and parental perception of safety (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).
8. There is no relationship between school choice and parental perception of awareness of information about Adventist schools (controlled for the independent variables of the prior hypothesis).

A review of recent literature regarding parental school choice indicated that private schools came into existence because of the parental desire to have their children attend schools that were smaller and had a religious influence, better training in diligence and study habits, and stricter discipline. From the literature, most parents indicated that values, attitudes, and being closer to home were also significant in choosing a school for their children. From the studies it was also recognized that parents generally are interested in providing an education for their children that will mold them for the future.

Christian education was considered to provide an option for parents to have their children attend schools that impart values that they viewed as best for their children, and in order to achieve this goal, education must integrate such values within its curriculum. The Seventh-day Adventist school system does provide an opportunity for such a transfer of values, while also attempting to achieve academic excellence and prepare the student for the present life and the life to come.

The various research findings cited do support the hypotheses that there was a relationship between school choice and parental perception of spiritual-based education, cost of education, academic program, peer influence, social factors, proximity, safety, and marketing. The study, therefore, focused on addressing the foregoing possible factors in as far as they may influence Seventh-day Adventist parents in Southwest Michigan in choosing between Seventh-day Adventist schools and public schools and further enhance an understanding of school choice theory.

The literature also indicated that Price (1992), who did studies in private non-profit schools, and Archibald (1996), who did studies in Catholic schools on school choice, used the multiple regression method to determine the most significant variables. Studies on Seventh-day Adventist schools were done by Epperson (1990) in Southeastern United States, Hunt (1996) in Southeastern United States, and Kromann (1982) in the Midwest.

Studies on spiritual values-based education on the first factor cited in the literature include the Gallup Survey (1969, 1996, and 2000), Kromann (1982), Hunt (1996); on the cost factor--Daugherty (1991), Goldhaber (1994), Dutton (1996), and Hunt (1996); on academic program factor--West & Varlaam (1991), Hu (1996), and Hunt (1996); on the

influence factor--Archibald (1996); on the social factor--Archibald (1996), Hunt (1996), Hu (1996); on proximity factor--Stephen (1979), West & Varlaam (1991), Hunter (1991), and Archibald (1996); on safety factor--Buttrum (1996), Hu (1996), and Hunt (1996); on awareness factor--Price (1992).

This study was a quantitative empirical study carried out through descriptive methods using a survey questionnaire instrument with both fixed and open-ended questions. A parental population of 1,063 Seventh-day Adventists was obtained from which a sample of 535 were surveyed. The research instrument used in gathering the data had questions which were developed from interviews. The key issues constituting the main sections of the questionnaire were consistent with research findings discussed under the literature review. The questionnaire was structured using the Likert scale with fixed questions seeking responses in diverse ways which included fixed questions that had different polarity, thus making the subjects think about how they would respond. There was also an open-ended comment section which gave the respondents an opportunity to comment in their own words on information beyond the fixed questions. A pilot study was done to refine the instrument as well as ensure that the issue of internal validity was fully addressed and hence establish that it measured what it was intended to measure.

Data were gathered from the sample of 535 Seventh-day Adventist parents in Southwest Michigan from which a total usable response of 370 (69.2%) was received. Results of the survey were analyzed and statistical tables given on survey responses. Three analytical tools were used to determine which of the eight factors were significant to school choice. To measure common characteristics of the two groups (Seventh-day

Adventist parents with children attending Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children attending public schools) as well as differences between the groups, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) was done.

To measure the extent to which an independent variable contributed to the dependent variable (school choice) multiple regression was performed using the step-wise approach in which 8 sets of factors were entered in hierarchical manner, and the independent variables of the prior hypothesis controlled. Any independent variable with level of significance equal to or less than .05 was entered in the regression model and to be retained in the regression. a .1 or less level of significance was necessary. To analyze the comments a 17-category dichotomous scale was developed to identify common issues of concern in order to make a comparison in response with the fixed questions.

The findings from the survey were tabulated and each null hypothesis was analyzed for each independent variable in relation to the dependent variable. A .05 level of significance was selected as necessary to reject the nulls of all hypotheses. Analyses of data were referenced to the stated hypotheses and then presented along with analyses of the written comments and other variables. Regression analyses, ANOVA, and mean scores were tabulated using information generated from responses to the survey.

From the study, there was sufficient evidence to reject six of the eight hypotheses because of the significant relationship found between the independent variables and the dependent variables. Two of the hypotheses were retained on the basis that they showed no significant relationship between the associated independent variables and the dependent variable. As a result, the hypotheses must now be restated, based on the outcomes.

Restatement of the Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of spiritual value based education.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of cost of education.

Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of academic programs.

Hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of who influenced school choice.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of social factors.

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of school proximity.

Hypothesis 7: There is a significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of children safety in schools.

Hypothesis 8: There is a significant relationship between parental school choice and parents' perception of awareness of information about schools.

The research questions which this study sought to address were as follows:

1. What are the factors influencing parents in their choice of schools?

What are the possible factors influencing Seventh-day Adventist parents to choose schools other than the Seventh-day Adventist schools? If indeed there are factors causing parents to opt for other schools, how can these factors be identified?

2. To what extent do parents consider the select factors important in their school of choice?

3. What is the relationship between school choices made by parents and the select factors including parental perception of the spiritual values, cost of education, academic program, peer influence, social impact, proximity, safety, and awareness of information about the school?

Answers to Research Questions

Six out of the eight hypotheses were rejected. There was adequate evidence at the alpha level of .05 to substantiate the rejections. Hypotheses 5 and 6, however, showed no statistical significant relationship. Consequently, the hypotheses were retained as originally stated. The first research question asked about possible factors which influenced Seventh-day Adventist parents to choose schools other than Seventh-day Adventist schools. In answer to the first question therefore, the findings suggest that the factors influencing parental school choice are spiritual values, cost of education, academic program, children's influence, safety, and awareness.

The specific variables that were found to be significant were 11 out of 57 ranked in the order of the magnitude of their respective coefficient of determination (*R* square) with cumulative proportion of variance ranging from .047 to .297 in the regression model.

The regression model therefore explained .297 or 29.7% of the total variance, which is considered good for a complex dependent variable as in this study on human subjects' perception pertaining to choice decisions between public and private schools.

Summary of Findings and Discussion

Spiritual Values Factor

The regression analysis indicated that the most significant variable that contributed to school choice with regard to parental perception of Seventh-day Adventist education was attributed to spiritual values. Accordingly, parents chose Seventh-day Adventist schools because they believe that it is the best system of education (the fourth most significant variable) and that spiritual teachers are the best for their children.

Of all the significant factors contributing to school choice, parents indicated that their top priority in school choice was teachers who were spiritual. The findings concur with the study (discussed in chapter 2) by Hunt (1996) among 2,000 Seventh-day Adventist parents in the Southeastern United States, in which he found the most significant factor influencing school choice was spiritual environment in school.

Overall, two of the nine variables under the spiritual values-based education factor were found to contribute significantly to the model, and seven out of the nine variables under the factor were found to be significantly different between groups, with Adventist school mean scores higher than public schools on average. From the results of the spiritual value factor it is evident that the groups were significantly sensitive with regard to the Seventh-day Adventist system of education being the best and that teachers should be spiritual and indicated overall support for spiritual values.

Whereas both groups, overall, had higher levels of support for spiritual, values with average means in excess of 4.0, they significantly differed on the extent to which they

perceived the importance of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs; the value of morning devotions; the extent to which children who attend Seventh-day Adventist schools stay in church; the extent to which they would recommend Seventh-day Adventist schools to others; the extent to which Seventh-day Adventist beliefs are an essential part of the church's ministry; and the extent to which they perceived a spiritual atmosphere should exist in school.

The findings, therefore, suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in church schools are more inclined to spiritual values than Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in public schools. Having established that there is a relationship between parental school choice and parent's perception of spiritual values-based education, we can conclude that parents who have a strong interest in certain values have a higher tendency or probability of choosing a school that advocates and demonstrates those specific values that uniquely place them in any given market. The findings are also consistent with the Gallup Survey (1969) of 2,000 parents in which 93% of the Protestant and 73% of Catholic parents indicated that the main reason why they chose private schools for their children was attributed to religious influence, values and attitude with the view to molding them for the future. As stated earlier, since 1969, the annual Gallup survey on school choice issues has subsequently concentrated on cost issues relative to the school voucher system. Therefore, this study was justified as it dealt with the fundamental issues in line with the 1969 survey.

In comparison with the open-ended comments, the spiritual values factor had also the highest positive rating whereby both groups indicated that they would support

Seventh-day Adventist schools despite their shortcomings. Further, both groups agreed that they would choose the Seventh-day Adventist educational system because they believed that it was the best system of education. This would explain the fact that despite the negative comments given on the academic program, parents were still willing to enroll their children in Seventh-day Adventist schools. The question to be addressed is, If they indeed believe in the Seventh-day Adventist system of education in which they espouse religious values, why do Seventh-day Adventist parents still have their children in public schools, contrary to their aspirations? The answer to the problem is twofold. One, school administrators need to address the perception of Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools in order to improve the likelihood of choosing Adventist schools. This is because in the nine independent variables associated with the Adventist education factor, including religious values, there were significant differences between the means in seven independent variables. It is prudent to suggest that the narrower the differences between the groups, the more the likelihood of making similar choices. Second, it is also prudent to suggest that there must be other factors that deter such parents from enrolling their children in Seventh-day Adventist schools other than the nine variables, which must be equally addressed.

Finally, further research is necessary to establish if there are factors beyond this study as well as to obtain more information from parents as to what the administrators should do to enable them to choose Seventh-day Adventist schools.

Cost of Education Factor

The regression analysis indicated that the second, third, and fifth most significant variables that contributed to school choice with regard to parental perception of Seventh-day Adventist education were attributed to cost of education. Accordingly, parents chose Seventh-day Adventist schools because they believe that Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost, and Seventh-day Adventist schools are better than public schools. The higher the indication that financial aid is critical, the more likely the parents would send their children to public schools. The findings that financial aid was a critical factor in school choice concur with the study done by Daugherty (1991). The findings of this study also concurred with those of Goldhaber (1994), Dutton. (1996) and Hunt (1996) in which they found cost of education and availability of financial assistance to have had the most significant correlation with parental school choice. In this regard, financial aid is a critical issue in being able to make choices, and Seventh-day Adventist parents who are reliant on financial aid are likely to choose Seventh-day Adventist schools if such assistance is available.

Overall, three of the six variables under the cost of education factor were found to contribute significantly to the model, while on average four out of the six variables under the factor were found to be significantly different between the groups, with Adventist parents with children in Adventist schools having higher means than Adventist parents with children in public schools. All six variables at least registered medium high-levels of support, which would indicate that the parents considered cost of education to be an important factor in their school-choice decisions.

From the results of the cost of education factor, it is evident that both groups concur that if cost of education were lower in Seventh-day Adventist schools, then more children could attend. Further, in both groups, respondents considered that Seventh-day Adventist schools were not affordable to most families. The two statements do not contradict, but are actually consonant. The findings indicate that while some families could afford the cost of education in Seventh-day Adventist schools, a number of other Seventh-day Adventist families could not afford without recourse to financial aid. This was also supported by the open-ended comments that parents made.

Whereas both groups overall raised concern over cost of education, Adventist parents with children in Adventist schools felt that it was because of their belief that it was well worth the cost that they were willing to sacrifice their financial resources.

Considering that the groups significantly varied on the extent to which they perceived that Seventh-day Adventist schools were worth the cost, and the extent to which they could afford the cost of education in Seventh-day Adventist schools, would suggest that there is a relationship between school-choice and cost of education. Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in Seventh-day Adventist schools are more inclined to or are able to pay for private education than Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in public schools. Further, that in being able to make such choices, financial aid is critical to parents who have inadequate resources to meet the cost of Adventist education. Having therefore established that there is a relationship between parental school-choice and parents' perception of cost of education, we can conclude that parents who perceive that the Seventh-day Adventist system of education is better than the public

system, and worth the sacrifice, have a higher probability of choosing a school that demonstrates that it is well worth it.

The open-ended comments indicated that only 30% of Seventh-day Adventist parents who commented could afford the cost of Seventh-day Adventist schools, and 25.1% were marginally affording. There were 44.6% who clearly indicated that they could not afford it without financial aid. Further, the comments indicated that both groups of parents generally agreed that the cost of Seventh-day Adventist education was prohibitive, but it was worth the cost. If indeed the cost of education was prohibitive, how would these same parents who have children in Seventh-day Adventist schools then be able to keep them in Seventh-day Adventist schools? Parents with children in Adventist schools indicated that they were able to do so because a number of them were dependent on the financial aid the school provided or arranged, and the middle-income-earning parents ineligible for financial aid had to obtain financial aid from elsewhere in order to pay school fees.

From the comments, therefore, there are parents who have children in private schools, not because they are able to afford them but because they are able to secure credit elsewhere or they make the sacrifice to meet the cost of education. Such an arrangement, the respondents say, makes it necessary to forego certain family essentials in order to keep their children in private schools. It is because of this experience that they feel the financial aid program in Seventh-day Adventist schools is viewed by both groups as disenfranchising, especially the middle-income parents. In terms of cost, therefore, it can be presumed that it was those who were not able to withstand the sacrifice or to secure

funds elsewhere, for whatever reasons, who tended to opt for public school education.

With regard to cost of education, it is evident that there are significant differences between Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools. The extent to which both groups perceive the worth of Seventh-day Adventist schools, its affordability, superiority, and the necessity of financial aid, suggests that the concept of diminishing marginal utility is evidently applicable. As the cost of education increases, the additional value in education increases at a decreasing rate. Therefore, demand for Seventh-day Adventist education decreases to a point where, even if parents are positive about Seventh-day Adventist education, they reach a point of indifference and are forced to take other alternatives, such as other private schools or public schools.

The Academic Program Factor

Parents were asked to rate Adventist schools using a grading scale of A, B, C, D, E, and F with scores matched to 5-1 in a descending scale. The ANOVA table confirmed that both groups, on average, graded high the academic program that was offered by Adventist schools.

The regression analysis indicated that the sixth and seventh most significant variables that contributed to school-choice (number of courses offered and academic quality) with regard to parental perception of Seventh-day Adventist education were attributed to the academic program. The findings concur with the study done by Hunter (1991) in which it was observed that the parents' main priority in choosing a school was

academic results. Accordingly, parents chose Seventh-day Adventist schools because they believed that Seventh-day Adventist schools offered an adequate number of courses and have a quality academic program.

Overall 13 of the 14 variables under the academic program factor indicated significant differences between the two groups. Both groups registered similar means of 3.79 (second lowest, medium high) which would suggest that the groups concurred with regard to the importance parents attached to the amount of homework assigned.

Whereas both groups overall rated the Adventist academic program high, Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools tended to rate it higher than those with children in public schools. Fourteen academic variable mean scores were above 4.0, while Adventist parents with children in public schools registered all means below 4.0. In this regard, the two groups significantly differed on the academic quality; quality of classroom instruction; grading procedures; variety of courses offered; textbooks and teaching materials used; the extent to which teachers help students outside class; availability of academic counselors; relevance of courses; class size; number of courses offered; and preparation for further education and the real world. The differences between the mean scores suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools have a more positive impression of the academic program than Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools.

Having established that there is a relationship between parental school-choice and parents' perception of the academic program, we can conclude that, with regard to the

academic program, parents who choose Seventh-day Adventist schools for their children have a higher perception of the number of courses offered and the academic quality than parents who choose public schools for their children.

Statistics (Tables 25-38) on average indicated high importance on parental perception of the academic program offered by Seventh-day Adventist schools. This observation is consistent with the open-ended comments and would suggest that, in view of the differences between the two groups, the Adventist school administrators need to attempt to improve the perception of Adventist parents with children in public schools in the area of academic program. Judging from the comments parents gave on the academic program factor and the Gallup (2000) survey, it appears that there is a perceived narrowing gap in academic quality per se between Seventh-day Adventist schools and public schools.

With regard to availability of equipment, several parents indicated that public schools have more equipment necessary to develop the talents of children than in Seventh-day Adventist schools. In public schools, for example, equipment such as musical instruments are provided to children, while in Seventh-day Adventist schools children have to buy their own instruments, and piano lessons have to be paid for in addition to the already perceived high cost of education. This situation, the parents suggest, tends to be discriminatory as it deprives equal opportunity to the children as well as inhibits development of potential talents just because of funds. Second, parents generally resent the practice in some Seventh-day Adventist schools to have more than one grade in a classroom no matter how good the teacher may be. The narrowing gap between the two

systems of education in terms of the academic program is attributed to a combination of possible improvements public schools have made, against lack of improvements or changes made by Seventh-day Adventist schools over time to meet the needs of their customers and compete effectively in the market, albeit without compromising educational goals and objectives.

Influence on Parental Choice Factor

The descriptive statistics (Tables 40 - 42) and more specifically the ANOVA table indicated that there were no significant differences between Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools with regard to other people influencing parental school-choice or purely being their own decision. However, the mean score for influence by others (2.40) was moderate low and by children (2.55) also moderate low, while by parents was a moderate high score of 3.87. The ANOVA table indicated that influence by children in school-choice had a significant difference mean score $p < .01$. It is important to point out that the findings are not suggesting that children are choosing schools rather than their parents. Further, the regression analysis indicated that the eighth significant variable that contributed to school choice with regard to parental perception of Seventh-day Adventist education was influenced by children with significance of $p < .01$ with proportion of variance (R square) of .261. From the results of the influence factor, it is evident that while the level of influence in school choice by those other than parents was low, the higher the influence of children, the more likely they would attend Adventist schools.

It is important to also note that while the mean scores are concerned with the averages of the magnitude of the level of agreement, the *R* square in the regression model is concerned with the average of the sum of the squared deviations around the means.

The findings are consistent with those of West and Varlaam (1991) in which a study was done on parents of junior school children in England, and discovered that one of the factors influencing school choice was children's influence in which it was attributed to their desire to be with their friends. In addition to the findings of this study, it was interesting to note that both groups did not vary in their perception regarding the extent to which other people (people outside the family) influenced their choices or their choices being purely theirs and that these variables were not significant in the regression model. However, the moderately high mean scores clearly indicated that parents made school choices and not children.

Social Factor

The social factor variables tested with regard to the degree of importance in making school-choice decisions include: physical education, extracurricular activities, racial harmony in the school, being part of the school, active social life, school spirit, and parental involvement. The total mean scores indicated that both groups considered all the variables important with racial harmony having the highest total mean score of 4.40; school spirit, 4.17; being part of the school, 4.12; parental involvement, 4.12; active social life, 3.85; extracurricular activities, 3.62; and physical education, 3.51. The ANOVA table indicated that none of the eight variables in the social factor registered significant

differences between the groups, and the regression analysis indicated that none of the social factor variables significantly contributed to parental school-choice decisions on the basis that in all cases the variables had *R* square value not within significant level. Therefore, none had significant variance between the two groups at .05 level of significance, but were important in school choice. Whereas both groups overall were positive on social factors and considered them important, on their own they did not contribute to the school choice model. This study did not concur with that of Archibald (1996) in which parental school choice was found to be correlated with social factors.

Why the two groups did not significantly differ in their perceptions could be attributed to the influence of their faith, beliefs, and aspirations that may be considered similar since all the subjects in the sample were Seventh-day Adventists. The lack of significant variations between the groups may also be attributed to the unique international setting of parents from various parts of the world living in Southwest Michigan, such that a replication of this study elsewhere may not necessarily generate the same results. On the other hand, it could be a reflection of changing trends in society in which 21st -century parents are those whose educational interests have transcended social barriers and are more influenced by other factors.

However, the important issue in this study is the discovery that Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools did not differ in their perception about social factors which they perceived as important in school choice.

From the available literature regarding parental school choice among Seventh-day

Adventists, none of the studies show any significant correlation between parental school choice and social factors. However, Seventh-day Adventist parents in Southwest Michigan consider social factors to be very important in school-choice decisions.

Proximity Factor

The proximity factor variables tested with regard to the level of agreement in making school-choice decisions generally registered moderately high levels of agreement and ranked in their order of total mean scores as follows: parents should have easy access to school (4.22); nearness improves effectiveness among students and teachers (3.94); lack of transportation is a problem to some parents (3.90); children should attend schools that are close to home (3.89); and living near school improves attendance (3.84). Although the mean scores were moderately high, like the social factor variables, there were no significant differences between the groups in any of the variables.

The regression analysis also indicated that none of the proximity factor variables significantly contributed to the school-choice model given that their *R* square values were not within the significant level. The findings, therefore, do suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in either Seventh-day Adventist schools or public schools in Southwest Michigan have similar views in suggesting that proximity is an important factor. However, on the basis that there were no significant variations between the groups, all the variables on their own, although important, did not significantly influence school-choice decisions on their own.

Comments made by parents with regard to proximity also suggest that distance

from school does not hinder parental decisions on school-choice, and that parents are more interested in schools that can provide the kind of education they consider best for their children. The finding is inconsistent with that of Archibald (1996), Stephen (1979), and Hunter (1991) in which it was found that school-choice was correlated with proximity. Again from available research studies on parental school-choice among Seventh-day Adventists, none indicate significance or non-significance as this factor was not explored. Replication of this study among other Seventh-day Adventist communities may help uncover the causes of the indifference or non-significance and whether it is attributed to possible uniqueness of the Seventh-day Adventist community in Southwest Michigan or high affinity for Seventh-day Adventist education such that parents would be willing to send their children to Seventh-day Adventist schools no matter where they are located. Further, replication may also help determine whether the contributing factors are due to the existing modes of transportation within an effective infrastructure, or because of relatively less populated areas within large cities.

Safety Factor

The safety factor variables tested with regard to the level of importance in making school-choice decisions included: reasonable dress code, strict rules, fairness in discipline, personal safety, student feeling safe, school uniform, and student supervision. All variables registered very high total mean scores, all above 4.00, with the exception of school uniform, which registered 2.82. Both groups therefore considered safety an important factor. Generally, Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in Seventh-

day Adventist schools registered higher mean scores than Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in public schools. There were significant mean differences between the groups with Adventist schools higher than public schools except the requirement for school uniforms. Students feeling safe had a $p < .01$; a requirement for school uniforms was $p < .05$; and students are well supervised, $p < .05$. There were no significant differences between the means with regard to reasonable dress code, strict rules related to student conduct, and personal safety.

The regression analysis indicated that the ninth and 10th most significant variables (school uniform with $p < .05$ and students feel safe with $p < .05$) that were perceived to influence school-choice were attributed to the safety factor. The findings concur with the studies by Hunt (1996) among Adventist parents with elementary and middle-school children in Southeastern states in which safety was found to be a significant factor in school-choice. The Gallup national survey (1996) asked 1,329 randomly selected respondents if they perceived that the use of school uniforms would reduce school violence and other disciplinary problems, improve climate for learning by eliminating “label competition” and peer pressure and gang clothes, and thereby improve security. At least 53% nationwide approved the use of school uniforms while 44% disapproved. A similar survey on public school parents reported that 50% approved while 46% disapproved, and 73% of private school parents approved while 21% disapproved. Among the public schools to document success with a mandatory uniform policy is the 83,000-student Long Beach District in California, which reported a drop in assault and battery cases in Grades K-8 by 34% in 2 years, physical fights by 51%, and suspensions by 32%.

In this study, results (Table 64) indicated that Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in public schools had a moderately higher mean score (3.12 or 62%) on the requirement for school uniforms than Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in Seventh-day Adventist schools (2.66 or 53%) and a total mean of 2.82 or 56%. It is very interesting to note that the national Gallup poll survey and my study of Adventist parents with children in Adventist schools had similar results of 53%. However, the national survey on private schools had a higher score (73%). In this study, Adventist parents with children in public schools had a mean of 3.12 or 56%, while the Gallup survey on parents with children in public schools indicated 50% in favor of school uniforms.

Comments generated by both groups of parents did address the issue of safety within the context of bad influence by others as a whole. Parents were concerned that some children did not feel safe due to other children talking about drugs, promiscuity, and a passion for fashion, issues which in their opinion Seventh-day Adventist schools did not seem to address or otherwise tend to assume are non-existent. The parents generally felt that although at present school uniforms are not a requirement, its introduction would create uniformity in dress code, and not only alleviate worries of the economically disenfranchised families who cannot cope with fashion costs, but also to create a sense of belonging, team spirit, and oneness as an outward demonstration of the unseen intrinsic values. Accordingly, parents chose Seventh-day Adventist schools because they perceived that such schools provide an environment that makes students feel safe in school. The higher support for school uniforms by parents with children in public schools would suggest that Adventist parents with children in public schools are more likely to choose a

school with uniforms than Adventist parents with children in Adventist schools. It has always been common practice among Seventh-day Adventist schools not to require school uniforms in Southwest Michigan and elsewhere in the United States. However, over the years there may be changing trends in the way parents perceive the school uniform issue, could account for the significant outcomes in this study as well as the Gallup poll. Further study on the subject would be desirable in light of issues raised in comments regarding the perceived negative influence that secular society is perceived to have created in the manner of dress and the need to improve safety.

Awareness Factor

The awareness factor variables tested with regard to how pertinent the information received by parents was in making school-choice decisions, registered high total mean scores above 4.00 in: awareness of Christian education (4.76); awareness on the quality of education offered in Adventist schools (4.09), and receiving information about Adventist schools (4.04). Generally Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in Seventh-day Adventist schools registered higher total mean scores on awareness about Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in public schools.

There were significant differences between the means in the following variables: “I am sure of the quality of education offered in Adventist schools” ($p < .05$); “I receive good information about Adventist schools” ($p < .001$); “I have been unable to obtain information about Adventist schools” ($p < .05$); “I am not aware of financial assistance available in Adventist schools” ($p < .001$), and “I receive pertinent information” ($p < .001$).

Adventist parents with children in Adventist schools had higher means than those with children in public schools. Further, Adventist parents with children in Adventist schools were relatively more informed about Adventist schools than those with children in public schools. There were no statistically significant differences between the means with regard to awareness of the value of Christian education variable.

The regression analysis indicated that the variable “I receive information that is pertinent” had a significant variation with $p < .05$ thus contributing significantly to school choice. This 11th significant variable that contributed to school-choice with regard to parental perception of Adventist education was attributed to how informed parents were about Adventist schools. The findings indicate that Adventist parents were sensitive on the extent to which they received information that was pertinent than were Adventist parents with children in public schools. The findings concur with that of Price (1992) in which marketing in church-related schools strongly correlated with school-choice on the premise that where choice opportunity exists, there is bound to be an interplay of demand and supply forces. Both groups overwhelmingly agreed with regard to the extent of their awareness of the value of Christian education. Generally, statistics indicate that Seventh-day Adventist parents who had children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more informed than those who had children in public schools (Tables 66-71).

The findings, therefore, do suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools were more informed about Seventh-day Adventist schools than Seventh day Adventist parents who had children in public schools. Table 78 is a summary of all the 11 significant variables based on the regression model.

TABLE 78
SUMMARY OF THE SIGNIFICANT VARIABLES

Variable	M e a n S c o r e s		Regression
	Adventist	Public	
1. Teachers should be spiritual people	4.86	4.52	.002
2. Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost	4.15	3.48	.003
3. Public schools are better regardless of cost	1.48	2.04	.000
4. Seventh-day Adventist education is the best system of education	3.93	3.84	.000
5. Financial aid is a critical factor in enrolling in Seventh-day Adventist schools	3.83	4.20	.001
6. Number of courses offered	4.05	3.62	.005
7. Academic quality	4.28	3.92	.029
8. Parents are influenced by their children in choice of school	2.70	2.28	.002
9. A requirement for school uniform	2.66	3.12	.023
10. Students feel safe in school	4.78	4.61	.028
11. Parents do not receive information that is pertinent	3.85	3.24	.003

Having established that there is a relationship between parental school-choice and information they receive about Seventh-day Adventist schools, it can be concluded that parents tended to choose Seventh-day Adventist schools for their children on the basis of the quality of information they receive about Seventh-day Adventist schools. To expand enrollment in Seventh-day Adventist schools, further research needs to be done on how to reach parents with children in institutions other than Seventh-day Adventist schools with the view to providing pertinent information necessary to make choices in their best interest.

Conclusions

Generally, Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools as well as Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools were very positive on their perception of Seventh-day Adventist schools as demonstrated by high mean scores. Both groups underscored the importance of Adventist education in which the highest mean score of 4.72 was on the importance of religious beliefs. The academic program, affordable cost of education, safety, and awareness were also factors that were rated high. Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools are more positive to Adventist schools than Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools.

Eleven variables significantly contributed to the school-choice model as attested by their proportions of variance within the significant level ($p < .05$). Parents of children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and parents of children in public schools are

convinced that the Seventh-day Adventist educational system is the best. In choice of school, Seventh-day Adventist parents in Southwest Michigan want teachers who are spiritual. The higher the level of desire on the part of parents for teachers to be spiritual people, the greater the tendency to choose Adventist schools for their children.

The cost factor was found to be significant in parental school-choice. However, parents may perceive the amount of cost to be high to a point they become indifferent and start exploring other options, and will only make preference on any choice when one of the options subsequently demonstrates a higher marginal utility. Although income level was not one of the test variables, a number of parents indicated their reliance on financial aid to maintain attendance, thus making the utility concept relevant. A marginal value is the change in a dependent variable (y) associated with a one-unit change in an independent variable (x) in the form $Y=f(X)$. Taking the cost of education as an independent variable and the value of education as the dependent variable, the law of diminishing marginal utility would suggest that, as the cost of education increases by a dollar, the additional value in education increases at a decreasing rate. Therefore, as the cost of education increases due to rising costs, the unit change in value of education gained to cost of education, increases at a reducing rate. Consequently, there may be a declining demand for Seventh-day Adventist education because of available alternatives such as public schools that would ostensibly provide the same utility value. At this point the parent is considered to be indifferent, although in some cases some parents may simply not have enough money to pay for private education.

Seventh-day Adventist parents in Southwest Michigan have commented on the

perceived strong influence the academic program has on school-choice. Finally, they have also shown that in school-choice they are conscious of safety and the extent to which they are informed or are aware about Seventh-day Adventist schools.

Based on the findings from this research as supported by empirical data, there are several conclusions which can be made:

1. A belief that Seventh-day Adventist education is the best and that teachers should be spiritual, are significant predictors of an Adventist parent's choice of an Adventist school. While response to the other spiritual variables in the first factor did not add to the prediction model, they do indicate a strong support for the spiritual component by both sets of parents.
2. Whereas Adventist parents with children in public schools have a high positive attitude toward the Adventist system of education, they tend to choose public schools for their children because of their relatively lower perception of the worth of the Adventist education relative to cost, availability of financial aid (by qualification or non awareness), academic quality, the number of courses available for selection, and the lack of adequate valuable information.
3. A stronger agreement that Adventist schools are worth the cost, disagreement that public schools are better, and lower need for financial aid are significant predictors of an Adventist parent's choice of an Adventist school for their children. While other variables connected with the cost factor did not predict school-choice, the significant differences between the means do provide more information associated with cost issue. Both groups of Adventist parents do not think that Adventist schools are affordable to

most families and strongly believe that more children would attend if the cost were lower.

4. Adventist parents who have children in Adventist schools tend to rate the academic program offered in Adventist schools higher than Adventist parents who had children in public schools. Further, Adventist parents tend to choose Adventist schools because they perceive that Adventist schools offered a number of courses with more options and better quality of the academic program than public schools.

5. While the level of influence in school-choice by those other than parents is low, the stronger the influence of children on their parents, the more likely they are to choose an Adventist school.

6. Adventist parents perceive social and proximity factors to be important in school-choice decisions but they do not add to the prediction model.

7. Except for the requirement of school uniform, all the safety variables are considered highly important by parents in making school-choice decisions. While the importance of school uniform is not high, it is part of the model in that parents with children in public schools tend to place higher importance on school uniform than Adventist parents with children in Adventist schools. There is a stronger tendency to place importance on a student's feeling of safety at school by parents whose children are in Adventist schools. Therefore, the more Adventist parents perceive that children feel safe in Adventist schools, the more likely the parents would choose Adventist schools.

8. The significant positive attitude by Seventh-day Adventist parents of children in public schools toward the Adventist system of education indicates that its unique potential is not being fully exploited.

9. Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in Adventist schools tend to be more informed about Adventist schools than Adventist parents who have children in public schools. Adventist parents tend to choose Adventist schools for their children depending on how pertinent the information they receive is. Therefore, the more informed Adventist parents are about schools, the more likely they will enroll their children in those schools.

10. Based on group differences developed from this study, it is prudent to conclude that, as a school-choice theory, parents who have a strong interest in certain values they espouse have a higher tendency or probability of choosing a school that advocates and demonstrates those specific values that uniquely places them in any given market.

Recommendations for Administrative Actions

Spiritual Values

As discussed in chapter 1, what prompted this study was the declining enrollment trends in Southwest Michigan over the last 30-year period. In order to reverse this trend the study attempted to assess the way the significant factors can provide pointers to the solution. In terms of value of Seventh-day Adventist education, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has made efforts to educate the Seventh-day Adventist community in Southwest Michigan on the value of the Seventh-day Adventist educational system. As a result of this, there was no significant variation between Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with

children in public schools. On this score, the Seventh-day Adventist community as a whole is aware of its value and superiority over the public education system.

Although both groups had very strong positive perception of Adventist schools, the significant differences between the groups and variations would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist school administrators need to create/enhance programs aimed at improving parental awareness, familiarity, and positive attitude.

Given the finding that both Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and parents with children in public schools believe in the superiority of the Seventh-day Adventist educational system over the public educational system, it is imperative that school administrators attempt to fully exploit any given potential to achieve enrollment objectives. Seventh-day Adventist schools need therefore to promote the unique values that they enjoy over the other school systems. As evidenced by the recent Gallup national survey 2000, there is a downward trend in support of private education and significant positive public attitude toward public education due to improving levels of satisfaction of public education. Over time, there is a tendency of parents to perceive a narrowing gap between the two systems, to the extent that parents start contemplating other educational options as perceived differences continue to dwindle.

Cost of Education

The study indicates that Seventh-day Adventist parents in both groups strongly agreed that: lowering of cost in Seventh-day Adventist schools would result in increasing attendance; Adventist schools are worth the cost; Adventist schools are better than public

schools; and financial aid is a critical factor. However, parents perceived that Adventist schools are not affordable to most parents. Accordingly, school administrators need to continually address the issue of cost as it influences school-choice decisions. It is therefore recommended that Seventh-day Adventist schools restructure and expand their financial aid program in order to accommodate more children in the aid package which is presently perceived to address needs of only low-income parents. Further, schools should solicit funds from sources other than the operating budget in order to provide finance for school owned equipment needed for developing talents so as to minimize the perceived limited opportunities to potential children.

From the findings of this study that fewer parents could afford the cost of Seventh-day Adventist education without relying on financial aid, it is clear that Seventh-day Adventist schools will in the future continue to heavily rely on financial aid to remain viable. If indeed we can rely on the evidence adduced by this research, then Seventh-day Adventist schools can be considered having overpriced themselves in the market, as a result of which tuition costs have continued to be subsidized through financial aid in order to remain viable. In these circumstances, as long as Seventh-day Adventist schools remain price insensitive, they will remain vulnerable to continued declining enrollment--hence the need for price restructuring.

Academic Program

Parents differed most between groups in the area of academic program where respondents had the highest differences between the means. Seventh-day Adventist parents

rated the academic variables high and, more specifically, the academic quality and number of courses offered, which were also significant variables in school-choice decisions. It is therefore recommended that, in line with the significant findings and open-ended comments, Seventh-day Adventist schools evaluate the academic program in order to improve the perception of parents in areas of instruction, and particularly on core subjects such as math and science which are perceived to be weak, especially in K-8 levels. Further, the quality of homework assignment is perceived to be of little significant value and is viewed to be more of occupying students rather than academically challenging engagements aimed at improving their knowledge. Although the issue of homework assignment did not emerge as a statistically significant variable, the regression analysis indicated a p of .051 with a moderately high mean of 3.79, which can be considered as a potential issue of significance between the groups and, therefore, worth paying attention to.

Although the academic counseling variable did not indicate statistical significance the school-choice model, the two groups of parents differed significantly ($p < .05$). It is therefore recommended that Seventh-day Adventist schools increase the level of awareness regarding the availability of the counseling program in order to improve parental perception, if such a program is made available by the school.

Of all the factors that were found to be significant, the academic program revealed more pronounced differences in perception between the Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools and Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools. If, therefore, Seventh-day Adventist schools are to attract more

children into their schools, then close attention must be paid to improving their perception of the academic program; and as long as Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in public schools continue to have lower perception of the effectiveness of the Seventh-day Adventist curriculum than those with children in Adventist schools, enrollment enhancement may not be attainable.

Influence on Parental Choice Factor

From the results of the influence factor, it is evident that both groups concur that parents do make school-choice decisions. However, in view of the significant variations between the groups on children's influence on parents in school-choice decisions, it is recommended that Seventh-day Adventist schools use every channel available in their promotional activities to dialogue and reach parents of school-age children, as well as those with children under age, in order to attract them. Because of the limitations in reaching parents with children in public schools, Adventist schools must engage in an effective program of reaching them especially through churches where they attend in order to tailor programs more specifically targeted to motivate and improve their perception of Adventist education.

It is recommended that churches are the best vehicles for achieving this goal and, in order to do so, they must first identify the target group. From this study, there was overwhelming evidence that nearly all churches in Southwest Michigan did not have records identifying parents with children in public schools and therefore cannot be expected to perceive the magnitude of the problem (consequently they function on

guesswork).

Further, it is recommended that school administrators and church leaders work on a joint program to have a census taken in local churches for the purpose of assessing educational needs. It is recommended that churches update their records at least annually, and preferably in September, the list of both Seventh-day Adventist children attending Adventist schools as well as those attending public schools. Once they have been identified and their contacts known, then schools can commence continuous dialogue on a personal basis, through a combination of correspondence and invitations to various promotional programs.

Social and Proximity Factors

The social and proximity factor variables tested with regard to the level of importance in making school-choice decisions generally registered high levels and would therefore suggest that parents perceived the factors as crucial. It is, therefore, recommended that school administrators do take into consideration social issues as valuable to parents although they were no statistically significant differences or variations to justify on their own as significant predictors in school-choice decisions.

The open-ended comments were consistent with statistical analysis of non-significant variations and differences between groups. Parents do imply that although distance of school is an advantage, they are more interested in what the school offers than how far it was from home. The benefits a school offers is considered by parents to outweigh proximity impediment.

Safety Factor

Since the safety factor was found to be significant in school-choice decisions, would suggest that Seventh-day Adventist parents with children in Seventh-day Adventist schools choose Seventh-day Adventist schools because children tend to feel safe in school. It is therefore recommended that school administrators recognize and ensure safety of children in school in view of the continuing impact of social ills that have a negative influence on students, through preventive programs and promotion of values.

Awareness Factor

The extent to which parents were informed was found to be a significant factor influencing school-choice. Whereas both groups overall were very positive about their awareness of the value of Christian education, they registered high mean scores on: how sure they were of the quality of Seventh-day Adventist schools; whether they received good information about the schools; and awareness of financial assistance available. Generally, it is evident from this research that Seventh-day Adventist parents who have children in Seventh-day Adventist schools are more informed than those who have children in public schools (Tables 67-72). Further, the two groups significantly differed on: the extent to which they were sure of the quality of education offered in Seventh-day Adventist schools, receive good information about Seventh-day Adventist schools, inability to obtain information about Seventh-day Adventist schools, awareness of financial assistance available in Seventh-day Adventist schools, and the extent to which they received information that was pertinent. It is therefore recommended that Seventh-day

Adventist schools develop a more effective awareness program to reach children of Seventh-day Adventist parents in public schools in order to be more informed than they currently are. This is important because the more informed they are the greater the probability of making choices in favor of Adventist schools.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Since in any given market, awareness of a product is an essential part in increasing customers, further research is needed on the extent of awareness about Seventh-day Adventist education as a vital step toward improving Adventist schools' image.
2. By way of replication, similar studies should be conducted in other areas to strengthen and affirm the findings of this study and, in this regard, the Lake Union Conference may take advantage of this study to compare results in other conferences within its jurisdiction.
3. Further research is needed to establish the extent to which the uniqueness of Seventh-day Adventist education is evident in Seventh-day Adventist schools.
4. Further research is necessary to establish whether there are significant changing trends influencing perception on safety and child influence factor.
5. Further research is necessary on academic program variables to establish why there were such high numbers of significant differences between the groups and what could be done to narrow the perceptual differences.
6. Further research is needed on how the cost of Adventist education can be restructured in order to be affordable to more parents without continued reliance on

financial aid only in view of its limitation.

7. In view of the high importance both groups placed in Adventist education, further research is recommended by way of market segmentation particularly among Adventist parents with children in public schools, in order to narrow down and identify which specific significant variables are associated with which segment.

8. Although Table 2 indicated that the Seventh-day Adventist membership is increasing, further study would help in examining the demographic profile as well as determining whether demographic trends may be a significant causal factor in enrollment decline.

APPENDIX A

LETTERS

Parent School-choice Survey

Dear Parent

I am conducting a study of factors that influence parents in making the decision on where their children attend school. I would appreciate your giving some thought to this issue and responding to the survey attached as soon as you receive it.

We parents have a lot of choices as to where to send our children to school. There have been a number of studies around the country to determine what influences parents in their school-choice decision. I am interested to see what these influences are, here in Southwest Michigan. I will appreciate your prompt response to this authenticated study.

I would be happy to share the results of my study with you if you are interested. If you do, please mail me a return address note.

1. Please answer every question on the questionnaire.
2. Your answers will be confidential.
3. Identification numbers on the form are used primarily for follow-up purposes.
4. Feel free to write additional comments on the form or another paper.
5. Please help me control costs by returning the form using the enclosed stamped envelope.

Philip Mainda 4778 E. Hillcrest Dr. Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Parent School-choice Survey

Dear Parent

Just a short reminder that I have not received your survey concerning parent school-choice. The response thus far has been excellent and I want you to know that I value your response in order to successfully complete the project. If however, you have already responded I thank you and you may disregard this letter.

I am conducting a study of factors that influence parents in making the decision on where their children attend school. I would appreciate your giving some thought to this issue and responding to the survey attached as soon as you receive it.

We parents have a lot of choices as to where to send our children to school. There have been a number of studies around the country to determine what influences parents in their school-choice decision. I am interested to see what these influences are, here in Southwest Michigan. I will appreciate your prompt response to this authenticated study.

I would be happy to share the results of my study with you if you are interested. If you do, please mail me a return address note.

1. Please answer every question on the questionnaire.
2. Your answers will be confidential.
3. Identification numbers on the form are used primarily for follow-up purposes.
4. Feel free to write additional comments on the form or another paper.
5. Please help me control costs by returning the form by Friday February 11th, 2000 using the enclosed envelope.

Philip Mainda 4778 E. Hillcrest Dr. Berrien Springs, MI 49103

APPENDIX B
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

PARENT School-choice SURVEY

Part 1. In this section, you are asked about your own **perception of Adventist Education** in general. Please indicate your degree of agreement with each statement by circling one number for each.

1 means you strongly disagree and 5 means you strongly agree.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

- a. Seventh-day Adventist beliefs are important to me.....1 2 3 4 5
- b. Seventh-day Adventist education is the best system of education.....1 2 3 4 5
- c. School morning devotions are valuable.....1 2 3 4 5
- d. Teachers should be spiritual people.....1 2 3 4 5
- e. Children who attend Adventist schools are more likely to stay in church.....1 2 3 4 5
- f. Adventist education helps build Adventist families.....1 2 3 4 5
- g. I would recommend Adventist schools to others1 2 3 4 5
- h. Adventist schools are an essential part of the church's ministry.....1 2 3 4 5
- i. A spiritual atmosphere should exist in school.....1 2 3 4 5

Part 2. Indicate your degree of agreement about the **Cost of Education** at an Adventist school by circling one number for each statement.

1 means you strongly disagree and 5 means you strongly agree.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

- a. Seventh-day Adventist schools are worth the cost.....1 2 3 4 5
- b. I cannot afford the cost of Adventist schools.....1 2 3 4 5
- c. If cost was lower in Adventist schools, more children would attend.....1 2 3 4 5
- d. Public schools are better regardless of cost.....1 2 3 4 5
- e. Financial aid is a critical factor in enrolling at Adventist school.....1 2 3 4 5
- f. Adventist schools are affordable for most families.....1 2 3 4 5

Part 3. In this section you are asked to **grade Adventist schools** in general, on several aspects of their program. Regardless of your knowledge about Adventist schools, give your impression of them. Use the same grading scale that schools use. **A, B, C, D, F** where

A is excellent and **F** is failure. Circle one letter for each item.

- a. Academic quality.....A B C D F
- b. Amount of homework assigned.....A B C D F
- c. Quality of classroom instruction.....A B C D F
- d. Grading procedures.....A B C D F
- e. Variety of courses offered.....A B C D F
- f. Text books used.....A B C D F
- g. Teaching materials used.....A B C D F
- h. Teacher's help to students outside the class.....A B C D F

- i. Availability of academic counselorsA B C D F
- j. Relevance of courses.....A B C D F
- k. Class size.....A B C D F
- l. Number of courses offered.....A B C D F
- m. Preparation for further education.....A B C D F
- n. Preparation for the real world.....A B C D F

Part 4. In this section, you are asked about your own **perception of who influenced your choice of school.** Indicate your degree of agreement with the statements by circling one number for each.

1 means you strongly disagree and **5** means you strongly agree.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

- a. Other people influenced me to choose current school..... 1 2 3 4 5
- b. School-choice was influenced by my children.....1 2 3 4 5
- c. School-choice was purely my decision.....1 2 3 4 5

Part 5. Various **social factors influence people’s perception of Adventist schools.** Indicate the degree of importance the following factors are to you in making school-choice decisions:

1 means unimportant and **5** means very important
Unimportant 1 2 3 4 5 Very important

- a. Physical education.....1 2 3 4 5
- b. Extra curricular activities.....1 2 3 4 5
- c. Racial harmony at the school.....1 2 3 4 5
- d. Being part of the school.....1 2 3 4 5
- e. Active social life.....1 2 3 4 5
- f. School spirit.....1 2 3 4 5
- g. Parental involvement.....1 2 3 4 5

Part 6. **Proximity** is an important factor in making school-choices. Please state your opinion by circling your best choice:

1 means you strongly disagree and **5** means you strongly agree
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

- a. Children should attend schools that are close to home.....1 2 3 4 5
- b. Lack of transportation is a problem to some parents...1 2 3 4 5
- c. Parents should have easy access to school.....1 2 3 4 5
- d. Nearness improves effectiveness among students and teachers....1 2 3 4 5
- e. Living near school improves attendance.....1 2 3 4 5

Part 7. How important are the following **safety factors** in making your decision on school attendance? Please indicate the level of importance to you of the following factors by using a

1 to 5 rating scale, where 1 indicates unimportant and 5 indicates very important.

Unimportant 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

- a. Reasonable dress code.....1 2 3 4 5
- b. Strict rules related to student conduct.....1 2 3 4 5
- c. Fairness in disciplinary policies, procedures and enforcement.....1 2 3 4 5
- d. Personal safety/ security at the school.....1 2 3 4 5
- e. Students feel safe in the school.....1 2 3 4 5
- f. A requirement for school uniform.....1 2 3 4 5
- g. Students are well supervised.....1 2 3 4 5

Part 8. How **well informed** are you about Adventist schools? Please indicate your degree of agreement with the statements by circling one number of each.

1 means you strongly disagree **5** means you strongly agree

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

- a. I am aware of the value of Christian education.....1 2 3 4 5
- b. I am sure of the quality of education offered in Adventist schools.....1 2 3 4 5
- c. I receive good information about Adventist schools1 2 3 4 5
- d. I have been unable to obtain information about Adventist schools.....1 2 3 4 5
- e. I am not aware of financial assistance available in Adventist schools...1 2 3 4 5
- f. I receive information that is pertinent.....1 2 3 4 5

Your Comments:

APPENDIX C

TABLES

TABLE 79

		Regression Model Coefficients					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	2.008	.156			12.866	.000
	Teachers should be spiritual	-.139	.033	-.217		-4.266	.000
2	(Constant)	2.136	.165			12.981	.000
	Teachers should be spiritual	-9.264E-02	.038	-.145		-2.448	.015
	I recommend SDA schools to others	-7.852E-02	.034	-.138		-2.330	.020
3	(Constant)	2.276	.163			13.994	.000
	Teachers should be spiritual	-9.464E-02	.037	-.148		-2.573	.010
	I recommend SDA schools to others	3.868E-03	.037	.007		.104	.917
	SDA schools are worth the cost	-.126	.027	-.274		-4.746	.000
4	(Constant)	2.279	.159			14.338	.000
	Teachers should be spiritual	-9.285E-02	.033	-.145		-2.855	.005
	SDA schools are worth the cost	-.125	.023	-.271		-5.324	.000
5	(Constant)	1.966	.179			10.978	.000
	Teachers should be spiritual	-7.440E-02	.032	-.116		-2.296	.022
	SDA schools are worth the cost	-.105	.024	-.228		-4.420	.000
	Public schools better regardless of cost	8.856E-02	.025	.183		3.600	.000
6	(Constant)	1.800	.184			9.777	.000
	Teachers should be spiritual	-9.635E-02	.033	-.151		-2.946	.003
	SDA schools are	-.128	.024	-.278		-5.232	.000

	worth the cost Public schools better regardless of cost	.103	.025	.214	4.177	.000
	SDA Education system is the best (Constant)	8.652E-02	.027	.175	3.241	.001
7	Teachers should be spiritual	1.670	.189		8.839	.000
	SDA schools are worth the cost Public schools better regardless of cost	-.114	.033	-.178	-3.436	.001
	SDA schools are worth the cost Public schools better regardless of cost	-.119	.024	-.259	-4.870	.000
	SDA Education system is the best Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA (Constant)	9.531E-02	.025	.197	3.862	.000
	SDA Education system is the best Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA (Constant)	8.032E-02	.027	.163	3.022	.003
8	Teachers should be spiritual	5.426E-02	.020	.131	2.670	.008
	SDA schools are worth the cost Public schools better regardless of cost	1.970	.199		9.898	.000
	SDA schools are worth the cost Public schools better regardless of cost	-.119	.032	-.186	-3.674	.000
	SDA schools are worth the cost Public schools better regardless of cost	-9.786E-02	.025	-.213	-3.990	.000
	SDA Education system is the best Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA Number of courses offered (Constant)	9.207E-02	.024	.191	3.809	.000
	SDA Education system is the best Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA Number of courses offered (Constant)	9.822E-02	.026	.199	3.722	.000
9	Teachers should be spiritual	6.163E-02	.020	.148	3.085	.002
	SDA schools are worth the cost Public schools better regardless of cost	-.116	.028	-.202	-4.085	.000
	SDA schools are worth the cost Public schools better regardless of cost	2.195	.214		10.270	.000
	SDA schools are worth the cost Public schools better regardless of cost	-.126	.032	-.197	-3.902	.000
	SDA schools are worth the cost Public schools better regardless of cost	-8.679E-02	.025	-.189	-3.522	.000
	SDA Education system is the best Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA	8.996E-02	.024	.186	3.752	.000
	SDA Education system is the best Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA	.112	.027	.227	4.196	.000
	SDA Education system is the best Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA	6.257E-02	.020	.151	3.160	.002

	Number of courses offered	-9.105E-02	.030	-.159	-3.082	.002
	Academic quality	-9.307E-02	.034	-.144	-2.735	.007
10	(Constant)	2.309	.214		10.806	.000
	Teachers should be spiritual	-.127	.032	-.199	-3.998	.000
	SDA schools are worth the cost	-8.746E-02	.024	-.190	-3.597	.000
	Public schools better regardless of cost	9.315E-02	.024	.193	3.935	.000
	SDA Education system is the best	.113	.026	.229	4.303	.000
	Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA	6.218E-02	.020	.150	3.182	.002
	Number of courses offered	-9.115E-02	.029	-.159	-3.127	.002
	Academic quality	-8.981E-02	.034	-.139	-2.674	.008
	School-choice was influenced by my children	-5.000E-02	.015	-.149	-3.295	.001
11	(Constant)	2.196	.220		9.974	.000
	Teachers should be spiritual	-.122	.032	-.190	-3.825	.000
	SDA schools are worth the cost	-8.729E-02	.024	-.190	-3.605	.000
	Public schools better regardless of cost	9.024E-02	.024	.187	3.821	.000
	SDA Education system is the best	.107	.026	.218	4.079	.000
	Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA	6.230E-02	.019	.150	3.202	.001
	Number of courses offered	-9.291E-02	.029	-.162	-3.200	.001
	Academic quality	-8.345E-02	.034	-.129	-2.484	.013
	School-choice was influenced by my children	-4.743E-02	.015	-.142	-3.127	.002
	A requirement for school uniform	3.095E-02	.015	.093	2.020	.044
12	(Constant)	2.425	.244		9.923	.000
	Teachers should be spiritual	-.102	.033	-.159	-3.084	.002

	SDA schools are worth the cost	-8.938E-02	.024	-.194	-3.706	.000
	Public schools better regardless of cost	8.882E-02	.024	.184	3.777	.000
	SDA Education system is the best	.111	.026	.224	4.219	.000
	Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA	6.455E-02	.019	.156	3.329	.001
	Number of courses offered	-9.037E-02	.029	-.157	-3.124	.002
	Academic quality	-8.210E-02	.033	-.127	-2.456	.015
	School-choice was influenced by my children	-4.869E-02	.015	-.146	-3.224	.001
	A requirement for school uniform	3.479E-02	.015	.104	2.265	.024
	Students feel safe in school	-7.582E-02	.036	-.102	-2.120	.035
13	(Constant)	2.531	.244		10.366	.000
	Teachers should be spiritual	-9.960E-02	.033	-.156	-3.054	.002
	SDA schools are worth the cost	-7.236E-02	.024	-.157	-2.954	.003
	Public schools better regardless of cost	8.514E-02	.023	.176	3.657	.000
	SDA Education system is the best	.109	.026	.222	4.217	.000
	Financial aid critical in enrolling SDA	6.419E-02	.019	.155	3.347	.001
	Number of courses offered	-8.191E-02	.029	-.143	-2.851	.005
	Academic quality	-7.293E-02	.033	-.113	-2.197	.029
	School-choice was influenced by my children	-4.615E-02	.015	-.138	-3.085	.002
	A requirement for school uniform	3.475E-02	.015	.104	2.288	.023
	Students feel safe in school	-7.811E-02	.035	-.105	-2.208	.028
	I receive pertinent information	-6.485E-02	.021	-.145	-3.034	.003

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