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Identity, Mission, and Markets: A Multiple-Case Study on Select Catholic High Schools in the United States

Danielle N. Trollinger

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Identity, Mission, and Markets: A Multiple-Case Study on Select Catholic High
Schools in the United States

by

Danielle N. Trollinger

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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in
Learning and Leading

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2019

Identity, Mission, and Markets:
A Multiple Case Study on Select Catholic High Schools in the United States

by

Danielle N. Trollinger

This dissertation is completed as a partial requirement for the Doctor of Education (EdD) degree at the University of Portland in Portland, Oregon.

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Abstract

Since 1965, over 7,000 Catholic schools have closed in the United States. This phenomenon is referred to by both Catholic and secular news agencies as, “The Catholic School Crisis.” The crisis is in part due to the marketization of education in the United States which has created a competitive economic market between all types of schools. In a market-driven culture, schools compete for students and funds the same way businesses compete for customers and dollars. This multiple-case study investigated how leaders within select Catholic high schools understand and communicate their institutional identity within a market context and how that identity can be observed to be influenced by market forces. In aggregate, twenty semi-structured interviews, four school walkabouts, and thirty documents/artifacts were collected for this study. Key findings revealed that religious charisms are essential to institutional identity and that Catholic high schools identify as inclusive faith-based communities. However, data also evidenced that Catholic high schools shift their practices and discourse to accommodate the market even if such practices and discourse are antithetical to their mission. Importantly, this study also found that Catholic high schools also shift their practices and discourse to align and realign with their religious mission, highlighting a continuous tension between mission and market.

Keywords: Catholic schools, high schools, Catholic school crisis, institutional identity, mission, market forces, market pressure, Catholic identity, language, discourse, practices

Acknowledgments

While dissertations are written largely in the wide-open spaces of solitude, they are inherently a communal effort. Many individuals contributed to the completion of this work. A special thank you to my committee chair, Dr. Eric Ancil, whose encouragement, advice, expertise, and sense of humor inspired me and kept me going throughout the entire process. Thank you for walking this journey with me. Thank you for helping me remember to keep evolving *and* to stay human. You have changed my life and I am truly grateful. I would also like to thank my dissertation committee members, Dr. Julie Kalnin and Dr. John Watzke. Thank you for your insightful questions and feedback. You helped me refine my writing and my thinking. Further gratitude to the University of Portland faculty/staff across campus for offering me your encouragement, support, and friendship the past three years. The names are too many to mention here but I promise to thank you in person and I carry you in my heart.

Thank you to the participants in this study. Without your willingness to participate and provide honest and transparent responses, this study would not have been possible. Thank you for welcoming me into your communities. I would gladly send my future children to either of your schools because, despite contemporary challenges and pressures, your care and concern for each student is remarkable. Who you are and the work you do is inspiring. Thank you for inviting me to be a witness to your mission. Finally, thank you to my family and friends for your prayers, support, and encouragement. To my parents, thank you for your curiosity about my dissertation

and your enthusiasm for my dreams and professional goals. Thank you for forming me and teaching me to value education, the common good, and a faith that seeks understanding and does justice. Most importantly, thank you for your love. To Justin, my fiancé, thank you for your listening ears and kind words. I cannot believe we only met a year ago. Our meeting was perfect timing. Your love, compassion, wisdom, encouragement, patience, understanding, and empathy helped me complete this work. Our conversations provided fruitful insights and ideas for my dissertation and helped me grow as a scholar and a person. I cannot imagine this experience or this life without you. I will forever be thankful for small coincidences that string together to become miracles.

Dedication

To the young women of Regis Jesuit High School who still inspire me.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

At 10:00am on January 6, 2012, Catholic elementary and secondary school administrators in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia gathered to learn their schools' fate from their archbishop. A few years prior to the gathering, Cardinal Justin Rigali created a 16-member Blue Ribbon Commission to mark schools in the region for closure. The commission formed in response to declining enrollment rates in Philadelphia's Catholic schools which had dropped more than 30 percent in 10 years causing subsequent financial issues (Woodall, 2012). Social media captured the angst faculty, staff, students, and parents experienced during the months and weeks that proceeded the announcement: "I hear from a reliable source that St. Williams is *definitely* closing" and "No way McDevitt can survive the cuts" (Palan, 2012, para. 1). Social media also captured the relief that came when schools learned their institutions were not on the list: "Just got a call from the Pres! We're safe!" (Palan, 2012, para. 2). Similarly, schools marked for closure dissented on social media platforms such as Twitter. In response to the commission's decision, a Twitter movement called "Occupy St. Hubert's" began (Vito, 2012, para. 1) and the closing of West Catholic High School came as such a shock to the community that the phrase "West Catholic" was trending on Twitter after the announcement (Bayliss, Masterson, & Chang, 2012, para. 6).

By the end of the 2011-2012 school year, a total of 44 elementary schools and four high schools in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia closed their doors. While the 2012 Philadelphia Catholic school closings are significant, they are not unusual. On February 4, 2019, the Archdiocese of New York announced that seven Catholic schools were

slated for closure and blamed closures on low enrollment and lack of public funding (Dolan, 2019). In 2017, Queen of Peace High School closed after 86 years and became one of over 300 Catholic schools to close in New Jersey since 1971 (Grant, 2017). Catholic school officials in the New Orleans Archdiocese have announced that four Catholic schools are scheduled to close at the end of the 2018-2019 school year, with more closures likely to be announced (Kennedy, 2019). Smaller dioceses, like the Diocese of Oakland, have also been impacted. The Diocese of Oakland closed five Catholic schools in the 2017-2018 school year, stating, “Although Diocesan and school personnel have made major efforts to increase enrollment and reduce diocesan subsidies, these schools cannot project a successful return to sufficient enrollment and financial sustainability” (Lochner, 2017, para. 3).

Since 1965, approximately 7,000 Catholic elementary and secondary schools have closed across the United States (McDonald & Schultz, 2019; McFarland et al., 2017). This phenomenon is widely recognized as “The Catholic School Crisis” (Bush, 2008; Filteau, 2012; Invest in Education Foundation, 2016, p. 33; Norris, 2008, para. 6; Topping, 2015, p. 13). While some people eschew the phrase ‘school crisis’ in order to highlight the external factors impacting Catholic schools (Meyer, 2009), such rapid decline would rightfully be called a crisis in any school system (Vitello & Hu, 2009). Margaret Spellings, the former United States Secretary of Education, once referred to Catholic schools as a “national treasure” (U.S. Department of Education, 2008, p. 127). However, Catholic and secular news agencies are now referring to Catholic schools as an “endangered species” (Shaw, 2012, para. 8; Wuerl, 2008, para. 2).

The Catholic School Crisis

In 1965, Catholic schools were in their heyday with approximately 13,000 elementary and secondary schools educating roughly 5.5 million students in a federation of schools which seemed to be flourishing and “inevitably headed for further expansion” (Walch, 1996; Youniss, Convey, & McLellan, 2000, p. 2). However, since 1965, nearly 7,000 Catholic schools have closed their doors in the United States and enrollment has declined by approximately 33 percent (calculations from data reported by McDonald & Schultz, 2019). As of 2018, approximately 6,289 Catholic schools remain educating roughly 1.8 million students in a federation of schools that seems “in need of salvation” (McCloskey & Harris, 2013, para. 1; McDonald & Schultz, 2019). Figure 1 and Figure 2 display Catholic school closure and enrollment trends. Data was obtained and calculated from both the National Catholic Educational Association (McDonald & Schultz, 2019) and the National Center for Education Statistics (McFarland et al., 2017).

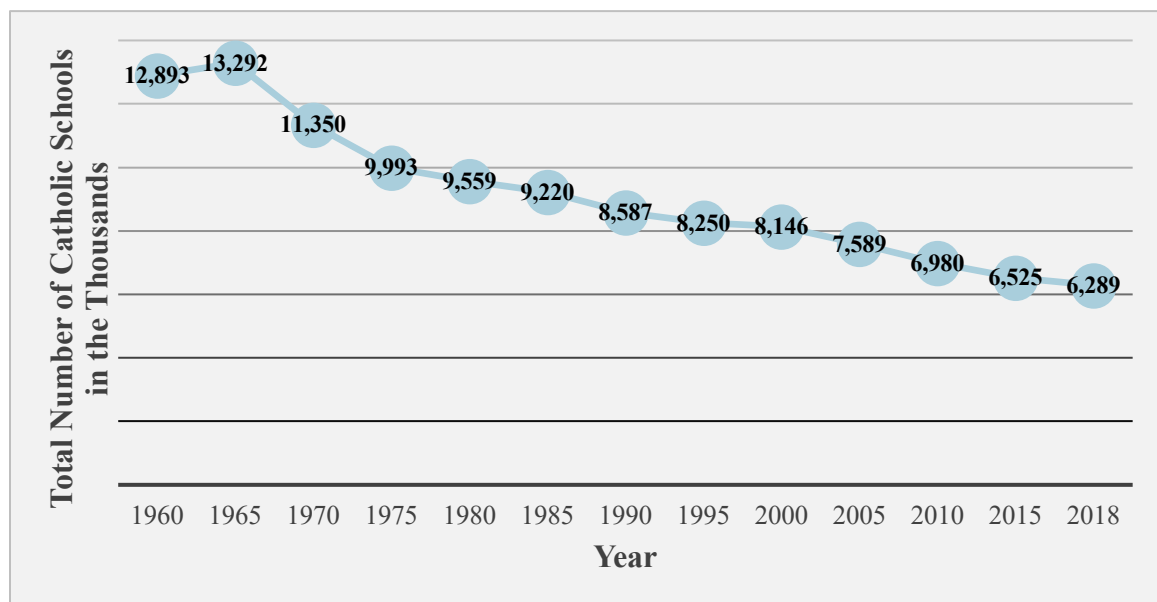


Figure 1. Total number of Catholic schools in the United States from 1960-2018.

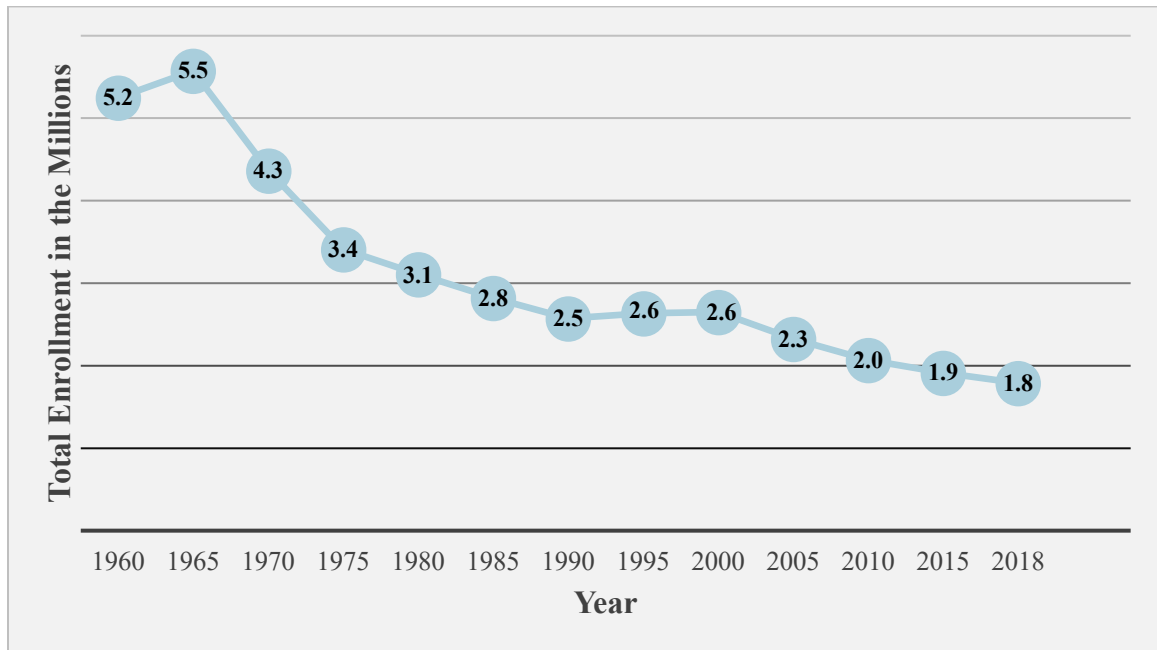


Figure 2. Total Catholic school enrollment in the United States from 1960-2018.

Additionally, Catholic school closures and declining enrollment trends are expected to continue until 2026, the last year projected data are available (Hussar & Bailey, 2018). The Catholic school crisis has been attributed to the “basic economics [of] supply and demand” (Zech, 2016, para. 3) and, in response, Catholic leadership at the national and local levels have encouraged schools to strategically and aggressively plan for a “competitive market” by “marketing and branding” their institutions while also attending to their Catholic identity and mission (Appel, 1986, p. 10; National Catholic Educational Association [NCEA], 2018; Ozar & Weitzel-O’Neill, 2012). Thus, in contemporary conditions, people working in Catholic schools experience a tension between the demands of the market and the defining characteristics of their mission (Grace, 2002). A greater understanding of market forces – the economic and cultural factors affecting the price of, demand for, and availability of Catholic schools –

commonly associated with the crisis is crucial to also understanding the crisis itself and the institutional identity of Catholic schools in the twenty-first century.

Market Forces

Since the economic discourse of “supply and demand” has been used to explain the Catholic school crisis by individuals in Catholic circles (Zech, 2016, para. 3), the post-Vatican II economic and cultural forces that contributed to the crisis are framed below using these same economic concepts. However, it is imperative to note that “many important observations about these schools cannot be reconciled in these terms” (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993, p. 300). Catholic schools exist within American culture, which has become rooted in a market-based discourse, but their origins extend beyond American culture and their founding discourse is that of the Catholic Church (Giridharadas, 2018; Grace, 2002). Unfortunately, market terms like ‘supply and demand’, ‘return on investment’, and ‘market needs’ are frequently applied to American education and solutions to perceived problems within both public and private schools are oftentimes framed as solely economic ones (Ravitch, 2016). Indeed, the United States seems “trapped in a language of schooling that stresses economics, accountability, and compliance” over the common good, learning, and, ultimately, human need which “is not a language that inspires” (Rose, 2009, p. 25).

While Catholic schools operate separately from the American public school system, they still function within contemporary American culture and are even encouraged by politicians and Catholic school leaders to adopt market-based practices as primary solutions to enrollment concerns (Dougherty & Sostre, 1992; Dwyer, 2009;

NCEA Boards and Councils Department, 2010). To provide clarity on the Catholic school crisis and to explore the potential impact of market forces on the institutional identity and mission of Catholic schools in the United States, economic terms are referenced below. However, the use of economic discourse within education is questioned and discussed in Chapter Five. Additionally, the conceptual framework for this study, which is presented in Chapter Two, explores the problematic power dynamics that exist when market-centric discourses and practices are introduced into educational institutions intended to welcome and serve all students and their families.

Market forces: The supply. Dramatic changes to staffing, skyrocketing tuition costs, increased competition between schools, and widespread apathy and desperation over the fate of Catholic schooling in the United States are all factors influencing the availability and affordability of Catholic schools. On the supply side of the problem, the primary reason typically given for the crisis is the decline in the number of vowed religious and clergy, most of whom “carried out their apostolate” by teaching in Catholic schools (Dolan, 1985; Youniss & Convey, 2000; Zech, 2016, para. 4). Their diminished presence within schools have undoubtedly altered the organizational structure, routine practices, and financial needs of American Catholic schools (Heft, 2011; Sheehan, 1997).

Change in staffing. On October 18, 1965, Pope Paul VI published a declaration on Christian education during the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) which was a global gathering of Church officials in Rome to discuss relations between the Catholic Church and the modern world. This official Church document, *Gravissimum Educationis*, provided the Church with a “new mission statement” (NCEA TALK, 2018, para. 2) and

announced that Catholic schools no longer needed to act as bulwarks against the world (Paul VI, 1965). Instead, as faith-based communities, Catholic schools were challenged to open their doors to “all men” (para. 3), including non-Catholics. Additionally, as instructed by the Second Vatican Council, Catholic institutions started to encourage lay participation, allowing “fresh air” to flow through the Church (Youniss et al., 2000, p. 2). Lay participation meant that men and women who were not vowed religious/clergy could still serve the Church in various roles, jobs, and positions typically held by sisters, brothers, or priests.

For reasons that still require exploration, the Second Vatican Council was also followed by a mass exodus of religious/clergy from their roles in the Catholic Church (Youniss et al., 2000). Catholic schools in the United States immediately felt the consequences of their departure. The spiritual formation and inexpensive labor of religious members were “the very foundations that contributed to the identity and staffing of [Catholic] schools” (Watzke, 2005, p. 464). As religious/clergy left the religious life or changed how they carried out their apostolate, Catholic schools were “depleted of their teaching force” and lay people stepped into teaching and administrative positions originally held by sisters, brothers, and priests (Watzke, 2005, p. 464; Youniss & Convey, 2000). This change in staffing, which was dramatic at the time, has “continued apace” and “coupled with the paucity of new religious vocations” results in a ratio of approximately 35:1 lay: religious/clergy professional staff (calculations from data reported by McDonald & Schultz, 2019; Youniss et al., 2000, p. 2).

Prior to the Second Vatican Council, religious and clergy staffed 90.1 percent of Catholic elementary and secondary schools (Bryk et al., 1993). In 2018, religious staffed 97.2 percent laity and 2.8 percent religious/clergy (sisters: 1.7 percent; brothers: 0.5 percent; priests: 0.6 percent) of Catholic schools in the United States (McDonald & Schultz, 2019). As a result of such dramatic shifts in staffing, additional church documents were written to define and recognize the changing role of laity in Catholic schools. Within documents such as *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* (The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education [CCE], 1982), the Church acknowledges that lay Catholics and non-Catholics “who devote their lives to teaching in primary and secondary schools” (para. 1) are “essential to ensuring the identity” of Catholic schools (para. 5) and “constitute an element of great hope for the Church” (para. 81).

However, while the Church supports lay educators on pen and paper, the challenge within a competitive economic landscape is to provide them with a “living wage” and a “just wage” (McLaughlin, O’Keefe, & O’Keefe, 1996, p. 14; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004, para. 662). Since Catholic schools in the United States do not receive federal funds to assist them in their institutional mission, tuition costs are annually increased to provide lay people with competitive salaries (McLaughlin et al., 1996). However, in too many Catholic schools, faculty remuneration is “shockingly inadequate” (McLaughlin et al., 1996, p. 14) and annually threatens teacher retention (Przygocki, 2004) as well as the accessibility of Catholic schools to families from low socioeconomic backgrounds (McLaughlin et al., 1996; Baker & Riordan, 1998; Youniss & McLellan, 1999).

Rise in tuition costs. While Catholic schools across the country struggle to provide a living and just wage to their professional staff, the cost of living in many areas throughout the United States continues to rise (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). As a result, since Catholic schools are primarily tuition-based, Catholic school tuition costs continue to rise in order to provide faculty and staff with the adequate economic resources they need to live and support their families (McDonald & Schultz, 2019; McLaughlin et al., 1996). According to national data reported in 2013, the average Catholic elementary school tuition increased over 69 percent between 2003 and 2013, and this percent doubled for Catholic high schools at 136 percent (Bath, 2013; McDonald & Schultz, 2014). In 2018, the mean tuition cost for Catholic elementary schools was \$4,841 and the mean tuition cost for Catholic high schools was \$11,239 (McDonald & Shultz, 2019). However, tuition fees paid for by families only constitute a portion of the actual per pupil expenses. In 2018, the mean per pupil cost for Catholic elementary schools was \$5,936 and the mean per pupil cost for Catholic high schools in the United States was \$15,249 (McDonald & Shultz, 2019). Catholic schools across the United States have started to obtain the difference between their per pupil cost and the tuition charged in a variety of ways, primarily through direct subsidy from parish, diocesan, or religious congregation resources and from multi-faceted development programs and fund-raising activities (McDonald & Shultz, 2019).

While Catholic schools attempt to make themselves accessible to all students, especially the poor and marginalized, in response to their Catholic mission (Bryk et al., 1993), supply is oftentimes limited to students and families that can afford escalating

tuition costs (Baker & Riordan, 1998). The Catholic schools that remain open are more likely to be located in affluent neighborhoods (Brinig & Garnett, 2014) and cater to affluent families “by offering services and classes more commonly found in expensive private schools” (Anderson, 2012, para. 1). Additionally, in response to financial constraints, Catholic schools in the United States are encouraged to move toward a “market model of education” in order to compete with other schools for funding and students (Appel, 1986; NCEA, 2018; Youniss et al., 2000, p. 4).

Increased competition. Since the 1980s, both public and private schools have experienced the social consequences of a neoliberal renaissance which pushed for the complete privatization and deregulation of American education (Bartlett, Frederick, Gulbrandsen, & Murillo, 2008; Pring, 1987; Lackman, 2013; Youniss et al., 2000). The values and discursive practices of the market have been gradually and increasingly applied to schools which were traditionally guided by the values and discursive practices of democracy and/or religion (Fairclough, 2013; Grace, 2002; Ravitch, 2016). One such consequence is the increased emphasis on competition between schools (Ravitch, 2016) as well as the pervasive use of marketing and branding tactics to compete for funding and students (Bartlett et al., 2008). Public charter schools have presented a particular challenge to both traditional public schools and Catholic schools in the United States as public charter schools receive government funding while operating independently of the established state school system in which they are located (Heft, 2011; Ravitch, 2016).

The ascendance of charter schools is closely linked with Catholic school closure and enrollment trends. Every new charter school draws an estimated 100 students from

Catholic schools (Lackman, 2013) and, in the competition with charters, “the outlook for Catholic education looks bleak” (Ravitch, 2012, para. 4). The impact is greatest in urban areas where more than 1,600 Catholic elementary and secondary schools have closed and 4,500 charter schools have opened since charters first gained traction in the late 1900s (Brinig & Stelle-Garnett, 2014). To attract students in urban neighborhoods, new charter schools advertise themselves to poor and working-class families promising to “provide a rigorous, college preparatory education” like “Catholic schools but for free” (Ravitch, 2014, para. 4). For Catholic schools in states that allow funding for public charter schools, charter schools are perceived as a major threat (Heft, 2011) even though Catholic schools are inherently different from public charter schools because Catholic schools are faith-based (Ravitch, 2014, 2016).

While magnet schools – public schools with specialized courses or curricula – might increase competition for Catholic schools in certain areas, public charter schools are considered the primary competition for Catholic schools (Heft, 2011). Public charter schools are at the heart of the School Choice movement to privatize education and the primary beneficiaries of school reform (Ravitch, 2013, 2016; Vinovskis, 1996). While traditional public schools and Catholic schools have been pitted against each other in the academic world (Baker & Riordan, 1998; Coleman, 1981; Greeley, 1998; Youniss & McLellan, 1999), they share in their mutual commitment to the common good and are both struggling to defend their institutional missions against public charter schools and a market-oriented worldview (Bryk et al., 1993; Engel, 2000; Grace, 2002; Ravitch, 2016).

To put the problem into perspective, Figure 3 and Figure 4 provide comparisons between Catholic schools and non-traditional public schools – charter and magnet – in the United States from 2000-2018 (McFarland et al., 2018). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) does not provide data on charter or magnet schools prior to the year 2000 and the most recent data available on non-traditional public schools in comparison to Catholic schools is from the 2015-2016 school year.

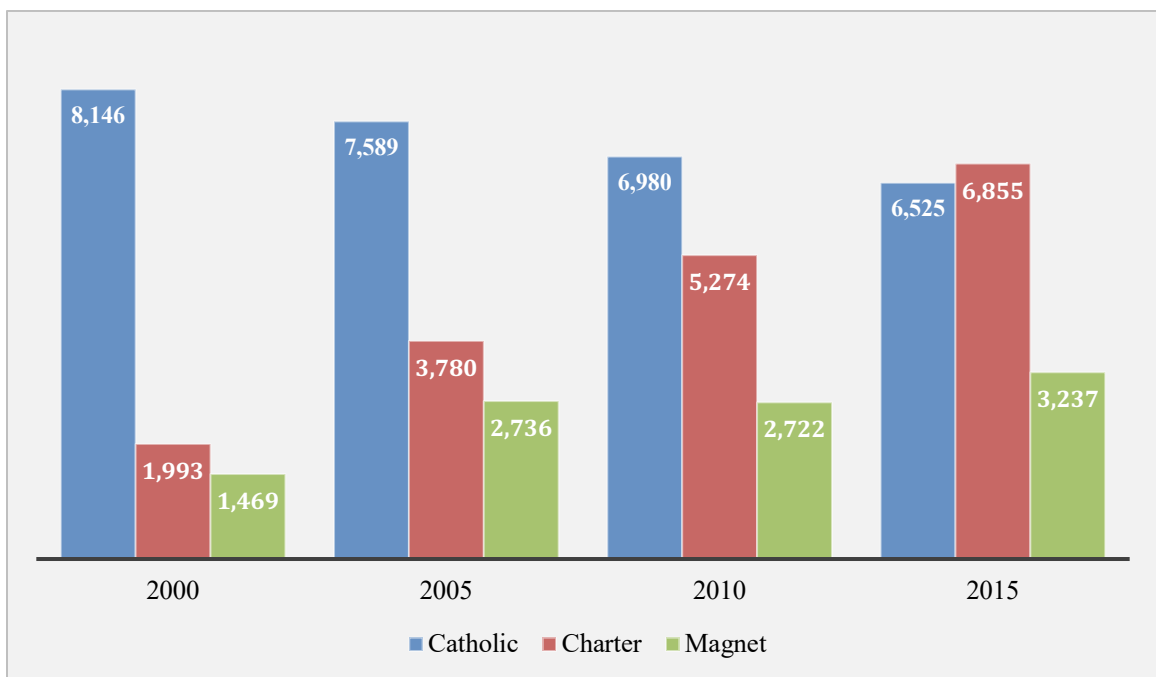


Figure 3. Total number of Catholic, Charter, and Magnet schools in the thousands from 2000-2015.

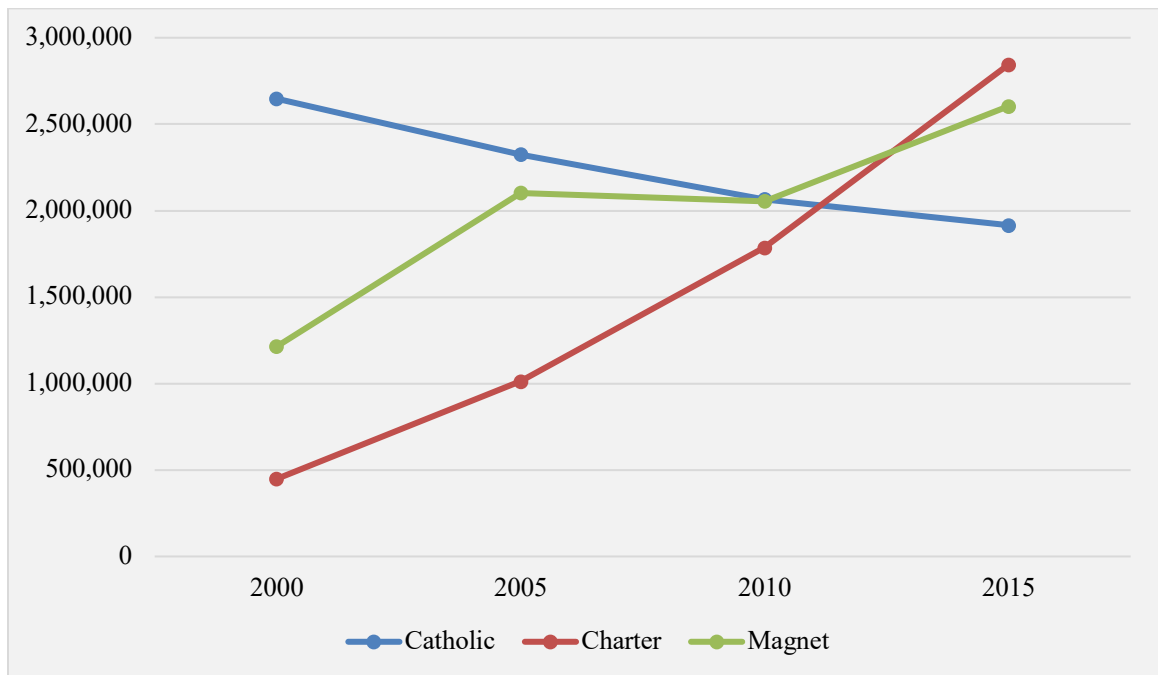


Figure 4. Total Catholic, Charter, and Magnet school enrollment from 2000-2015.

Similarly, while enrollment rates have decreased in Catholic schools, enrollment rates have increased in other private schools across the country. Figure 4 compares Catholic school enrollment to enrollment rates in other private elementary and secondary schools from 2000-2015 (McFarland et al., 2018).

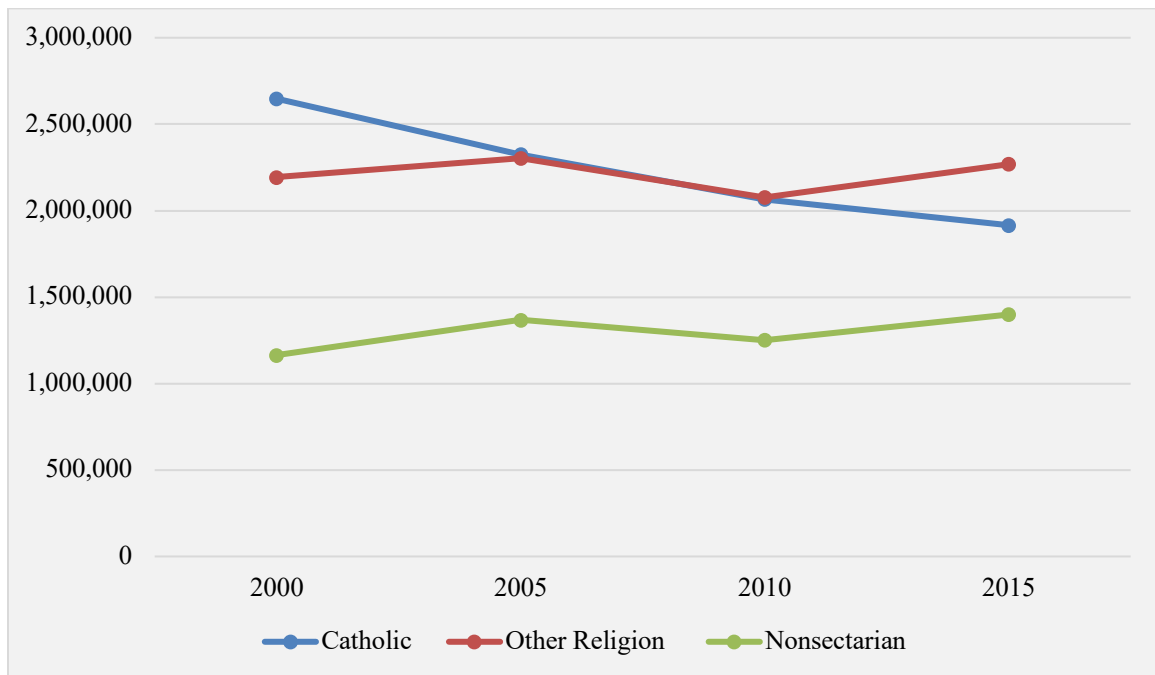


Figure 5. Total private school enrollment by school orientation from 2000-2015.

Important to consider when analyzing the above data are the demographic trends in the United States. The U.S. Census Bureau reported that the overall U.S. population has tripled since the year 1900 (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002). However, the number of school aged children has decreased. At the beginning of the twentieth century, 1 out of every 3 people was under 15 years of age. By 2000, only 1 of every 5 people was under age 15 (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002). While the U.S. birth rate increased after 2002 for two decades, it declined again in 2008 and the decrease appears to be linked to the Great Recession (Livingston & Cohn, 2010). A recent study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that, in 2017, the U.S. birth rate was the lowest in 30 years (Martin, Hamilton, Osterman, Driscoll, & Drake, 2018). Since school aged children constitute a smaller percentage of the overall U.S. population than they once did, some declines in

Catholic school enrollment might seem understandable. However, the U.S. birth rate has not impacted enrollment trends in other types of schools. While enrollment in Catholic schools has declined since 1965, enrollment in other schools – both public and private – has either steadily increased, slightly dipped only to increase again, or remained relatively the same (McFarland et al., 2018). Therefore, while important to consider, the birth rate cannot explain the worrisome decline in Catholic school enrollment over the past several decades.

Apathy and Desperation. Despite evidence of academic quality and effective religious education in Catholic schools, the great majority of Catholics currently send their children to public schools, especially during their high school years (Hudolin-Gabin, 1994; Heft, 2011). The sending of Catholic children to public schools signifies a historical shift. Prior to World War II, Catholic schools were at the center of immigrant Catholic communities and urban neighborhoods in the United States (Glazer & Moynihan, 1970; McGreevy, 1996; Youniss et al., 2000). Many immigrants settled in cities which “provided Catholics opportunities for employment and collective sharing of their ethnic heritage” (Youniss et al., 2000, pp. 2-3). Oftentimes attached to and supported by Catholic parishes, schools were at the center of Irish, Italian, German, Polish, and other ethnic neighborhoods. Indeed, for much of the twentieth century, most European Catholic immigrants considered themselves first and foremost as “neither ethnics nor simply as Americans, but as American Catholics, a new people and a new identity that they had created for themselves” (Meagher, 2000, pp. 190-191). Catholic

schools also functioned as fortresses from a hostile Protestant dominated society in the early and mid 1900s (Youniss et al., 2000).

After World War II, Catholics in America experienced upward mobility and a renewed confidence in their place in American society with the election of John F. Kennedy as the President of the United States in 1960 (Youniss et al., 2000). With more stable incomes and a more secure social position, Catholics no longer felt threatened by Protestantism or the culture at large. Additionally, Catholics felt less and less the need for separate schools (Morris, 1997). Indeed, many white Catholic families moved into the suburbs and placed their children in the public school system (Morris, 1997). The decision to place Catholic children in public schools was undergirded by the assessment that a new Catholicism was to be practiced *in* the culture rather than apart from it (Ryan, 1964). However, many generations later, parents in contemporary society no longer have the experience of attending Catholic schools and are largely unaware of the benefits they offer (Heft, 2011).

However, a growing number of Latino and African American parents strongly support Catholic schools in their inner-city locales (Brinig & Steele-Garnett, 2014). What prohibits minority groups as well as poor immigrant families from attending Catholic schools is not ambivalence or a lack of awareness about Catholic schooling but rather the cost (Heft, 2011; Polite, 2000). Prohibitive costs require creative solutions and support from the Church to help make “Catholic schools [affordable] for all, with special attention to those who are weakest” (Congregation for Catholic Education [CCE], 1997,

para. 15; Greeley, 1976; Zech, 2016). Unfortunately, many priests and bishops have given up on Catholic schools entirely (Greeley, 1990).

Since 1965, more than one thousand parishes have opened, but a much smaller number of Catholic schools have started with school closures outpacing any school openings (Heft, 2011). While Catholic priests and bishops unanimously say they value and prioritize Catholic schools, only 76 percent of priests believe they are the best opportunity to realize the mission of Catholic education (O'Brien, 1987). A study conducted by Convey (1998) found that "the more removed in terms of distance the ministry of a priest is from the inner city, the less supportive he is of issues pertaining to supporting Catholic schools financially, including sharing of resources to help non-parishioners attend Catholic schools" (p. 260). This current ambivalence is what causes other Catholic leaders like Cardinal Timothy Dolan (2010), the Archbishop of New York, to complain that a "hospice mentality" has "hypnotized Catholic leadership in our nation" (p. 1). For years, Church leaders have acted as if "the best thing we can do is prolong [Catholic schools'] death and make them as comfortable as possible" (Dolan, 2010, p. 3).

In a study published in 2008 entitled *Faith, Finances, and the Future: The Notre Dame Study of U.S. Pastors*, the researchers interviewed over one thousand priests responsible for Catholic schools. The priests reported that finances were their most pressing concern. For the priests in the study, financial concerns included, enrollment, financial management, and affordability. The priests' second major concern was Catholic identity. In their conclusion, the researchers recommended that the identity question needed to take primacy: "This study leads us to hypothesize that it is the value

proposition of Catholic education that has been lost, and that value proposition is highly theological in nature” (Nuzzi, Frabutt, & Holter, 2009, p. 55). Other Catholic scholars agree that the most important need for Catholic schools, especially during a nation-wide crisis, is clarity about their distinctive religious and educational mission (Heft, 2011; Miller, 2006; Pollefeyt & Bouwens, 2014; Youniss & Convey, 2000). Certainly, finances are also a critical problem in many schools, especially those in urban areas (Brinig & Steele-Garnett, 2014). However, as Heft (2011) explains, “vision and leadership are the most important factors for the future of Catholic schools. Money follows vision. Without vision, the scripture states, the people will perish. Without vision, schools also, eventually, perish” (p. 13).

Another growing concern is that many Catholic school officials are embracing the idea of turning struggling Catholic schools into public charter schools which inadvertently assists in the demise of other inner-city Catholic schools (Moses, 2010). In the Archdioceses of New York, Washington DC, Indianapolis, and Miami, vacant Catholic school buildings have been sold or leased to public charter schools (Brinig & Steele-Garnett, 2014; Seton Education Partners, 2018). Facility proceeds are infused into parishes, remaining Catholic schools, or after school religious formation programs to counter the loss of the faith-forming component of Catholic schooling, despite evidence that students in Catholic schools consistently score higher on knowledge of Catholic faith than do students in parish religious education programs (Elford, 2000; Smarick, 2009). Some archdioceses have undertaken a hybrid model when converting Catholic schools to public charter schools. In response to continued school closures, the Archdiocese of New

York set out to launch a “secular charter school model of virtue paired with optional, privately funded Catholic faith formation after school” (Seton Education Partners, 2018, para. 1). Some Catholics posit that such school transformations are ingenious (Smarick, 2009). Other Catholic voices are concerned that bishops and Catholic school superintendents are desperate for quick solutions without understanding the “jeopardy [public charter schools] pose to Catholic schools” or realizing that “charter schools overall have had mixed results, which demonstrates that they are not, in and of themselves, the solution their proponents claim them to be” (Moses, 2010, para. 3). Despite these concerns, approximately 5,000 charter schools are currently housed in former Catholic school buildings (Brinson, 2009).

Compounding the problem is that Catholics do not contribute enough financial resources to their Catholic schools (Moses, 2010). Prior to 1965, Catholic schools were “Catholic through and through...most elementary schools were attached to parishes which served ethnic neighborhoods of believing Catholic families. Hence, schools were embedded in a Catholic context and, in turn, promoted the perpetuation of practices which enhanced that culture” (Youniss et al., 2000, p. 2). In such a context, even parishioners without children financially and faithfully contributed to their neighborhood Catholic schools. With the suburbanization that followed World War II, many Catholic parishioners were separated from the day-to-day life of Catholic schools and the social practice of supporting their schools. Additionally, Catholics are statistically less likely to tithe than other religious sects (Zech, 2016). While Catholic schools receive some donations from Catholics and other generous donors, financial support for schools in the

United States is no longer interwoven into the daily fabric of parish life or Catholic culture (McDonald & Schultz, 2019; McLaughlin, et al., 1996). Despite apathetic attitudes from certain Church officials and other constituents, certain Catholic religious orders as well as some Catholic colleges and universities have demonstrated their renewed support for Catholic elementary and secondary schools in recent years (Schuttloffel, 2012). These efforts are reviewed later in this chapter as well as in Chapter Two.

Market forces: The demand. While approximately 1,739 of the 6,289 Catholic schools in the United States report having waiting lists for admissions (McDonald & Schultz, 2019), the national decline in enrollment and continued school closures suggest a decline in demand for Catholic schools overall (Sander, 2006). While tuition costs are prohibitive for many parents and Catholic parents who went to public schools may not have experienced the benefits of attending Catholic schools firsthand, there are other factors to consider. Additional reasons why parents choose to send their children to other schools over Catholic schools include: (1) The loss of faith in the Church as an institution, especially after the sex abuse scandals, (2) religious disaffiliation, and (3) the changing concept of what the term *Catholic* means.

Loss of faith in the church as an institution. Research indicates that the Catholic Church's sex abuse scandals are partially responsible for the Catholic school crisis. It is estimated that negative publicity because of the sex abuse scandals explains about two thirds of the decline in Catholic schooling since 2002 (Moghtaderi, 2017). Archdioceses with higher rates of negative publicity experienced a larger decline in both the number of

Catholic schools and overall Catholic school enrollment (Dills & Hernández-Julián, 2010). While the Catholic sex abuse scandals had a direct impact on Catholic school enrollment and a primary reason many people distrust the institutional Church, other dynamics have also fueled distrust.

Increasingly, young Catholics are weakly attached to the Church. Out of an estimated 20 million former Catholics, approximately 5.4 million are between 15-25 years old (McCarty & Vitek, 2017). The research study *Going, Going, Gone: The Dynamics of Disaffiliation in Young Catholics* (McCarty & Vitek, 2017) sought to understand more fully, and in young people's own words, why young people leave the Catholic Church. Researchers surveyed 1,500 young people between the ages of 15-25 who identify as former Catholic and included interviews with 214 of those surveyed. Seventy-four percent of young adults sampled said they stopped identifying as Catholic between ages 10 and 20 with a median age of 13 years old. Of the participants who left the Catholic Church, roughly 36 percent became nonreligious and 46 percent joined another religion. When asked why they left the Catholic Church, young people provided reasons as diverse as the individuals' lived experiences (McCarty & Vitek, 2017). Included in those reasons were dissatisfaction with hierarchical norms and the lack of freedom to ask questions and challenge church teachings that they believe did not align with their core values or Catholic social justice principles. The research findings from the study also reflect broader demographic trends towards religious disaffiliation.

Religious Disaffiliation. The percent of Americans who claim no particular religion doubled from seven percent to 14 percent in the 1990s (Hout & Fischer, 2002).

In 2012, the Pew Research Center discovered that one-in-five U.S. adults have no religious affiliation and are colloquially referred to as the *religious nones* (Cooperman, 2013, para. 4). According to a *Religious Landscape Study* (Pew Research Center, 2014), the percent of unaffiliated (i.e., religious nones) account for 22.8 percent of the U.S. population while Catholics account for 20.8 percent. Research also indicates that millennials are increasingly driving the growth of religious nones with the number of disaffiliated young millennials (ages 18-24) at 36 percent and disaffiliated older millennials (ages 25-33) at 34 percent (Lipka, 2015).

Religious demographic shifts are reflected in Catholic schools across the United States as student populations become increasingly religiously diverse with 349,139 non-Catholic students enrolled in Catholic schools, accounting for 19 percent of total enrollment (McDondald & Schultz, 2019). Additionally, research shows that parents' religiosity has a large effect on the probability that their children attend Catholic schools (Greeley & Rossi, 1966). Religiosity is practiced and expressed, in part, through church attendance (Holdcroft, 2006). Multiple Gallup surveys conducted near the middle of each decade from the 1950s through the present, indicate that church attendance has declined for U.S. Catholics. The decline began in the 1960s, accelerated in the 1970s, and has since continued at a slower pace (Saad, 2018). In 2018, fewer than four in 10 Catholics reported attending church (Saad, 2018). Research indicates that part of the decline in Catholic school enrollment is attributed to a decline in parental religiosity as measured by church attendance (Sander, 2005). Central to understanding and addressing the problem is the term *Catholic*.

The meaning of Catholic. The Catholic school crisis has raised significant contemporary questions about the Catholic identity of Catholic schools (Curran, 1997). Before the mid-1960s, Catholics in the United States and those affiliated with Catholic schools seemed uniformed in their understanding of Catholicism (Meagher, 2000; Morris, 1997). However, this uniformity was dependent on close-knit immigrant communities and a teaching faculty of sisters, brothers, and nuns who shared similar religious training (Meagher, 2000). Additionally, Catholic diversity and variations of Catholic identity may have been hidden, suppressed, or less obvious in such a context.

Perhaps in times past, diversity was hidden by a homogeneous definition of Catholicism which was reinforced by a well-trained cadre of teachers with a commonly avowed religious life. Today, the diversity of the students' backgrounds is complicated by diversity in the meaning of 'Catholic.' One can see then why observers might ask just how Catholic the schools are and how high a priority being Catholic ranks, say, in comparison with academic achievement. (Youniss et al., 2000, p. 7)

Among Catholics in contemporary culture, Catholic identity is varied and diverse (Dillon, 1999). According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Christian usage of the term *Catholic* means "universal" or "the whole world" (Catholic Church, 1993, para. 752). Therefore, a heterogeneous church is expected and welcome (Dillon, 1999; Graham, 2009). Inclusivity is, in theory, the essence of Catholicism (Francis, 2013). However, internal tensions exist and while tensions can be "a sign of life" within the

Church (Francis, 2015, para. 1), certain tensions have become “wounding” and demonstrate “ideological divergent analyses” of Catholicism (Dillon, 1999, p. 2).

Pope Francis has warned against ideologies rooted in “a narcissistic and authoritarian elitism” that shut the door to God’s grace and render the Church exclusive (Francis, 2013, para. 35). In apostolic exhortations he discusses the temptation to reduce holiness to individual power, success, and ways of acting which lead individuals to “feel superior to others because they observe certain rules or remain intransigently faithful to a particular Catholic style” (Francis, 2018, para. 49). Additionally, Francis warns against “a variety of apparently unconnected ways of thinking and acting: an obsession with the law, an absorption with social and political advantages, [and] a punctilious concern for the Church’s liturgy, doctrine and prestige...” (Francis, 2018, para. 57). Such excessive concerns and ideological tensions play out in social spaces like parishes and schools (Bernstein, 1990). However, there is a dearth of research on how these tensions impact and influence Catholic identity in Catholic schools. Parental demand for various types of Catholic schooling and how those responsible for Catholic schools respond to diverse opinions and understandings of Catholicism are also issues that remain relatively unexplored.

Why Catholic Schools Matter

Catholic schools are among the oldest educational institutions in the United States (Bryk et al., 1993). Research indicates that Catholic schools are a “gift to the Church” and “a gift to the nation” (Guerra, 2005, p. 3). The following is a brief review of the research-based benefits of Catholic schooling in the United States:

- Students in Catholic schools demonstrate higher academic achievement than similar students from similar backgrounds in public schools (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982; Greeley, 1982; Sander, 1996).
- The achievement gap between races and income groups is smaller in faith-based schools (Jeynes, 2007; Marks & Lee, 1989).
- Latino and African American students who attend Catholic schools are more likely to graduate from high school and more likely to graduate from college than their public school peers (Benson, Yeager, Guerra, & Manno, 1986; Evans & Schwab, 1995; Neal, 1997; Sander & Krautman, 1995).
- “Multiply disadvantaged” children benefit most from Catholic schools (Evans & Schwab, 1995; Greeley, 1982; Neal, 1997).
- Social class effects on educational achievement are significantly lessened in Catholic schools (Bryk et al., 1993; Greeley, 1982).
- The poorer and more at-risk a student is, the greater the relative achievement gains in Catholic schools (York, 1996).
- Graduate of Catholic high schools are more likely to vote than public school graduates (Dee, 2005).
- Graduates of Catholic schools are likely to earn higher wages than public school graduates (Hoxby, 1994; Neal, 1997).
- Catholic school graduates are more civically engaged, more tolerant of diverse views, and more committed to service as adults (Campbell, 2001; Greeley & Rossi, 1996; Greene, 1998; Wolf, Greene, Kleitz, & Thalhammer, 2001).

This list of benefits is what the Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) at the University of Notre Dame coined the *Catholic school advantage* (2018, para. 4). There are many dimensions to the Catholic school advantage, including “higher graduation rates, demonstrated academic achievement, character formation, civic engagement, and a variety of prosocial and pro-ecclesial effects” (ACE, 2018, para. 4).

Despite financial concerns and the Catholic school crisis, the commitment to disadvantaged students and families remains firm. New governance models such as the Jubilee schools, the Cristo Rey Network, and the Notre Dame ACE Academies were recently created to meet the needs of economically-disadvantaged families and “sustainably provide [them with] high-quality education and faith formation” (Smarick & Robson, 2015, p. 48). Additionally, in 1979, the Conference of Bishops declared in *Brothers and Sisters to Us*:

We urgently recommend the continuation and expansion of Catholic schools in the inner cities and other disadvantaged areas. No other form of Christian ministry has been more widely acclaimed or desperately sought by leaders of various racial communities. For a century and a half the Church in the United States has been distinguished by its efforts to educate the poor and disadvantaged, many whom are not of the Catholic faith. That tradition continues today in – among other places – Catholic schools, where so many Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asians receive a form of education and formation which constitutes a key to greater freedom and dignity. It would be tragic if today, in the face of acute need and even near despair, the Church, for centuries the teacher and guardian of

salvation, should withdraw from this work in our own society. No sacrifice can be so great, no price can be so high, no short-range goals can be so important as to warrant the lessening of our commitments to Catholic education in minority neighborhoods. (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979, p. 52)

Research also shows that when Catholic schools close in urban neighborhoods, minority groups suffer because of the loss of community and “social capital” that Catholic schools provided them (Brinig & Garnett, 2014, p. 118). In their research on Catholic high schools, Bryk et al. (1993) found that one of the reasons why Catholic schools advance greater educational equity is because of their emphasis on community.

We heard the claim “we are community” repeated often. For adults, especially principals, the idea of building and nurturing a school community was a major concern. As social scientists, our initial reaction to such rhetoric was skepticism. What does it really mean to talk about a school as a community? The pervasiveness of this language, however, coupled with the manifest qualities of the social relationships in these schools, eventually led us to believe that this was more than a rhetorical exercise. We sensed something special in the organization of these schools, above and beyond the constrained academic structure, that was central to their operations. (p. 275)

In their analysis, the researchers found that an emphasis on community and the common good helped explain why the average dropout rates were lower in Catholic schools than public schools. A distinct approach to community also helped explain why the achievement gap was smaller in Catholic schools.

The Catholic school, organized as a community, is an “irreplaceable source of service to society” (Sacred Congregation for Christian Education, 1977, para. 1). Official Church documents such as *Gravissimum Educationis* and *The Catholic School* articulate that Catholic schools exist to help educate all people and form them to be good citizens who contribute to their society. Additionally, these Church documents explain that Catholic schools exist to share in the evangelical mission of the Church. In other words, “Catholic schools aim at forming in the Christian those particular virtues which will enable [him/her] to live a new life in Christ and help [him/her] to play faithfully [his/her] part in building up the Kingdom of God” (Sacred Congregation for Christian Education, 1977, para. 1). Research indicates that Catholic schools are also effective ambassadors of the Catholic Church. As previously mentioned in this chapter, students in Catholic schools consistently score higher on knowledge of Catholic faith than do students in parish religious education programs (Elford, 2000). While research provides evidence for Catholic school success, Catholic schools continue to close and enrollment continues to decline. Aside from market forces, the Catholic school crisis is intensified by the belief that educational markets are the basis for school improvement (Bryk et al., 1993; Grace, 2002).

Market vs. Mission

Market forces alone are not the root of the Catholic school crisis. Catholic schools and public schools are also caught up in a “global ideological struggle” for power and control over the purpose of schooling (Grace, 2002, p. 180). In his study, *Catholic Schools: Mission, Markets and Morality*, Grace explains:

The attempted colonization of schools, colleges and universities in the 1980s and 1990s by the values, practices and discourse of market ideologies has presented Catholic school leaders in some countries with sharp challenges to the principles of a distinctive Catholic educational mission. Catholic schools, with other schools, have been caught up in a global ideological struggle between those who claim that the application of competitive market forces within education will be a revitalizing reform for schooling, making it more efficient, effective and responsive to education “consumers”, and those who argue that it will be a distortion and corruption of what education is about. (p. 180)

In the United States, educational policies like School Choice which allow public funds to follow individual students to the private or public school of their choice, have contributed to the marketization and privatization of education (Natale & Doran, 2011; Ravitch, 2016). Such policies have been criticized for reducing parents and students to consumers and for undermining the purpose of public education (Engel, 2000; Pring, 1996; Ravitch, 2016). The purpose of public education is to provide a quality education for all children, regardless of socioeconomic status, and contribute to the common good (Engel, 2000; Tyack, 2001). Catholic education shares in the mission of public education and also views schooling as a human right (Paul VI, 1965). Both schools are intended to function as instruments of democracy. However, School Choice and the rhetoric behind the school reform movement undermines this shared mission because it is an educational policy that is beneficial for some children, but not for all.

Conflicting educational philosophies. School Choice is an educational policy founded upon neoliberal, market-based ideologies and carried out by vouchers, tax credits, and tuition scholarships (Engel, 2000; Ravitch, 2016). Since schooling is “inherently value-laden...the question is not *whether* politics but whose politics” (Tyack, 2001). The school reform movement entered the American mainstream when President Reagan took office in the 1980s and has continued into the twenty-first century. Educational policies such as School Choice, No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, and Common Core are all rooted in neoliberal, market-based ideologies and educational philosophies. School Choice specifically encourages individualism and the competition between schools (Engel, 2000). Three primary assumptions undergird the School Choice movement (Bernard & Mondale, 2001):

1. In the same way the economy becomes more efficient and prosperous when businesses compete freely in the marketplace and consumers make rational choices among varied products, all schools would become more efficient and effective if they competed with one another and gave parents choices of where to send their children;
2. In a knowledge-based economy, students will perform better in the workplace if they have taken rigorous academic subjects, especially math and science;
3. Although schools, unlike businesses, show no profits and losses – no bottom line – at the end of the year, standardized test scores measure what has been learned and can roughly predict how future employees will perform in the workplace.

School Choice supports a “market philosophy” or view of education (Pring, 1996, p. 62). Such a vision of schooling is antithetical to the educational philosophies that undergird both public and Catholic schools, primarily that of democracy and the common good. In 1997, the Bishops of England and Wales produced a powerful critique of market-driven approaches to education and to explain how neoliberal, market-based ideologies inherently conflict with the Catholic commitment to the common good:

Education is not a commodity to be offered for sale. The distribution of funding solely according to the dictates of market forces is contrary to Catholic doctrine and the common good. Teachers and pupils are not economic units whose value is seen merely as a cost element on the school’s balance sheet. To consider them in this way threatens human dignity. Education is a service provided by society for the benefit of all its young people, in particular for the benefit of the most vulnerable and the most disadvantaged – those whom we have a sacred duty to serve. Education is about the service of others rather than the service of self.

(Catholic Education Service, 1997, p. 13)

The Bishops of the United States have yet to issue a formal statement expressing their concerns over a market-based approach to education. However, the dilemma between the distinctive mission of Catholic schools and the reality of market forces in the United States has been referenced in the literature.

Given the private status of Catholic high schools, there is a natural temptation to conceive of the relationship between parents and the school in market terms. To be sure, there are features of the relationship that resemble the exchange of goods

and services. The “firm” (the Catholic school) has a “product” that “consumers” purchase. The firm has an interest in pleasing these consumers, and it regularly evaluates its internal operations in the light of consumer feedback. But the actual dynamic of parent-school relations are much more subtle than this caricature of a market metaphor conveys. (Bryk et al., 1993, p. 307)

An alternative to describing Catholic schools as “market-responsive firm(s)” is the idea of schools as “voluntary communities” (Bryk et al., 1993, p. 312) or “bridging institutions” (p. 316).

As voluntary communities, Catholic schools are organized around communal ways of life. The theme of community appears in official Church documents on the topic of Catholic education. In *To Teach as Jesus Did: A Pastoral Message on Catholic Education*, the U.S. Catholic Bishops articulated the importance of embracing the educational philosophy of *person-in-community*: “The educational efforts of the Church must therefore be directed to forming persons-in-community; for the education of the individual Christian is important not only in [his/her] solitary destiny, but also to the destinies of the many communities in which [he/she] lives” (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1972, p. 12). Catholic schools are also voluntary communities in the sense that they possess a relatively high degree of autonomy in managing their affairs. Such autonomy is important because “much of the rationale for activity within a communal organization relies on traditions and local judgements” (Bryk et al., 1993, p. 313). Additionally, membership in a school community involves an ongoing exercise of free will. Therefore, the notion of membership in Catholic schools requires relationships

of trust among students, parents, and faculty. Rather than “the contracts that formalize marketplace interactions...a set of fiducial commitments is at the core of the voluntary community” (Bryk et al., 1993, pp. 313-314).

Catholic high schools are also bridging institutions. As previously mentioned, disadvantaged children benefit greatly from attending Catholic schools because of the organizational structure, social behavior, beliefs, and sentiments found in Catholic high schools. Their distinct approach to the education of the disadvantaged is encapsulated in the idea of a school as a bridging institution.

The philosophy of a bridging institution is dialogical. On the one side is an empathetic orientation toward children and their families that is grounded in an appreciation of the worth of each person without regard for outward appearance, customs, or manners. The school welcomes all who choose to come, and it conveys to parents and children a sense of security, personal well-being, and engagement. On the other side is a clear recognition of the demands of contemporary middle-class American life for which the school consciously seeks to prepare its students. From this perspective, the school is of value to the disadvantaged student because it is culturally different. School staff aim to provide an education that will enable each student to develop the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and habits necessary to function in a modern democratic society. (Bryk et al., 1993)

Unfortunately, popular arguments for School Choice and a market-driven educational system commonly employ a microeconomic explanation of schooling that bears little

resemblance to schools as communities. In *The Contemporary Catholic School: Context, Identity, and Diversity*, Pring (1996) explains:

The market is said to deepen the relations between teacher and learner in a particular way – namely as a relation between provider and consumer – which is inappropriate. It represents a shift in language about education, which seems to distort that relationship and mis-describe the educational process. (p. 60)

Additionally, it is inappropriate to assume that a new system of education, just because it is market-driven, would produce effects similar to those found in Catholic schools; a claim School Choice advocates make as a way to encourage reform and promote public charter schools (Ravitch, 2014; Bryk et al., 1993). Indeed, without commitment to the specific values ingrained within Catholic schooling, neither the quality of relationships found in Catholic schools nor the more equitable and just social distribution of education would result.

We reiterate our doubts that the specific consequences...for Catholic high schools would appear more broadly should a market-based system of schooling emerge in the United States.... A market system seems apt to produce a highly differentiated set of schools, in which educational opportunities would be even more inequitably distributed among individuals and communities than is already the case. We are reminded of Weber's maxim that 'capitalism stripped of its religious imperative is a cloak of steel, a cage of iron.' A market system of schools, absent a vital moral imperative, would likely come to resemble this image. (Bryk et al., 1993, pp. 315-316)

While some Catholic scholars have voiced their concerns over a market-based system of education, there is a dearth of research on how those responsible for Catholic schools in the United States respond to such a system. While there is a dearth of empirical research on the topic, a general idea of how Church officials and Catholic school leaders respond is observable through *non-academic* materials such as websites, blogs, media, news articles, letters, and populist texts (Fairclough, 1995; Franklin, 1999; Taylor, Rivzi, Lingard, & Henry, 1997).

Putting faith in choice. When School Choice policies, including the idea that families could use government funded vouchers to send students to Catholic schools, were first proposed in 1955 by economist Milton Friedman (Friedman, 1955), Catholic schools remained silent on the issue causing School Choice policies to “die without any significant action” (Dougherty & Sostre, 1992, p. 162). However, by the time School Choice was reintroduced by President Ronald Reagan in 1982, Catholic schools were in the midst of the Catholic school crisis and desperate for financial solutions (Dougherty & Sostre, 1992; Olsen, 1991). In the 1980s, the Catholic voice helped propel School Choice into the educational limelight, partially because President Ronald Reagan and President George H. W. Bush courted Catholic schools (Walsh, 1991b). Reagan and Bush – who “were not friends to teachers unions or public schools, which they deemed as failures” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Youniss et al., 2000, p. 4) – urged Catholic school leaders at private meetings and national conventions to support School Choice, claiming it would solve Catholic school financial woes (Dougherty & Sostre, 1992; Olson, 1991; Walsh, 1991b). In response to presidential promises as well as

their own belief in School Choice policies, the U.S. Catholic Bishops voted a fund of \$2 million dollars to set up a national office to guide state and diocesan groups on the issue of choice and to establish a national Catholic parents' organization to lobby on the issue (Walsh, 1991a, p. 16).

However, an unintended consequence of the School Choice movement for Catholic schools, is the proliferation of public charter schools at the expense of Catholic schools (Lackman, 2013; Ravitch, 2016). As explained earlier in this chapter, a growing concern is the impact unregulated public charter schools have on the fate of Catholic schools in the United States since “Catholic schools die where charters expand” (Brinig & Stelle-Garnett, 2014; Lackman, 2013, D. Ravitch, personal communication, April 30, 2010, para. 17). Yet, despite the negative impact School Choice has on Catholic schools in regards to the proliferation of public charter schools, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops continue to prioritize School Choice policies on their website which includes links to documents like “The ABCs of School Choice” and letters written to the United States Congress by the bishops advocating for tax credits, vouchers, and tuition scholarships (Murry, 2017a, 2017b; Lucas, 2015; Lucas & Wuerl, 2016; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2019).

The National Catholic Educational Association's website (NCEA) also prioritizes School Choice: “NCEA supports the concept of full and fair parental choice in education which is supported by tax relief, vouchers, scholarships and other aid to parents so they may seek the educational opportunities they want for their children” (NCEA, 2019a, para. 1). Indeed, former presidents of NCEA have individually identified as “outspoken

advocate(s) for School Choice and educational reform” (Guerra, 2005, p. 23). Catholic enthusiasm for School Choice stems from the dire financial issues caused by declining student enrollment and rapid school closures. Without a fiscal crisis and related market pressures, Catholic support for School Choice may have never popularized (Dougherty & Sostre, 1992).

Doubts about school choice. While Catholic support for School Choice is evident at the national level, there is evidence that individual Catholics doubt the School Choice movement, particularly in regards to government funded vouchers. Problems with voucher programs have been articulated in Catholic magazines. Bertucio (2018) lists a number of concerns with vouchers and School Choice policies including:

- State aid may be accompanied by state control. State control of pedagogy, curriculum, and professional norms might be an unintended consequence.
- Catholic schools might willingly grow to resemble non-Catholic institutions as they compete for students.
- Catholic schools might lose their autonomy and make themselves vulnerable to the onslaught of standardized testing.
- Overtime, Catholic schools might lose their religious ethos and overemphasize how they complement the mission of public schools.
- Choice programs can turn schools into “segregation academies” (para. 13) and, by participating in voucher programs, families may select Catholic school out of a desire to attend more statistically white institutions.

Empirical research also conveys concerns over School Choice policies and practices. A multiple-case study (Bridges, 2019) examined the influence of vouchers on the Catholic identity of two elementary schools in the state of Indiana. Data consisted of observations, institutional documents, and interviews with administrators, teachers, and staff. Researchers found that a key part of Indiana's School Choice voucher program is academic accountability. According to the study, schools, including Catholic schools, must be at a "C" level in their testing each year or they are in danger of being placed on probation, which means restrictions or prohibitions on future vouchers. Both of the schools in the study faced sanctions for the upcoming school year which researchers explained threatened the institutional identity of each school in the sense that it shifted the focus and efforts of each school towards academic achievement and accountability requirements in order to remain eligible for vouchers. When one participant was asked about the influence of vouchers on the Catholic identity and culture of their elementary school, the participant responded, "I love being in a Catholic school, and the atmosphere of family [at the school], but I have felt, since...vouchers, that we are more like a business and we have lost a big part of that tie into family" (p. 54). Another participant in the same study stated, "I did not get into the profession to make money so I have a hard time looking at the school as a business. I understand that it is a business and is all about the money right now, but I do worry the Catholic identity is getting...sometimes I think it's a show" (p. 56).

Putting faith in business and marketing. In the United States, many Catholic schools have turned towards business practices, policies, and principles that now

commonly suffuse the approach and administration of American education. Such decisions are an attempt to make schools both more competitive and “branded” in a market-oriented culture (Convey, 2000; Grace, 1995, 2016; Natale & Doran, 2011, p. 1). As Catholic schools face market pressures, new business models as well as massive marketing and rebranding campaigns are utilized to help them navigate a competitive economic landscape. For Catholic schools that are “failing” to keep their doors open, media coverage of the crisis and institutes like the Thomas B. Fordham Institute have expressed the opinion that this crisis is because “Catholic schools need a business model” (Emerson, 2012; Nocera, 2017, para. 3). Strategic plans have also become a common practice in Catholic schools. The use of strategic plans began as a result of the Catholic school crisis.

During the 1985-86 school year...bishops around the country were scrambling to shore up the schools, attempting to stop the hemorrhaging and to find ways to support financially the schools that remained, particularly those in the center cities of large urban areas. Many dioceses commissioned strategic planning studies to secure the future of their schools. (Convey, 2000, pp. 14-15)

Additionally, Catholic schools increasingly rely on wealthy donors to fund their operations and help actualize their strategic plans (McDonald & Schultz, 2019). One way in which Catholic schools across the United States have communicated with donors as well as prospective families about their institutional identity and value is through extensive marketing, branding, and advertising efforts (Trivitt & Wolf, 2011).

At the national level, the NCEA provides year-round marketing toolkits, strategic marketing plan handbooks, and brochures describing the “nuts and bolts” of marketing to Catholic school boards and leadership teams (Dwyer, 2009; National Catholic Educational Association, 2019b; NCEA Boards and Councils Department, 2010, para. 1). The NCEA also explains that marketing practices are considered “best practices” and encourages Catholic schools to “enhance marketing strategies [to] avoid school closings” (Baxter, 2011, p. 10; Dufault & Jones, 2018). Catholic colleges and universities also encourage Catholic elementary and secondary schools to market. The University of Notre Dame developed a Task Force (NDTF) to help Catholic elementary and secondary schools utilize Notre Dame’s “marketing expertise to attract new families to Catholic schools” while also reminding Catholic schools that research findings underscore that “word of mouth is the most powerful marketing tool for Catholic schools” (NDTF, 2006, p. 10).

Notre Dame’s Task Force also highlights the importance of marketing to Latino families since Latino populations are growing and will soon constitute the majority of the United States. While Latino Catholics now comprise nearly half of all Catholics in the United States, only 3 percent of Latino families send their children to Catholic schools (Brinig & Steele-Garnett, 2014). Latino children are little more than half as likely to enroll in Catholic schools as non-Latino white children (NDTF, 2006). In this instance, market segmentation is encouraged because it is “a practice that helps target populations most interested in Catholic schooling” (Appel, 1986, p. 16). Notre Dame’s Task Force frames the problem and the solution in market terms: “We also recognize that increasing

the demand for Catholic schools among Latinos is inseparable from the supply side of the equation – improving the schools themselves” (p. 11). Marketing practices have also been encouraged and implemented by Catholic school leaders at the archdiocesan and individual school levels.

Across the United States, archdioceses as well as schools have launched massive marketing campaigns in an effort to save Catholic schools. In the late 1990s, the Archdiocese of Chicago embarked on a four-year campaign intended to reverse decades of declining enrollment (Rossi, 2000). To facilitate this campaign the archdiocese created a new director of marketing position within their school offices and elicited the help of Public Communications, Inc., a Chicago-based marketing agency. The first step in the campaign was a 12-month, \$400,000 marketing onslaught consisting of 200 billboards, local radio ads, and local newsprint ads. The catchphrase guiding the campaign was, “Catholic Schools: Have Faith in Education” (Rossi, 2000, para. 2). The outside marketing agency the archdiocese hired used common marketing research strategies, such as focus groups, to develop the slogan and elicited the help of alumnus and former Detroit Pistons star, Isaiah Thomas. Thomas appeared in ads declaring, “A Catholic education played a major role in making my dreams come true” (Rossi, 2000, para. 3). By the turn of the twentieth century, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New Jersey, and Boston had all turned to television ads to boost enrollment. Throughout the 1990s, Boston Catholic schools paid for ads to be on cable stations such as Lifetime and A&E and even local network breaks on ABC’s “Good Morning America” (Rossi, 2000).

Tensions between marketing Catholic schools and being Catholic schools are evident in the Diocese of Orange. The Diocese of Orange whose territory comprises the whole of Orange County, California has seen an increase in enrollment. For one school in the diocese, enrollment has grown by 18 percent since the school opened in 2014 (Kandil, 2018). However, the school's communications director stated, "I don't think you'd see that anywhere else. We have to be better than your comparable options. Ninety-nine percent of our graduates are admitted to 4-year colleges. Catholic schools where all the kids in the parish just come over, you open the door and all the kids who go to Mass every Sunday are ready to enroll – it doesn't work like that anymore" (Kandil, 2018, para. 5). Catholic schools in the diocese were the first in Southern California to introduce a one-to-one technology program that offers each student an iPad or Chromebook. Their business model "caters to wealthier clientele" which allows for several schools to have STEM labs equipped with design software and 3D printers and new ballet studios (Kandil, 2018, para. 4). However, religious education is still seen as "what sets the Catholic schools [in the Diocese of Orange] apart because of community building and a values-driven environment" (para. 13). Because of the faith-based mission, the Diocese of Orange also works to provide tuition assistance to ensure that Catholic education is accessible to all, not just for those who can afford it: "One mission of Catholic schools is to take immigrant communities and help them up the socioeconomic ladder. We did that very successfully with the Irish, and we want to do that in the Hispanic community now" (Kandil, 2018, para. 11).

In order to attract families, larger, more prominent Catholic high schools have also marketed and promoted sports as a means of financial security. Since a winning sports program can boost enrollment and draw bigger donations “by building an irresistible reputation for success” (Rosengren, 2005, para. 7), Catholic high schools have woven sports programs into their marketing strategies, imitating college programs. Since “education has become a business...Catholic schools survive in a competitive marketplace [by] turning to sports for financial salvation” (Rosenberg, 2005, para. 8) and are encouraged to rely on sports as a marketing tactic by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). The NCEA offers Catholic schools the following advice in the book, *Athletics and the Gospel Mission of the Catholic School*: “Since Catholic schools need to market themselves to the larger community and to attract students and benefactors with available resources, successful athletic programs can be a powerful tool for a well-ordered Catholic school” (McGrath, 2000, p. 8). However, there are individual Catholics and groups of Catholics that question the reliance on business models and marketing campaigns to help solve the Catholic school crisis.

Doubts about business and marketing. Marketing practices, like those that focus on promoting Catholic school sports and athletic programs, have been called “an increasingly common practice that threatens the religious identity and academic foundation of Catholic secondary education” (Rosengren, 2005, para. 2). Those with the view that sports marketing threatens the institutional identity and character of Catholic schools explain that a nationwide sports revolution has shifted the place of athletics in Catholic schools from extracurricular activities to a core, defining component (Natale &

Doran, 2011). In an article published in *U.S. Catholic*, Rosengren expresses his personal frustration over such marketing practices:

Catholic principals will tell you that they're using athletics to shape character. Don't believe them. They're doing it for money. Bottom line: Catholic schools have sold their souls. Now I have nothing against sports themselves. I play them. I cheer them. I've coached them at the high school level. But I've also seen them strip schools of their integrity. This marketing strategy denigrates Catholic schools to the level of college programs, notorious for their corruption. In step with this strategy, coaches recruit players in defiance of league rules. Admissions directors accept talented athletes over more qualified students. The prize recruits deplete scholarship funds. The schools sacrifice their standards to build athletic powerhouses because nothing brings home the bacon like a winner.... Not all Catholic schools line up with the goats in this regard, of course. There remain those administrators with moral backbone...[and] in these institutions sports supplement the Gospel mission, they don't supplant it. These schools are the winners. (Rosengren, 2005, para. 5-8)

Other individual voices express a concern over the business models used in Catholic schools that, in praxis, rely on wealthy donors for funding. Jim Santos – a parent who served on the school board of his son's Catholic school in Los Altos, California – expressed his concern with the school's response to market pressures:

In our attempts to find the best business model for our Catholic schools we have forgotten that our schools are a faith-based business. Our capital is the faith we

put into them. When that capital dries up, our schools wither and become something other than what they should be. Our student population declines, our funds dry up, and parishioners and pastors see little reason to support the schools. Even more tragically, our schools lose their way in the morass of academic excellence at the expense of their evangelical mission. We should know we have reached a crisis of faith when we seek guidance from marketing experts singing a siren's song assuring us that our faith belongs in them. We should know we have reached a crisis of faith when we see the salvation of our schools in the wealthy donor rather than in the body of faithful who comprise our church. (Santos, 2012, para. 12)

Concern over the philanthropic efforts and donations to Catholic schools has also been expressed. The language of the market permeates through American culture to such an extent that "business is seen as the only solution to our problems" (Giridharadas, 2018; Tippet, 2018, para. 33).

Philanthropic efforts to fix the perceived problems within American schooling are evident in the School Choice movement. Public charter schools have become popularized and funded by philanthropic celebrities like Bill and Melinda Gates, LeBron James, and Sean Combs, also referred to as P. Diddy (Abduhl-Alim, 2016; Barkan, 2011; McGoey, 2015; Scott, 2009; Victor, 2016; Zillgitt, 2018). Catholic schools across the United States have also benefited from philanthropic efforts. In June 1998, the Children's Scholarship Fund was established by philanthropists Ted Frostmann and John Walton, who offered \$100 million to cities across the country that could come up with matching funds for

local foundations. During the 1998 school year, the local Washington DC, Scholarship Fund was supporting 1,300 poor children attending private schools, 70 percent of whom were in Catholic schools (Youniss et al., 2000). However, while some say that Catholic schools should be funded by philanthropists “like Gates and Walton, not tax payers” (Ravitch, 2014, para. 3), a growing concern is the cultural norms perpetuated by philanthropic involvement in educational endeavors. In an interview on National Public Radio, Giridharadas, who is the author of *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World*, explained:

Everybody is part of the culture we share. This is the problem.... It is every private school in America that now has to raise endowments and has a mission of service and makes kids do 50 hours of community service, but basically has 18 millionaires on the board and is totally in fealty to wealthy donors. It's every university that is courting the next \$30 million science center donation and puts whatever those people want ahead of its educational mission. Business has become the most real lens on life...business is how you make things different now. In every age, it's something else. Maybe at one point it was the Catholic Church...but now, in our age, it's business. You don't get to pick the locus of power in your age. It just is what it is, and you have to try to make things work within that. But, of course, what that obscures is that it's also a very convenient thing to cling to because it's a way of making change that doesn't ask you to sacrifice in any way, which has traditionally been at the heart of any kind of

spiritual or moral tradition, the idea that sometimes you have to deny yourself for the good of others. (Tippet, 2018, para. 76-79)

Despite this social problem, Catholic school leaders at the national level conduct “philanthropy roundtables” and produce promotional materials such as *Catholic School Renaissance: A Wise Giver’s Guide to Strengthening a National Asset* to attract and educate philanthropists on the benefits of Catholic schooling (Smarick & Robson, 2015, p. 3). Mixed opinions about such market responses evidence the complexity of the problem and the sharp challenges market ideologies present to the principles of a distinctive Catholic mission. A moral tension between the market and the mission exists for every contemporary Catholic school yet few empirical studies explore the impact of market forces on Catholic schools or how those responsible for Catholic schools in the United States understand their institutional identity in a market-driven culture (Bryk et al., 1993; Grace, 2002).

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this multiple-case study was to investigate how leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand and communicate their institutional identity and how that identity – and an institution’s related practices and discourse – can be observed to be influenced by market forces.

Research Questions

To investigate how leaders within select Catholic high schools understand and communicate their institutional identity within a market context and in relation to market forces, two research questions guided this multiple-case study:

- RQ1. How do leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand their institutional identity within a competitive economic market?
- RQ2. How do select Catholic high schools in the United States respond to market pressures?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it helps address a research gap in the literature by focusing on two suburban Catholic high schools in the United States and investigates the influence of market forces on their institutional identities. There is a dearth of research on Catholic education (Grace, 2009). However, this is especially true in regards to the institutional identity of Catholic high schools in the United States and the influence of market forces on their institutional identity. While both elementary and secondary Catholic schools have closed at alarming rates in the United States, most of the research conducted on the Catholic school crisis has been on elementary schools in urban neighborhoods. Therefore, research that focuses on how market forces influence suburban Catholic high schools, which are generally more affluent and potentially less vulnerable to the Catholic school crisis, is needed.

The few empirical studies that address the market's potential influence on the mission and identity of Catholic schools exist outside the United States. Two studies – one from Canada and the other from the United Kingdom – focus on the impact of market forces on the professional identity of Catholic high school principals and headmasters (Grace, 1995; Davies, 2013). Another study from the United Kingdom focuses on how Catholic schools understand their institutional identity within a competitive market-

driven approach to schooling (Grace, 2002). However, there are no studies that empirically explore how Catholic leaders understand and communicate their institutional identity in a competitive economic market and if their identity – and an institution's related practices and discourse – can be observed to be influenced by market forces. This study seeks to fill that research gap.

Additionally, this study is significant because it adds systematic scholarship and research to the field of Catholic education. Systematic scholarship has been expressed as a need by other researchers in the field (Grace, 2009; Shulman, 2008). One of the reasons why the serious study of Catholic education should be more extensively developed is “to provide ideas, inspirations, evaluations, empirical data, theoretical reflections and pedagogic suggestions which will assist Catholic educators to improve the integrity and effectiveness of the various forms of educational work in which they are engaged” (Grace, 2009, p. 6). This multiple-case study is significant because the findings inspire, challenge, and provide insight into the institutional identity, practices, and discourse of Catholic high schools in the United States.

Summary

Since 1965, Catholic schools in the United States have lost approximately 7,000 schools. While other schools continue to expand, Catholic schools continue to close and enrollment continues to decline, forcing some Catholic schools to cease operations and rent their school buildings out to public charter schools. Individual people and organizations responsible for Catholic schools have responded to the Catholic school crisis in a variety of ways including an increased emphasis on School Choice policies,

business models, and marketing campaigns. Unfortunately, in a competitive economic market, schools are encouraged to compete for students the same way businesses compete for customers. Such a vision of schooling is based on individualism and the assumption that self-interest and competition are always beneficial. However, this market-based vision of schooling is antithetical to the Catholic vision of schooling which exists to foster faith-based communities and serve the common good. While Catholic school leaders experience moral tensions between the market and their Catholic mission, a dearth of research exists on the institutional identity of Catholic high schools in relation to market forces. This multiple-case study is significant because it adds to the corpus of research on Catholic education and systematically studies the institutional identity of two Catholic high schools in the United States as well as the extent to which that identity can be observed to be influenced by market forces. The following chapter includes this study's conceptual framework and a review of the literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Once called national treasures (U.S. Department of Education, 2008), Catholic schools in the United States are now considered an endangered species (Shaw, 2012; Wuerl, 2008). Since 1965, approximately 7,000 Catholic elementary and secondary schools have closed across the country (McDonald & Schultz, 2019). While Catholic high schools navigate an increasingly competitive, market-driven culture, they also attempt to carry out their institutional mission and communicate their institutional identity to heterogeneous populations (McLaughlin et al., 1996). The purpose of this multiple-case study was to investigate how leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand and communicate their institutional identity and how that identity – and an institution’s related practices and discourse – can be observed to be influenced by market forces. To investigate how select Catholic high schools understand and communicate their institutional identity within a market context and in relation to market forces, two research questions guided this multiple-case study:

RQ1. How do leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand their institutional identity within a competitive economic market?

RQ2. How do select Catholic high schools in the United States respond to market pressures?

Chapter Two explains the conceptual framework used for this study and includes a review of the literature including a brief history of Catholic high schools in the United States.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual frameworks are key to conducting a transparent and trustworthy study and to guiding data collection and analysis: “A conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied – the key factors, constructs, or variables – and the presumed relationships among them. Frameworks can be rudimentary or elaborate, theory-driven or commonsensical, descriptive or casual” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 18). Figure 6 displays the conceptual framework designed to guide this qualitative research study.

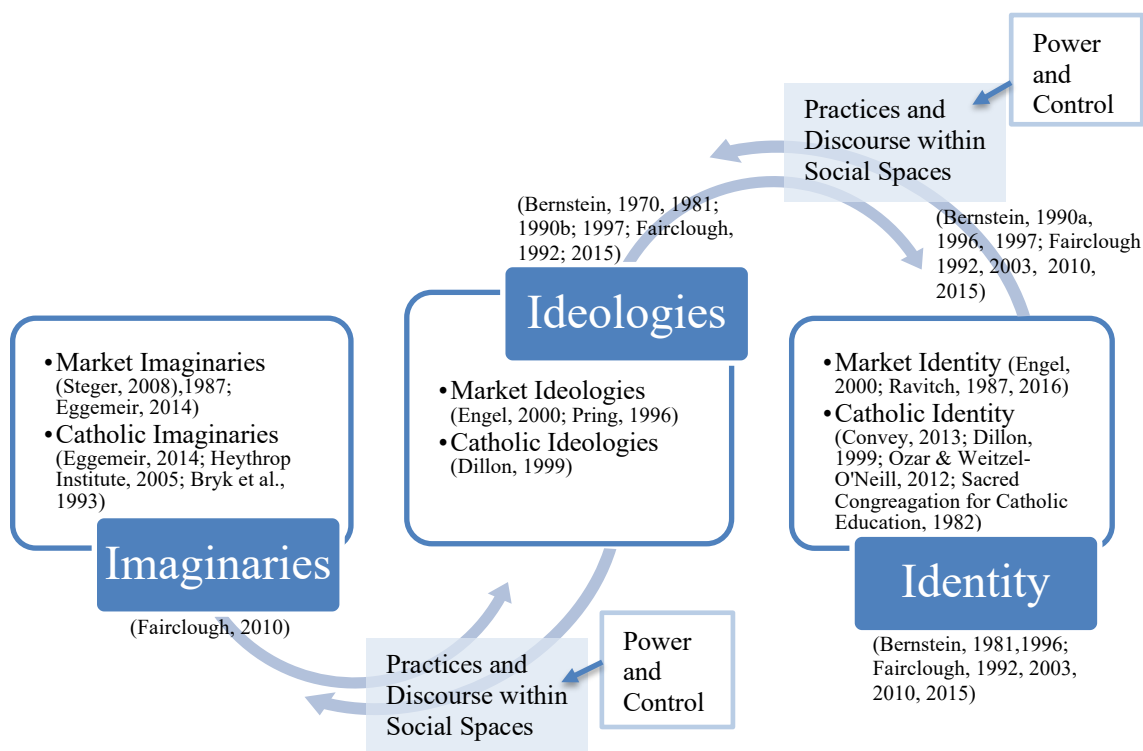


Figure 6. Conceptual Framework.

This study’s conceptual framework is based on the theories of Basil Bernstein and Norman Fairclough. Three primary, interrelated concepts provided the basis for this study’s framework including, (1) *imaginaries*, (2) *ideologies*, and (3) *identity*.

Imaginaries are our vision of the world, what people individually and/or collectively believe is possible (Steger, 2008). Fairclough (2010) explained that imaginaries are “projections of possible states of affairs, possible worlds” or representations of “how things might or could or should be” (p. 266). Importantly, these possible worlds or imaginaries may be “enacted as actual (networks of) practices – imagined activities...[and] social relations can become real activities...[and] social relations” (Fairclough, 2010, p. 266). The enactment of imaginaries occurs through the use of discourse and conventional practices in social spaces such as schools (Bernstein, 1990a, 1996, 1997; Fairclough, 1992, 2003, 2010, 2015). Additionally, since imaginaries are dialectical in nature, they can also involve the use of and reliance on *orders of discourse*. According to Fairclough, orders of discourse embody particular ideologies.

Discourse and practice are constrained not by various independent types of discourse, but by interdependent networks which we can call orders of discourse. We always experience the society and the various social institutions within which we operate as divided up and demarcated, structured into different spheres of action, different types of situation, each of which has its associated type of [language and] practice. (2015, p. 61).

Bernstein refers to orders of discourse as categories, spheres, or domains (1990a). Each category is comprised of underlying aims, values, practices, discourse, and assumptions about ways of being or identity (Bernstein, 1990a, 1996; Fairclough, 2015). What protects institutional identity and voice is what Bernstein referred to as *insulation* (1990a). In other words, what keeps an institution’s identity and voice unique is the

degree to which there are boundaries between other categories or domains. Figures 7 and 8 provide an example of how the market domain and the Catholic domain are inherently different in their social function.

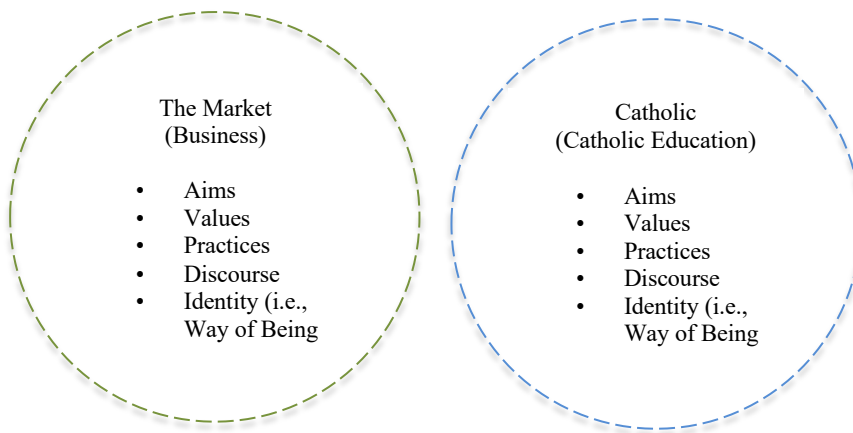


Figure X. Categories of discourse (i.e., orders, spheres, domains).

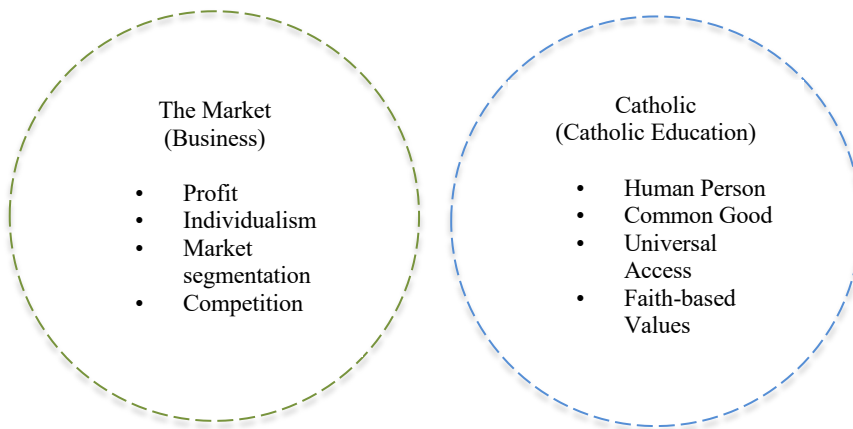


Figure X. Differences between the market domain and the Catholic domain.

Bernstein explains that complete insulation is also problematic and has “inner” and “outer” consequences (1990a, p. 25). Categories of discourse and the systems in which they are enacted must remain open to ensure. However, categories of discourse still require a degree of insulation to ensure institutional identity, voice, and autonomy.

Bernstein posited that specific domains or categories of discourse “constitute ‘voices’ and practices constitute their ‘message’; message is dependent upon ‘voice’” (1990a, p. 27).

Both Bernstein and Fairclough discuss the vulnerability of schools and the field of education to the discourse, practices, and values of the market domain. Fairclough (2015) explains that contemporary capitalism has colonized people’s lives through systems such as the economy, the state, and institutions like schools and that this colonization has reached “crisis proportions” (p. 200).

Catholic high schools in the United States are currently situated in a broader socio-cultural context dominated by a market imaginary (Steger, 2008) which consists of specific ideologies – systems of beliefs and values – that can influence individual and institutional ways of being and communicating (Bernstein, 1970, 1981, 1997; Fairclough, 1992, 2015). The pervasiveness of the market imaginary is a result of *new capitalism*, meaning the most recent form of capitalism originating from the neoliberal political project to “restructure” and “rescale” human social relations in accordance with the demands of an unrestrained, unregulated global market (Fairclough, 2003, p. 4). New capitalism involves the restructuring of relations between economic, political, and social domains which results in the “commodification and marketization of fields like education” which become “subject to the economic logic of the market” to the point where these domains are no longer autonomous or distinct (Bernstein, 1981; Fairclough, 2003, p. 4). Thus, the market has eroded the role that democratic citizenship, the public sphere, and religion play in the contemporary cultural imaginary (Bernstein, 1990b). Because the market is the central social imaginary of contemporary culture (Steger,

2008), “no contemporary social research can ignore these changes, they are having a pervasive effect on our lives” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 4).

Additionally, because “the market imaginary not only decisively shapes the logic of the economy but also trickles down into every feature of life” (Eggemeier, 2014, p. 4), Catholic high schools in the United States must contend with a market-oriented view of schooling and operate within a market context (Grace, 1995; 2002; Ravitch, 2016). For schools, a market context involves meeting and addressing the demands of stakeholders which can vary depending on socioeconomic background, personal interests and agendas, and fluctuate or change over time. While simultaneously articulating their institutional identity and fulfilling their educational mission which oftentimes is in direct opposition to the demands, values, practices, and aims of the market, Catholic schools must appease a variety of stakeholders and remain financially viable (Grace, 2002).

As mentioned earlier in this section, this study focused on the conceptual work of Bernstein and Fairclough to frame the problem. Theoretical concepts from the work of Bernstein were used in previous empirical studies (Grace, 1995, 2002) closely related to the topic and purpose of this study. While Fairclough’s work was not directly referenced in these other studies, the work of Pierre Bourdieu, one of Fairclough’s predecessors and influencers, was mentioned and utilized as a theoretical foundation (Grace 1995, 2002). This study focused on the work of Fairclough because his theoretical concepts include and expand upon the work of Bourdieu. Fairclough was also influenced by Bernstein (2015). Indeed, much of their work aligns and overlaps philosophically and topically. Both focus on language as the basis for ideological and identity formation as well as the

way in which people and entities can attempt to exert power and control over individual and institutional identity. Below is a further explanation of the primary concepts from both theoreticians that were used to design and inform this study's conceptual framework and, thus, guide this qualitative inquiry.

Fairclough (2010, 2015) focuses on the role that language plays in the creation of reality and individual and institutional identity. Particularly, Fairclough's conception of language centers upon "language as social practice determined by social structures" (Fairclough, 2015, p. 51). In other words, "discourse is language viewed in a certain way, as part of the social process (part of social life) which is related to other parts. It is a relational view of language...which includes social relations, material practices, rituals, beliefs (values, desires)" (Fairclough, 2015, p. 7). Importantly, discourse also refers to *semiosis* or meaning-making through the use of various resources such as written texts, visual artifacts, images, and phrases (Fairclough, 2015).

Fairclough and Bernstein explain that discourse and practices are used in such a way that categories of discourse are used within social structures to produce or reproduce social norms or conventions with underlying ideological assumptions (Fairclough, 2015; Bernstein, 1981, 1990b). Within an institution, there can be multiple discourses occurring simultaneously just like there can be multiple identities (Fairclough, 2015; Rogers, 2004). However, a dominate discourse and identity does exist (Bernstein, 1996; Fairclough, 2010). As mentioned above, institutions are structured around an *order of discourse* – a particular combination or network of practices, discourse, and ways of being – which dominate the discursal aspect of an institution and are influenced by external social

structures (e.g., economic, political, and religious social structures). Social spaces, like Catholic high schools, are structured by various dominant domains or discourses which include various types of practices, “what people habitually do” or consider to be inevitable or acceptable actions (Fairclough, 2015, p. 60).

As social institutions, each Catholic high school is a social structure and operates from an order of discourse. According to Fairclough (2015), each school has:

a social structure and an order of discourse which involves a distinctive structuring of its ‘social space’ into a set of situations where discourse occurs (class assembly, playtime, staff meeting, [board meeting], etc.), a set of recognized ‘social roles’ in which people participate in discourse ([principal], teacher, [student], [parent], [board member], [alumni], [donors], etc.), and a set of approved purposes of discourse – learning and teaching, examining, maintaining social control, as well as a set of discourse types. (p. 68)

Figure 9 displays Fairclough’s representation of this relationship.

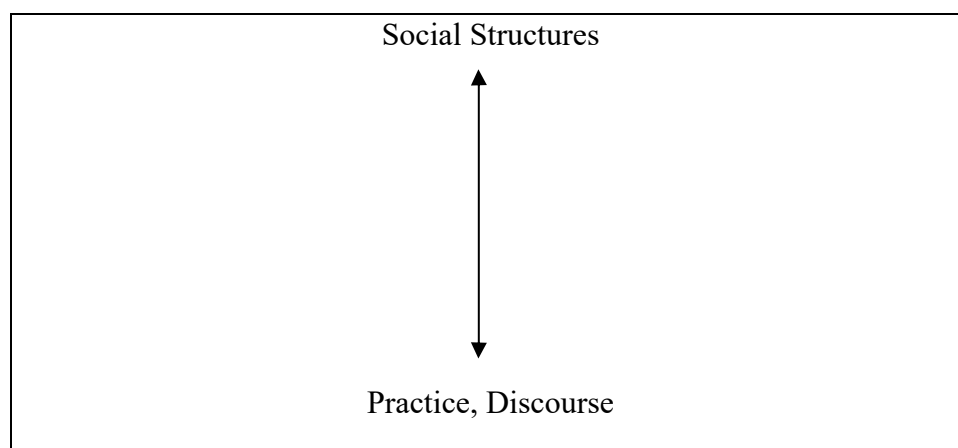


Figure 9. Social structures and social practice.

As far as the social world is concerned, social structures not only determine social practice, they are also a product of social practice. More particularly, “social structures not only determine discourse, they are also a product of discourse” (Fairclough, 2015, p. 68). Fairclough (2015) explained:

In addition to the order of discourse of a social institution, which structures constituent discourses in a particular way, we can refer to the order of discourse of the society as a whole, which structures the orders of discourse of the various social institutions in a particular way. How discourses are structured in a given order of discourse, and how structurings change over time, are determined by changing relationships of power at the level of the social institution or of the society. Power at these levels includes the capacity to control orders of discourse; one aspect of such control is ideological – ensuring that orders of discourse are ideologically harmonized internally or (at the societal level) with each other. (p. 62)

Bernstein (1990a) explained that, “if categories of...discourse are specialized, then each category necessarily has its own specific identity and its own specific boundaries” (p. 23). As mentioned previously, Bernstein (1990a) points to the crucial importance of structural and cultural boundaries and insulations in the maintenance of a distinctive mission or voice for cultural and social institutions and the individuals within them. However, such boundaries and insulations are in a constant process of change and “it follows that, as the strength of the insulation between categories varies, so will the categories vary in their relation to each other and so will their space, identity, and ‘voice’

(p. 24). This precisely describes, in theoretical terms, the “changing relation between Catholic schools and the market place. These two categories, previously with strong insulations from each other have”, as a result of new capitalism, “been brought into a much closer relationship” (Grace, 1995, p. 175).

In Bernstein’s *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity* (1996), he focuses upon changes in forms of pedagogical discourse and how these changes are located in a larger sociocultural and ideological context which reflects major transformations in the realm of society as well as education. Bernstein (1996) outlines a major cultural transformation that is a move away from a faith-based conception of knowledge and pedagogy to a market-based conception of knowledge and pedagogy: “The Christian God was a god you had to think about. It was a god that not only was to be loved but to be thought about. And this attitude created an abstract modality to the discourse” (p. 83).

Such a transformation only occurs through language and could be framed as a move away from a faith-based order of discourse to a market-based order of discourse (Grace, 2002). Educational discourse and the fundamental principle of school knowledge and pedagogy used to be the existence of God which regulated the curricula (Bernstein, 1996). This “religious regulative principle was, in Bernstein’s view, progressively replaced during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment by a ‘humanizing secular principle’ and this principle is now being replaced by a ‘dehumanizing principle’ of market commodification of knowledge” and schooling (Grace, 2002, p. 45). Bernstein’s position is elaborated in the following statement:

Today...there is no new principle guiding the latest transition of capitalism. The principles of the market and its managers are more and more the principles of the policy and practices of education. Market relevance is becoming the key orienting criterion for the selection of discourses...This movement has profound implications from the primary school to the university... Of fundamental significance, there is a new concept of knowledge and of its relation to those who create and use it. This new concept is a truly secular concept. Knowledge should flow like money to wherever it can create advantage and profit. Indeed knowledge is not like money, it is money... Knowledge, after nearly a thousand years, is divorced from inwardness and literally dehumanized. Once knowledge is separated from inwardness, from commitments, from personal dedication, from the deep structure of the self, then people may be moved about, substituted for each other and excluded from the market. (Bernstein, 1996, p. 87)

Accompanying the commodification, marketization, and privatization of knowledge in contemporary settings, there are comparable transformations in pedagogic discourse and communication (Grace, 2002). Pedagogy is not simply a means for transmission of knowledge, it is also a powerful regulator of consciousness and a formative influence upon personal and institutional identity (Bernstein, 1996). However, pedagogy in the market curriculum has itself become dominated by output measures of specific competences and skill acquisition, by performance models of comparative achievement and the obsession of the delivery of required standards and curriculum (Grace, 2002). It follows that from this analysis that student consciousness, sense of identity, and personal

worth will be affected in particular ways by what Bernstein (1996) describes as a “virtually secular, market discourse” (p. 80). As Pope Francis explained, the pedagogy of a faith-based curricula has to acknowledge, at least at the formal level, the Christian value and dignity of every student regardless of achievement (Francis, 2014). The pedagogy of the market curriculum has no similar principled constraint or values-based foundation and its potential danger is that students may become differentially valued as output assets (Bernstein, 1996; Grace, 2002). Fairclough (2010) also explained that a knowledge-driven economy is a discourse-driven economy:

Take the concept of a “knowledge economy” and “knowledge society”. This suggests a qualitative change in economies and societies such that the economic and social processes are knowledge-driven – change comes about, at an increasingly rapid pace, through the generation, circulation, and operationalization of knowledges in economic and social processes. The relevance of these ideas here is that “knowledge-driven” amounts to “discourse-driven”: knowledges are generated and circulate as discourses, and the process through which discourses become operationalized in economies and societies is precisely the dialectics of discourse. (p. 266)

At one level, Catholic schools as faith-based schools have a continuity with and a lineage from the educational cultures of the medieval, Catholic schools (Grace, 2002). Catholic high schools exist as an attempt to know Christ and Christ’s purpose for the world; they exist that people might think about and experience God (Francis, 2014). Yet, at another level, Catholic high schools are caught up in the workings of the market

curriculum, a performance-based pedagogic regime and a system of accountability and evaluation where measurable and visible outcomes rather than transcendental and invisible pedagogy are dominant (Bernstein, 1996; Grace, 2002). While the massive marketing campaigns, strategic plans, and business models undertaken by Catholic school leaders in the United States remain to be adequately documented and researched, such practices which bring with them a market-based discourse might also reflect the commodification of institutional identity and the attempted colonization of Catholic schools by market ideologies.

How practices and discourses are structured in a given order of discourse, and how structurings change over time are determined by changing relationships of power at the level of the social institution or of the society (Fairclough, 2015). This is of particular interest to this study since over the past 50 years changing relationships of power are evident within Catholic schools at the institutional level, particularly between local bishops and laity. An example of these changing relationships is provided below by Bryk et al. (1993):

Decisions in the past few years to close inner-city schools in several major metropolitan areas – Washington, D.C., in 1989, Detroit in 1990, Boston in 1991, and Philadelphia in 1992 – have provoked considerable controversy. The broad lay participating and sense of collegiality that had grown since Vatican II were seemingly set aside in favor of centralized decision making. Such incidents mark a continuing disquiet with the American Catholic Church. Although the clerical hierarchy still has the power to exercise forms of control characteristic of the old

“Roman Church,” it must also confront a confident, well-educated, and committed lay population pressing for institutions more consonant with American democratic principles. (p 334)

Additionally, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishop’s as well as the National Catholic Educational Association’s increased support for educational policies like School Choice, which have become popularized at the societal level, might also indicate power struggles over America’s education system.

Power at these levels includes the capacity to control categories of discourse; one aspect of such control is ideological – ensuring that orders of discourse are ideologically harmonized internally or (at the societal level) with each other (Fairclough, 1999, 2003). In fact, discourse is the favored “vehicle of ideology...[and] of considerable social significance (Fairclough, 2015, p 64). The way in which categories of discourse are structured, and the ideologies that they embody, are determined by relationships of power in particular social institutions, and society as a whole.

In a capitalist society, Fairclough (2015) explained this partly in terms of the people with power in institutions mainly seeing their interests as tied in with capitalism. But, again, a more significant factor is *ideology* (Bernstein, 1996, 1997; Fairclough, 1992, 2003, 2010). Institutional practices which people draw upon without thinking often embody assumptions which directly or indirectly legitimize existing power relations. Practices – like marketing, advertising, strategic planning, business models, curriculum development, and accreditation procedures – which appear universal and commonsensical can often be shown to originate in the dominant class or “the dominant bloc”, and to have become

naturalized (Fairclough, 2015, p. 64). Where types of practice, and in many cases types of discourse, function in this way to sustain unequal power relations, they are functioning *ideologically*.

Ideological power and, the power to project one's practices as universal and *common sense*, is a significant complement to economic and political power, and of particular significance to this study because it is exercised in educational institutions through discourse. The relationship between language and power is frequently indirect and "hidden" (Bernstein, 1990a, p. 54). This "opacity" of discourse (and practice in general) indicates why discourse is of so much more social importance than it may on the case of it seem to be: because in discourse people can be legitimizing (or delegitimizing) particular power relations and ideologies without being conscious of doing so (Fairclough, 2015, p. 119). In the words of Bourdieu (1990, p. 70), "It is because [people] do not, strictly speaking, know what they are doing that what they do has more meaning than they know."

The opaque quality of discourse and practice also indicate the basis for investigating how Catholic schools communicate their institutional identity and if their institutional practices, discourse, and identity are being influenced by market forces. To review, discourses include representations of how things are and have been within an institution or society, as well as imaginaries – representations of how things might or could or should be (Fairclough, 2015). Discourse as imaginaries may also come to be "inculcated as new ways of being, new identities" (Fairclough, 2010, p. 207). The process of changing individual and institutional identities can be thought of in terms of the inculcation of new discourses or the merging of categories of discourse (Bernstein, 1990a). Inculcation is a

matter of, in the current jargon, people coming to *own* discourses, to position themselves inside them, to act and think and talk and see themselves and their communities in terms of new discourses (Fairclough, 2010, 2015).

A stage towards inculcation is *rhetorical deployment*: people may learn new discourses and use them for new purposes while at the same time self-consciously keeping themselves at a distance from them (Fairclough, 2006, 2015). One of the mysteries of the dialectics of discourse is the process in which what begins as self-conscious rhetorical deployment becomes “ownership” – how people become unconsciously positioned within a discourse (Fairclough, 2015, p. 208). Inculcation also has its material aspects: discourses are dialectically inculcated not only in styles, ways of using language, they are also materialized in bodies, postures, gestures, ways of moving, and so forth (Fairclough, 2010). Thus, theoretically, those working in and for Catholic high schools are capable of assisting in the reproduction of market imaginaries and ideologies, with or without being conscious or aware of this reproduction.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Bernstein (1990a) has pointed to the crucial importance of structural and cultural boundaries and insulations in the maintenance of a distinctive mission or voice for cultural institutions and their agents. However, such boundaries and insulations are in a constant process of change and: “It follows that, as the strength of the insulation between categories varies, so will the categories vary in relation to each other and so will their space, their identity and ‘voice’” (p. 24). This precisely describes in formal and theoretical terms the changing relation between Catholic schools and the marketplace.

Practices and discourse within an institution, like a Catholic high school, can reflect the dominant discourse of society. However, Fairclough (2015) explained,

The dialectical process does not end with enactment and inculcation. Social life is reflexive. That is, people not only act and interact within networks of social practices, but they also interpret and represent to themselves and each other what they do, and these interpretations and representations shape and reshape what they do and who they are. (p. 266)

Thus, while market practices and discourses used within Catholic high schools can shape and reshape what they do, they may or may not shape or reshape who they are. Likewise, while market forces may shape or reshape what Catholic high schools do, they may or may not shape or reshape who they are (Bryk et al., 1993).

Literature Review

Below is a review of the literature related to this study. A brief history of Catholic high schools in the United States is provided. Empirical research on the institutional identity of Catholic high schools in the United States as well as the impact of market forces on these educational institutions is also reviewed below.

A brief history of Catholic high schools in the United States. Externally, Catholic high schools are subject to market forces, as are all private schools and now public schools due to the proliferation of public charter schools (Bryk et al., 1993). Both Heft (2011) and Bryk et al. (1993) have noted these market effects.

Market effects were quite apparent in the 1970s, when parents spurned Catholic schools that adopted innovations then popular, such as an expanded personal

development curriculum. As a result, these reforms never took deep root in Catholic schools. Market influences can also be seen in Catholic school history. They were an important reason, for example, that vocationalism was never strongly pursued in the Catholic sector. (Bryk et al., 1993, p. 300)

Heft (2011) has highlighted how Catholic high schools stood mostly on the sidelines of American education until Catholic school leaders realized that they needed to compete professionally with public schools (Heft, 2011).

Because the United States government established accrediting agencies during the first half of the twentieth century, the graduates of any school, public or private, that was not accredited were at a distinct disadvantage, especially if they wished to continue their education at reputable colleges (Heft, 2011; Toch, 2010). With accreditation came the adoption of standardization, including the rule that classes should be a prescribed length which would constitute a “unit,” fourteen to sixteen of which were necessary to complete if a student were to graduate from high school. As one school leader concluded:

Thus the unit-credit system came to define both the structure and the meaning of a high school education: a rigid schedule of subjects and classes, an emphasis on time served rather than the amount learned, and a belief that once a student obtained the required number of graduation credits, his high school education was complete. (Brawer, 2006, p. 20)

Because of government law and the need to be accredited, Catholic schools, especially Catholic high schools, embraced professionalism and became somewhat “Americanized” in the hopes of being recognized as better schools (Heft, 2011, p. 32).

Eventually, some of the largest Catholic high schools, located mainly in the Northeast, adopted a tracking system that put their brightest students in advanced placement courses, the less talented in college prep courses, and the least talented in vocational courses (Heft, 2011). But the lack of federal funds limited severely the variety of courses they could offer. As a consequence, most Catholic high schools have focused on traditional subjects. Despite these market effects, Catholic high schools are still successful. In their study on Catholic high schools, Bryk et al. (1993) reported that they manage simultaneously to achieve relatively high levels of student learning, distribute this learning more equitably and justly with regard to race and class than the public school system. The researchers also reported high levels of teacher commitment and student engagement.

In their 1993 study, Bryk et al. singled out four foundational characteristics that account for the extraordinary success of Catholic high schools: “a delimited technical core, communal organization, decentralized governance, and an inspiration ideology” (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993, p. 297). A delimited technical core meant that Catholic high schools offered a single core curriculum rooted in the liberal arts, regardless of whether the students intended to go to college. Additionally, Bryk et al. found that Catholic high schools offered few electives and that each student, whatever his or her ability, was expected to make academic progress. According to their findings, the schools’ communal organization rested

on three practices: a wide array of co-curricular activities that bring students and faculty face-to-face; an extended role for teachers, encouraging them to be more collegial and more than subject experts confined to the classroom; and a shared moral tone that respects the dignity of each person. Decentralized government meant that the Catholic high schools in the study were autonomous and there really was not a “Catholic school system,” but rather a very loose federation of schools where decision making is largely local. Finally, the researchers noted that Catholic high schools benefited from an inspirational ideology that draws freely upon the principles of Christian personalism and subsidiarity (Bryk et al., 1993). They reported that this inspirational ideology is rooted in helping both the individual and the community. Together, both Christian values and philosophies, encouraged the humane treatment of everyone in the school, students as well as faculty, while also encouraging people to live in community. Additionally, such an inspirational ideology respected the genuine competencies and creative abilities of the principal, faculty and staff, and “softened the centralization impersonality of a highly bureaucratic approach to organization” (Bryk et al., 1993, p. 297). In addition to an inspirational ideology, other Church documents like *On the Way of Life* (Hanvey & Carroll, 2005) have discussed how Catholic high schools are called to pass along the *Catholic imagination* or the *sacramental vision* to students, parents, faculty, and staff. However, this document was commissioned by the Bishops of England and Wales and a more fully developed emphasis on the imaginative aspect of Catholic high schools and this part of their history is still needed in the United States.

Institutional identity. Catholic identity is considered “the heart of Catholic

education” (Schuttloffel, 2012, p. 148). While Catholic high schools in the United States face a variety of market pressures, one of the hopeful outcomes is a renewed commitment from the institutional Church and Catholic higher education to celebrate and serve Catholic schools (Schuttloffel, 2012). Since 1965, the Church has published official documents attending to the institutional identity and mission of all Catholic schools (Hunt, Oldenski, & Wallace, 2000). Table 1 captures the primary texts published by the Church and the United States bishops on the Catholic identity of Catholic schools.

Table 1

Official Church Documents on Catholic Education from 1965 to 2018

<i>Document</i>	<i>Publication Date</i>
<i>Declaration on Christian Education</i>	1965
<i>To Teach as Jesus Did</i>	1972
<i>Teach Them</i>	1976
<i>The Catholic School</i>	1977
<i>Sharing the Light of Faith</i>	1979
<i>Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith</i>	1982
<i>The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School</i>	1988
<i>In Support of Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools</i>	1990
<i>The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium</i>	1997
<i>Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium</i>	2005
<i>The Holy See’s Teaching on Catholic Schools</i>	2006

According to Church doctrine and the above documents, there are three primary aims of Catholic education: (1) Work for the common good; (2) contribute to the evangelizing mission of the church; and (3) provide universal access to education since education is a human right. Since 1965, a number of programs have been created to address the needs of Catholic schools and “Catholic identity development [which] is at

the heart of our role as Catholic educators” (Schuttloffel, 2012, p.). A number of books and monographs addressing the identity issue have also surfaced (Cook, 2001; Fox & Shimabukuro, 2010). Such texts indicate that the “most central feature of the contemporary Catholic school is a concern with its precise identity” (McLaughlin et al., 1996, p. 14). Recent studies have attempted to measure the identity of Catholic schools in the United States (Convey, 2013). Additionally, a set of standards and benchmarks for Catholic identity in Catholic schools were recently created and included in the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* (Ozar & Weitzel-O’Neill, 2012).

Over 3,300 administrators and teachers in Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the United States were surveyed about their understanding of the meaning of the term *Catholic identity* (Convey, 2013). The survey was conducted in the Fall of 2010 in anticipation of a national conference on the Catholic identity of Catholic elementary and secondary schools at The Catholic University of America, October 2-4, 2011. The vast majority of respondents viewed the school's culture or faith community as the most important component of its Catholic identity (Convey, 2013). The longer the teacher or administrator worked in Catholic schools, the higher the rating they gave to the essential nature of the school's faith community to its Catholic identity. Other aspects of Catholic identity that received high ratings were prayer, the content of the religion course, who taught religion, liturgical celebrations, and participation in service. The respondents viewed the percentage of Catholic students as the least important aspect of Catholic identity.

Additionally, four terms appeared in over 10 percent of participant responses: Faith, Catholic, Christ, and Jesus, with Faith appearing in over 20 percent of the responses. Three percent of the responses contained the combination, *Jesus Christ*. Seven terms or combinations appeared in 5-10 percent of the responses: Liturgy (Eucharist, Mass), Community, Living, God, Values, Teachings and Love (Charity). Other terms that appeared with some regularity were Prayer, Christian, Belief, Follow, Service, and Gospel. Some examples of specific phrases in the responses are: Christ centered (75), Christ-like (52), Catholic Church teachings (50), Catholic values (42), Christian values (37), Gospel values (26), and Faith community (20). Fourteen responses contained the phrase *To teach as Jesus did* which is a phrase that harkens back to the letter the U.S. bishops wrote to Catholic educators in 1972. Further analyses revealed that, with few exceptions, the frequency of terms used were similar for Catholic teachers and non-Catholic teachers and for teachers in different grade levels and experience in working in Catholic schools (Convey, 2013).

Sherman and Smith (2017) conducted a case study on a standards-based approach to Catholic principal preparation in order to help create national standards and benchmarks for Catholic education and Catholic school identity. Based on their research, Sherman and Smith (2017) have encouraged the use of standards and benchmarks to assess, define, and measure Catholic mission and identity. However, other empirical research has pointed out the impossibility of standardizing Catholicism given the heterogeneous nature of Catholicism and Catholic school (Grace, 2002). The conceptual framework for this study also emphasizes that institutional identity cannot be measured or

“pinned down” through standardization (Whetten, 2006, p. 23; Bernstein, 1996; Fairclough, 2010). Any attempt to standardize or measure institutional as well as individual identity is an attempt to control (Whetten, 2006; Bernstein, 1996; Fairclough, 2010, 2015).

Books have also been written about Catholic identity. For example, *The Catholic Identity of Catholic Schools: Catholic schools for the 21st century* (Heft, Brigham, & Reck, 1991) is a book that defines Catholic identity by the qualities that mold institutions and, thus, mark them as *Catholic*. Dogmatic teachings are viewed in this text as a small aspect of Catholic identity. Instead, church documents and papal statements are pulled upon to explain what characterizes Catholic institutions. One such document the book uses is the bishop’s pastoral letter, *To Teach as Jesus Did* (1972). The letter emphasizes three distinct dimensions of Catholic educational institutions: teaching, community, and service. *Teaching* all subjects well, and especially teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ; forming *community* through which the presence of God is experienced in the midst of a faith-filled people; and *serving* others after the example of Jesus – these three constitute the essential institutional qualities of Catholic schools.

Additionally, since many Catholic schools in the United States were founded by religious orders – groups of sisters, brothers, or priests – and not directly by diocesan officials, the importance of charisms have also been discussed in the literature on Catholic school identity. A charism is a “particular spirit” that assists Catholic institutions, especially schools, in the cultivation of their Catholic identity (Cook, 2015, p. 9). Catholic schools often inherit a charism from their founding religious order –

Catholic communities of nuns, brothers, and clergy – that exist alongside yet independently of archdioceses – and this charism signifies the “spiritual energy that permeates a school’s way of life” (Cook, 2015, p. 9). As discussed in Chapter Two, a school’s charismatic identity “relates to where [a school] is inspired to place its focus” (Cook, 2015, p. 9). While Catholic schools share a common identity (Groome, 2003; Miller, 2006; Ozar & Weitzel-O’Neill, 2012; Paul VI, 1965), each Catholic school can “preserve its own specific character” (The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982, para. 39). While some empirical research exists on the importance of charisms to Catholic schools (Hengemuhle, 2015), more empirical research is specifically needed on the importance of charisms to the institutional identity of Catholic high schools, especially within a competitive economic market.

While the above texts address the Catholic identity of Catholic schools, more empirical research is needed on Catholic high schools overall, especially in regards to what influences Catholic institutional identity in contemporary society. From a theoretical perspective, future research must also be qualitative in nature as institutional identity is an enduring question that cannot be measured through quantitative means or strategies (Whetten, 2006; Fairclough, 2003). Additionally, while these empirical studies, books, or monographs explore the institutional identity of Catholic schools in the United States, they do not extensively cover the influence of market forces or market philosophies on the institutional identity, practices, and discourse of Catholic high schools. There is a dearth of research on Catholic high schools in the United States as well as the influence of market forces on their identity, practices and discourse. They

might focus on market forces – economic and cultural influences – and the challenges that Catholic high schools have historically faced but there are no empirical studies that explore how leaders within Catholic high schools communicate their institutional identity and mission to prospective students and families within a competitive economic market. Also, there is a dearth of research on the dialogical influence of the market on the institutional identity of Catholic high schools in the United States and the tension this creates between serving the market and serving the mission.

Markets and Catholic schools. The most extensive study on the attempted colonization of Catholic high schools by market ideologies was conducted by Gerald Grace (2002). In this study, 60 high school principals were interviewed across three dioceses in England about increased market completion in schools. Participants fell into three distinct categories: pro-marketers, pragmatic survivors, and market regulators. Pro-marketers viewed market competition as beneficial and, ultimately, the surest way to ensure educational quality and innovation. Pragmatic survivors made no social or moral evaluation of increased market competition but generally focused upon what schools had to do to survive in new competitive conditions. A central characteristic of the pragmatic stance was the belief that there was no practical alternative (Grace, 2002). Lastly, the belief that the market should be “properly regulated in the name of the common good” characterized the stance of market regulators (Grace, 2002, p. 193). This group sought to find alternatives to the *winner/lose* syndrome in individualistic competitive relations among schools by finding a synthesis between the values of competition and the values of the common good. According to the conceptual framework for the study, this synthesis

could also be referred to as recontextualization: “The relationship between different (networks of) social practices – a matter of how elements of one social practice [and discourse] are appropriated by and relocated in the context of another (Fairclough, 2003, p. 222).

The results of Grace’s study (2002) revealed that out of the 60 Catholic principals interviewed, the majority of principals were market regulators. Overall, there were five explicit pro-marketers, 25 pragmatic survivors, and 30 market regulators. At the time of the study, market regulators had engaged in informal professional relationships with other Catholic principals in their diocese to promote collaboration instead of competition: “We try very hard to make sure that we’re not pulling the other school down by presenting ours in a good light” (Grace, 2002, p. 195).

Another study was conducted by Davies (2013) on *Catholic High School Principals in Alberta Micro-Markets*. This study focused on the individual and professional identity of Catholic high school principals in Alberta, Canada. The study concluded that principals primarily understood their social role as “imagineers of opportunities” (p. 218). According to the study, they dreamed and toiled to provide students with an array of both academic and religious opportunities, something the participants in the study felt it was their job to do for every student. However, participants also felt like they were frequently forced into the role of business-manager. A market setting, in which other educational providers exist and compete for students, “drove them into a mindset given over to comparison” (Davies, 2013, p. 218). School funds also emerged as a chronic concern for principals in the study. Money either enabled

them to accomplish what they desired because of its presence or foiled their hopes because of its absence. Further research is needed on the individual, professional identity of those working and leading Catholic schools with a competitive economic market as well as how their identity contributes to the institutional identity of Catholic schools. Chapter Three will discuss why the methodological approach used in this multiple-case study considers this relationship and, thus, adds to existing research.

While studies in England (Grace, 2002) and Canada (Davies, 2013) seek to understand the tension within Catholic high schools between the market and their Catholic identity and mission, there is a dearth of research on the moral implications of this relationship in the United States. Empirical research conducted on this topic in the United States is virtually nonexistent. Additionally, research on this topic in the United States tends to focus on the effectiveness of marketing strategies and the rebranding of institutional identity as an effective means to increase student enrollment. Miller (2017) conducted a statistical analysis that showed how a year-long marketing campaign in one Catholic elementary school in Illinois led to statistically significant gains in enrollment the following school year. The marketing campaign in Miller's study involved a rebranding of the elementary school's institutional identity by changing the school's name. While this change met opposition from parents as conveyed in survey responses, the school still decided to proceed with the change to attract prospective families which seemed to help in the rebranding process (Miller, 2017). It is important to note that Miller's study is not a longitudinal study and, in order to discover if marketing efforts boost enrollment overtime, more research is needed.

Lastly, as mentioned in Chapter One, a multiple-case study (Bridges, 2019) examined the influence of vouchers on the Catholic identity of two elementary schools in the state of Indiana. Data consisted of observations, institutional documents, and interviews with administrators, teachers, and staff. Researchers found that a key part of Indiana's School Choice voucher program is academic accountability. According to the study, schools, including Catholic schools, must be at a "C" level in their testing each year or they are in danger of being placed on probation, which means restrictions or prohibitions on future vouchers. Both of the schools in the study faced sanctions for the upcoming school year which researchers explained threatened the institutional identity of each school in the sense that it shifted the focus and efforts of each school towards academic achievement and accountability requirements in order to remain eligible for vouchers. When one participant was asked about the influence of vouchers on the Catholic identity and culture of their elementary school, the participant responded, "I love being in a Catholic school, and the atmosphere of family [at the school], but I have felt, since...vouchers, that we are more like a business and we have lost a big part of that tie into family" (p. 54). Another participant in the same study stated, "I did not get into the profession to make money so I have a hard time looking at the school as a business. I understand that it is a business and is all about the money right now, but I do worry the Catholic identity is getting...sometimes I think it's a show" (p. 56).

Summary

This chapter explained the conceptual framework used to anchor the data collection and data analysis of this study. An emphasis on the relationship between

imaginaries, ideologies, and identities was explored and the ways in which institutional identity is connected to an institution's practices and discourse was explained. The difference between the values, practices, and discourse of the market and that of Catholic schools was also reviewed. Lastly, a brief history of Catholic high schools in the United States was provided and the literature on Catholic school identity as well as research related to the impact of the market on Catholic school identity was included. Chapter Three will explain the methodology used for data collection and data analysis in this study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this multiple-case study was to investigate how leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand and communicate their institutional identity and how that identity – and an institution’s related practices and discourse – can be observed to be influenced by market forces. This chapter provides a rationale for this study’s research methodology as well as information about the research participants, the data collection, and the data analysis process.

Research Design and Rationale

Research questions are a key indicator for what methodological approach is most appropriate for a study (Yin, 2018). The following two research questions determined this study’s research methodology and informed every phase of research design and implementation:

RQ1: How do leaders within select Catholic high school in the United States understand their institutional identity within a competitive economic market?

RQ2: How do select Catholic high schools in the United States respond to market pressures?

Research propositions were also used to highlight and explore important theoretical issues within the scope of this study (Yin, 2018). Additionally, propositions provided direction for where to look for relevant evidence through copious data collected throughout the study. The following two propositions were used to inform data collection and analysis (Yin, 2018).

While functioning within a market context, Catholic high schools will:

P1. Experience internal and external power struggles.

P2. Own and reject the values, practices, and discourse of market ideologies.

Qualitative research is about understanding human experiences and “how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Crotty, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 6). Given that this study’s research questions were designed to gather a deeper understanding for how Catholic high schools understand their institutional identity within a competitive economic market and how they experience and respond to market pressures, qualitative research was the most appropriate form of inquiry. Qualitative research was also chosen as the research tradition for this study because qualitative research is an in-depth, holistic, and systematic process that “addresses the meaning individuals or groups assign to a social or human problem” such as the attempted colonization of Catholic high schools by the values, practices, and discourse of market ideologies (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 8; Grace, 2002; Patton, 2015) which is germane to this study’s conceptual framework.

Multiple-case study research – a qualitative research design – aids in this study’s research endeavor: “Case study research is useful when a how or why question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control” (Yin, 2018, p. 9). Case study methodology narrows the scope of research by providing an in-depth analysis of a bounded system (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Case study research also “investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be

clearly evident” (Yin, 2018, p. 16). Since the boundaries between Catholic high schools and the market context within which they operate are not always clearly evident and, potentially, blurry or “opaque” (Bernstein, 1997; Fairclough, 2015, p. 119), case study design was utilized to help illuminate the problem.

While single case studies are an important form of case study research (Stake, 1995), the advantage of a multiple case study design is the inclusion of different perspectives which allows for more compelling evidence and, therefore, an overall stronger study (Yin, 2018). Additionally, while some case study approaches advocate for a flexible research design (Stake, 1995), other approaches emphasize the importance of developing a structured and detailed protocol to follow (Yin, 2018, p. 20), especially for emerging researchers and experts in the field. Therefore, this study developed a protocol prior to the beginning of data collection and analysis.

Participants

Two Catholic high schools in the Pacific Northwest participated in this multiple-case study. Since there are power struggles within the Catholic Church to define what is meant by the phrase *Catholic identity* (Grace, 2002) and since the influence of market forces on an institution’s identity – and an institution’s related practices and discourse – are potentially a controversial topic, the names of the participating institutions in this study were anonymized to ensure their protection (Yin, 2018). The two Catholic high schools participating in this study are referred to as either High School A or High School B throughout this work. Interview participants were also assigned numbers to protect their individual identity. Additionally, any other identifiable information – such as

demographic data or details about the institution that surfaced from interview transcripts – was either omitted from this study or systematically converted from real details to similar yet fictitious details to ensure anonymity (Yin, 2018). Changes made to original data for the purposes of anonymity are indicated throughout this study with bracketed text.

While specific demographic data was omitted from this study to protect the identity of participants, general information about each institution is provided below. For example, both participating institutions operated within the same archdiocese in the United States which helped strengthen content validity because both participating institutions functioned within the same micro-economic, micro-cultural, and micro-educational context allowing for this study to adequately reflect the perspectives of a specific population within the United States (Yin, 2018). Table 2 and Table 3 display general demographic data provided by both institutions during data collection.

Table 2

General Demographics of Student Populations

	Student enrollment	Catholic students	Students receiving financial aid	Minority students
Participating Institutions	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
High School A & B	395	53%	49%	23%

Table 3

General Demographics of Faculty/Staff

	Faculty/staff size	Student/ faculty ratio	Vowed religious on faculty/staff
Participating Institutions	Mean	Mean	Mean
High School A & B	83	15:1	0%

Each participating institution had a governance model that involved three types of school boards: (1) an alumni board, (2) a foundations board, and (3) a board of trustees.

Members from each board were interviewed at each participating institution.

Additionally, each Catholic high school was founded and sponsored by a Religious Order within the Catholic Church that operates separately from the archdiocese. Both participating institutions were located in suburban neighborhoods. These two high schools were also chosen for this study because there is a dearth of research on the institutional identity of Catholic high schools in the United States and the potential influence of market forces on that identity, especially in regards to suburban Catholic high schools. More information is known on the impact of market forces on urban elementary schools in the United States. This study fills that research gap by focusing on the institutional identity of two suburban Catholic high schools. Both schools were also co-educational and served students grades 9-12. The above information is important to the research process because there are multiple different types of Catholic high schools in the United States (Youniss et al., 2000) and case membership allowed for

the systematic narrowing of which Catholic high schools were eligible to participate in the study and which Catholic high schools did not qualify for case membership.

By working within a bounded system, this study also remained reasonable in scope and investigated the research within a specific context. Important to this study is not to confuse participating institutions with interview participants. While leaders, which this study defines as those with decision-making power and administrative responsibility, were interviewed to capture how they understood and communicated their institution's identity, the unit of analysis was institutional identity itself. It is important to clarify here that the unit of analysis was not the individual leader's identity but rather how institutional identity was reflected in their responses when analyzed collectively and in the practices and discourse they approved on behalf of their institution. The case in this multiple-case study is the Catholic high school as a system of people that work together to define and embody their institutional identity through their practices and discourse. This chapter further explains why leaders or those with final decision-making power were the only interview participants in this study and how the field notes, documents, and artifacts collected as data were sorted and bounded based on their connection to institutional identity.

A purposive criterion-based sampling method (Patton, 2015) was used to determine the members interviewed from each participating institution. One benefit of a purposive sampling process is the rich information gathered on the participants who are involved in the institution, enabling understanding of the phenomenon in greater depth (Patton, 2015). Members from each Catholic high school's leadership team were the

interview participants for this study. A total of twenty face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted, ten interviews per institution. Guided by this study's research questions, three predetermined criteria were established for member selection: (1) each leadership position had to involve communicating the institutional identity of the Catholic high school to internal or external constituencies, (2) each leadership position had to involve overseeing the institutional identity of the Catholic high school in some way as made evident by the description of the position, and (3) each leadership position had to be given a prominent role on the school website and in the school community.

From both Catholic high schools, this study sought to understand the experiences and perceptions of principals, presidents, vice principals, marketing directors, alumni relations directors, development directors, chief financial officers, and board members as representatives and liaisons of institutional Catholic identity. While the voices of parents, teachers, and students would have enhanced this study and is needed in further research, participants in leadership and administrative roles were the primary focus of this study because of the drastic changes to traditional Catholic school governance models over the past few decades which were seen as the core identity of Catholic school communities (Sheehan, 1997). Additionally, Catholic educational literature suggests that school leaders, especially Catholic school principals, "set the tone" for institutional identity and that "principals in effective schools have an attentiveness to Catholic identity and build school culture" (Cook, 2001). However, in a competitive economic market, many Catholic high school principals are forced with moral dilemmas and challenges to their own Catholic identity as well as the Catholic identity and mission of their institutions

(Grace, 1995, 2002; Davies, 2013). Similarly, Catholic principals are not isolated in their experiences or in their institutional decision-making. New governance models have surrounded Catholic high school principals with leadership teams, oftentimes consisting of board members and various directors, to assist in carrying out the mission of Catholic high schools and to inform their practices and responses to market pressures (Crow, 1992; Sheehan, 1997). Furthermore, laity have assumed leadership roles long held by vowed religious and clergy. The Catholic Church has articulated the importance of these leadership positions to institutional identity and mission of Catholic schools and the Church (CCE, 1982) and there is a gap in the literature as to how administrators and various people with decision-making power and new advisory roles, such as board members and chief financial officers, within Catholic high schools work together to understand and communicate their institutional identity.

Additionally, within a market-based culture, the lay leadership of Catholic schools do not have an easy task when it comes to communicating and preserving their institutional identity. Grace explains (1995):

As part of the rising dominance of market culture in education during the 1980s it is important to note the remarkable growth of Education Management Studies (EMS) within the wider field of Education Studies. As education has been recontextualized in the market place, with explicit assertions that education shares the main characteristics of other commodities traded in the market place, the growth of EMS has been a predictable cultural outcome. Education-as-a-commodity requires to be ‘packaged,’ ‘delivered’ and ‘marketed’ as efficiently as

possible and Education Management Studies has risen to a position of potential dominance in order to facilitate these developments. Not only have texts on various aspects of education management begun to dominate the language, consciousness and action of many of those working within the education sector and within Catholic schools (p. 5).

In addition to grappling with a societal emphasis on management approaches to leadership positions, Catholic school leaders have also been entrusted as spiritual and moral leaders of their Catholic schools (Bryk et al., 1993; Coleman, Hofer, & Kilgore, 1982; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Cook, 2001). Therefore, this study decided to only interview participants responsible for communicating and overseeing the institutional identity of each high school given the contemporary conditions of the marketplace (Cook, 2001; Grace, 1995). However, it is important to note that within this study, many of the participants interviewed also held other roles within the community. Of the twenty interview participants, twelve were also parents of former or current students, eight were alumni themselves, and seven also had former or current teaching positions at the high school in addition to their primary leadership duties and responsibilities. The variety of these perspectives were captured in the interviews and are evident in the research findings. Tables 4 and 5 display the variety of roles interview participants held within each institution.

To ensure anonymity, participants were not identified by name or job title in this study. During member checking, one participant asked that they not be identified by their direct job title in order to feel comfortable with their response being included in this

study. Instead, this study groups interview participants into three primary leadership roles in order to provide a rich understanding of the participants and their responses while also ensuring the anonymity of each individual: Administrator, Business Director, or Board Member. Multiple people within each institution held these roles and when asked if participants would be comfortable being grouped into one of these three roles, all participants agreed that they approved this solution. Individual participants were grouped into one of these three groups based on their educational and professional background which they shared during the interviews and their job descriptions. Tables 4 and 5 also explain participant grouping.

Table 4

Interview Participants for High School A

Role	Group
Principal/President (two roles consolidated into one)	Administrator
Vice Principal	Administrator
Chief Financial Officer	Business Director
Marketing/Admissions Director (two roles consolidated into one)	Business Director
Director of Alumni Engagement and Development	Business Director
Vice President of Foundations and Major Gifts	Business Director
Director of Communications	Business Director
Board of Trustees Member	Board Member
Foundations Board Member	Board Member
Alumni Board Member	Board Member

Table 5

Interview Participants for High School B

Role	Group
President	Administrator
Principal	Administrator
Dean of Academics	Administrator
Chief Financial Officer	Business Director
Director of Foundations	Business Director
Chief Communications Officer	Business Director
Director of Admissions	Business Director
Board of Trustees Member	Board Member
Foundations Board Members	Board Member
Alumni Board Member	Board Member

Important to reiterate for this study is that the institutional identity of each participating institution is the unit of analysis for this study (Yin, 2018), not the individual interview participants. As mentioned earlier, the case study methodology narrows the scope of research by focusing on a bounded system (Creswell, 2008; Mirriam, 1998). By working within a bounded system, the study remained reasonable in scope and investigated the research questions within a specific context. The unit of analysis was bounded by that which related to institutional identity and that which did not relate. Cook (2001) defines Catholic school identity as an identity which “encompasses a

religious mission as well as academic excellence centered on the liberal arts” (p. 11).

Further broadening this definition, Cook also explains that a school’s Catholic identity includes a global/multicultural commitment in recognition of the universality or catholic nature of the sponsoring Church which is consistent with official Church documents on the justification for Catholic schools and the right to a quality education for all people. This definition helped inform interview questions, structure observations (i.e., school walkabouts), and the artifacts and documents that were collected. For example, if interview participants mentioned the importance of a liberal arts education, a follow up question was asked, or if the phrase “liberal arts” was mentioned in a brochure, this was included in the data analysis of documents and artifacts. Cook (2001) also explains that a Catholic school’s mission statement encapsulates and clarifies a Catholic school’s identity and explains a school’s purpose. Therefore, participants were asked about their institutional mission statements. The placement of their mission statements around their school buildings was also recorded in field notes and artifacts and documents that included their mission statements were collected for data analysis.

Additionally, Whetten (2006) explains that institutional identity is always in flux and, therefore, always a question that needs to be answered. Therefore, any materials that attempted to answer the question “Who are we?”, especially for current or prospective families were collected. Interview participants assisted in providing the artifacts and documents that they believed communicated their institutional identity throughout the data collection phase. Interview participants from both institutions also suggested what aspects of the school to pay attention to during school walkabouts and extended the

invitation to observe their annual Open House for prospective students and their families, an entire day dedicated to communicating their institutional identity. Below is a further explanation of the instrumentation used in this study as well as the data collection and data analysis process.

Data Collection

The case study approach to qualitative analysis constitutes a specific way of collecting, organizing, and analyzing data (Patton, 2015). Data collection for this study was based on the research design and qualitative nature of understanding experiences as well as the literature (Creswell, 2008; Patton, 2015). Semi-structured interviews, observations (i.e., school walkabouts), and document/artifact collection were conducted simultaneously throughout the course of the 2018 Fall semester (Yin, 2018). While preliminary coding and analytic memo writing occurred throughout the data collection process (Saldaña, 2016), the data analysis did not begin until all data were collected.

Since the semi-structured interviews for this study were directly intended to involve participants and capture their voices (Yin, 2018), this study ensured quality of the instrument by going through a four-phase process to interview protocol refinement. Those phases were (Castillo-Montoya, 2016):

Phase 1: Ensuring interview questions align with research questions,

Phase 2: Constructing an inquiry-based conversation,

Phase 3: Receiving feedback on interview protocols,

Phase 4: Piloting the interview protocol.

Below is an overview of the pilot study conducted to help with the final and fourth phase of the refinement process.

Pilot study. Following the Institutional Review Board's (IRB) approval, interview questions were piloted in September 2018. To refine the quality of interview questions and elicit information-rich responses, a pilot study was conducted with one Catholic high school in the same area as the participating institution that did not meet case membership requirements. The pilot study consisted of interviewing one principal and one vice principal from the pilot study Catholic high school. Interview questions were developed partially by using a few questions from Grace's (2002) study on *Catholic Schools: Mission, Markets, and Morality*. Initially, interview questions one and six originated from Grace's study. However, feedback from pilot study participants led to the refinement of interview questions one and six. Instead of asking about the Catholic ethos of Catholic schools, the character of Catholic schools was inquired about for question one. Additionally, instead of asking if they believed Catholic schools needed reform, interview question six was changed to asking participants if they believed Catholic schools needed *financial* reform (see Appendix A for Interview Guide).

Interviews. A total of 20 semi-structured interviews were conducted and analyzed for this study. In order to ensure quality data analysis, ten semi-structured interviews were conducted for each participating institution. An interview guide was used to frame and structure each interview (see Appendix B). To make each participant feel comfortable in the interview process, each interview began with the researcher's disclosure of their background, interest in the topic of the study, and appreciation for each

respondent's time (Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti, & McKinney, 2012; Patton, 2015).

Confidentiality was also assured for each participating individual and institution prior to and throughout the interview. Prior to the interview, participants were given a confidentiality agreement and this was collected prior to the start of each interview (see Appendix A). Immediately following every interview, data was transcribed using Rev.com, a transcription service approved by the IRB.

The main purpose of qualitative interviewing is to capture what is “in and on someone's mind” (Patton, 2015, p. 341), and to “allow us to enter into the other person's perspective” (pp. 340-341). As a source of data, interviews have strengths and weaknesses. The strengths include, a targeted focus on the case study topics and insightful explanations as well as personal perceptions of the topic being studied (Yin, 2018). The weaknesses of interviews include the possibility of bias due to poorly articulated questions, response bias from the interviewees, inaccuracies due to poor recall, and reflexivity as the interviewee gives what he or she believes the interviewer wants to hear. Thus, it is important to remain cognizant of the potential weaknesses of the interview process during the analysis phase. These “guided conversations” (Yin, 2018, p. 10) followed the researcher's line of inquiry as reflected in theoretical propositions, research questions, and the study's conceptual framework.

The semi-structured interview questions (Appendix B) were designed to gain the participants' perspectives on institutional identity and practices as well as responses to market pressures. The questions are based on broad issues that were modified to suit the category of each participant and their individual responses. The use of prompts assisted in

clarifying participant responses and in seeking a richer understanding of the participants' perspectives. The four different phases of the interview protocol refinement process as well as the interview guide (Appendix B), ensured that the information collected was within the scope of the study (Patton, 2015; Yin, 2018). The advantages of an interview guide included maximizing the limited amount of time, making the interview more systematic and comprehensive, and focusing the interview while allowing for some flexibility in the conversation (Patton, 2015).

School Walkabouts. Four school walkabouts – two per institution – were conducted during the data collection phase of this study. The initial walkabout was a preliminary observation to get a sense for the layout of the school and what might be important to each individual institution (Strang, 2010). General fieldnotes and researcher impressions were recorded for this walkabout. The second walkabout adapted field note procedures suggested by Merriam & Tisdell (2016), Kruse & Louis (2009), and Strang (2010). See Appendix C for the template created and used to guide each school walkabout. Merriam & Tisdell (2016) recommend to sketch the layout of the classroom or school where the observation is taking place. Following this recommendation, the basic layout of each school building was sketched in the field notes and the placement of different objects and artifacts relevant to this study's research questions were marked on the sketch. Kruse and Louis (2009) provide the definition for a school walkabout and offer possible questions to ask while the walkabout is being conducted. Along with the literature and this study's research questions, Kruse and Louis's questions helped structure the type of questions asked during this study's school walkabouts. Such

questions included, ‘What do people see when they first come in the building?’ and ‘What evidence do they have that this is a Catholic school?’ (see Appendix C).

Lastly, Strang (2010) suggests that school walkabouts include cultural mapping and that observers look for specific items mentioned in the literature. Cultural mapping “explores people’s historical and contemporary relationships with local environments. It entails going on ‘walkabouts’...and observes that places not only reflect the physical materialization of cultural beliefs and values, they are also a repository and a practical mnemonic of information” (Strang, 2010, p. 132). Therefore, each institution’s way of displaying their historical and contemporary identity was recorded in the field notes. The way in which people interacted with each other in the hallways were also noted since human interactions help create a school culture and a unique identity (Cook, 2015; Strang, 2010). Phrases and artifacts from the literature regarding the business domain and the Catholic domain were also looked for during school walkabouts. In regards to the business domain, evidence of the *glossification* of education (Davies, 2013) and the use of marketing techniques were recorded in the field notes (Grace, 1995). For the Catholic domain, phrases like *Education of the Whole Person* (Convey, 2013) and the placement of artifacts like mission statements or religious statues (Cook, 2001) were accounted for in the field notes.

Documents/Artifacts. The literature and research questions that helped structure the fieldnotes for the school walkabout also helped determine what documents and artifacts to collect. Documents and artifacts were only collected for data analysis insofar as they were judged to communicate institutional identity and mission. For documents

and artifacts to be considered for data analysis, their primary function had to be to informative, especially for prospective families and students as well as potential or current donors since the tension between market forces and institutional identity is oftentimes located in these social interactions (Bernstein, 1990a, 1996; Grace, 2002). Importantly, material culture, which consists of documents and artifacts, is *active* (Hodder, 2008). Documents and artifacts actively help people communicate institutional identity and reveal important ideological assumptions and practices within an institution. Documents and artifacts were collected as data for this study because (Hodder, 2008):

Artifacts are produced so as to transform, materially, socially, and ideologically.

It is the exchange of artifacts themselves that constructs social relationships; it is the style of spear that creates feelings of common identity; it is the badge of authority that itself confers authority. Material culture is thus *necessary for* most social constructs. (pp. 705-706)

Once documents and artifacts were collected, they were immediately labeled and indexed as an organization method (see Appendix D). Indexing was also used as one starting point for analysis which is further explained in the following section (Hodder, 2008).

Data Analysis

After data collection was complete for both participating institutions, data analysis occurred. For qualitative research, “stable patterns and themes – assertions that make generalizations about actions and beliefs that were observed – must be searched for repeatedly within the total data corpus, in a process of progressive problem-solving” (Erickson, 2004, p. 486). In this study, six phases of data analysis occurred: (1)

Organization and indexing; (2) Preliminary coding; (3) First cycle coding; (4) Second cycle coding; (5) Deductive Analysis; and (6) Cross-Case Analysis.

Organization and indexing. Raw data from interview participants, field notes, and documents and artifacts were organized by data type and placed in different folders in Nvivo. Additionally, raw data was also separated by institution. The Nvivo software was used because it helped organize and store the data and analytic memo writing efficiently in one place while also allowing the researcher to run analytic search queries after the analysis was complete to ensure that no major themes were missed (Yin, 2018). As previously mentioned, documents and artifacts were immediately labeled and indexed as an organization method (see Appendix D). Indexing was used as a starting point for analysis (Hodder, 2008).

Preliminary coding. Preliminary coding was concurrent with data collection to help avoid potential blind spots and to make “analysis an ongoing, lively enterprise” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 70). Pre-coding (Saldaña, 2016) was completed prior to first cycle coding as the interviews were transcribed, read, and reviewed. Additionally, “preliminary jottings” and analytic memos were added as data was reviewed (Creswell, 2008; Saldaña, 2016, p. 21). Circling, highlighting, bolding, and underlining significant quotes early in the process allowed me to catch meaningful passages and exemplar quotes which were bookmarked in Nvivo for future reference (Saldaña, 2016).

Coding Cycles. After preliminary analysis was complete, the data was analyzed in cycles (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016). Coding and analytic memo writing were

conducted throughout each cycle where thoughts and ideas regarding emerging categories and patterns in the data were noted (Creswell, 2008). The central research questions for this study determined which coding methods were most appropriate (Saldaña, 2016). For review, the two research questions for this study are:

Q1: How do leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand their institutional identity within a market context?

Q2: How do select Catholic high schools in the United States respond to market pressures?

These research questions are epistemological questions and suggest “the exploration of participant actions/processes and perceptions found within the data” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 70). Coding methods that may catalogue and better reveal the answers to epistemological questions include “Descriptive, Process, Initial, Versus, Evaluation, Dramaturgical, Domain and Taxonomic, Causation, and/or Pattern Coding, plus Themeing the Data” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 70). Following this suggestion, versus coding was applied during the First Cycle of analysis. Pattern and focused coding were also employed during the Second Cycle of coding and used to identify major themes. For an example of this process reference the section that discusses Second Cycle coding below.

However, because this study explores the concept of identity within Catholic high schools, methods that are typically used to answer ontological questions were also important to apply to the data (Saldaña, 2016) which is why value and in vivo coding were also included in the first cycle of coding. Below is an explanation of the analytic procedures for each cycle and how these procedures align with this study’s research

questions and/or contribute to a greater understanding of how Catholic high schools understand and communicate their institutional identity within a market context. The same analytic procedures were followed for each case: High School A and High School B. Additionally, as explained further in Chapter Four, inductive and deductive analysis were conducted throughout this study since both are essential and natural aspects of the research process (Yin, 2018). Inductive methods of coding constituted the First and Second Cycles of coding while deductive methods of coding constituted the Third Cycle of coding. Lastly, the first three cycles of coding were within case analysis while the last cycle was a cross-case analysis conducted to complete the Fourth Cycle of coding.

First cycle: In vivo, values, and versus coding. During the First Cycle of analysis, different types of codes were used to analyze the data: In vivo, values, and versus coding. Descriptive coding was also considered for the First Cycle because it is recommended as a method that aligns well with epistemological questions. However, descriptive coding was rejected because this type of coding should be used “*sparingly and preferably not at all for interview transcript data*” or case studies “because the noun-based codes of this method will not reveal very much insight into participants’ minds” or the human condition (Saldaña, 2016, p. 78, p. 102). Therefore, in vivo and values codes were used instead during the First Cycle.

In vivo was chosen because words and short phrases from the participant’s own language in the data are used to develop codes. Additionally, in vivo coding is appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies but particularly for “beginning qualitative researchers learning how to code data, and studies that prioritize and honor the

participant's voice" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 74). In vivo codes were placed in quotation marks to differentiate them from researcher-generated codes.

Values coding was also used to analyze the data because it "is appropriate for studies that explore cultural values, identity, intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions in case studies..." (Miles et al., 2014, p. 75). The decision to apply values coding was made during pre-coding when it became clear to the researcher that many participants were expressing beliefs, emotions, or judgements regarding the pressures they face individually and collectively. The research analyzed data from interview transcripts and school documents and found similar value-laden comments falling within similar categories across the two schools.

Because of the tension that Catholic high schools face between satisfying market demands and fulfilling their mission— a tension well established in the literature and this study's theoretical framework – versus coding was used during the First Cycle of analysis. Versus codes identify in dichotomous and binary terms the "individuals, groups, social systems, organizations, phenomena, processes, concepts, etc. in direct conflict with each other" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 137). For example, during this cycle of coding, when participants referred to a tense experience or relationship, a versus code was applied such as "Catholic schools vs. public schools" or "Diocese vs. schools" or "market vs. mission" (see Appendix D for the complete codebook).

Versus coding is appropriate for qualitative data sets that suggest strong conflicts or competing goals within, among, and between participants and institutions (Saldaña, 2016). Agar (1996) notes that a researcher exploring a contemporary phenomenon can

look for “patterns of social domination, hierarchy, and social privilege. He or she examines power that holds patterns in place, how people accept or struggle against them. The focus is on patterns that reveal injustice” (p. 27). Since this study uses Bernstein and Fairclough’s theories on the relationship between power, practice, discourse, and identity for the conceptual framework, versus coding is a compatible analytic heuristic. See Appendix E for the list of codes and their definitions.

Second cycle: Pattern and focused coding. During the second cycle of data analysis, pattern coding (Saldaña, 2016) was used to group or cluster data into a smaller number of concepts. Pattern coding identified similarly coded data and grouped the data into inductively identified categories for each institution, making the data more meaningful and workable for the scope of the study. Focused coding was then applied as data was recoded and guided by the specific categories or concepts. This enabled the reduction of data into larger categories that subsumed multiple codes. In this way, data moved from fairly literal codes into more conceptual ones (Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015). The combination of pattern and focused coding reduced the copious amounts of data while not losing the meaning, significant ideas, or issues present. Second cycle coding led to the establishment of themes that not only generated categories but also enabled me to attribute meaning to the data. For example, a reoccurring code such as “charism” evidenced the need for a category such as “High School A’s charism provides a unifying language.” Coupled with other related categories, a major theme identified for High School A was “High School A uses their religious charism as a lens with which to view their institutional identity.” To enhance trustworthiness and to counter suspicion

that predispositions and biases shaped the analyst, systematic searches for inductively identified categories, divergent patterns, analytic memo writing, and rival explanations were conducted (Yin, 2018). For example, queries were performed in NVivo to examine how many participants used the phrase “charism.” Additionally, NVivo was used to create a hierarchy chart which helped reveal if some nodes had more coding references than others to identify prominent themes in the study.

Third cycle: Deductive analysis. Yin (2018) suggests that case study research should present data through tables, charts, figures, other exhibits such as matrices, as well as narrative. Early in the cross-case analysis matrices were used for each case to clearly identify data by deductive theme, and inductively identified categories and themes. Each research question was deductively analyzed for each participating institution using codes from previous empirical research (Convey, 2016; Grace, 2002) related to the purpose of this study. Findings from Convey’s (2002) study were used to deductively analyze research question one of this study and findings from Grace’s (2002) study were used to deductively analyze research question two of this study. Chapter Four displays these matrices in the within-case analysis for both High School A and High School B and reviews the connection between deductive themes and inductively identified categories.

Fourth cycle: Cross-case analysis. The goal of within-case analysis was to become intimately familiar with each case as a stand-alone entity, allowing the unique patterns of each case to emerge before identifying patterns across cases (Eisenhardt, 1989). Analysis of the data in this way allowed the study to show the perceptions of institutional identity and market forces described at one site (Catholic high school) by

participating members, were not necessarily distinctive to that site and thus contributed to the understanding about contextual variations, or lack thereof, across sites. Following within-case analysis of both institutions (High School A and High School B), a cross-case analysis was conducted using data from all interviews, school walkabouts, and documents/artifacts. The data were analyzed for possible case comparisons to identify key similarities and differences (Miles et al., 2014). Through NVivo, a comparison diagram was utilized to help identify intersections between cases and to summarize content and themes that were shared between participants and cases. By looking across participants and using codes from the literature and conceptual framework during deductive analysis, the analytic procedure enhanced the dependability of this study and provided a more powerful explanation of the setting, context, participants, and overall unit of analysis. Because of the multi-level inquiry in this study, the final analysis presented the evidence systematically and clearly.

Utilizing Nvivo helped organize the cross-case data and allowed for the cross-case data to be comparable via common codes, and common reporting formats for each case, and condensing data into workable, intellectually coherent themes (Miles et al., 2014). The cross-case analysis also allowed for the exploration of rival explanations (Yin, 2018) and helped the researcher look beyond initial impressions and see evidence through multiple lenses. This process provided a more comprehensive picture of the perceptions and experiences of participating institutions and, according to Yin (2018), cross-case analysis and the exploration of rival explanations to a studies propositions strengthens the

study. This study's propositions were mentioned at the beginning of this chapter and will be reviewed throughout Chapter Four and Chapter Five.

Issues of Trustworthiness and Ensuring Quality

The standards for quality in qualitative research were adhered to throughout the design, data gathering, and analysis phases of this study. The design of this multiple-case study included the multiple interview participants with multiple leadership roles and perspectives as well as the utilization of more than one source of data, which provided evidence of credibility, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and helped triangulate the data in two ways (Yin, 2018). The data was first triangulated by three primary yet different leadership groups: (1) Administrator, (2) Business Director, and (3) Board Member. Figures 10 and 11 display how the data was triangulated.

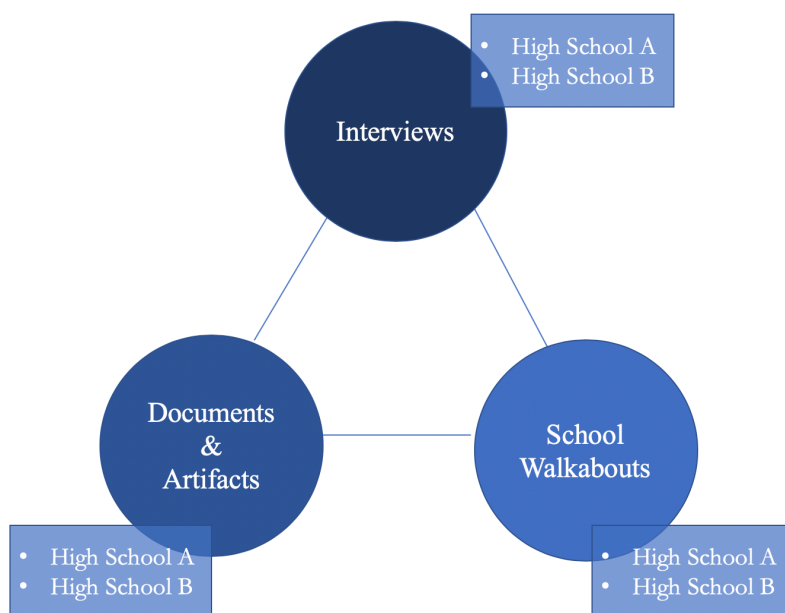


Figure 10. Triangulation by data type.

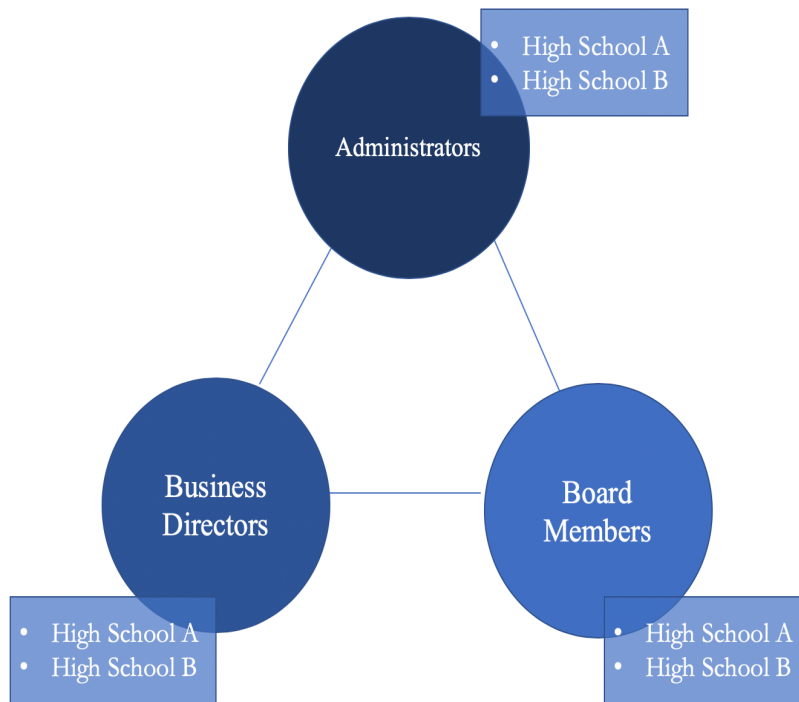


Figure 11. Triangulation of data by roles of interviewees.

The researcher also used member checking to strengthen the confirmability of the data. Following the interview protocol, the interviewees had the opportunity to read the researcher's within-case analysis of their school prior to the study being submitted for review. As previously mentioned in this chapter, member checking resulted in a change to participant anonymity and the grouping of participants into three different groups according to their leadership position and role within the institution. Member checking also resulted in the clarification of a theme identified for High School B which is that "High School B identifies as a business." One participant from High School B wanted to clarify that while they use this analogy to explain their institutional identity within a market context, there is nothing "corporate about what [they] do." This theme is explained in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5. While this theme remained in the

study, member checking ensured that the presentation and discussion of this theme also represented this participant's feedback. The use of multiple sources of data relevant to the study and rich in real-life situations has been described as a distinguishing characteristic of case study methodology strengthening reliability (Yin, 2018).

Guba (1984) describes qualitative fieldwork as moving back and forth between the discovery mode and the verification mode like a wave. This ebb and flow took place throughout this study. During the fieldwork, the researcher explored, gathered data, and watched for common categories to inductively emerge. Although time was a constraint (data was gathered during one semester), the researcher applied considerable diligence and integrity documenting the process of data collection and analysis, building additional credibility that allowed for confirming (or disconfirming) the analysis of the case. By testing ideas, confirming the importance and meaning of patterns, and checking the viability of findings, the data collection generated rich data for analysis.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher has past experience teaching in Catholic high schools in the United States and has witnessed the tension Catholic high schools experience between institutional identity and market forces. Additionally, the researcher is Catholic and has political and moral opinions on educational policies like School Choice and the marketization and privatization of education. Because of the researcher's close relationship with the research topic, bracketing methods were used throughout data collection and data analysis to help mitigate the potential negative effects of the researcher's own perspective toward the subject (Tufford & Newman, 2010). Methods

utilized included, analytic memo writing and ongoing discussions with individuals outside the study to assist the researcher in recognizing preconceptions and biases (Yin, 2018). Feedback from those who participated in the pilot for this study as well as member checking and peer review also contributed to the researcher's ability to recognize and suspend researcher biases. To negate the potential effects of researcher bias and ensure credibility, the researcher participated in memo writing (Creswell, 2008; Saldaña, 2016). Researcher thoughts and musings were organized and filed in a separate folder in NVivo after interviews were conducted and were not included in the actual transcripts. The researcher also bracketed observer comments in field notes during and after school walkabouts and included the acronym OC next to researcher insights or comments to mark that the text came from the researcher (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Clarification of one major finding for High School B is also included in Chapter Five as a result of participant feedback and member checking. It is important to note that bias is an "unavoidable part of the process of coming to know something and that knowledge is impossible without some kind of previous conceptual structure" (Elliott & Timulak, 2005, p. 147). While every measure was taken to ensure that researcher bias did not influence the findings of this study, the researcher's experiences in Catholic high schools and informed perspectives on education in the United States were also viewed as an important and valuable part of the research process.

Ethical Procedures

This research was conducted with the highest regard to ethical considerations. The IRB granted the researcher permission to conduct this research study and their permission

was acknowledged in this section of the study (see Appendix B). Each participant read and signed a consent form and all participants' identities (both individual and institutional) were protected using numerically-assigned codes and identifying information about their respective schools of employment was omitted from the research study. Deliberate steps to ensure confidentiality and protection of all participants were also taken and data was stored on a password secured desktop.

Summary

This study was a multiple-case study that investigated the institutional identity of two Catholic high schools in the same geographical area and the influence of market forces on their identities and their related practices and discourse. In aggregate, twenty semi-structured, face-to-face interviews, four school walkabouts, and thirty documents/artifacts constitute this study's data collection and data was analyzed in six phases utilizing both inductive and deductive methods. Analytic memo writing, member checking, peer review, and triangulation of the data all helped ensure the quality of this study. Research findings are reviewed in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Research Findings

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate how leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand and communicate their institutional identity and how that identity – and an institution’s related practices and discourse – can be observed to be influenced by market forces. In aggregate, twenty face-to-face interview responses, field notes from four school walkabouts, and thirty institutional documents and artifacts constituted the base of data for this study’s research findings. Below are the two research questions addressed in this qualitative multiple-case study:

RQ1. How do leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand their institutional identity within a competitive economic market?

RQ2. How do select Catholic high schools in the United States respond to market pressures?

First, research findings are presented through within-case analysis reports. Codes, categories, and subcategories crystalized major themes for each case. In the sections that follow, research findings for both High School A and High School B are organized by: **research question, the major themes identified for each research question, and the categories associated with each major theme.** This organization method helps clearly link the research findings to the research questions. Interview responses are presented within each theme and category. Field notes and institutional documents and artifacts are presented in analyzed form after the interview responses. Tables at the end of each within-case report provide a clear and succinct summary of deductive and inductive

integration for each individual case. Additionally, research findings are presented in a cross-case analysis report to convey salient themes across High School A and High School B. Propositions and possible rival explanations are also reviewed at the end of this chapter as part of the cross-case analysis and synthesis.

Within-Case Analysis: High School A

Data presented below identify the unique research findings for High School A. In aggregate, 10 face-to-face interview responses, field notes from two school walkabouts, and 15 institutional documents and artifacts captured High School A's institutional understanding of their identity within a competitive economic market as well as their institutional responses to market pressures.

Research question one: How do select Catholic high schools in the United States understand their institutional identity within a competitive economic market?

In regards to this study's first research question, three major themes were identified through inductive analysis for High School A, including:

- T1. High School A uses their religious charism as a lens with which to view their institutional identity.
- T2. High School A identifies as an inclusive faith-based community.
- T3. High School A identifies as an experience provider.

As explained in Chapter Three, High School A's religious order and their religious order's charism are not disclosed in this study to ensure anonymity. Likewise, interview responses are anonymized and participants were assigned numbers to protect their individual identity.

Theme one: High school A uses their religious charism as a lens with which to view their institutional identity. When asked to describe what makes High School A a Catholic institution, all participants referred to their religious order's inherited charism. As discussed in Chapter Two, a school's charismatic identity relates to where a school is inspired to place its focus and explain its broader Catholic identity. Participant A1 explained,

I would start by saying we would frame [our identity] as [Religious Order] Catholic. Catholic is the basis, but the sort of lens that we view our work, it's a Catholic lens, but we view our identity specifically through this mission, this teaching, this charism of our [Religious Order] and [Religious Order] schools (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

The following categories within this theme reflected the importance of High School A's religious charism to their institutional identity, especially within a competitive economic market:

C1. High School A's religious charism provides a unifying language.

C2. High School A's religious charism helps them own their institutional identity.

Category one: High School A's religious charism provides a unifying language.

All participants shared that High School A's charism is a framework that helps them instill students with specific faith-based values, practices, and discourse. Participant A8 expressed,

I think first and foremost if you are a Catholic school that you're trying to adhere to Catholic teachings. And if you're a [Religious Order] Catholic school it's a

little bit more specific, you know, our values, the banners that hang in the hallway, are [Religious Order] values. In that regard, you can more explicitly and intentionally develop, inform, and guide young people into being good people (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Responses from participants evidenced that High School A's charism also informs their institutional practices. Participants A1 (Administrator), A2 (Business Director), and A3 (Board Member) referenced High School A's annual Heritage Ceremony as an institutional practice that communicates their religious roots and charism. Participant A2 shared,

People learn a lot about who we are at the [Heritage Ceremony]. This is a very special day for our seniors. They are invited to take the [Religious Order] vow, and they understand what that is. They are awarded a medal, the [name of founder] medal. The story of our [Religious Order's] charism and our history is shared and celebrated (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018).

All participants highlighted the practice of prayer in their school community. Participants A1 (Administrator), A3 (Board Member), A7 (Board Member), and A10 (Board Member) explained that every prayer connects to and draws inspiration from High School A's charism, primarily through the recitation of specific phrases used to bookend every prayer.

In the morning [we] pray over the intercom, so it [is] everybody participating in prayer. In every class, a teacher or student begins with prayer. There's a tradition started by [name of founder] and the [tradition] is to pray with the phrase, 'Let us

remember we are in [Christ's presence].’ That starts everything we do. Every assembly, every class, every day, the leader says, ‘Let us remember,’ and then we respond that, ‘We are in the holy presence of [Christ].’ The point is, remembering that [Christ] is here right now, and in that remembering, it might just change the interaction that you’re having with the person in front of you. If you remember [Christ] is present in your midst then you remember [Christ] is present in them. That was [our founder’s] call, [their] emotional call to always remember. Then at the end of the prayer [we] say, ‘Live [Christ] in our hearts,’ and everyone responds, ‘forever’ (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant A1 also indicated that the institutional practice of prayer and the recitation of specific phrases inspired by their charism unites High School A with other [Religious Order] schools across the United States and provides students with a common discourse.

There’s this funny story. It becomes lore. I think it’s true because I heard it from the person who heard the [alumnus] share his story. It comes from, I think it was a student from a [Minnesotan] school...he went off to college and he was feeling really homesick. I think he was like...back east somewhere. At some point he said in the cafeteria, ‘Live [Christ] in our hearts,’ and like 10 to 12 people said, ‘Forever.’ So, there were kids from [Religious Order] schools all across the nation. They all got up and went and sat at a table together and shared the [Religious Order] experience (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Six participants also affirmed that High School A's charismatic identity provides a "common language" shared amongst stakeholders (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018). In a competitive economic market, High School A's religious charism also helps them own their Catholicity.

Category two: High School A's religious charism helps them own their Catholic identity. In addition to providing High School A with a unifying framework, participant responses evidenced that High School A's charism helps them own their institutional identity in a market that is increasingly non-Catholic or "distrusting" of the institutional Church (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018). All participants expressed that the biggest challenge facing High School A – and all Catholic schools – is the Catholic Church's sex abuse scandals. Participant A2 expressed, "I think from our point of view, in our market, the biggest challenge we see is addressing the sex abuse scandals" (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018) and Participant A6 explained, "If the word Catholic is in your name the biggest challenge is...the clergy abuse" (Participant A6, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A2 empathized, "I think parents are concerned. Every time you see a new story you want to know, 'Is my child safe?' I understand. I'm a parent" (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant A4 explained that, even within a complex and diverse market, High School A's religious charism assists them in addressing communal differences and concerns.

Our charism helps us live our Catholicism. We communicate our identity through action. We certainly put that we are [Catholic] in all our admissions [material] and

on our website and we have a Catholic identity...but we cannot be the adjective, we have to be the verb. I think the doing of Catholicism, the living of our [charism], is where people are finding solace right now as the institutional Church has been so painful to be around. I think turning to the verb of Catholicism unifies us and helps us [come together] for the good, not only of the Church, but of our own identity. More so than ever, we are finding it easier to find common ground with non-Catholics, with people who share different faith, or no faith because we [are] living our mission and we [are] serving all people not just Catholic people (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Likewise, Participant A8 expressed that “when the market fluctuates” and when certain Catholic teachings are “difficult to apply to modern times,” High School A relies on their religious charism to anchor them.

Default(s) to doing what [we] say, literally, on [our] banners. If we say we accept all people, then we are going to accept all people...not just people that adhere to one type of sexual identity or one type of political belief or one faith tradition. [Our] charism helps us make sure we practice what we preach” (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participants A1 (Administrator), A2 (Business Director), A8 (Administrator), and A9 (Business Director) also emphasized that High School A’s charismatic identity “anchors [them] when the market fluctuates” (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018) and helps them trust that “[they] will be alright” (Participant A9, Interview, Fall 2018).

Participants A1 (Administrator), A4 (Business Director), A8 (Administrator), and A9

(Business Director) also explained that High School A's charismatic identity supports them when the archdiocese challenges their Catholicity. Participant A1 stated,

Our [Religious Order] wants to take some ownership of our Catholic identity. When you have schools in, how many different diocese, a hundred different diocese around the nation, and you have some diocese emphasizing certain things in 'Catholic' and some dioceses emphasizing other things. I think our founding religious order wants to emphasize their own identity, Catholic identity...so this shift to this sort of [Religious Order] Catholic. Our founding religious order uses the image of a lens, in terms of this is who we are and our charism is how we view and approach Catholic teaching. One of the things I'll always hear members of [our religious order] say is, 'We propose, we don't impose'" (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant A9 echoed this sentiment and the quote below further typifies the struggle within the institutional Church over Catholic identity.

I see the struggle all the time between the archdiocese and [High School A] and between the Church and the archdiocese even and between the archdiocese and our religious order...there [are] all these different perspectives of what it means to be Catholic. [High School A] has our own definition of what it means to be Catholic, I would say we live our definition. Our [charism] helps us with that. We try to make sure that we are doing things that [students] see that shed the best light possible on the Catholic faith (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Responses from High School A participants evidenced that High School A's founding religious order – and their related charism – protects their institutional identity from archdiocesan control. Participant A1 explained that this protection is necessary when the archbishop “identifies the problem in Catholic schools [as] people not being Catholic enough” and refers to himself as the “arbiter of what it means to be Catholic” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant A4 explained that High School A's administration “does a great job at making sure that [High School A] has a relationship and partnership, to some degree, with the archdiocese” (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018) since the archbishop can, according to canon law, “determine what schools are Catholic and what schools are not Catholic” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). However, High School A's [Religious Order] possesses equal jurisdiction over High School A which protects their institutional identity and allows them to preserve their own religious character within a competitive economic market (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School A and were used to triangulate the data for theme one. High School A's connection to their charism is evidenced in the banners displayed in their hallways and line the sidewalk to the main entrance of the school with phrases rooted in their charismatic tradition. Their website also includes a page with the history of their charism and their mission statement references their founding religious order. Statues of their founding religious order's leader are displayed throughout the school, primarily in the entryway and the chapel. Pictures of their

religious order serving the poor and working with students in schools are spread throughout the chapel. Quotes from the founding religious order's members are etched into the wall on plaques on the outside on the school building. Glass cases inside the school facilities also display the history of their institution as rooted in their charism. Lastly, booklets distributed to new board members educating them on the history of their institution and the charism of their founding religious order support this theme.

Theme two: High school A identifies as an inclusive faith-based community. All participants referred to High School A as a faith-based community. Responses from High School A participants also evidenced that inclusivity is essential to their faith-based mission and identity. Participant A6 shared, “We are first and foremost a faith-based community that welcomes everyone” (Participant A6, Business Director, Fall 2018). The following categories within this theme reflect the inclusive faith-based aspect of High School A's institutional identity:

C1. High School A prioritizes inclusivity.

C2. High School A identifies as a proxy church.

Category one: High School A prioritizes inclusivity. All participants expressed their institutional commitment to inclusivity and referenced the importance of welcoming non-Catholic students and families into their Catholic community. Participant A5 explained,

We are unambiguously Catholic here. But we [are] open and accessible and inclusive to all. That [is] part of [our] mission. Obviously, you do [not] have to be Catholic to come to school here but, we are a Catholic school, so we [are] going

to have all school masses and daily prayer and religious studies classes that are required all four years (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

When asked to describe the main objectives or commitments of Catholic schooling, many participants discussed the importance of the Catholic faith as well as inclusivity. Participant A8 conveyed,

I think [for] all Catholic schools [our] mission is to share the beauty of the Catholic faith. But we [are] mindful that not everybody at [High School A] is Catholic and that [is] okay. From where I stand, and as a Catholic myself, I want to be accepting and inclusive of all people, not just Catholics, right? Even people who identify as Catholic may not be so receptive to Catholic teachings...and I think that [is] alright. We love and welcome all people like Jesus did. I would [not], personally, be a part of an organization that was archaic and not progressive and that [was] not inclusive or open to other points of view or beliefs or thoughts (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2019).

When asked the same question, Participant A1 expressed that the core religious mission of Catholic schools remains the same as it did when “priests, brothers, and sisters ran the schools” but that student demographics “have shifted” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant A1 explained that – within a competitive economic market – inclusivity is also a competitive advantage.

You have to constantly make an argument [for Catholic education], for why families [should] send their kids to Catholic schools. I think, yes, it [is] important for Catholic schools to declare, ‘This is who we are.’ But in a [competitive

economic market] it [is] tough to be just be ‘Catholic, Catholic’ or to serve only Catholic kids and families. We [have] opened [our] doors to kids, to all kids. You make your competitive advantage (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Six participants also expressed the importance of including students with a variety of learning needs. Despite the financial constraints they faced in actualizing this commitment, participants articulated their commitment to trying to meet the needs of students with diverse abilities and educational backgrounds. Participant A5 said,

For [High School A], what we really hang our hat on is [that], at the time of admission, we have students that are all across the [abilities] spectrum. They might be two grade levels below average, and our job is to get them, in four years, to get them ready for college. We try to see potential for growth and we respond to that challenge because we believe that just because [students] did [not] receive the support they needed [in the past] because of a learning style or a diagnosed learning difference does [not] mean they should [not] be given the opportunity to attend [High School A]” (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant A2 explained that High School A markets inclusivity to prospective parents and students.: “One of the things I try to market really carefully [is that] we are one community” with a range of abilities and needs “but that we are all here to grow” (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018).

According to seven participants, while High School A is “making a case for faith-based education” (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018) by “authentically and inclusively practicing what [they] institutionally preach” (Participant A4, Business

Director, Fall 2018), the archdiocese attempts to enforce practices and policies that seem inherently exclusive. Participants A1 (Administrator), A4 (Business Director), and A8 (Administrator) specifically expressed their concern over a recently issued Archdiocesan Liturgical Handbook which “shifted some of [the liturgical] practices” celebrated within the Catholic mass (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

According to Participant A1, previous liturgical practices invited non-Catholics to come forward during the Eucharistic procession to receive a spiritual blessing. However, with the dissemination of the new Liturgical Handbook, non-Catholics – including non-Catholic students attending Catholic high schools – are no longer allowed to receive a blessing. Participant A1 reported,

Initially, [the archdiocese] said that really the only people that should be coming forward and getting communion are those in good standing in the Church. Then they relented and said [non-Catholics] could come forward and be acknowledged, like go with God, but it [is] not a blessing. Eucharistic ministers are no longer allowed to give [non-Catholics] a blessing or put their hand on somebody’s forehead to bless them. Those of us who run schools, we [are] like, ‘What the heck?!’ Not all schools require that all their [students] attend mass. We do. Our belief is that, [mass] is what we do as a community. It [is] an invitation. My feeling is, ‘What do we do with our non-Catholic kids?’ We see [mass] as an evangelical opportunity. Where else would you have a group of teenagers where two thirds are Catholic, one third are not Catholic, sitting together in mass? It [is] like ‘You [are] given that opportunity, Catholic Church, what do you want them

to hear? What do you want them to experience? What do you want them to remember about that experience? Do you want them to be inspired or do you want them to be reminded that they [are] not Catholic?’ That [is] the part that I just do not understand sometimes. What are the messages these kids receive from the Church (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018)?

Similarly, when asked about the contemporary challenges that High School A faces, Participant A5 shared,

Well I would say just the current feel of the Catholic Church right now...especially when you have a mission like the [Religious Order] mission [which] is based on accessibility and inclusivity, when you have the Catholic Church that some would say is not inclusive because women do [not] have the same rights as men do in the Catholic Church, it is difficult. And young people are not afraid to speak their mind(s) about that and they should, it [is] confusing (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant A8 also expressed that the Catholic Church’s institutional and hierarchical norms present a stark challenge to High School A’s institutional identity and mission.

What we hear from either the archdiocese and/or the Church in general can be difficult to navigate, particularly if you have students who believe or practice or adhere to things that maybe are in contradiction to what Catholic teachings say. Whether the students are struggling with their identity or not struggling with identity but identify as lesbian, gay, bi...that requires some navigation as a Catholic institution that is delicate and you have to be mindful of what people

believe from different perspectives. But remembering that we are an inclusive community, that we are educating young people, that we believe that there can be different ways of thinking and believing and being that are good, that are positive...not having [students] fit into a box. That [is] an everyday challenge (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Within contemporary conditions, High School A also identifies as a proxy church for the Catholic faith and religion in general.

Category two: High School A identifies as a proxy church. Because High School A identifies as an inclusive faith-based community, all participants asserted that all their students feel welcomed, loved, safe, supported, and respected. Nine participants ($n=10$) expressed that – within a fluctuating marketplace – the feeling of belonging is especially important because High School A functions as the primary or only faith-based community for many of their students and families. Participant A5 stated,

I think Catholic high schools...are in a really unique position because a lot of our students do [not] necessarily go to church or are not involved in youth groups but they feel like [High School A] is their place of worship. They [are] coming to [our] high school because they [are] drawn to the value of service and [our] charism. They [are] drawn to the community feel and [our] values...but they [are] not willing to commit to the Catholic faith (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

When asked about the main objectives or commitments of Catholic schooling in general, Participant A9 shared that the goal of Catholic education is for students to “see

faith in action” (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Five participants shared that this is especially important in contemporary conditions. Participant A5 summarized,

We know through [our] internal Catholic Assessment process last year and anecdotally...and through a survey that was done through our [Religious Order] that families increasingly come to Catholic schools with not a lot of church background or a lot of church behavior, church activity, church habits...we are the closest thing they have to a church (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

In order to understand this phenomenon, Participant A1 explained the importance of “paying attention” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018) to studies like *Going, Going, Gone: The Dynamics of Disaffiliation in Young Catholics* (McCarty et al., 2018). Participant A1 conveyed,

Why are young people disaffiliating? That happens as early as 12 and 13 [years of age]. That [is] young.... One of the themes that came through the *Going, Going, Gone* study is that young people feel like they were never engaged in dialogue and conversation. Participants in that study said, ‘We were told to believe this but we were [not] really allowed to question and challenge and really sort of own our faith (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant A8 explained that – prior to but especially because of recent research – High School A’s primary concern is “student wellbeing” and that High School A’s religious mission is to “help students own their faith” (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant A4 also shared that High School A exists to “experience a church-like

community that is accepting and welcoming” (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

When asked how High School A communicates their institutional identity and mission, Participant A4 explained that when the hierarchical structures of the Catholic Church “Fall short”, High School A offers students from a variety of religious backgrounds another message: “We bear witness to Jesus’ universal law of love...the heart of Catholicism. We live our faith like a church community. We find common ground with non-Catholics. We invite people to join us” (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018). The quote below exemplifies how High School A, within a competitive economic market, identifies as a proxy church for both Catholics and non-Catholics.

We have to make sure we [are] trying to accomplish what we can control [within this] market and [within] the Church. I think the frustration for me is the archdiocesan idea that if only [students and parents] were more Catholic or more Christian or more x, y, z they would be better served here. We got to realize, we are their faith community. To me, Catholic education is the new primary entry point for the Catholic faith and [we] have to look at [Catholic education] as the driver of the Catholic faith instead of the beneficiary of the Catholic faith and the Catholic Church (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Additionally, field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School A and were used to triangulate the data for theme two. On the front of the building is a large cross which was designed

to be seen from the street as a Catholic school identifier. Religious quotes from various saints and spiritual leaders are painted on the walls of the school throughout the building. High School A's website also has a page titled, "Family of Faith." This page explains the inclusive nature of High School A and emphasizes the importance of community. Brochures used for Open House also include information about service immersions and requirements and link this aspect of the school to their faith-based mission. Information about retreats and the importance of prayer to their community are also included on their brochures and their website. The contents of their bi-annual magazine also convey a Catholic ethos. Articles expressing High School A's commitment to fostering empathy in their community and teaching social justice principals rooted in the Catholic tradition also support this theme. Booklets distributed to new board members also emphasize High School A's Catholic identity.

Theme three: High school A identifies as an experience provider. All participants discussed the primacy of experience over knowledge. Theme three inductively emerged through analytic memo writing and "cycling back" through categories and codes (Saldaña, 2016, p. 232). Participants did not directly say, "We are an experience provider," rather – as participants shared their institutional mission and primary educational goals – the primacy of experience over knowledge became a salient theme intricately connected to High School A's institutional purpose and identity. The following categories within this theme reflected High School A's institutional identity as an experience provider:

C1. High School A exists to prepare students for life.

C2. High School A prioritizes human relationships.

Category one: High School A exists to prepare students for life. When asked to describe the main objectives or commitments of Catholic schooling, all participants indicated that they believe that one aspect of their institutional mission is to prepare students for life. Participant A8 responded,

That question makes me think about who we say we are as a [Religious Order] Catholic school and our [Religious Order] values and that we are inclusive of all, that we recognize the individual for who they are, that we prepare [students] for the future, we prepare [students] for life. If we want all [students] to feel respected, to feel like they belong...if we want [students] to learn to accept and love others, we have to give [students] that experience (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Six participants indicated that High School A's school culture offers students a transformative, Christian experience.

A [Christian] attitude is what permeates throughout [High School A's] culture. Students encounter it. That is what I wanted for my kids and what I want for my grandkids. At the very least, I want them to walk out of this education with some good knowledge but more importantly an understanding of what being a better person is all about, what being a good, true Catholic is all about, what accepting others is really all about. I want them to experience what living your life in a Christian way is like. Doing things to serve others, first and foremost (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

When asked to describe the main objectives and commitments of Catholic education, Participant A5 also expressed,

Gosh, I would say helping young people come to know and understand their faith and to help them develop their relationship with God or with their faith, whatever that faith might be, and providing opportunities for them to realize where they are on their spiritual journey. We can give [students] all kinds of information, we can tell [students] what the Catholic faith is and we can talk about what that means [for our] identity here at this school. But in terms of educating young people, it [is] about helping them come to know and understand God through experience and supporting them in their spiritual journey (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

In addition to helping students experience God, Participant A3 explained that this experience is ultimately to help students independently navigate and contribute to the world.

I think our first goal is to instill within [students] a love of God [and a] love of community. Secondly, when [our] students graduate after four years, we want them to be ready for the world. They will be ready to go out and make a difference...whether that means going to college, entering military service, or finding a good job that requires more vocational skills. They will be ready because they will have that Christian lens (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant A2 explained that, while this can be challenging to explain to prospective parents and students in a market context, it is a crucial aspect of High School A's institutional identity.

First and foremost, we are a Catholic school, we are going to teach religion. We are going to teach about social justice issues, we are going to teach [about] character and moral development, and we are going to ask tough questions about life and human choices. I think that all Catholic high schools do that. Parents focus a lot on the products...grades, tests, awards...and this is a cultural norm...but [High School A] focuses on the process. We want spiritual students, we want lifelong learners, and we want to give them an experience that sparks [their] curiosity, sparks [their] commitment...an experience that helps them own their education and own their faith in their way (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Six participants reported the institutional importance of emphasizing experience within a competitive economic market. From an administrative perspective, their priority is student growth. Participant A9 explained,

As a school...we are focusing less on grades and more on [providing] feedback for students. While grades are important in the scheme of being eligible for particular scholarships and having options for particular colleges and life beyond [High School A], grades are [not] the most important thing in life. The most important thing in life is the learning process, the experience, the 'how are you

coming out the other end of this' experience stronger, more educated, and having grown as a person (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Importantly, Participants A7 (Board Member), A8 (Administrator), and A9 (Business Director) observed that High School A's institutional mission is not immediately measurable, if measurable at all, which can present challenges within a market-driven culture. Participant A9 stated,

I get frustrated with educational and cultural norms. I think the challenges [we] face are systematic issues. These kids are with [us] for four years, but really what we [are] trying to do is form good people, life-long learners, moral leaders, critical thinkers, and creative workers...what we [are] trying to do is supposed to impact them for the next 40 years, so how is it possible to measure that and know that that [is] happening? How can you measure a students' character or the quality of their spiritual life when [people] are always growing and evolving (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018)?

When asked to elaborate upon their response and provide specific examples of their frustrations, Participant A9 continued,

Yeah, I think competing priorities, interests, shifting interests [are frustrating]. Sometimes this happens internally but we also have external factors that come into play in terms of what parents are looking for and what colleges are looking for and now what businesses are looking for. There [are] these cultural behaviors or norms that we...have to still align with while we [are] trying to form good human beings. It [is] just reality. SATs still matter to colleges and although I think

we all say, ‘Yeah, but there [is] a lot of other stuff that matters too,’ as far as parents are concerned SAT scores can help pay for college so students need to hit all these marks to get scholarships and there is a lot of pressure on kids for that now. I think we [are] trying to shift the direction of education but there [are] high stakes too, so we are partly reticent to change because, ‘Boy, this is working pretty well and, if we change it, it might not work as well,’ and there is a huge cost to that. Not [a] financial [cost] but just in terms of losing the opportunity to educate these kids if we screw something up along the way. We got to be aware of that (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant A8 also explained that in a competitive economic market, High School A must continually explain the primacy of experience over academic success, primarily to prospective parents.

The most common overall question I get from parents is, ‘Why should I send my kid to [High School A]?’ You know, it [is] like [asking], why should I buy this car? That [is] how I interpret it. Those [questions] put me on the defensive a little bit. I feel like the right questions to ask are more about experience.... A lot of parents – and I do [not] want to say if it [is] right or wrong – want their kids to go to [High School A] to guarantee that they [will] end up in a particular place, particular college, particular path. Parents will say, ‘I want my kid to go to an ivy league school’ and ‘I want my kid to be a cut above the rest.’ Parents ask questions like, ‘Where do your students go to college?’ or ‘What will you do to ensure that my kids go to ivy league?’ or ‘How many of your kids get

scholarships?’ And while that [information] may be interesting to know, I’m not sure that those are the right questions to ask (Participant A8, Business Director, Fall 2018).

When asked what questions they wished parents would ask High School A, Participant A8 expressed,

Questions like, ‘What can my [student] expect to experience that they may not think about or may not be interested in now?’ I just had a conversation with a dad who said his son is really not interested in taking ‘any froufrou classes.’ I said, ‘tell me more about what you mean by froufrou classes?’ And [the dad] said, ‘Well my son is headed to be an engineer. He needs STEM classes. Does [he] really have to take art?’ I [am] constantly helping parents understand that students benefit from art and the humanities even if they are pursuing engineering just like [students] benefit from math classes even though they may be more interested in becoming a writer...it is a more well-rounded experience. We do [not] necessarily want kids knowing exactly what they want to do because we want to prepare them to explore and to experience more of life. I do [not] really get specific questions like, ‘How [is] my kid going to morally develop here?’ Maybe it [is] assumed (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Well High School A navigates market pressures like parental inquiries, all participants expressed their commitment to offering students the “[Religious Order]” experience (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant A5 explained, “One of the characteristics of [High School A] is that it [is] not a privilege to go to school here, it

[is] something that all students are entitled to. Everyone [is] entitled to an education and to a Catholic educational experience if they wish for one” (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Responses from High School A participants also evidenced that human relationships are central to the type of experience that High School A seeks to provide.

Category two: High School A prioritizes human relationships. All participants with High School A passionately articulated the importance of relationships in their community. According to all participants, the main experiences they hope to offer students are experiences of “human connection” (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018) that help foster “loving relationships” (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018) for the “wellbeing” of all people (Participant A1, Interview, Fall 2018). According to Participant A2, High School A “invite(s) all students” to experience and develop “loving relationships with themselves, others, and God” (Participant A2, Administrator, Fall 2018). All participants explained that relationships are fostered through a variety of faith-based practices. Nine participants stated that the experience of daily prayer helps cultivate a “shared experience” which in turn forms relationships and community (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018). Five participants also expressed the importance of faith-based retreats. Participant A2 shared,

We have some practices that are, I think, shared with a lot of other Catholic schools. We have one-day class retreats during freshmen and sophomore year.

Those [retreats] are intentional time [set aside] to build community. [Students] go and [the retreats] are not academic in nature, [the retreats] are social in nature.

[The retreats] are about learning how to trust, communicate, and listen to other people. Junior year and senior year we have what [is] called [Encounter]. The other Catholic high schools have a similar practice. This is a three-day retreat where [students] there are specific activities that [are] centered around students getting to know themselves, getting to know God, understanding their role in their families, in their relationships, and with Jesus Christ. We do three [Encounter] retreats per year and it [is] a deeply moving experience (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Eight participants also articulated that mass is celebrated as an entire school community in order to help students experience a relationship within “a spiritual context” (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018). According to Participant A1, High School A tries to emphasize the relational aspect of the mass despite archdiocesan efforts to change this emphasis. Participant A1 explained,

According to the archdiocese, there [have] been all these ‘abuses of the mass.’ The archbishop says, we should refrain from holding hands. We should not have an extended sign of the peace. The...belief is that we need to return to a more focused or controlled...[controlled] is too strong a word but I [am] trying to put the best spin I can on it...form of the mass. For the [archdiocese], it [is] not a communal experience. It [is] an individual experience...a personal devotion with all these practices that are ‘correct’ or ‘incorrect.’ I [have] heard the archbishop say, ‘We need to return to this true expression of faith’ and ‘the Church may need to get smaller before it gets bigger.’ Implying that if [people] do [not] like it

[they] can leave. To me, that [is] not what [is] enriching about being Catholic.

Catholicism is about being in community...it is about service and...my job as a Catholic is to serve all those around me like Christ. I just want to treat people with dignity...a more Pope Francis vs. Pope Benedict orientation if you will. The Catholic Church's ministry is at the margins. Everything else is just a distraction. [High School A] tries to help students see that being Catholic is about serving the poor...about sharing love...that is what being [Catholic] has to be about (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Despite challenges with the archdiocese, Participants A4 (Business Director) and A10 (Board Member) stated that High School A exists to provide students with an "authentic Catholic experience" that "helps students have a relationship with the Church" (Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018). Similarly, responses evidenced that High School A wants to help students "serve the Church but also the world by preparing them, through relationships, to be good people and good citizens" (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Nine participants emphasized the relationships cultivated through High School A's service program. Participant A4 expressed,

[High School A] respect(s) the identity and voice of every child and [we are] called to help guide that voice with exploration of truth and empathy meaning [students] have to understand through human experiences and interactions what another person might be experiencing. They cannot just assume. Students go on service and immersion programs where [they] talk to someone who [students]

think might be different from them. Through these relationships students learn to find common ground. [High School A] teaches children to use their agency for the good of mankind, for the good of themselves. That does not mean to teach them to be selfish, but to be joyful, and respectful of the life God has granted them, and to use that agency to help better [humanity] (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Furthermore, all participants articulated that student-teacher relationships are essential to the High School A experience. Participant A1 explained,

[High School A] want students to struggle and come out the other side of their high school experience stronger for it, understanding how to get through challenges, how to develop their personal skills, how to develop positive relationships, how to grow as a person. Teachers help students become...holistic people, students, citizens, [and] adults. [We] want parents to realize that their students will have a voice here and learn agency [throughout] the educational process; that [students] may not have that experience now but they will become a more mature person with the support of their teachers. It won't be done to them or for them but with them (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

When asked how an outside observer would recognize that High School A is a Catholic school, Participant A7 shared,

I think features in the [school] building display our Catholicity...the pictures and banners and so forth.... I think you see the interaction with the kids themselves and the teachers...the relationships they have with the students. I think that these

interactions and relationships project true Christian values. For example, respect, mutual respect. Even though we have a large percentage of non-Catholic [students], there [is] still that mutual respect between people (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Six participants also articulated that – within a competitive economic market – relationships with financial donors and other stakeholders are also highly regarded. Additionally, the interests of donors determined the types of programs and facilities that High School A was able to prioritize. Participant A4 explained,

Every educational institution goes about involving donors in different ways. The most successful partnerships are made through relationships. We hear a lot about social media.... [Social media] can only support the messaging. Picking up the phone and making an appointment to go speak to someone will trump social media and marketing every single time and will have a longer donor enjoyment. If your goal is donor enjoyment rather than specifically achieving certain [institutional] goals, you [are] going to have a long-lasting donor relationship. You obviously have to be cognizant of your financial responsibilities but forcing someone to give to student scholarships or tuition assistance when they are clearly interested in giving to another program is a big mistake, even if you need to make scholarship quotas that year (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Additionally, field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School A and were used to triangulate the data for theme there. High School A's website includes videos of students and faculty

sharing their experiences at High School A. Many of the people in these videos discuss the “High School A” experience and the community’s commitment to providing meaningful and transformative experiences for every student. A variety of posters are placed throughout the school building that offer a variety of activities and opportunities for students to experience. A sign outside the art room also indicates that students are welcome to use the space outside of class time to create and appreciate art for “an aesthetic experience.” Additionally, High School A’s website articulates their model for education which emphasizes experience over academic achievement.

Research question two: How do select Catholic high schools respond to market pressures? Participant A2 explained that “anyone in Catholic education has to be aware that education [is] a constantly evolving marketplace. [High School A’s] demographic is definitely not static. It reacts to market influences. It reacts to the economy. It reacts to geography. It reacts to everything” (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018). When asked how High School A responds to market pressures, Participant A1 replied, “It’s complicated” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). In regards to research question two, five major themes were identified for High School A using inductive analysis, including:

- T1. High School A shifts financial practices.
- T2. High School A shifts leadership roles.
- T3. High School A adopts new programs and curricula.
- T4. High School A relies on marketing practices.
- T5. High School A educates the community.

Interview responses are presented first and field notes and artifacts and documents are incorporated at the end of each theme.

Theme One: High School A shifts financial practices. When asked if Catholic high Schools are in urgent need of financial reform, nine participants said that “the whole system is in urgent need” (Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018). All participants discussed potential solutions to financial and economic pressures. Participant A1 specifically mentioned that, within a competitive economic market, High School A has adopted a new funding model. Participant A1 explained,

When you think of funding Catholic schools in modern times, think of a three-legged stool...this is you ‘funding stool.’ One leg [of the stool] is tuition.

Donations and benefactors [are] the other leg. What [is] the third leg? You need a third leg...you need to balance your funding stool out. While, many Catholic schools are looking at creative business ventures...or foundations (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

The following categories within this theme inductively emerged to reflect Participant A1’s ‘three-legged funding stool’ analogy.

C1. High School A adjusts tuition costs.

C2. High School A focuses on fundraising.

C3. High School A emphasizes new business ventures and foundations.

Category one: High school A adjusts tuition costs. Nine participants ($n=10$) discussed the first leg of High School A’s funding stool: Tuition. These nine participants referenced the challenges associated with tuition costs. Participant A2 shared that as “the

cost of living rises” High School A’s tuition rates “also rise” (Participant A2, Interview, Fall 2018). Participants A2 (Business Director), A4 (Business Director), A8 (Administrator), and A9 (Business Director) also shared that High School A looks to neighboring Catholic high schools to ensure that “[their] rates are similar to other Catholic high schools...” (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018). However, Participants A2 (Business Director) and A4 (Business Director) noted, “...there [is] a point at which families cannot even afford the [amount] that Catholic schools charge. The [financial] jump from elementary to high school is huge. It [costs] more than double...” (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018) and “what if families have more than one child? What if families are preparing to [pay] for college? College [tuition] rates keep climbing as well” (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Four participants shared that – because of economic forces outside High School A’s control – “tuition costs increase annually” (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018) to provide “teachers with a living and competitive wage” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). In response to market forces, High School A tries to “stager” their tuition increases (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant A2 reported,

[Tuition] costs go up about three percent to 4 percent per year. We have an incredibly smart CFO who maintains a very steady growth. Tuition increases will not be eight percent one year and two percent the next year. Our CFO keeps tuition increases very steady and intentionally keeps increases at three percent and four percent per year. I think that helps families plan ahead (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant A9 conveyed that – during the span of a decade – High School A significantly increased tuition costs despite High School A’s slow and steady approach.

[When] I started here [tuition] was \$8,000 and we [are] already up to \$15,000. We do a pretty good job...[and] try to maintain a low tuition increase every year, at or below four percent every year, and that [has] been standard for us [for] the last 10 years.... But still, even with low tuition increases every year, [High School A] is at \$15,000, and as we know [there is] compound interest... Tuition costs are only going to go higher. We look at that, and say wow, that [is] a problem. Think about other costs families [have], like housing costs...which put pressure on...the ability to fund [Catholic high schools]” (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Despite economic market pressures, all participants expressed High School A’s institutional commitment to financial “accessibility” (Participant A5, Interview, Fall 2018). Participant A1 shared, “We have to be affordable...accessibility is part of our Catholic mission. When asked how High School A remains affordable and accessible despite financial pressures, Participant A1 explained,

We ask, ‘Do we want to only be affordable to those who can pay full cost or are we going to be affordable to those who are in the middle?’ and ‘What does that cost delineation look like and how do we fund those students that could [not] be here otherwise?’ We try to be affordable to everyone. Seven years ago, we started to use a new approach to tuition to create a more socioeconomically diverse student body. Members of our founding religious order said every [Religious

Order] Catholic school should have a five percent program, meaning five percent of the student body has to be at or below the federal poverty line and given full tuition assistance. That pushed a lot of schools to find enough tuition assistance to support those kids. Well, what we found is that if [we] push more resources dollars towards the highest needs [students], it makes less room for others. [High School A] decided to find funding for the five percent program but also raised our program to 11 percent. We also have target benchmarks for the percentage of [students] that are receiving 90 percent tuition assistance as well as [students] receiving 75 percent, 50 percent, and 25 percent. The goal is to avoid a situation where [we] have the haves and the have nots, [students] with no need and [students] with full need and no one in the middle (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

When asked how High School A responds to market pressures like tuition costs, Participant A9 used a business analogy to explain High School A's response. Participant A9 stated,

Well, when you have a base of kids, like a customer base...I do [not] know...basically, if you [are] looking at it from an economic standpoint and look at your financial assistance as a discounting tool, like you would in retail or kind of the corporate world...you can be profitable and provide discounts. That [is] what all these stores, of course they [are] all closing now, but that [is] what they [are] doing. Stores provide discounts in order to drive revenue that helps them fund their business and make profits. We can do the same here is basically what

my premise is...and this is vital in a competitive economic market (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

While High School A responds to increasing tuition costs by keeping tuition costs steady and providing financial assistance (or discounts) to families, High School A also focuses on fundraising.

Category two: High School A focuses on fundraising. Eight participants explained that High School A's primary response to the financial pressures facing Catholic schools is the second leg of the funding stool: Donations and Benefactors (or fundraising). All participants also referred to this leg of the stool as "fundraising" (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

When asked how High School A responds to the news of Catholic schools closing across the United States, Participant A4 communicated, "...the greatest minds in the nation are working on this [issue] in the Catholic world and we [are] still getting [school] closures. [Our] response it to fundraise, fundraise, fundraise. I [am] afraid and I cannot help but pray and keep fundraising and keep expressing the value of the mission" (Participant A4, Interview, Fall 2018). All eight participants expressed the importance of fundraising to help supplement tuition costs and provide financial aid for families. Participant A3 explained that fundraising is a crucial practice because High School A "does not want to price [themselves] out of the market" (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Responses from participants also evidenced that fundraising practices help pay for High School A's facilities, basic operational costs, and educational programs.

Participants A2 (Business Director), A4 (Business Director), and A5 (Business Director) shared that High School A relies on both internal and external fundraising practices because collecting “tuition is [not] enough” (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A2 stated,

We do a huge amount of fundraising.... Internally we require every student to raise [money] for [High School A]. Our particular qualification is \$150 which I think is a challenge for some families. This amount is less of a challenge for others...but I think it. [is] a number that we [are] pretty happy with.... [We] used to require that families raise \$300 or \$350...then we made some changes institutionally to what kind of fundraiser it is. I think people were happy...\$150 is a manageable number and if it is not manageable for some families, that [is] okay. We have resources here that can help them. For example, we used to ask families to do a wreath sale...well, if a [student] cannot sell enough wreaths to meet their \$150 fundraising goal, we have alumni who have offered to purchase their wreaths...and we are able to connect them to [students] (Participant A2, Business Director, 2018).

Participant A7 explained why High School A institutionally requires students to contribute to High School A’s fundraising efforts when families already pay tuition:

This is a recent practice to...try to get students involved [and] to help them understand that all this does [not] just happen and a lot of donations [are] needed besides what their parents pay for tuition. It takes a lot to run a campus and provide the faculty and staff and so forth...the earlier we can start that thought

process in [students], the better. We [are] trying to educate [students] about [our financial needs] before they leave our [school] so that when they are alumni and receive our requests for money starting the year after they graduate...they will give. This is just the dirty part of reality, right? This is what it takes. This is where the rubber meets the road and what it takes to get it done (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Eight participants also emphasized the importance of High School A's external fundraising practices within a competitive economic market. Participants A4 (Business Director), A7 (Board Member), and A10 (Business Director) referred to their annual action which is "usually held in May" (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018) and Participants A2 (Business Director), A4 (Business Director), and A5 (Business Director) also discussed recent capital campaigns. Participant A5 explained,

We have capital campaigns. For example, the front entrance is brand new...and that was a recent campaign.... Then we raised money for seismic upgrades to the theater roof a couple years ago. We put solar panels on the roof of the school, gosh, maybe 10 years ago, 12 years ago. These kinds of things...[that] are not necessarily visible but they [are] critical to keeping the school well maintained. Also, if you think about it, if families are going to pay tuition you have to have modern, clean, safe facilities. Just around the corner you can see the public high school and if there [is] a bond measure...improvements are going to be made to the public-school buildings, we cannot be behind [them]. We have to be ahead of [them] (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

According to seven participants, external fundraising practices also include corporate partnerships and grants. Participant A1 stated, “We found corporate partnerships to help fund [tuition]. Precision Castparts Corporation has been awesome” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant A2 also shared, “externally we have a lot of corporations that we have relationships with and...some partnerships [provide] matching grants. So, if our families raise X amount of money, then [they] will match it. We work with the archdiocese because they have some matching sources as well” (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018). However, Participant A10 explained that receiving financial assistance from the archdiocese can be difficult:

It [is] frustrating because [the archdiocese] make(s) these rules but they will tell [us] that schools do not have to enforce the [rules] because they are just advisory. But then they [will] forbid [us] to do something and it [is] like, ‘But I thought you were just advising us?’ [The archdiocese] says, ‘Well, [we are] on that. [We are] not on this.’ Sometimes it feels like walking on jello. It [is] like, the archdiocese is going to help [us] and give [us] funds in some ways and not in others...and they charge us to go to principal meetings now. Sometimes I do not want to [attend the meeting] at all and I have to pay \$50 a meeting.... It [is] frustrating...and it did [not] used to be that way. I know everybody has a budget but schools are trying to financially make it...I just hate that I have to write a check to them.... It [is] like, ‘I [will] tell you what...I will not come.’ But, no, [we] do [not] have a choice. The archdiocese says, ‘You must come and if you come you must pay and if you bring extra people you have to pay for them and we [are going] to require you to bring

an extra person to this [meeting].’ I just feel like it [is] a bit of a racket

(Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant A1 (Administrator), A5 (Business Director), and A10 (Board Member) also explained that not all the Catholic high schools in “[High School A’s] market”

(Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018) are financially equal. Participant A5 explained that – within a competitive economic market – all the Catholic schools and organizations in High School A’s market are vying for funds from the same donors: “I see all the same names, the same donors, on everybody’s list” (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A10 also shared,

Everybody’s fighting for their piece of the pie and the archdiocese is saying, ‘We [will] take all the [donations] and invest and parlay [funds] to better serve everybody and then we [will] disperse it.’ But they are not including [Religious Order] schools in that equation...just diocesan-run schools. If there is a central funding organization, they should ensure that everybody gets an even slice of the pie. [We] go into meetings and [other administrators] from [other Catholic high schools] say, ‘Oh, you want 1:1 iPads? Well, just make that your auction [item] at your [fundraising] gala and you [will] pull down \$200 or \$250 thousand.’ I [am] like, ‘No, if my main auction item pulls down \$50 thousand it [is] huge. We pull in an average of \$35 thousand.... Catholic schools are not all equal, we do [not] all draw from equal neighborhoods or have families with the same socioeconomic backgrounds (Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Despite fundraising challenges, seven participants believed that donors are an essential aspect to new financial practices and a necessary response to market forces. Participant A4 surmised,

We would be nothing without donors, and [if we said so] we would be fooling ourselves. [Therefore], fundraising is about how we are able to learn about the [donor], learn about what makes them tick, learn about what makes them appreciate what we do, and then giving them access to enjoy the benefits and understand the impact they will have by supporting us (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant A2 also expressed that without “donors” and the “advancement department” High School A “could [not] operate [as a] school” (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participants A4 (Business Director) and A7 (Board Member) discussed the importance of thanking donors for their financial contributions by writing “personalized thank you cards” (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018) and “treating all donors to an [annual] benefactor dinner” (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018). Similarly, Participant A10 referenced holiday fundraisers that treat hundreds of guests, mostly alumni, to “wine tastings, dinner, and dancing” (Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018). Participant A10 also explained that “to be a named sponsor, donors must now give \$2,000 or so...and that [donors] get certain benefits at each level [of giving]” (Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018). Since the establishment of these practices, Participant

A10 said, “[we have seen] a huge jump in [our] ability to raise funds from businesses” (Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018).

When asked how High School A decides what institutional needs are met or what educational programs receive funding, Participants A3 (Board Member), A4 (Business Director), A7 (Board Member), and A10 (Board Member) shared that donors are usually given a list to decide what they “would like to be funded” (A4, Business Director, Fall 2018). In addition to seeking donors and benefactors to support their institutional mission in a competitive economic market, High School A also looks towards creative business ventures and growing foundations.

Category three: High School A emphasizes business ventures and foundations.

Six participants mentioned the third leg of High School A’s funding stool: Creative Business Ventures and Foundations. Participant A1 first explained the “creative business ventures” of other [Religious Order] Catholic schools (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant A1 shared,

Two schools’ business ventures come to my mind. At one [Catholic] school someone donated a big refrigeration facility and a bunch of acreage to them. Now they are growing hops on [the land] ...they leased it out and are growing hops. They are also using the facility to store blueberries. All of this is generating like \$200,000 a year [for] the school. Then the other [Catholic] high school is building a retirement center on their land. It was going to be a strip mall but another Catholic high school associated with [another religious order] owns the strip mall right next to them. Catholic schools [are] leveraging what they have, which

oftentimes is land, to generate income.... It [is] an income positive generation (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

When asked if High School A had any “creative business ventures” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018), Participant A1 explained that High School A does [not] have any land but they are “hoping the carrot farm adjacent to [High School A], [which] is looking to sale, will donate their land” (Participant A1, Administartor, Fall 208).

Participant A1 imagined,

I would love the carrot farmers to consider us...I think they have some connections to the Catholic community. It would be so sad if a developer came in and just slapped up track housing...just think what we could do with that land? We have talked about building a second gym on the grass outside the front entrance. What if that second gym included space for physical therapy or provided elder care or something, and we said, ‘Okay, you use it from 8:00am to 3:00pm but after 3:00pm we [will] use the [gym] for our athletic practices and for what we need. What if that generated income for the school (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018)?

Participants A1 (Administrator) and A5 (Business Director) also discussed High School A’s desire to grow their foundation, another possible third-leg to their funding stool.

Participant A1 stated,

Can you imagine a foundation like Harvard’s or Sandford’s...like a billion dollars? Their foundation kicks off tens of millions of dollars every year...it could fund the school. Gosh, all we need is \$50 million dollars...somebody [has] got to

[have] that money...and we could fund the school for the rest of eternity just with a foundation. Right now, we [are] at like four million. It generates some income but not enough to fund the school... (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant A5 also expressed that High School A's current foundation is not large enough to meet all their financial or institutional needs. According to Participant A5,

I mean the goal would be that [our] foundation would get to the point where [we] would [not] have to charge tuition because the foundation would cover all our costs. We [are] a very long way from that. However, in the last 10 years, the distribution from the foundation has doubled in size so...what [is] going to drive the future of this place? The foundation is the answer (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

When asked if Catholic schools are in urgent need of financial reform, Participant A4 also expressed,

We have a really strong foundation but the needs and wants of the world change instantly. It [is] even daily. It [is] just...to be ahead of market forces or to respond to market pressures but not to react is difficult? To be able to think in a responsive way but not freak out? It [is] a toughie. [Our] need is very urgent. High School A's leaders spend a lot of time on that. I think they really do stay up at night sometimes and worry (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Lastly, participants A1 and A9 espoused that, within a competitive economic market, "what High School A really needs is a business model" (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and

artifacts support these research findings for High School A and were used to triangulate the data for theme one. The shift in High School A's financial practices are evident in their strategic plans which mark past, present, and future financial goals and possible solutions to annual tuition increases. Detailed information about the cost of High School A is included in the brochure that they distribute to prospective families. Additionally, one of the first objects a person sees when entering High School A is a list of donors on a glass plaque next to the front doors of the building. On this plaque, donors – individuals and businesses – are named and ranked based on the amount of money donated to High School A.

Theme Two: High School A shifts leadership roles. All participants agreed, that with fewer vowed religious available to run or work in Catholic schools, the “old leadership paradigm is gone” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). The following categories within this theme reflect High School A's attempt to create a new paradigm within a competitive economic market:

C1. High School A consolidates leadership roles.

C2. High School A creates new business positions.

C3. High School A expands and restructures their board.

Category one: High School A consolidates leadership roles. Participant A1, A3, and A9 discussed High School A's decision to condense the President and Principal roles into one role to “save money” (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018) and “hire a CFO who wants to serve education but has a business mindset” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant A9 expressed,

[Our CFO] comes from the corporate world...and came to [High School A] when [their] business got crushed in the '08-'09 recession. [The CFO] wanted to do something more meaningful because at the time [they] were just working for money...just trying to figure out how to get more money and what [they] were going to do to get money, money, money. But now [the CFO] wants to do something more meaningful (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant A1 (Administrator), A2 (Business Director), A3 (Board Member), and A9 (Business Director) also articulated that the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) position is a relatively new leadership role. Participant A9 shared,

Before the [CFO] there was a VP of finance. I do [not] remember what the title was...it might have been VP of finance or a director of finance or something like that but there was that model. I think the CFO role is the same role just a different title. I think the same role has been here for 15-20 years which is relatively new in the scheme of things. In general, the role [they] created is a CFO role as opposed to a director of finance or an accounting role.... I think a lot of Catholic schools kept what they could afford, or thought they could afford, so more of an accounting role to just take care of the books. I think what [our CFO] tries to bring to the position, whether [High School A] likes it or not, is a more financial strategic mindset...focused on how we are going to measure things financially...and mission-oriented but financially primarily (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant A3 shared, “[The president/principal] and the [CFO] now run the school together” (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018). Participant A1 said,

When I think of creative structures to support Catholic education...well, those ideas will probably not come from educators. Those creative funding structures are going to come from business. Plus, [High School A] did not want to hire a super principal to be president. The natural path to president often is: I was a teacher then I was vice principal, then I was maybe a development director, or vice principal somewhere, then principal, and now I am going to be president. Well, that does [not] necessary prepare you for the complexities of financial sustainability. What we really need is business (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Similarly, when asked about the challenges that Catholic high schools in the United States experience, Participant A9 explained,

I think we as Catholic educators in Catholic education we have to toe the line between maintaining the values of the Catholic faith with what the market seeks and needs. We do [not] want to change our values but we have to consider what costumers need and what they [are] looking for and I do [not] think that means we completely shift over to a market-based system, a market-based viewpoint...we have to hold the line somewhere. I think the definition of that line is a struggle right now (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

While struggling to define the boundaries between Catholic orientations and market orientations, High School A also creates new business positions in response to market pressures.

Category two: High School A creates new business positions. All participants highlighted the creation of new business roles and responsibilities in response to fiscal challenges. Participant A6 expressed that High School A's admissions department is "now in charge of marketing and branding" (Participant A6, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A5 also expressed that – in addition to elevating the CFO role – High School A's former admissions director "was hired as the vice president of advancement...a role that has since been expanded and broadened to two vice presidents [of advancement]" (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participants A1 (Administrator), A3 (Board Member), A5 (Business Director), A6 (Business Director), and A7 (Board Member) also explained that a "new role was created a few years ago on the advancement/development side to oversee High School A's foundation" (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018) since High School A believes that, if the foundation grows, "the foundation will eventually secure High School A's future" (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). As High School A creates new business positions in response to market pressures, they also expand and restructures their school board.

Category three: High School A expands and restructures their board. All participants referenced the expansion of High School A's school board, which went from one board to three separate boards. Participant A7 explained,

I can only remember there being one board when the school first opened and now there are three. All three boards are a part of the leadership team. One board is the Board of Trustees, the other board is the Foundation Board, and the third board is the Alumni Board. The Foundation Board and the Alumni Board were more recently developed (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant A3 also shared that establishing each board was “not necessarily a smooth process” because “there was this whole issue of control [over] alumni board” (Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018). While High School A operates as a community, tensions and struggles still exist. Participant A10 relayed,

[The alumni board] was initially more successful at [raising money] than the school expected and so [High School A] started asking more of [the alumni board] and the school wanted more control over how money would be allocated. It was no longer just a bunch of friends hanging out and chipping in money to do something...and there was a huge upset and a major split in the board at the time...and about half the board left...and the people that left said, ‘It is [not] fun anymore. I do [not] want to be a business. I do [not] want to do this like a business. I want to just have fun. It [is] our money, we should choose what we do with it.’ And the [administration] replied, ‘You would [not] be making money if you were [not] raising it under the umbrella of [High School A].’ I see both sides...and I hear that from parent clubs as well. I get it. I get that they [are] doing all the work to fundraise and they want to have some sort of a say...but I also get that there are needs that might not be as sexy as what they want to spend money

on...school needs are not always feel good needs...like updating the plumbing or something...but they [are] needs (Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Despite internal conflicts, all participants expressed the “crucial role each board member plays in promoting [High School A]” (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018) and the “necessity of [boards] in a competitive economic market” (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018). Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School A and were used to triangulate the data for theme two. High School A’s shift in leadership roles are evident in board meeting minutes which included the decision to consolidate the roles of principal and president into one role while elevating the responsibilities and decision-making power of the Chief Financial Officer. Shift in leadership roles are also evident in photographs displayed throughout the school building of former faculty and staff that once consisted of all religious members and that, since the 1990s, consist of all laity. Perhaps the shift in leadership is most evident in the building itself. High School A’s rectory – where religious members used to live – was transformed into business offices.

Theme three: High School A adopts new programs and curricula. While High School A shifts leadership roles, they also adopt new programs and curricula. The following categories within this theme reflect High School A’s facilitation of new programs and curricula within a competitive economic market.

C1. High School A invests in new STEM program.

C2. High School A offers students grant money.

C3. High School A adopts the Bishop’s Framework.

Category one: High School A invests in new STEM program. All participants indicated that parental demands for specific programs are a market pressure. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, parents ask about and emphasize the importance of STEM courses (Participant A8, Interview, Fall 2018). Seven out of the 10 participants also articulated the importance of developing High School A's STEM program. When asked how High School A decides which programs receive funding, Participant A1 shared,

Our idea to fund a new STEM Center came out of a parent meeting.... Part of [our] strategic plan is to identify areas that may be missing or to strengthen areas that are not fully developed. Based on this we added...the STEM program, so really emphasizing science, technology, engineering, and math. We did that knowing there is a demand for STEM and we wanted to create something unique that was distinguishable. [We] created additional requirements, additional course offerings, created new space for those courses to happen. [We] created marketing materials that talked about STEM. [We] really emphasized that students can have a robotics class and [they] can post this on [their] social media accounts. Part of that marketing [our] distinguishers and asking ourselves, 'What do [we] want to be known for?' In a sort of competitive landscape, I think it [is] healthy for schools to compete and have different areas. We did [not] want to lose girls that were interested in science and math to the all-girls Catholic high school. We want to create opportunities for girls to see us as an option.... When we started the STEM program, I think we had one, maybe two sections of AP Calculus. Now we

have four sections of AP Calculus, two sections of BC Calculus, and a section of multivariable Calculus. So now we have 500% more kids taking those more advanced math classes (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant A4 also point to the success of High School A's STEM program: "We have an excellent STEM program.... Our strategic thinking process reflects [that] the innovative mindset [is] well in place throughout the curriculum" (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018). Additionally, Participants A1 (Administrator), A3 (Board Member), A4 (Business Director), and A5 (Business Director) shared that the adaptation of STEM programs appealed to donors and brought "financial revenue" into High School A (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A3 explained that – to garner continued support – High School A continually invites "parents and board members to sign up for tours of the STEM Center...and, at the beginning of the school year, board members are given coffee thermal mugs with the school logo on it as a gift...because the [students] make it with the Center's laser [machine]" (Participant A3, Interview, Fall 2018). While High School A is committed to their new STEM program, they also award students internal grants that fund "innovative and entrepreneurial" projects (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Category two: High School A offers students grant money. Eight participants ($n=10$) highlighted the importance of the Ignite grant. Participant A4 explained,

High School A takes great pride in being able to infuse innovative thought with the mindset and habits of problem solving, creative problem solving, so students can thrive more quickly by seeing end results. So, we created an internal grant

that students and faculty can apply for called the [Ignite] grant which supports anything innovative, creative, design centric, and entrepreneurial.... Kids start businesses [and] make enough profit [to] buy the materials from us so that [students] can continue their businesses after graduation.... One student had a T-shirt printing business. Another [student] created a fair-trade coffee cart and all the proceeds go to funding [High School A's] service immersion trips"

(Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Six participants referred to the Ignite grant as "a successful program" and "one of [their] market distinguishers" (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participants A1 (Administrator), A4 (Business Director), A5 (Business Director), and A7 (Board Member) explained that the Ignite Grant helped High School A receive funding for their STEM Center. The Ignite Grant helped High School A "received a \$300,000 donation" (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018) from a "[large] corporation" (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018) to build a new STEM Center which "[we] were not expecting" (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A4 explained,

We saw that donors expressed excitement and ownership over the Ignite grant projects. People starts donating...and even a small donation can help us leverage to get bigger donations...or bigger grants. Since we are evaluated [by donors] and philanthropic organizations on our community giving, if we have a high percentage of parent giving or alumni and board member giving, donors will look favorably on that...and [it] helps us stack the deck. We need community

investment, financial investment...then we can get big grants like the Murdock grant (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

When asked what the corporate donation meant to High School A, Participant A7 shared that the grant “was essential because parents dictate [our] programs” (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018). When asked how parents dictate High School A’s programs, Participant A7 continued,

Well, if [High School A] is not a well-run school...parents will not pay. Our programs need to be good...if schools do not have well-run programs...parents will not pay...those are hard-earned dollars. So [High School A] is not going to get the tuition or [financial] contributions [we] need if programs are not well-run...so perhaps other Catholic schools that struggled and ended up closing did [not] have their ducks lined up and were [not] quite producing enough of a value....even though we [are], you know, a school and providing an education...parents are still parents and they expect a return on their investment (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participants A1 (Administrator), A2 (Business Director), A4 (Business Director), and A9 (Business Director) also posited that parents want to see a “return on [their] investment...” (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018). According to Participants A5 (Business Director) and A6 (Business Director), High School A “became a 1:1 iPad school” (Participant A6, Business Director, Fall 2018) and is “now committed to creating 21st century learning classrooms...so that [they] can remain relevant” (Participant A6, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A9 concluded,

I think there should be little positive innovations all over the place...so that we can try different stuff. By 'all over the place' I mean within Catholic schools. I think there [is] an opportunity for Catholic education to earn the investment that it requires to fund a Catholic education as a parent. I think we need to continue to push the envelope in terms of how we [are] educating and make sure we [are] distinguishing ourselves from public schools because it [is] not getting any easier...and [we] have the double whammy of our taxes increasing because public education costs are also going up and what it costs to educate our [students] in Catholic schools is going up. That is the reality. Parents volunteer to [pay]. It [is] not like somebody forces me [as a parent] to do that with my kids...and the [students] we [have] here, all their parents are [paying] because they want to, not because they have to. The more opportunities we give students to be innovators and entrepreneurs...like we did with the Ignite Grant...the better off we will be (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

While High School A offers students grant money to distinguish their institution in a competitive economic market, High School A "must [also] incorporate the Bishop's Framework" into their curricula (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Category three: High School A adopts the Bishop's Framework. All participants referred the tensions between the archdiocese and High School A. According to seven participants, tensions exists over curricular content and archdiocesan expectations. Participant A8 shared,

Archdiocesan influence or input regarding curriculum is a challenge.... This mostly has to do with the religious studies curriculum. I know that our religious studies department a few years back...acquiesced to the Bishop's framework in teaching subject matter. Operating within that framework has been a challenge but I think it [is] doable...[but] one of the things that went away, as an example, from our course offerings when we moved to the Bishop's framework was our morality class. Our teachers have tried their best I think to then weave in a little bit of what we used to teach in that course but we have [not] been able to include that material as intentionally as we would like to as a school (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

When asked if the Bishop's framework is well designed, Participant A6 said, "Not really...especially for teaching a class like morality" (Participant A6, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participants A3 (Board Member), A4 (Business Director), and A8 (Administrator) explained that "the Bishop's framework limits [High School A's] autonomy in subject matters such as theology and health" (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A1 also explained that the Bishop's framework is difficult because "the Church uses language like 'sinful' and 'disordered' to describe homosexuality" and that "is [not] the language or the message that [High School A] wants to communicate to [students]" (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). While issues of control arise between High School A and the archdiocese, High School A responds the "best [they] can to hierarchical pressures while also considering and being mindful of what the market needs" (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School A and were used to triangulate the data for theme three. The STEM center is highlighted on the first page of High School A's brochure. Donor names are listed on plaques outside the STEM center and outside science classrooms but not outside other classrooms. An emphasis on athletic programs was evidenced by a courtyard outside the football stadium dedicated to alumni and donors. Bricks paved the courtyard with names of alumni and donors. Additionally, one of the school walkabouts occurred during High School A's annual Open House. During the Open House, faculty and staff were stationed at different tables to greet prospective students and parents. High School A's athletic program was placed in the gymnasium with music and a promotional video playing on the big screen. Each table in the gymnasium had a decorative centerpiece and a plethora of balloons and candy as well as brochures. In contrast, the academic program was placed in the cafeteria with generic refreshments at one end of the cafeteria and a small collection of balloons at the other end. The tables in the cafeteria included a poster that identified the subject represented at that table but did not include a decorative centerpiece, candy, or brochures.

Theme four: High School A relies on marketing practices. All participants discussed the importance of marketing and branding in a competitive economic market. Participant A1 (Administrator), A2 (Business Director), and A5 (Business Director) stated that "marketing strategies are absolutely essential" to High School A's "success" as an institution (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018). The following categories

within this theme reflected High School A's commitment to marketing their institutional identity and mission:

C1. High School A changes their school name.

C2. High School A seeks market distinguishers.

C3. High School A creates and distributes marketing materials.

Category one: High School A changes their school name. All participants explained that High School A's recent decision to change High School A's name was a market response. Participant A5 stated,

Branding and marketing [are] really important because [people] might not know anything about us...when we were going through [a] marketing and branding overhaul, we realized that we used to be [our former name] and sort of joked that we were the best kept secret.... [We] realized that being the best kept secret was something we inherited from our [Religious Order]...there [is] a lot of humility behind their mission...a part of which is that they do [not] advertise or boast about [themselves]. However, when you [are] in a competitive environment you realize that [is] not such a great thing so we changed our name to make sure people know we are Catholic and...a college prep school...that was vitally important. Some of the negative unintended consequences was that now we start to sound elitist by saying that we are college prep and that was never really the culture of [High School A]. We had some alumni that really do not like [our] name change because that was [not] what they remembered about their school and other alumni say, 'Can I change my diploma because I want mine to say college

preparatory?’ You also have students here that are like, ‘We play in an athletic league with all public schools and...they see the phrase ‘prep’ on the side of our bus and they think we [are] elitist or that we have this sort of air about us because we are [a] prep [school].’ There are a lot of kids that do not really like the name change (Participant A5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Regardless of mixed emotions, Participants A2 (Business Director), A5 (Business Director), and A7 (Board Member) affirmed that the name change was necessary in a competitive economic market. Participant A2 posited, “We have to have market distinguishers and we have to have a brand. Obviously, [our] brand is in our name...prep and Catholic...those are two very quick brands” (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participants A6 also reported,

No one is going to know you or what you do if you don’t brand and market...well, in some ways they can because our students, faculty, and staff are emissaries of who we are but not everybody is going to come across [High School A’s] students or staffers so that’s where our [marketing] and branding and name comes in (Participant A6, Business Director, Fall 2018).

According to six participants, High School A’s decision to change their school name was an attempt to “distinguish” themselves in a competitive economic market (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Category two: High School A seeks market distinguishers. All interview participants emphasized the value and prioritization of market distinguishes within a market context. Participants A1 (Administrator), A2 (Business Director), and A5

(Business Director) shared that their STEM program and inclusion of students with learning differences distinguishes them from other schools – particularly Catholic schools – in their micro-market. When asked how High School A communicates their institutional identity to prospective parents and students, Participant A2 shared,

I talk to people who have never heard of [High School A] and then I talk to people who have never heard of [High School A] so the message obviously is different. If a person has never heard of [High School A], I want to get the message right out front that we are Catholic and we study social justice issues and we study the Bible. We do study what the Catholic Church believes. Having said that, we are going to ask you to think for yourself too. I think that...is really careful to message to folks that have never heard of us. To folks that have heard of us, it [is] a little bit easier because they know we [are] a Catholic high school, so that [is] when I talk about our identity, our distinguishers from the other Catholic high school(s). There are [eight] Catholic high schools in [our city]. All of us have distinguishers so we talk to the public about what their child's experience would be if they came to our school. I message we are coed. I message we have a great STEM program. I message we have a program for students and we welcome students with learning differences. Those are a couple of [our] market distinguishers (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Six participants also shared that High School A's class and school size is a market distinguisher. Participant A8 shared that because High School A is a "smaller school" they can "do a lot more personalized learning whereas other Catholic schools are twice

the size,” therefore, High School A “talks about [their] size as a market distinguisher” (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Seven participants also explained that marketing materials – as further reviewed and explained within category three below – are used to communicate how High School A is different from other schools in their area. Notably, Participant A10 shared, “I have started to hear the phrase ‘market distinguishers’ a lot more recently. I don [not] remember that [phrase] being used ten years ago” (Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Category three: High School A creates and distributes marketing materials. All participants shared that marketing materials are used to communicate with prospective students and parents as well as alumni and current and potential donors. Seven participants all shared that marketing materials – such as brochures, billboards, and magazines – “help [High School A] distinguish what’s different about us compared to other schools that [families] might be looking at...[we are] very intentional about the pictures [we use] and about what tells our story” (Participant A5, Interview, Fall 2018). Participant A1 also shared that marketing materials and practices are important “because you control what you say and what you emphasize and how clear it is.... It’s part of marketing your distinguishers and what do you want to be known for? In a sort of competitive landscape of schools, I think it’s healthy for schools to have different areas” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant A8 stated,

[Marketing materials] convey who we are. Just like any school...we’re competing for [students]. I know for a fact that, for some students, it’s between us and

another school...we have to make sure that we are distinct enough that we attract someone that may be on the fence...our size is important...our [market] niche is not too big, not too small (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant A3 also indicated that marketing materials are “more for the parents” than prospective students (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018) because, according to Participant A8, “parents have a lot of choice...so [marketing materials] help explain why us and not someone else?” (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant A6 also shared, “I think every parent wants something like this to help them decide where their student’s going to go. Every student wants to look at it to see if they can see themselves in these images...depending on the kid...some kids are going to read it and some kids are just going to look at the pictures” (Participant A6, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A9 also explained that marketing materials “goes back to parents wanting to see outcomes, right? Marketing materials tell you some of the outcomes but also telling you about the process” (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participants A2 (Business Director), A3 (Board Member), and A7 (Board Member) also shared that – because all Catholic high schools utilize marketing materials and practices to communicate their institutional identity – High School A needs to as well. Participant A7 shared,

I think advertising on billboards and secular radio stations and passing out marketing materials, like [our] brochure, is necessary to show what level we are. Sophisticated. You know, it communicates what we do, how we do it, the results that we’re getting...and, I think, especially when you’re competing against other

Catholic schools...we have to have [marketing materials]. They have it. They have it even nicer...they do everything just grander and bigger because they're bigger and they have more resources. They're the big draw...a good percentage of that is because of sports...even for [students] who are not playing sports.

[Students] want to be a part of the school that's got the big team and all that kind of thing (Participant A7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant A10 also expressed that "marketing sports is always really big" (Participant A10, Board Member, Fall 2018) and Participant A9 affirmed that interacting with prospective parents and students "mostly comes through athletics and sports, right or wrong, that's just where that happens" (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

However, while all participants shared that marketing materials and practices are "very important" (Participant A3, Board Member, Fall 2018) and Participants A1 (Administrator), A2 (Business Director), A5 (Business Director), A7 (Board Member), and A9 (Business Director) posited that – within a competitive economic market – "marketing and branding are absolutely necessary" (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018) and "has to be done" (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018), Participant A9 stated, "I don't see marketing and branding as a driving force behind a [family's] decision if that makes sense.... The important thing is to be authentic" (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018). When asked how necessary marketing materials are in the communication of High School A's institutional identity, Participant A8 also shared that marketing materials and practices are "beneficial because if you talk the talk, you need to walk the walk...and [marketing materials] are all talk. [Our]

brochure is saying we are ‘this’ very concretely...so if we’re not reflecting these numbers or this information then...it’s checks and balances, you know?” (Participant A8, administrator, Fall 2018). However, when asked if Catholic schools compete with one another, Participant A9 shared,

Marketing and branding helps [High School A] compete for students and funding [and]...there is some dysfunction in it because...I don’t think [marketing materials] are a bad thing to have but I do think there [are] some things we do just because other schools do it and I think they do it because we do it and so it’s this vicious cycle or whatever of ‘who is going to blink first’ kind of thing (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School A and were used to triangulate the data for theme four. High School A’s marketing strategies are evident in their marketing materials which include brochures, postcards, and marketing gimmicks. To prospective students, High School A passes out free stickers, pens, pencils, socks, hairbands, 3D glasses, and PopSockets for smartphones with High School A’s logo printed on each item. Participant A2 (Business Director) explained that the maze pen and PopSocket are a new marketing device. A mural commissioned to help High School A create a brand image also decorates a wall in the admissions office. Lastly, High School A’s social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter also indicate a marketing approach to communication.

Theme Five: High School A educates the community. All participants agreed that conversations with people are imperative to the continuation of their institutional identity and mission, especially within a market context. The following categories within this theme reflect High School A's attempt to invite people – especially prospective families and donors – to participate in a dialogue about Catholic schools:

C1. High School A conducts and encourages school visits.

C2. High School A engages in conversations.

Interview responses are presented first within each category. Research findings from field notes and institutional documents and artifacts (see Appendix B).

Category one: High School A conducts and encourages school visits. All participants explained that importance of holding Open House events for prospective families within a competitive economic market, especially because “all the Catholic high school do it” (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participants A2 (Business Director) and A3 (Board Member) also discussed annual visits to local Catholic elementary schools. Participant A2 shared,

There is a system to marketing. We go to all the Catholic grade schools in September, all the high schools do. They [are] called grade school visits and for two weeks we visit every single Catholic grade school. Well, I do [not] go to all of them...I go to like 24 or 25 because I think in like 12 years we [have] never had a student from [the name of] that one elementary school so I elected to not visit because, ‘Okay, maybe that school is not the smartest marketing move. Let [us] really target our resources.’ But, essentially, all the Catholic high school visit

the grade schools.... What we are trying to get them to do is come to Open House (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Likewise, nine out of the 10 participants also articulated that the goal of marketing materials is to encourage students and families to visit their school and sign up for an all-day experience where prospective students can “shadow current students and be an [Eagle] for a day” (Participant A6, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A1 expressed,

For people to really know who we are...they have to experience our community. They have to be here. We hope that the message in our marketing materials convey something more than just sort of the rote, we [are] a great diverse community of learners, ready for college. We always say, it is a term from our Religious Order, ‘Venaver’ which means, ‘Come and see.’ Come and see our community, see the work in actions, the mission in action. We say, ‘Come and see, to experience who we are as a community.’ You have to walk the halls, you go to be in the classrooms to experience the dynamic and flow and witness the relationships. It [is] hard to witness something in a two-dimensional brochure. We emphasize the experiential part of that. We prioritize having kids come for visits [and] spend the day (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Additionally, High School B responds to market pressure by engaging in conversations and encourage open dialogue about their institutional identity and mission.

Category two: High School A engages in conversations. Participants A1 (Administrator), A2 (Business Director), and A8 (Administrator) explained that “every

year [High School A] has to make the case for Catholic education” (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018). According to Participant A8, “We have to repeatedly explain our value” (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018). As explained in theme 3, category 1 under the first research question, participants shared that they continually explain and justify their educational requirements and philosophies to prospective parents. Although, Participant A8 noted, “When parents and students have been at [High School A] a few years, their questions go away...they start to get...they start to see” (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018). Similarly, all participants explained that they engage in conversations with people about their institutional identity and mission.

When asked how High School A helps people understand their institutional identity, Participant A4 shared, “You talk to them” (Participant A4, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participants A2 (Business Director), A6 (Business Director), A7 (Board Member), and A10 (Board Member) also pointed out that – despite competition with other Catholic high schools – High School A talks and collaborates with other Catholic high schools in their micro-market. Participants A2 (Business Director) and A6 (Business Director) explained that admissions directors “get together and talk about [market] challenges and [their] plans to address these challenges” while also sharing “marketing materials” (Participant A2, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A6 also expressed the desire to pursue more opportunities to converse and collaborate with local Catholic high school leaders.

While High School A cultivates, facilitates, and encourages conversations with parents, students, donors, alumni, and other Catholic high schools, High School A also

attempt to converse and explain their institutional identity and mission to the archdiocese.

Participant A1 explained High School A's attempts to explain to the archbishop their concerns about the language the Church uses to teach sexual morality topics.

I said [to the archbishop], 'Theology teachers want to create a critical thinking atmosphere where [students] are able to question, not tune out or disengage...and [to do that] they have to create a safe environment.' Then the archbishop came back with. 'I do [not] understand safe. The [archdiocese] love(s) questions, right? We love questions. I [will] answer your questions all day long.' But, to me [Participant A1], that felt like he was saying that he love(s) one way questions, not dialogue. He also said he did [not] understand the word, 'safe' and [the archbishop] called it a 'buzzword.' The [archbishop] asked me, 'Can you give me an example?' I said, 'Yeah I can give you an example. How about a student sitting in a Catholic moral theology class where the [class is] talking about gay marriage and this young person happens to have two gay parents who adopted him at birth...or they identify as homosexual? That kids in that moral theology class is not feeling safe to talk about their own experiences because the Church uses words like 'disordered' and 'hell' and 'sin' and...that [is] the language that the Church uses to describe homosexuality. So how safe is it for that kid? This is where we need to pay attention to their moral wellbeing but also their emotional, physical, and psychological wellbeing.' Quite frankly, young people, the Church has lost all moral authority...moral high ground on sexual morality issues. I [am] sorry, I told [the archbishop], 'they are just not listening...and what does the

Church have to teach them about sexual morality? Are you kidding me? Right now? What is a young kid supposed to think?’ That is what I told him (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School A and were used to triangulate the data for theme 5. High School A’s website includes pages that help educate the community about their mission, their understanding of community, and their approach to education. A letter from the principal is also included on the website which explains the institutional identity, mission, and culture of their school community. Portions of the website also explain the value of Catholic education and how it differs from “the traditional academy” model. During one of the school walkabouts, student tour guides escorted prospective families to different parts of the school building and the student was overheard saying, “We start our tours in the chapel since we’re a Catholic school.” The student went on to explain why masses are celebrated as a community and why both non-Catholics and Catholics attend.

High School A Summary

Table 6 displays the deductive themes and inductively identified categories with exemplar quotes for High School A addressing research question one.

Table 6

Deductive Themes and Inductively Identified Categories for Research Question One

Research question one: How does High School A understand their institutional identity within a market context?

Deductive theme	Inductively identified categories	Exemplar quotes
1. Charism provides a focused identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charism provides a unifying framework. • Charism helps them own their identity. 	“The charism of [our religious order] flows through our school and reminds us of who we are as a community” (A3, Board Member).
2. Religious Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies as a proxy church. • Prepares students for life. 	“We are called to walk with students on their faith journeys. In many ways, we are their church” (A5, Business Director).
3. Shaped by Communion and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizes inclusivity. • Cultivates human relationships. 	“We are such a close community. The relationships and the feeling of community here is just amazing. I think when people visit they can tell this is a community full of love” (A3, Board Member).

Similarly, Table 7 displays the deductive themes and inductively identified categories with exemplar quotes for High School A addressing research question two.

Table 7

Deductive Themes and Inductively Identified Categories for Research Question Two

Research question two: How do Catholic high schools respond to market pressures?		
Deductive theme	Inductively identified category	Exemplar quotes
1. Pro-Marketers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifts financial practices. • Adopts marketing strategies. 	“Catholic schools compete for dollars and students. I think competition is necessary for a healthy Catholic educational environment because then it can be about ‘which Catholic school do I choose’ versus ‘should I go to a Catholic or public school’” (A9, Business Director).
2. Pragmatic Survivors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifts leadership roles. • Shifts programs and curricula. 	“Marketing to students...and requiring families to fundraise...this is just the dirty part of reality, right? This is what it takes. This is where the rubber meets the road and what it takes to get it done” (A7, Board Member).
3. Market Regulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages school visits. • Engages in conversations. 	“I do not think the answer is to get vouchers...I always believe that what hurts public education, hurts all of education...it hurts the common good...and we never benefit. I say, ‘We’ as in society. Our mission never benefits. If the local public high school was not a great school and everybody wanted to send their kids here, that is not a good thing, right? What is bad for some kids, is bad for all kids” (A1, Administrator).

Within-Case Analysis: High School B

Data presented within each major theme identify the unique findings for High School B. In aggregate, 10 face-to-face interview responses, two school walkabouts, and fifteen institutional documents and artifacts captured participant perceptions of their institutional identity within a market context as well as their institutional response to market pressures.

Research question one: How do select Catholic high schools understand their institutional identity within a market context? In regards to this study's first research question, three major themes inductively emerged for High School B, including:

- T1. High School B uses their religious charism to guide their institutional identity.
- T2. High School B identifies as a familial faith community.
- T3. High School B identifies as a business.

Research findings from High School B's interview responses, school walkabouts, and institutional documents and artifacts are provided below. As explained in Chapter Three, High School B's religious order and their religious order's charism are not disclosed in this study to ensure anonymity. Likewise, interview responses are anonymized and participants were assigned numbers to protect their individual identity.

Theme one: High School B uses their religious charism to guide their institutional identity. All High School B participants explained that their religious charism is a navigational guide, especially within a competitive economic market. Eight out of the ten participants specifically referenced their charism as a "guide" (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018) and the other two participants discussed how their charism

is “a map” (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018) that “provides direction” and helps them “navigate” contemporary challenges (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018). The following categories within this theme reflected how High School B uses their religious charism as an institutional identity guide:

C1. High School B’s religious charism helps them define their Catholicity.

C2. High School B’s religious charism helps them visibly express their institutional identity.

Data presented within each category also help explain High School B’s understanding of their institutional identity within a competitive economic market. Interview responses are presented first and research findings from field notes and documents/artifacts are incorporated at the end of each theme.

Category one: High School B’s religious charism helps them define their Catholicity. All participants shared that the charism High School B inherited from their religious order helps them “define what it means to be Catholic” (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018). Nine out of the ten participants articulated that the core values of their founding religious order “animate [their] school community” on a “daily basis” (Participant B8, Administrator, Fall 2018) and “inform [their] collective identity” (Participant B4, Business Director, Fall 2019). Participant B2 expressed,

The Catholic ethos, for us, is rooted in the history and traditions and the charism of our [Religious Order]. I think from that springs purpose and direction for us. At least from a school perspective we’ve latched onto the core values of our [Religious Order] which are easy to translate to the kids and apply to things. The

four core values are live valiantly, strive for excellence, honor the unique gifts of each individual, and celebrate God and life. Those are ways we can actually talk about behavior and how it can reflect those values. I think...it's really a charism-specific kind of Catholic thing we're focusing on...it's a unique expression and understanding of Catholicism (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participants B1, B2, B3, B4, B9, and B10 also expressed that High School B's charism helps them answer questions about their Catholic identity and connect "more authentically" with "non-Catholic families" (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B3 shared,

When we're at a loss for how to celebrate who we are...the truth is we go back to the mission and to our [Religious Order's] core values. Mission is woven into everything we do and our [Religious Order's] charism and their Catholic mission is woven into everything we do. We build all our fundraising around our charism (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant B2 also shared that High School B's charismatic identity also helps them respond to market pressures and find support in a competitive economic market in a way that other Catholic schools might not experience.

I think some people are afraid, well, 'we don't want to be too Catholic,' I've heard that in other Catholic schools...like, 'We don't want to be too Catholic because then nobody will want to come.' People are searching for the right amount of Catholic to tell people that they are. To me that's kind of like a dog chasing its tail because you never know what kind of Catholic people are looking

for. For every person that you think you're giving the message they want to hear, the person right next to them is thinking, 'That's not it. That's not what I want. That's not the answer I was looking for.' So you simply have to tell them who you are, who you are as opposed to trying to tell each person what you think they want you to be. I think it's a lot more challenging. I'm only imagining, in archdiocesan schools where there is really no charism they can fall back on. The other schools I've worked for were archdiocesan schools [and] it was really hard to try to establish a consistent base or foundation for what that Catholicism looked like (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Responses from High School B participants also evidenced that their charism helps them navigate tensions between High School B and the archdiocese. Participant B10 shared, "When the archbishop talks to Catholic schools about Catholic identity, I think sometimes we're not always defining [Catholic] the same way" (Participant B10, Board Member, Fall 2018). When asked what makes a Catholic school Catholic, Participant B2 stated,

Well, that's a real interesting question because there are lots of people that say, 'Oh, I support Catholic education as long as it's Catholic.' Well, we have to get to that definition of what you mean by Catholic. Catholic, to us, and I think to our [Religious Order], reflects a really broad understanding of how to live a life that's rooted in the teachings of Jesus and how you want to treat one another. It's not necessarily limited to doctrine and real simplistic back and forth catechesis. It's not the Baltimore Catechism approach of you tell me this, you do this, you

memorize these prayers. I think a real Catholic, historically Catholic education, is rooted in intellectual discovery. We're really not afraid to examine how things work or how the culture works...to investigate...because truth reveals itself and unfolds itself with each new discovery. ...I think that's a much broader context for being Catholic. I think you're responsible for focusing on the things that really pull you together as a community, like the core values of our charism, as opposed to things that divide you...like if you genuflected on the right knee or not...realizing everything doesn't fit into a rubric when you're dealing with the human condition. And in a school where you have a high percentage of kids that aren't Catholic, we ask ourselves, 'What is the Catholic approach to help[ing] kids on their journey of faith and how are we supporting those families in a faith that might not be Catholic...how can we encourage them to become more full human beings.' The diocese is too narrow in their definition sometimes. Our charism helps us remember that our definition must be broad and inclusive if we are to truly be Catholic (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018)

Additionally, High School B's charism helps them visibly point to and express their institutional identity.

Category two: High School B's religious charism helps them visibly express their institutional identity. All participants expressed the importance of their religious order's visibility on campus. Since vowed religious still live near High School B, they are able to visit the school and interact with students, parents, and faculty more frequently than other religious orders whose members are not physically located near the educational

institutions they sponsor. All participants expressed the importance of religious proximity to their institutional identity. Participant B1 explained,

We have the benefit of frequent visits from [vowed religious]. You go to a basketball game and there are four or five religious [members] watching the game. They kids have a real close interaction with the religious [members]. The [Religious Order's] values and charism are well understood because it's seen. We really are a reflection of them and there is accountability too in that they are here [visiting] all the time and they ensure that we are doing things and living in ways that are consistent with their values.... And they help us show students what our core values look like (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant B5 also shared that the proximity of religious members allows High School B to more effectively communicate and market their institutional identity.

Our marketing priority is making sure that the [Religious Order's] message and voice is still theirs. This is one campus where [vowed religious] regularly [visit] campus, and some of them are teaching or in administrative roles, but [mostly] they just visit and interact with students. The marketing team here, they're younger, in their 20s, and so they [are] really doing a great job of embracing the ways of telling [High School B's] story [through] Instagram. The [marketing] team makes Instagram stories or videos of [vowed religious] here on campus to help communicate and express our identity. So, I think that's an exciting thing that keeps [High School B] really relevant (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Likewise, Participant B2 shared that High School B's religious charism – as well as visits from vowed religious – help High School B live their institutional identity. When asked what institutional practices demonstrate that High School B is a Catholic institutional, Participant B2 explained,

I think people have to spend time here so they can see it. We have crucifixes, we have those Catholic sacramentals, but I think if you spend a day here, I think you get a sense of how we live our Catholicism vs. running up and showing you we're wearing a badge that says we're Catholic. If people get a chance to observe the way the kids relate to each other, [people] would say, 'Oh, that's something that's consistent with Catholic teaching.' As [people] observe the way the staff relates to the kids and vice versa, and how the staff works with each other, you would say, 'Oh, this is what a lived Catholic community looks like.' I think we are able to reflect that and live our Catholicism because of our charism and the visits we receive from [religious members]. They are a part of our community. It's a lived experience. Sometimes, it's hard. People ask, 'What really makes you Catholic?' Well, it is how we live. It's the charism that moves through this place and manifests in our interactions with each other and the world. That [is] what makes us Catholic. You have to live with us for a little while. It is not enough for us to give you a rosary bead on the way out the door and say, 'God bless you.' There is more to our [identity] and mission than that" (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Additionally, Participant B7 shared that High School B's charism and consistent visits from vowed religious helps students understand their institutional identity and mission more clearly.

For us, even if the [vowed religious] are not teaching in [High School B], they are still near us and still present. They share their charism with us and come to the games and walk through the hallways to say hello so there is still somewhat of a visible presence here that, I think, makes sense to kids. If you start talking about, 'Well, you know there was this [Religious Order] with [vowed religious] and they used to live and work here but now there aren't any around anymore [but] we're carrying on their traditions and charism,' I think that gets a little bit more distant. Catholic schools across the country are having to deal with that transition (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

While all participants expressed an appreciation for High School B's charism and the visits from [vowed religious] that assist High School B in making their institutional identity visible, Participants B1 (Administrator), B2 (Administrator), B7 (Board Member), B9 (Business Director), and B10 (Board Member) expressed a concern for dwindling numbers of religious members connected to the High School B community. Participant B10 explained, "we have fewer [religious members] around campus" and they are not as "directly hands-on or active in the ministry of education" (Participant B10, Board Member, Fall 2018). Participant B1 also expressed a concern for "what campus will look like when there are no more [vowed religious] to visit. But, as long as we are rooted in their charism and mission, I think, we will be alright" (Participant B1,

Administrator, Fall 2018). Additionally, field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School B and were used to triangulate the data for theme one. High School A's mission statement evidenced their commitment to their religious charism and connects their current mission with that of their founding religious order. Additionally, reports and newsletters about the contemporary work of their religious order are scattered throughout the main office for people to read while they are waiting. Multiple TV monitors are positioned throughout the school building, including one in the front entrance of the school and the other in the front entrance to the gymnasium. These monitors scroll pictures and text explaining the history of their founding order and their mission statement.

Theme two: High School B identifies as a familial faith community. All participants shared that High School B views themselves as a family. Participant B7 stated, "We're like an extended family" (Participant B7, Interview, Fall 2018) and Participant B3 shared, "When people visit our campus, they see we are a family" (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). The following categories within this theme reflected how High School B identifies as a familial faith community:

C1. High School B prioritizes inclusive faith-based interactions.

C2. High School B emphasizes shared expectations and values.

Category one: High School B prioritizes inclusive faith-based interactions. All participants explained that interactions with students help create "family-like relationships" and a "familial feel" (Participant B4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

According to all participants, every student – "Catholic or not Catholic" – belongs within

“our faith community” (Participant B10, Board Member, Fall 2018). Participant B9 shared, “[High School B] exists to form good human beings to go out into the world and be a light, not just for our community, but also for the human family” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant A8 explained that High School B prioritizes “interactions with the students that are kind and loving” so that they might treat others this way” (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018). Participant B7 also explained,

One of the things I loved in my experience going to [High School B] and sending my kids there is that it’s an incredible community. It’s more than just rigorous academics. It’s about how the staff and administrators are invested in my kids, and how all the families are invested in each other like an extended family.... I feel like, my kids spend so many hours away from me...I work outside of [High School B] and so does my [spouse]. I don’t think we could ever do that if we weren’t so confident that their time spent on a Catholic school campus is time where they’re getting educated but also interacting with people in a meaningful way and learning how to become better people, right? When you have two working parents, you delegate some of the responsibility of raising your child, not just educating them, but raising your child to be a good human being. And so for us, the investment in Catholic schools was knowing that with our busy schedules, we have to abdicate some of that parental responsibility and decide who are we going to entrust them to...that’s why we love [High School B]. Let’s what I tell other families too (Participant B7, Interview, Fall 2019).

High School B has a very clear understanding of themselves as a family with religious roots and that everyone within that family – students, parents, faculty, and staff – has a valuable role. When asked how someone from outside the community would know that High School B is a Catholic institution, Participant B9 stated,

I think we're a family. I think in the classroom the conversations reveal that and go a little deeper...the [conversations] have substance. You'll see a lot of our students really want to get the why, the deeper question or reason for things...we talk about how everything we're learning and experiencing kind of how that connects with our identity and our identity in Christ. There's just a little bit extra there and then also just watching the kids interact with each other. I really do believe on campus that there is a universal love for each other.... You know kids truly do care for each other and...look out for each other...and teachers care and you see that in their interactions with students. You see that extra care and love for one another in our community. I don't think you would get that in a non-Catholic school (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Category two: High School B emphasizes shared expectations and values. All participants expressed that High School B's shared values and expectations – uniquely rooted in their Catholic and charismatic identity – help them cultivate community. Participant B3 shared, “Like a family, we share core values...our charism's core values” (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B6 also explained that “everyone has a role here in this community” (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018). Seven participants posited that High School B's faith-based values help them create a

familial atmosphere while also holding students to high moral and academic expectations.

Participant B7 explained,

Our Christian values help us explain to students why it's important to help each other and treat everyone with dignity and respect. I think this is what a family does. I think we have a level threshold of behavior and respect and expectations around campus, that they can't match at public schools from what I've seen. And again it goes back to our shared values. We can talk about them freely and openly (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

When asked about the main objectives and commitments of Catholic schooling, Participant B8 shared,

That's a good question. Obviously, academics is very important, but I think the idea of educating the whole person – which hopefully all schools are doing, public schools as well – but I feel like with a Catholic education there's maybe more emphasis on the spiritual side. Creating a community I feel is something I see here more than other places. [We] really want kids to connect and be involved. It seems like there's, and maybe that speaks to the spiritual side, but if you're all connecting and being together, you're going to see each other more humanely which seems like it's a big part of our mission. I think that community piece is really important. We're smaller than some schools, so I think the larger the school, no matter what type of school, the more challenging it is to help everybody feel included, like they really are a part of the family and feel supportive of one another. I do feel like that emphasis on encouraging everybody

to be involved and everybody to play their part is pretty important here
(Participant B8, Administrator Fall 2018).

Participant B3 also explained that High School B is “religiously diverse” and that a part of “being in our family, our community” is to develop morally and that “Catholic education demands that people, that students, become community citizens. We have that expectation regardless of what [their] religious practice is in life. It is who we are and we’re grateful for it” (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B10 also expressed that High School B’s core values help students “cultivate respect and responsibility. They learn that we, as a community, are called to respect ourselves and others in particular the Other...God, and respect all things...like the earth...and that we have a responsibility to take ownership for our actions and to serve” (Participant B10, Board Member, Fall 2018). Participant B2 also shared that High School B tries to foster shared experiences and “set the expectation that you come to school events and cheer for your classmates at assemblies and at games” because “we are a family” (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School B and were used to triangulate the data for theme two. High School B’s website includes a letter from the principal indicating that their community is like a family. Statues of Mary are present in the courtyard and crucifixes are displayed in the hallways and in the classrooms. Additionally, the library has a variety of religious paintings and a few multicultural renditions of crosses. The library also has quotes that emphasize a commitment to the

liberal arts such as, “Education is about becoming a critical thinker” and “Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.” High School B also has a chapel and student pictures are displayed throughout the school building with meaningful information shared about each student.

Theme three: High School B identifies as a business. Nine of the 10 participants expressed that, in a competitive economic market, High School B “is a business” with “costumers” (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018). Seven of the 10 participants also shared that High School B is a “unique brand” and that “branding is an essential aspect of their business model and strategic planning” efforts (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018). The following categories within this theme reflected how High School B identifies as a business:

C1. High School B emphasizes their business practices.

C2. High School B views themselves as a unique brand.

Category one: High School B emphasizes their business practices. All participants referred to the necessity of their business practices. Nine participants referred to the school as a business and five participants referred to students and/or parents as customers. When asked if the declining number of vowed religious was a concern for High School B, Participant B7 shared,

Yes because no one is going to hold true to the [Religious Order’s] mission like they will. They’ve dedicated their whole lives to it. They believe it and have the conviction to stand up for it. And sometimes that’s hard because the schools are a business, right? At the end of the day, it doesn’t work, if there are no costumers, if

there is no money. There's an absolute business aspect to it. And it's challenging when you are trying to make the financials work [and] you're trying to keep people happy. You've got all kinds of HR issues to deal with sometimes it's easy to bend on the mission, right? So I'm thankful our [Religious Order] is still very present to us and the [vowed religious] still interact with our students (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant B3 explained that the board “talks a lot about our business model” and “how [the business model] can help us with our mission” (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B9 also explained that, while High School B's mission and identity are Catholic, “we are a business [because] you have to get butts in seats. If you don't have students, you don't have a school” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B2 also said,

Education isn't and shouldn't be a business, we are a business because somebody has to watch the money. You can't price yourself out of the market and you can't really change the cost of living...all those costs that keep going up for families. To me, that's the biggest challenge...I can't explain that one away. I don't know how to change people's willingness or ability to adjust the price of homes. I can't control the market (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant B6 espoused that, within a competitive economic market, High School B needs to be “more of a business” (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018). Four participants stated that the tension between their charismatic identity and their business

mindset is especially present at board meetings. Participant B6 articulated that High School B needs to charge full price for tuition:

I don't think the board and school are very happy that I have such a strong opinion about our business practices [but] if you're a business and you keep raising your prices and you still sell all your product but you're not charging full price then you're leaving money on the table (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018).

When asked how High School B perceives market pressures, Participant B2 stated, "I think we're always feeling like somehow we're competing for students because in the end there's tuition dollars on the line. You got to get butts in seats...we're competing for customers" (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018). While most of the Participants referred to High School B as a business operating within a complex and competitive economic market, Participant B1 shared,

I would say we're a nonprofit. It has a gentler ring to it than business. There's nothing corporate about how we run this school. I know that there are other cultures and other Catholic schools that are a little bit more corporate. But, you know, you have a responsibility to your employees and to your customers to be there for them for as long as they need you there (Participants B1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Additionally, within a competitive economic market, High School B understands themselves as a unique brand.

Category two: High School B views themselves as a unique brand. Responses from High School B participants evidenced that High School B views themselves as a unique brand within a competitive economic market. Seven of the 10 participants directly referred to themselves as a brand and all participants expressed the importance of highlighting their “market distinguishers” (Participant B10, Board Member, Fall 2018). When asked how High School B responds to market pressures, Participant B5 shared,

I think you start by defining your brand attributes. Brand attributes, for me, for [High School B] include this really great intimacy, this community, this tradition and history, and the role of our [Religious Order]. These are all great attributes. Then you need to decide how you communicate those and decide what two, maybe three are most important because if you give people too much, it’s overwhelming. We’re a small school so that’s what we like to focus on. It’s part of our brand identity. The analogy I shared at a meeting recently is, ‘do you want to stay at the Bread and Breakfast or the Hilton hotel?’ If you want freshly baked scones and people who know you and your room is unique, come to [High School B]. You’re going to have that experience and the Hilton doesn’t provide that...it provides other things. There are Catholic schools in the area that are like Hilton. We [are] a Bread and Breakfast. People decide which one they like more (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant B4 also explained that – in a competitive economic market – “you need a business model, you need a strategic plan...which has items on it like, how do you increase our brand awareness? How do you do that? What type of advertising are you

going to do? Who's your audience" (Participant B4, Interview, Fall 2018)? Participant B2 also stated, "It helps that we are a small brand. We [are] competing with other schools but it [is] a competition on differing things...like do you want a quarter pounder or do you want fried chicken? Well, those are two different kinds of things" (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School B and were used to triangulate the data for theme one. High School B's identification as a business is evidenced in their board meeting minutes when the analogy is used to find solutions to financial goals and concerns. Additionally, High School B's business models and strategic plans also support this theme. The presence and positioning of marketing materials in the main office also emphasize the business aspect of their institution.

Research question two: How do select Catholic high schools respond to market pressures? In regards to this study's second research question, five major themes inductively emerged for High School B, including:

- T1. High School B shifts financial practices.
- T2. High School B shifts leadership roles.
- T3. High School B adopts new programs and curricula.
- T4. High School B relies on marketing practices.
- T5. High School B educates the community.

Research findings from High School B's interview responses, school walkabouts, and institutional documents and artifacts are provided below. While the five major

themes that emerged for High School B are similar to High School A, there are nuances within each theme. A cross-case analysis follows this section to explore the themes and categories that are shared across High School A and High School B. However, data presented below represents High School B's unique responses to economic market pressures.

Theme one: High School B shifts financial practices. Responses from High School B participants evidenced that one institutional response to market pressures is to shift and adjust financial practices. All participants expressed that tuition prices and faculty salaries are economic concerns and market pressures that High School B must contend with and address through a variety of “new and evolving” financial practices (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). The following categories within this theme reflected how High School B shifts their financial practices in response to market pressures:

- C1. High School B focuses on fundraising.
- C2. High School B prioritizes alumni.
- C3. High School B discerns new ideas and solutions.

Category one: High School B focuses on fundraising. Eight of the 10 participants emphasized the importance of fundraising in a competitive economic market. Participant B3 explained that “fundraising is our [primary] focus” although High School B also writes grants for financial support (Participant B3, Interview, Fall 2018). Participant B7 explained that fundraising is to “help cover immediate costs like tuition assistance” while also “growing [High School B's] endowment” (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall

2018). Participant B5 shared, “I think we have a small endowment but it is nothing compared to the Catholic high school down the street whose families and connections and alumni are wealthier” (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018). In order to compete in their market, High School B “spends the whole year fundraising” (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018). When asked to name the distinct pressures that Catholic schools face in contemporary conditions, Participant B10 explained,

Well, financially, [High School B] is always stressed because the only two ways that [we] have for making ends meet and meeting our budget is increased tuition or increased fundraising or both. If [our] goal is to justly pay our employees, to offer a just compensation packet with benefits and retirement while also making tuition affordable for families so you don’t price people or your school out of the market, that puts a strain on you financially, and then that therefore goes back to either tuition dollars or to the donors. That’s a strain but we have to fundraise or we won’t make it (Participant B10, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant B3 shared that High School B’s fundraising practices include “annual auctions”, “paddle raises”, “galas”, “parent socials”, “tailgates” before basketball games, and “other school events” (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). At these fundraising events, Participant B5 explained, “We usually tell a story about a family or a student that’s been impacted through the gift of receiving a [High School B] education and supported by tuition assistance” (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Five participants also explained that High School B also encourages parents to contribute to “a

gap gift at the beginning of every school year” (Participant B8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant B4 described the process:

We charge tuition which is say about \$14,000 annually...but it actually costs more than that to educate a [student] on this campus. So, I think the cost to educate a [student] at [High School B] is somewhere near \$18,000 and so the difference between that tuition charge and the cost to educate the [student] is what we call the gap. And so we ask parents, when they’re re-enrolling, to make a donation to help close the gap. Those are gap gifts...and it can or it used to be tax deductible...it worried us last year when the Tax Act passed that people wouldn’t donate as much because they wouldn’t get a write off for a donation. We didn’t see that...we were very worried. Then again it might just take people a year to realize when they actually file their taxes that they can’t write it off anymore...so a lack of giving may just be delayed...we might see it next year.... We hope people will continue to give based on their ability even though it may not be tax deductible to them (Participant B4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

High School B also looks towards alumni, in addition to other potential donors, to meet their fundraising needs in a competitive economic market.

Category two. High School B prioritizes alumni. Seven participants discussed the role of alumni in their financial model. Participant B3 shared,

There is a lot of work we need to do to reconnect with our alumni. We used to be an all-girls school so now the school is old enough that we need to reconnect with women that graduated in the ‘60s and the ‘70s and the ‘80s when High School B

was an all-girls' school...because a lot of them left and many of them married guys who went to the [Catholic] school down the street and their philanthropy goes with them. We need to reconnect with alumni of that age who are now financially independent...and maybe they want their philanthropy to go back to their alma mater (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018).

When asked where High School B finds financial support, Participant B9 also expressed a concern about alumni support:

The biggest thing and, this is awful to say out loud, but [High School B] used to be all women and the [Catholic] school down the street used to be all men, and a lot of those people married each other and now a lot of those people are giving money and they're giving money to the husband's school. Our men are still starting to establish themselves in the money-making market. The hope is that continues and then we can start receiving a little bit more [money] back, but you don't always know (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

In order to increase alumni donations, Participant B4 explained that "last week we had our first alumni road show" (Participant B4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant B3 also shared,

We went up to [Michigan] and we had a couple of [alumni] events there. We reached out to alumni in that area. We dipped our toe in the water because we've never done that before...we've never hit the road and gone to another city and said, 'Hey, we're coming to your hometown or whatever.' But we were really received well and people were very excited to see us and we had great meetings

and our events were well attended and we realized that there's a lot more support out there for us then we realized and so that felt good and we are going to do more of that (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participants B3 (Business Director) and B5 (Business Director) also discussed the importance of High School B's "distinguished alumni award" (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B5 explained that High School B has a new alumni award process:

People want to help us out financially...and we have a distinguished alumni award process that we just put into place this year and what we actually got out of the [alumni] road show was a super strong nominee for this year's award. I don't think we would have gotten [them] otherwise...and I don't think it would have appealed to alumni to consider recommending this particular woman for the award without our trip because we asked people for their opinion. People always like to give advice so anytime you say like, 'How can we do this differently?' or 'What would you like to see?' people say 'Let's help you. Let us tell you what we think you should do next year...' and that kind of thing. That always engages people and makes them feel valued and encourages them to give back to the school if they can [financially] (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

While High School B prioritizes alumni relations, four of the 10 participants expressed a concern for the "sustainability" of this financial approach (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018) especially within a competitive marketplace. Participant B2 reported,

We have several wealthy families here but not the kind that can give in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, which we need to really make a difference in terms of growing the endowment. We look down the street at the other [Catholic] school and [they] have those kinds of alumni and donors, right? They have wealthy families on their campus and wealthy business connections. They just have had a lot more wealth go through their doors. And so, we always have that challenge of like, gosh, that other [Catholic] school does it so well, they're really a model of having a super robust endowment, but their alumni and their current student body has a different socioeconomic makeup (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Despite these concerns, seven participants discussed the necessity of alumni giving within a market context. While new approaches to alumni relations are tested and tried, High School B also discerns other new ideas and solutions to financial quagmires.

Category three. High School B discerns new ideas and solutions. Six participants expressed that High School B has “ongoing conversations” about “new financial solutions” (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant B6 shared,

One of the things we were talking about is you have to have people donating to private schools which is again a difficult task when you say, hey my kid goes to [a] private school can you guys donate 10 dollars to our Jog-A-Thon? It's a weird statement to make...but you think of a lot of the universities...obviously they go and fundraise and have huge boosters. Think of like Duke University or Harvard

University...it's not like they're not out there raising tons and tons of capital through donations (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant B3 also talked about how “one idea is to look more closely at how universities operate and try to follow their fundraising [and] marketing strategies. All of the [universities] have development offices and marketing departments...and now we do too” (Participant B3, Board Director, Fall 2018). Participants B1 (Administrator), B2 (Administrator), B6 (Board Member), and B7 (Board Member) also shared that current financial practices are not enough in the case of an “economic downturn” (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018). When asked if Catholic high schools are in urgent need of financial reform, Participant B7 mused,

I would say we're safe for the next five years...but on the 10-year horizon it is urgent. It would greatly help to have something change that enables [our] model to continue to be high quality...and have the kind of infusion of capital that the schools need, because again, they're competing against brand new public schools, and really nice facilities. [High School B] is aging...and we really need capital to make the high school better, but also potentially, to expand it. And we still need to get out of debt...we still owe money for new facility enhancements...it's all about how much are you willing to let leverage, right? How much risk are you willing to assume and can you find those opportunities – because your financials will fluctuate – that bring in that infusion of cash. We need to find that big donor who wants their name on a building. That's how colleges do it (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant B1 explained that High School B “just finished a feasibility study to see if we can do a big push for an endowment campaign” and Participant B2 expressed,

We just started talking about the potential to do [a] big endowment campaign because just raising money to spend, it’s pointless. You need to raise money so you can pull off your 3% tuition increase every year and grow your endowment for a long-lasting impact. But the archdiocese is now restructuring their financial aid...it’s a large-scale project. So once again, all these donors are being asked from all these different Catholic schools and entities in the same geographical area for money...and who gets their first? Then which donor thinks which project is best? I heard a story the other day that one of our local Catholic K-8 schools had started construction for a new gym. They had raised money and gotten pledges for their project...one donor pledged like half a million dollars. The [school] got the foundation poured and then the person said, ‘You know what? I’m gonna pull my pledge because the archdiocese is starting this campaign for financial assistance and I think it can do more good [for] a broader group.’ But now there is this school that’s basically got the foundation for a gym poured and without that half a million dollars they can’t really move forward and it will just sit there. Maybe an endowment campaign can help us avoid the same situation (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant B3 also conveyed that the archdiocese, “just told us to stop asking donors in [our] local area for money...like are you kidding me? What are we supposed to

do? We aren't going to see the diocese' money...we're not an [archdiocesan] school”
(Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant B6 also expressed the importance of revisiting current practices even though “I think the board and the school wish I wasn't so opinionated about it”
(Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018). Participant B10 also explained,

The challenge is our price models and the tension this creates between [our] religious charism and good business practices. One of the things that's really interesting right now that we're discussing is if it costs 10 dollars to educate a child and we charge five dollars because, if we charge anything more than that that would put a lot of families outside the reach of it. However, I believe if you charge 10 dollars, you still wouldn't lack customers wanting to pay 10 dollars to have their kids attend [High School B], put then you price out certain families and that's not obviously not a goal of Catholic education is not to price people out. So, right now, [we] price it at five dollars and now we have to fundraise an entire year to raise the five dollars we need to cover the costs of the school. Okay so we set the price at five dollars because that's a non-profit view...let's make sure we're not pricing all of these people out of the market but then why don't we have enough for financial aid and why can't we pay teachers enough? As a business person, it's like well, if you charge five and it costs 10 and you spend the whole year fundraising to get back to 10, you're never going to have the 11, 12, 13, 14 dollars to go and build a new building or grow your endowment...so it's either you have to be okay with fighting for 10 every year and quit having these

conversations over and over again about how we aren't at 20 or you need to raise the price to 10 and find other means and other ways to support the kids that maybe can't afford 10 in a different way. In a different form. I mean, I'm sure it's a microcosm of the larger economic and political climate of the entire U.S. If you look at medical insurance and housing prices...how do you live in that tension. There's certain people who cannot afford it...and when they can afford it, it provides additional funds to support people that cannot afford it...although that's assuming people give back...it's a weird dynamic. I think it's a great opportunity for the board to get in there in the messiness sitting between a business mindset and our religious charism...to figure out...okay how do you attack that? What are maybe some unique ideas vs. the same method of keep prices low? The gap gift isn't efficient. It only makes people feel like they're doing something nice versus actually paying the full price. How do you deal with that? (Participant B10, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Additionally, field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School B and were used to triangulate the data for theme one. Board meeting minutes are dominated by discussion of school finances and possible solutions to a growing financial need. Different ideas for High School B's financial practices are argued in the board minutes. Two pages of High School B's brochure for prospective families is dedicated to tuition costs. Lastly, the new STEM Center is the only part of High School B that is named after donors and where donor names are also listed in front of classrooms.

Theme two: High School B shifts leadership roles. Responses from High School B participants evidenced that High School B adjusts and adopts new leadership models in response to market pressures. Two categories inductively emerged within this theme, including:

C1. High School B reorganizes leadership positions and structures.

C2. High School B reexamines the role of board members.

Category one: High School B reorganizes leadership positions and structures.

Seven of the 10 participants mentioned High School B's acceptance of "new governance models" that require High School B to reorganize "many of [their] leadership positions" (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018). When asked what – in their institutional memory – has changed at High School B, Participant B10 explained,

With fewer religious members, [High School B's] religious order requested that the remaining [religious members] affiliated with [High School B] be removed from their teaching positions and placed in positions of administrative authority with regard to the governance set up so that [our] founding religious order has the highest governing responsibilities...which meet(s) both civil and canon law requirements. That [is] a different setup. The majority of teachers are now lay...and they used to be almost all [religious members]. And we also now have a governance structure whereby the school is separately incorporated from the founding order, which is good business practice for the times that we're in...things are much more litigious. We went to this structure in 2006 and it [has] been interesting (Participant B10, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participants B3 (Business Director), B5 (Business Director), B7 (Board Member), and B9 (Business Director) explain embracing a new governance model is not the only response to market pressures, particularly the loss of religious members and financial burdens. B5 explained that High School B's "marketing department is relatively new and a younger team was created" to "more effectively" respond to "market needs" and communicate with "prospective parents and donors" (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B3 also shared that the "Alumni Relations Coordinator" position "has grown in recent years" as High School B "works to increase alumni involvement" (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). Nine of the 10 participants also discussed the role of board members in a competitive economic market.

Category two: High School B reexamines the role of board members. Responses from High School B participants explained that High School B is "constantly growing in how [they] view board members and the leadership responsibilities they give board members" (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). When asked to describe the role of board members at High School B, Participant B7 explained,

It's been an evolution. I think that to me the board has been on this journey of being more influential and strategic over the last six years. When I first came in...the board consumed a lot of information during the meeting, and then there would be a little bit of dialogue, but it would kind of be 80% of let us tell you, for example, where we are with the financials. Let us tell you where we are with [our] programs, let us tell you where we are with fundraising. And there was about 20% dialogue and many of us, myself included, said, 'Hey, you have got some really

seasoned business leaders on this board. You've got attorneys and executives and entrepreneurs and you really should rebalance that a little bit and get the most value from this group of leaders that you've brought together. We want to stay informed about what the school [is] doing and thinking but we also are really trying to have more time to talk [and] have strategic conversations (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant B6 also expressed a desire for High School B's school board to "play more of a prominent role and be more of a driving force" institutionally, because right now "it still feels like [boards] are a rubber stamp...and that there [is] a gap in leveraging the right talents in the actual people that are on the board" (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018). According to Participant B6,

There are tensions in private education...but [High School B] is not lacking customers. One challenge is getting the right kids at the right time, the best kids...and there [is] always the challenge between athletics and education and [High School B] versus other schools but it's not like, man, we only filled half the class this year. That's never the challenge. The challenge if more our price model...and boards can help with that because many [board members] have a business mindset (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018).

In an attempt to create a more dialogical relationship, Participant B1 shared that "last year [High School B] decided that we would have a couple meetings where we really focused on diversity and inclusion so [High School B] brought guest speakers and the board had good dialogue about those topics" (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant B7 also shared, “this year there has been more dialogue with the board about [High School B’s] strategic plan and there will be a six-hour strategy session with the board before the semester is finished” (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participant B10 also expressed the importance of “beginning every board meeting with a prayer” (Participant B10, Interview, Fall 2018). Similarly, Participants B1 (Administrator), B3 (Business Director), and B7 (Board Member) expressed that prayer – as a practice – keeps boards “rooted” in High School B’s “institutional identity” (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant B10 also explained,

Another good business practice for the time that we [are] in is to start every board meeting with the history of [High School B’s] charism and founding [religious] order. We will take some writings from our [Religious Order’s] documents, [their] constitutions or statutes, and read them together. It [is] like a segment of Church history from a certain time period. We relate that to the quality of the day that we [are] seeking to continue to promote...then we say a prayer together, asking God to give us the ability to do that at [High School B]” (Participant B10, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Additionally, field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School B and were used to triangulate the data for theme two. The shift in leadership roles is evidenced on the TV monitors placed throughout the school which display images of faculty/staff past and present. High School B’s website also alludes to the change in leadership from religious to laity on the page that explains their institutional history.

Theme three: High School B adopts new programs and curricula. While High School B faces market pressures from a variety of angles, they respond by adopting new programs and curricula. The following categories reflected the new programs and curricula that High School B adopted in response to market pressures:

- C1. High School B creates a new football program.
- C2. High School B builds new STEM and sports facilities.
- C3. High School B rearranges course schedule and requirements.

Category one: High School B creates a new football program. All participants referenced their “relatively new” football team (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participants B2 (Administrator), B7 (Board Member), and B9 (Business Director) explained that High School B was once an all-girls Catholic high school but that High School B “decided to [change] to co-ed to increase enrollment and follow what other Catholic high schools were doing at the time” (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018). All three participants also explained that, with the decision to become a co-educational institution, also came the decision to “build and create a football team” (Participant B9, Interview, Fall 2018). The intention behind the decision was to attract more male students to their school and compete with other co-ed Catholic schools in the area. Participant B7 summarized,

[High School B] used to be an all-girls school but when the boys came in, obviously, at some point, [we] need to start a football team. I think, it's the business side of things, right? It's like football draws in people and it draws in money. And I think at the university level, at the high school level, everyone kind

of knows that. If you have strong sports programs, but especially in the United States, if you have a strong football program, it helps you both get students who want to be there and then get donations (Participant B7, Board Members, Fall 2018).

Participant B9 also explained that “when [High School B] became co-ed in the 1990s there was a rise in boys sports at [High School B] and around 2007 [was] the first year that football came to the school” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant B2 continued,

We were the only high school in the surrounding four states that did not have a football team. Many schools with fewer students than [High School B] had football teams...and the previous principal thought it needed to be a defining element of the Catholic high school experience and a big feature of the school...the next step in attracting and retaining students, building a different kind of community and culture around that...and maybe we [would] never be the same as [other] Catholic high schools in the area but [he] thought our kids needed to have the same experience. However, I am worried now because how long our football program sustains itself is kind of a challenge. Football, because of all the concussions, is not as popular with students and parents. Football programs are declining. Even large prominent football programs are seeing fewer numbers because of head trauma. I’m not convinced now that football is really a long term program because I don’t necessarily think those are the kinds of families and students that are applying here. What do you do when you only have a roster of

35? You can't have a JV program, you can't develop players, you're playing freshmen and sophomores that maybe aren't prepared for a varsity level league. I think there are only three freshmen who are on the football team this year. So if we only bring in five next year, we are really looking at not being able to sustain our program (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Eight participants expressed this same concern as Participant B6 about the sustainability of their football program. Participant B6 also referenced High School B's attempt to attract families "by adding a boys lacrosse program...I think that lasted two seasons" (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018). Despite concerns about program success, four of the 10 participants articulated the importance of marketing their football program to prospective parents, students, and alumni. Participant B3 shared that alumni are invited back every year to football games for an alumni tailgate and that "when it is [snowing] we bring donors to our new science building which overlooks the football field and they can watch the game from there and see the Friday night lights and our community cheering" (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Category two: High School B builds new STEM and sports facilities. All participants referenced their new science and sports facilities. Participant B4 explained that "the new science building was built two year ago" (Participant B4, Business Director, Fall 2018). When asked why the new science building was built, Participant B4 shared,

The [Catholic] school down the street had just built a new science facility...part of it was in response to them and part of it was that a local elementary school had

brand new science facilities and so when the kids went from eighth grade to ninth grade, they were looking for nice buildings. The science facilities were lacking and need to be upgraded and updated (Participant B4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Responses from High School B participants evidenced that the institutional decision to build the new science building superseded plans to build a new performing arts center.

Participant B2 explained,

There were plans for a performing arts center and money had been raised for it but a timeline wasn't really communicated. Money was being raised for it and I think there was the sense amongst the faculty that it was the next project up in line but it wasn't really...it was more like a 15-year plan. In the meantime, other projects have seemed to become more urgent like the new science building. Now that 15-year plan is a 25-year plan. That creates tension among folks in the fine arts department especially because our orchestra doesn't have any place of their own to practice. They practice on the theater stage or in the cafeteria. We still have a great orchestra (Participant B2, Administration, Fall 2018).

When asked why High School B believed that the science building was a more urgent need than a performing arts center, Participant B2 identified,

If you saw the old science labs you could see that there was just no way anybody coming here would think we could teach science. I think [we] also felt maybe some competitive market pressure like the other [Catholic] high school next door had built a new science building. Our facilities are significantly older. Even if it

was perfectly adequate...and you could tell people, ‘Look, we still do good science even in these old unattractive rooms’ but sometimes people like to see things look nice.... So if you can take the awesome science you’re doing and put it in something new, that’s great. I believe that, you know, I don’t think the new science makes our science teachers better or stronger science teachers. They are some of the, in my opinion, best science teachers I’ve ever worked with. I could put them in a barn and they’re going to teach great science. The new building may have enhanced some opportunities they have...but again a new school or a new building doesn’t magically make people better teacher because they’re in a shienier new building. You have great teachers and then if you give them great facilitiees, it’s even more evident. The facilities help sell the program. For sure.

That is the business aspect of it” (Participant B2, Administration, Fall 2018).

All participants also mentioned High School B’s new football field, gymnasium, and field house. Participant B6 shared that High School B “competes with other Catholic schools in the area to try to stand out” (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018). When asked in what ways High School B competes with other Catholic high schools, Participant B6 expanded upon their response:

I think [High School B] is worried about, like, are our facilities the same? Are our programs as good? Is our financial aid the same? Athletics is a big one that comes up. A lot of money has been pumped into athletics at High School B...a lot recently. [We] have a new field, new lights, a new gym, a new school store, and a new field house (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018).

Participants B2 and B9 also explained that they, like most Catholic high schools, are “Nike schools” (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018) which means that “all our [athletic] uniforms are made by Nike and all the clothing sold at the team store is Nike” which provides High School B with “a discount which, in turn, provides more money for [their] athletic facilities or other things [High School B] needs” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2019).

Category three: High School B rearranges course schedule and offerings.

Responses from High School B participants evidenced that High School B also ensures that their infrastructure protects their Catholic commitment to the humanities “even within a competitive economic market” (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Six of the 10 participants referenced changes in their course schedule to provide the opportunity for students to “participate in the arts” (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018). Additionally, Nine participants explained that High School B “tries to avoid tracking students into AP courses” even though they are a “college prep” school (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B8 emphasized that – while High School B just built a STEM center – “the leadership and the majority of the teachers a traditional, Catholic education. It is less of a STEM emphasis and more of the humanities, liberal arts, classic kind of education...where students are exposed to everything, not only science and math” (Participant B8, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participants B2 (Administrator), B3 (Business Director), and B8 (Administrator) explained that High School B “has a protected period for band, choir, and orchestra so [students] do not have to choose if they want to be a chemist or a cellist...because that can be a

pressure...students want to take AP Chemistry but also want to play in the band”

(Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant B3 explained that High School B’s protected period is essential because “music is a central part of [High School B’s] original religious mission”

(Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). Similarly, Participant B8 conveyed,

The former principal put more of an emphasis on athletics. This was not an athletically-driven school. [High School B] was a fine arts school and an all-girls school. Not because girls cannot be athletic but our [Religious Order] was definitely committed to the fine arts. So, now, I guess maybe we are more balanced. I think about that in terms of who we are now versus who we used to be
(Participant B8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

The majority of participants – 80 percent – also explained that High School B has restructured their course offerings and does not allow students to register for AP (Advanced Placement) classes until junior year of high school. Participant B3 explained, “We emphasize community. We want underclassmen to know each other...rushing into AP, all it does is inadvertently track kids. We do not want that because then they [are] spending four years only knowing 10 kids and it creates a social hierarchy” (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). Likewise, Participant B2 posited,

Our culture emphasizes state testing and AP testing way too much. I know schools, public and private, that if you are not teaching something that specifically matches up to a standard, it somehow has no place in the curriculum. That is not really a humane way to approach intellectual curiosity or development. I think if

you are really teaching valuable and ethical lessons to kids then all of those little curriculum pieces will Fall into place. Good teachers know the specific things that they need to teach that are going to be important in life...if you're teaching to a bigger endgame, you are going to hit all those standards even without focusing on them. So, at [High School B] we don't put a lot of pressure on the [students] really about AP scores or SAT scores and we really don't want to talk a lot about grades. WE would rather talk about learning and the process but grades are obviously an important part of it. There is a balance. I guess what we found is if we are teaching well, kids will score well without only having to focus on that. And some AP courses and tests are different than others. AP calculus for example our calculus kids have great calculus scores because good calculus is good calculus. But some AP Biology teachers have to tell kids, 'I know this seems really interesting but we can't spend any more time on it because we have to get to the next thing because it will be on the test.' That's why we have been selective about what we are teaching. We don't teach AP U.S. history because the way the test is designed it cheats history and we can't dive deep into human issues... But it is a balance because [students] feel pressure from college and their parents and themselves...they want to do well (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018)

Participant B8 also shared, "I think one of the biggest questions I get from parents [are about] them wanting their kids to start taking AP classes right out of the gate, like Freshmen year. Sometimes parents are like, 'Why can't they? My kids needs to take 18 AP classes'" (Participant B8, Administrator, Fall 2018). When asked why parents ask for

AP classes, Participant B8 stated, “[Parents] think they need it to get into Stanford and Harvard, which is not true...but once that concept gets kicked around, it is hard to squelch it. We believe education should be about something else...something more...something meaningful...” (Participant B8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School B and were used to triangulate the data for theme three. High School B’s shift in programs and curricula is evident in the new facilities created for STEM programs as well as the new football stadium, sports complex, and school store which sales athletic gear and paraphernalia. The most up-to-date part of the building is the STEM and sports facilities. In contrast, the chapel is in a large room with a plastic dividing wall that is falling apart and outdated. On one side of the wall is the chapel made out of a humble table and approximately thirty wooden chairs. On the other side of the wall, is a large conference table and whiteboard for meetings. Additionally, a large state trophy is next to a miniature statue of the Last Supper in the front office.

Theme four: High School B adopts marketing strategies. Responses from High School B participants evidenced that – within a competitive economic market – High School B “has to have” marketing materials (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018) and “leverage” marketing strategies to “help [High School B] communicate [their] institutional identity” (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). All participants referenced the importance of High School B’s marketing strategies in contemporary conditions. Three categories inductively emerged within this theme, including:

C1. High School B seeks market distinguishers.

C2. High School B creates and distributes marketing materials.

C3. High School B segments their market.

Category one: High School B seeks market distinguishers. All participants referred to the importance of highlighting market distinguishers, especially to prospective parents and students. Participant B5 shared that “within a highly competitive culture [High School B] must find what makes us distinct and market those distinguishers” (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B2 also shared,

We talk about three things that make us unique. First, our protected period for band, choir, and orchestra. That is unique. Second, we have a no cut athletic policy, which is unique. We may not be as successful as the [Catholic] school next door but we are very successful. We have one the State Cup for excellence in academics, activities, and athletics. We do it all without having to tell [students] after two days of tryouts that they are no good...so that [is] unique. Lastly, we go out of our way to keep class sizes generally smaller than other [Catholic] high schools or public schools (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

As mentioned above in theme three for research question one, seven of the 10 participants directly referred to themselves as a brand. Participant B5 explained that branding is to help High School B “communicate [their] uniqueness” and “distinguish [themselves] from neighboring [Catholic] high schools” (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Four participants also referred to their religious charism as a market distinguisher and eight participants also stated that [High School B’s] “school size sets

them apart” from other schools (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant B4 stated,

Market distinguishers essential because there is more pressure on Catholic schools than any other schools, including other private schools...so we have to be strong in speaking to what we, as a Catholic school, offers in a distinctive way because there are so many options. I do feel like the trend I for charter schools or different types of private schools. I think that does increase the competition (Participant B4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participants B3 (Business Director), B5 (Business Director), and B6 (Board Member) also asserted that “competition” between schools is “in a way, a good thing” (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018). When asked why competition between schools is ‘good,’ Participant B5 clarified, “[Competition] forces you to like articulate what is really distinctive about the Catholic school environment and be really clear about the benefit of Catholic schools and how your school is unique” (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2015). To communicate their uniqueness, High School B creates and distributes marketing materials to current and potential stakeholders.

Category two: High School B creates and distributes marketing materials. All participants stated that marketing materials are “absolutely necessary” in a competitive economic market (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B2 shared,

Our main brochure, what we call our Viewbook, is definitely different now than it was under the previous administration. We have moved to, I guess what people would say is a friendlier version. There [are] a lot more pictures. There is [a] lot

more action begin shown and a little less writing. Part of that is because we think that the pictures can tell [our] story and confirm some question about some of the things going on at [High School B]. For us, we really like at Open House giving somebody something physical to look at like the Viewbook and they can take it home with them and can sit down and look at it and say, ‘Oh, isn’t this an interesting picture? Oh, hey, here is a picture of that raft trip they were talking about. Wow, that looks pretty fun.’ A lot more of our application materials and such are moving online and you can always direct people to our website to look up different things...but the Viewbook is a really good encapsulation of who we are and what we do. A picture is worth a thousand words. We also throw a few statistics in there that maybe parents are interested in...statistics of success. I think more parents are interested in reading the school profile and more kids are interested in looking at what other kids do in high school in the Viewbook. We reduced words and made it a little more kid friendly. The profile is probably a little more for the parents” (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant B9 also stated that High School B’s viewbook “has changed a lot throughout the years” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B8 explained,

We recently looked back at our first viewbook from like 10-15 years ago and it [is] very text heavy. Nowadays people just want something that catches their eye.... We have little captions that try to highlight every part of our campus...faith, academics, community, athletics, the arts...we try to show a little bit of everything because obviously people are going to be interested in different

things and we do not want them to think we do [not]...or we do not want them to miss out on knowing we have those types of things. It is a mix of we want to get the kid's attention but we also want to get the parent's attention. The facts are included in the Viewbook. The facts are there that the parents care about and then we have the pictures that the kids care about. It is a little bit of a mixed bag. We try to really show as much as we can" (Participant B8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant B5 also shared that marketing materials are important because "people move around a lot...and they will move again. There is an everchanging turnover of people whereas 25-50 years ago people bought a house and raised their children and knew about the school" (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B6 also wondered about the effectiveness of marketing materials. Participant B6 expressed,

I think every school has something like our brochure, our Viewbook, so if [High School B] does not that is going to be an issue. I'm assuming every high school emphasizes the same things, right? Academics, arts, spiritual life outside the classroom. I'm guessing if you picked up one at the [Catholic] high school down the street, I assume you would see the same type of pages. And that is what I am saying. Yes, Catholic schools compete with each other but I think each school has strengths that different types of students can flourish at each place. There is nothing in our Viewbook here that says we are different...there is no differentiator. Like this is how we look at things, this is where we invest our time, dollars, energy...if this was a business thing and you are all doing the same thing you would just explain that you are doing the same thing but then you are not

going to be able to differentiate for your consumer (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018).

In order to compete with other schools – public and private – High School B also focuses on market segmentation and finding their market “niche” (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Category three: High School B segments their market. Participant B6 shared that it can be difficult to “find the right, the best students” and “attract” them to High School B (Participant B6, Board Member, Fall 2018). While all participants expressed that High School B’s “doors are open to everyone” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018), 80 percent of participants talked about the importance of “finding students who will flourish at High School B” (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018). Likewise, six participants referenced marketing to certain corporations, elementary schools, and neighborhoods where High School B “is likely to find interested parents and students” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B4 explained,

We have a lot of parents in the Nike and Intel communities so we are trying to focus our marketing there. We are focusing a lot more and spending a lot more time in parish grade schools all around town to promote [High School B] and let them know who we are and what we are about. We advertise in the local Catholic magazine to make our presence known out there. Having kids in state competitions help. We market a lot through sports (Participant B4, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participant B9 also mentioned that High School B “prioritizes visiting certain parish schools over other depending on their location and how many students have come to [High School B] from those schools in the past” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018). According to Participant B7, another way in which High School B is efficient with their time, energy, and marketing resources is to “keep track of the likes [High School B] receives on social media” (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018). When asked about the market pressures High School B experiences, Participant B5 explained,

I think the market pressure that everyone faces is that everybody has a tsunami of information and stories coming at them at all times be it buying consumer products or different news organizations or just you cultivate your own social media...there is just so much. How does High School B stand out and be relevant when...every day, people are just drinking from the fire hose of information. There is just so much out there and I think that is a pressure every marketer feels in every field. I think it is a good thing because I think some of the older marketing styles, it is like you market to the world. For us, it forces us like okay let us be smart and market to who High school B is really relevant for today (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

When asked how High School B decides the students and families High School B is relevant for, Participant B5 elaborated,

Well, the analogy that we are a Bread and Breakfast not a Hilton helps. I ask, who is interested in the smaller bread and breakfast? My question is like so the parent group we have now, of we want to replicate that and have more parents like that?

So we need to identify who they are and how we gain more of those parents or do we want to add another group? Are we looking to add and who are they? What do they look like? Where do we find them (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Participants B1 (Administrator), B3 (Business Director), B5 (Business Director), and B7 (Board Member) also shared that social media helps High School B not only “tell [their] story” (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018) but also “identify and advertise to [potential] families” (Participant B7, Board Member, Fall 2018). Participant B5 shared,

You have to go where people are. I think Instagram is the channel where we have maybe more high school students whereas Facebook you have more parents. We are always looking at engagement and how many people like us and how many people are sharing our content and who they are. We have started doing digital advertising...what is nice about Facebook advertising is you can select your audience. You can choose to advertise and be visible to friends of friends. For example, if you like [High School B’s] Facebook page, Facebook can serve that ad to your friends. The assumption is if we have a lot of parents who like our Facebook page, their peers might have kids that conceivably could be students here or prospective students (Participant B5, Business Director, Fall 2018).

While High School B adopts marketing strategies to help them “keep [themselves] visible” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2019) in a competitive economic market.

Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School B and were used to triangulate

the data for theme four. In High School B's main office are marketing brochures, posters advertising the past themes of High School B's annual gala, postcards, and school magazines. High School B also offers marketing gimmicks like water bottles, pens, pencils, and bumper stickers with High School B's logo printed across each item. Social media accounts like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to advertise fundraisers and promotional events like High School B's alumni wine and cheese night.

Theme five: High School B educates the community. All participants emphasized the importance of speaking with families, alumni, and donors directly and “inviting them to visit [High School B] to learn about [their] community” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Nine out of the 10 participants also expressed a need to “clarify” and “explain to parents” their institutional identity and mission (Participant B2, Interview, Fall 2018). Two categories inductively emerged to create this theme, including:

C1. High School B conducts and encourages school visits.

C2. High School B engages in conversations with prospective families.

Category one: Conducts and encourages school visits. As mentioned above in theme four under research question two, High School B visits the surrounding Catholic elementary schools to “help students learn about who we are” (Participant B4, Business Director, Fall 2018). All participants explained that this “helps educate the community” and “spread the word” about their institution (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant B9 shared,

We are not given students. We have to keep our doors open and be able to run a school so we do need students. Our goal is to keep our Catholic identity but at the same time we still need students and numbers and money to be able to run. We make sure we are still living our mission while also making sure that we survive. So, [we] take [current] students out of school to do what we call grade school visits where we go to all the Catholic K-8 schools and we talk to the seventh and eighth graders. That is one of the best ways to reach people and explain who we are.... Basically, we give a twenty minute presentation and a lot of schools hear from all the local Catholic High School in one day so it is a bit overwhelming. It is the second or third week of the school year...they sit and listen from high school students and us the entire day. We go for twenty minute chunks and then there is a five minute break and then another Catholic high school will follow, a five minute break, then another Catholic high school will follow. It takes a good nine days worth of visits. It is exhausting. And I take different kids every day. They're only missing one day of school. It's a lot for the second week of school. But it's good. It's really fun to listen. I really try to be hands off, say a couple blurbs, we play a video, our communications team express, and then I let our kids tell their stories. And why they have enjoyed the decision they made to go to Valley. we have four or five kids that go there. I make sure that everything is covered. I'll take a kid that is very into drama and the arts, I'll take an athletic person, I'll take someone who can speak to academics, someone who can speak to the community. I make sure that all six of our aspects that I talk about or that we

have in that view book the faiths, and I think there's six of them, I make sure that between the four of them all six of those topics are covered. It always goes way better, I have nightmares about it weeks before, and it always goes better than anticipated. The kids are rock stars. It's easy to talk about something that you're so familiar with and they really do. They get nervous, but they do a really good job (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

All participants referenced the importance of the Open House. Three participants said that the Open House helps “inform” parents and students about High School B (Participant B3, Interview, Fall 2018). Five participants said that Open Houses happen at “all the Catholic high schools” so prospective families can “experience” and “get a feel” for “what it might be like to attend each school” (Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant B8 shared that this is important because “parents have the opportunity to ask teachers questions and we have the opportunity to clarify and explain and answer their questions” (Participant B8, Administrator, Fall 2018). When asked what is shared with prospective families at High School B’s Open House, Participant B9 summarized,

You want to talk about class sizes and the faith aspect of the school. You want to talk about how well your students do after college, but that it is more about the experience...we really try to show them that they will enjoy their four years here and that we are a community. We try to help them see that we really are a family...and that we are walking through life together. We try to help them understand that this is the most important thing...that we will be there for them (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018)

Six participants also expressed that the function of an Open House is to entice students to “sign up for a school tour and shadow day where they get to experience a full school day here...and imagine what it would be like to be a student at [High School B]” (Participant B3, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participants B2 (Administrator) and B9 (Business Director) also shared that High School B’s principal gives an annual address at the Open House which allows the principal to “explain to parents who [High School B] is and what [they] are really about” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018).

Category two: Engages in conversations with prospective families. All participants talked about the importance of engaging in conversations with prospective families, alumni, and donors. The majority of participants – 70 percent – also emphasized the importance of “being counter-cultural” and “educating parents about why our mission matter” (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participant B2 explained,

I think it [is] harder to be counter-cultural, right? To talk about how [High School B] wants [students] to become their authentic selves and grow in their faith in a culture that may be accelerating towards being a throwaway kind of culture where everything is just sort of disposable. Everything seems to be [focused on] the short term...and we are trying to talk to [students] about things that [are] hopefully...longer lasting...and [they] need patience for that. This is not ‘McLearning.’ [Students] need to have patience and try to enjoy the [learning] process. I think we are in a culture that is not that interested in the process. [People] want results. [People] want products (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

When asked how High School B communicates this message and their institutional mission to prospective families, Participant B2 elaborated,

The [principal] will say something at Open House or maybe in a letter. We try to tell the parents, 'Your students are not here to make something of themselves; they are here to make someone of themselves.' But that is kind of a countercultural message when they are used to hearing, 'Hey, everybody needs to do this because we need these workers.' Yet, good people will be good workers anywhere...education is about forming good people but that is not always understood and that is a challenge but we try (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Four participants also shared that many of these 'counter-cultural' conversations with parents and students occur individually. Additionally, conversations explaining the value of Catholic schooling are required annually which takes a lot of energy for those leading and working in Catholic schools. Participant B8 shared,

Sometimes people will ask me individually about, like math, a lot of times the same people, like how many AP classes can my kid take, how far in math, my kid's already taken this level of math, how far can he or she go? It seems like math is always the thing, like at Open House, everyone b-lines to the math table...because that is how you become an engineer. And in those [individual] conversation, especially with the AP questions, we just say, 'Hey, actually studies prove that is not true...you do not need 18 AP classes to get into an IV league school or be successful long-term. According to research, five AP classes is

actually the ideal amount...if there is an ideal amount. When parents ask, ‘Well, my kid wants to get ahead, why can’t I?’ I say, ‘Well, that is not how we do it here.’ We create community...everyone begins from the same place and gets on the same page. Usually, after [our conversations] parents are like, ‘Okay, okay, I get it’ So, that [is] good (Participant B8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Participant B1 also explained that High School B adopted a sustainability scale – an educational tool – from another Catholic high school in their state to help frame individual, ‘counter-cultural’ conversations with students.

In a college prep, Catholic environment, that whole rat race for the building of a resume is hard. We try to tell students, ‘I know this is hard but get off the hamster wheel...just get off of it...you do not need to do and be 100 million different things. [Students] want to do well but they [are] always looking for something that will separate them. So they think that everybody has a rigorous course load....high test scores...oh, and now, everybody is a leader. Those are questions they get, like, ‘What kind of leadership skills do you have?’ and, now, everybody has community service...so that no longer sets [them] a part. Now they are also being asked, ‘What is your experience with diversity and multiculturalism?’ Now kids are like, ‘Oh, I have to go hunt down opportunities to prove that I am diverse,’ because now that [is] what employers and colleges are looking for and...the [students] never take anything off their plate...they just keep piling it up...eventually they are going to breakdown. To help them, we use...a sustainability scale that we review with them individually at the beginning of the

year around registration time. We give the tool to kids and families and ask them to try to be honest...like if you select these classes that comes with this amount of homework and how many hours are in a day and there is this scale that says, 'Hey if you are taking four AP classes and playing two sports...and volunteering every weekend at the soup kitchen...you are scoring in this range...and this range is not really healthy and you are not going to be able to balance everything...

(Participant B1, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Five participants also referenced High School B's decision to avoid popular 1:1 tablet programs. While there was initial internal and external resistance, High School B is content and confident in their decision. Participant B8 shared,

We are educating the whole person and an aspect of that is to foster spirituality...and maybe that has always been a challenge no matter what time in history it is...but there are so many distractions in the world...it seems to make it a challenge to get kids to be into their own spiritual development. Although, once you get them there and take away the distractions or put them in their proper place, they usually get on board. I think community becomes more important to them....I think that is one thing that we are all...we very, very strongly [decided] that we did not want to go 1:1: tablets for that reason we have not. There are time I am sure parents are going like, what are these Luddites doing, they are so out of sync with everything, but I do not know that putting an iPad in a [student's] hand 24 hours a day is really being technologically ahead of things. iPads are just a toy. We are trying to help them put them down and connect and talk with each other

and sit down with a piece of paper and actually slowly think and write out their ideas about what they just read. We have carts of iPads for teachers and students to use...but they are not the main event. There was an initial concern like if we do go 1:1 is this going to look bad, are we going to look like we are behind the times. I think we were willing to take the gamble (Participant B8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Responses from High School B participants also evidenced that the decision to eschew 1:1 programs required continual conversations with parents, both individually and collectively. Participant B4 stated that parental conversations about 1:1 programs are difficult because “every year there is pressure because [parents] are told this is the future and the key to education” (Participant B4, Administrator, Fall 2018). Participant B2 explained,

I had a mom ask me one time, she said, ‘Well, the kids that do not have iPads, how are they going to take notes?’ I actually slid a piece of paper across my desk to her and I put a pen on [the paper] and I said, ‘The same way people have been doing it for hundreds of years...and research shows they remember more.’ People are like, ‘Kids really need to learn how to use the iPad.’ They can learn...we have them available...and they can learn how to use an iPad in five minutes and they do not really need it for a lot of stuff. Last year...at a prospective parent night, I got asked the question outright about not being a 1:1 iPad school...and I’d just been waiting because I had plenty of studies and data prepared as to why we decided not to go that direction. In a room of 40 or 50 prospective parents...the

more I talked about the data and how important handwriting is to development and learning and all these things...I started to see their heads nodding up and down...they know. I explained that it is not like we are anti-technology...obviously we use it, but it is always about time and place and what is it really doing to their intellectual development and their academic skills. I know a lot of other Catholic schools decided to adopt 1:1 programs...but we, for our community, decided that just was not going to fit for what we were trying to do (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

When asked if those 40 or 50 parents, hypothetically, demanded iPads for their students, how High School B would respond, Participant B2 stated,

I might suggest they look at a different high school. There was some concern. Obviously, lots of schools went that direction. We did a pilot year with it to look at it and I think there was some nervous energy by some people, "Boy, if we don't go this direction, what's going to happen? People aren't going to come here. We'll be viewed as somehow archaic or behind the times." Four years later we have enrollment that's just as high as it was before with ACT scores that are on average higher than some of those other places, and then college acceptance rates that haven't fallen off. There's nothing institutionally bad has happened. I think part of that is you can't be afraid to do the things that you believe in philosophically and then you might be surprised that you can help other people believe in it too... (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Three participants also explained that High School B decided “explains to parents that we are college preparatory” but “chooses not to put it in our official name...we refer to ourselves as a college prep school but I do not think it is even in our mission statement...maybe it is in an introductory paragraph about the identity of the school...but we rather emphasize that we are a Catholic school first...I know other schools have changed there name to include the college prep” but “[High School B] view not marketing that as a way to educate parents about what we really stand for as a Catholic institution with a liberal arts tradition” (Participant B2, Administrator, Fall 2018).

Field notes from school walkabouts as well as institutional documents and artifacts support these research findings for High School B and were used to triangulate the data for theme five. High School B educates the community about their Catholic mission through newsletters and marketing materials. However, High School B also educates the community on their website through a letter from the principal and pages that explain the mission statement and core values of High School B. Multiple TV monitors throughout the school also display a scrolling history of High School B’s founding religious order. Lastly, High School B developed a book that clarifies their institutional identity and explains the relevance of Catholic education in contemporary contexts.

School B Summary

Table 8 displays the deductive themes and inductively identified categories with exemplar quotes for School B addressing research question one.

Table 8

Deductive Themes and Inductively Identified Categories for Research Question One

Research question one: How does High School B understand their institutional identity within a market context?		
Deductive theme	Inductively identified category	Exemplar quotes
1. Charism provides a focused identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charism helps them define their Catholicity. Charism helps them visibly express their identity. 	“Our [Religious Order’s] charism is woven into everything we do. We build everything around their charism” (B3, Business Director).
2. Religious mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasizes faith-based expectations and values. 	“Our mission is to foster a community of lifelong learners who are committed to living out Catholic values and following Jesus’ example through prayer, service, and love” (B2, Administrator).
3. Shaped by Communion and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fosters meaningful relationships and interactions. 	“I feel like in Catholic education there is more emphasis on the spiritual side. Creating a community is something I see here...that speaks to the spiritual side...if you are all connecting and being together, you are going to see each other more humanely. That community piece is always important” (B8, Administrator).

Additionally, Table 9 displays the deductive themes and inductively identified categories with exemplar quotes for School B addressing research question two.

Table 9

Deductive Themes and Inductively Identified Categories for Research Question Two

Research question two: How does High School B respond to market pressures?		
Deductive theme	Inductively identified category	Exemplar quotes
1. Pro-Marketers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifts financial practices. • Shifts marketing strategies. 	“Competition is a good thing. It forces you to be really clear about what is distinctive about Catholic education...about the benefits” (B5, Business Director).
2. Pragmatic Survivors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifts leadership roles. • Shifts programs and curricula. 	“Since other schools have marketing materials we have to as well. It is just reality” (B6, Board Member).
3. Market Regulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages school visits. • Engages in conversations. 	“My social justice heart goes out to get along with people. I do not think competition helps the poor...and I am not sure vouchers are going to solve the problem. Is there another way we can fund Catholic schools and help the common good” (B1, Administrator)?

Cross-Case Analysis

Cross-case analysis of the research findings identified shared themes and patterns across High School A and High School B. Cross-case research findings are organized by **research questions** and *shared research themes*. The cross-case analysis concludes with a comparison of the research findings to this study’s research propositions and possible rival explanations.

Research question one: How do select Catholic high schools in the United States understand their institutional identity within a market context? Cross-case analysis produced similar findings across high schools related to their understanding of their institutional identity within a competitive economic market. The most significant findings for research question one included the following understandings, (a) religious charisms are essential to institutional identity and (b) authentic Catholic communities are also inclusive communities.

Theme one: Both high schools' religious charisms are essential to their institutional identity. All twenty participants referenced the importance of their charism to their institutional mission and identity. Worth noting is the understanding of each participant that – although there is a decline in the number of vowed religious on their campuses – both high schools exist to further the charism, mission, and values of their respective religious orders. Similarly, participants from both high schools explained that when their institutions experience various external pressures – like economic market pressures or institutional pressures from the Catholic Church – their religious charisms help them navigate these pressures and authentically live their Catholic identity and mission. Responses from all twenty participants evidenced that both high schools have a charismatic identity that is formed by shared traditions, symbols, values, practices, and discourses. While both high schools are rooted in the Catholic faith, their charismatic identity allows them to focus their identity and uniquely express their commitment to a holistic understanding of the broader Catholic educational mission. Additionally, field notes, documents, and artifacts from both cases evidenced the importance of their

religious charism to the understanding of their institutional identity within a market context. For example, all marketing materials referred to each institution's religious charism and both school websites gave primacy to their religious order. Field notes from school walkabouts evidenced that both high schools display religious symbolism affiliated with their respective religious order and display pictures or quotes from their religious order's founder near the entrance and throughout school buildings.

Theme two: Both high schools identify as inclusive Catholic communities. All twenty participants emphasized the communal aspect of their institutional identity and credited the quality of communal life to their religious mission. While both high schools had religiously diverse demographics, each emphasized the importance of cultivating community through shared faith-based experiences, practices, values, and discourse. Both institutions highlighted certain faith-based practices, including: prayer, liturgy (mass), retreats, service programs, and religious studies requirements. Similarly, core values and discourse rooted in the Catholic faith tradition were tangibly represented in the features of the school buildings (listed on banners, posters, plaques, engraved stones, and marketing materials placed in front offices) as well as documented in board meeting minutes, strategic plans, and mission statements. The intangible aspects of their Catholic community – such as student experiences, human interactions, relationships, and institutional culture – were referred to and prioritized by participants from both institutions.

All twenty participants uniformly expressed that an authentic Catholic community is an inclusive community and referenced the importance of living their mission as

opposed to imposing their mission on Catholic or non-Catholic students. Participants from both institutions explained that inclusivity is a vital aspect of their Catholicity but that a commitment to inclusivity is also imperative in a competitive economic market where religious disaffiliation is common and non-Catholics constitute a large portion of their student population. One participant's comment provides an example of the overall understanding that an authentic Catholic community is an inclusive Catholic community.

We are an inclusive community...that is part of our Catholic identity. Catholic education is meant to be for everyone. [We] cannot say we provide an inclusive environment for students but only accept 'elite' or wealthy families. [We] cannot say, 'All are welcome' but tell non-Catholics that they cannot receive a blessing at mass. [We] cannot say we are inclusive of all [peoples] but marginalize students who are homosexual, for example, in [our] conversations about sexual morality. To truly be a Catholic community, we have to practice what we preach...we must live Jesus' call to love our neighbors – all our neighbors – as ourselves (Participant A8, Administrator, Fall 2018).

In regards to research question two, Cross-case analysis of the research findings also identified shared themes and patterns across High School A and High School B.

Research question two: How do select Catholic high schools in the United States respond to market pressures? Cross-case analysis produced similar findings across high schools regarding institutional responses to market pressures. The most significant findings for research question two included the following institutional

responses, (a) Both high schools market forces and (b) Both high schools align and realign with their mission.

Theme one: Both high schools accommodate market forces. Cross-case analysis evidenced that both high schools respond to market forces by shifting their financial practices, leadership roles, programs, and curricula. Both high schools also adopt marketing and branding strategies to communicate their institutional identity and attempt to distinguish themselves in the marketplace. All interview participants explained that they operate within a very competitive environment and compete mostly with public schools and other Catholic schools for dollars and students. In both cases, a third Catholic high school was identified as the “big fish” in the Catholic school market (Participant B9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Participants from High School A and High School B compared their institutional successes, struggles, practices, and market responses to that of this third Catholic high school which, for both institutions, was considered wealthier and larger than their own institutions. Competitive comparisons and institutional measurements were also made to public schools and other Catholic schools in their market. However, references to the third Catholic high school occurred twice as frequently as other school comparisons.

Additionally, participants in both high schools shared that new STEM facilities and programs were funded in their respective institutions in response to parental pressures and new STEM facilities and programs surfacing at other Catholic high schools in their market. Despite the high demand for and popularity of STEM programs in their market, participants in both Catholic high schools referred to their STEM facilities and

programs as unique market distinguishers. All participants strongly asserted that – within a competitive economic market – market distinguishers are absolutely essential. Efforts to separate and distinguish themselves from other Catholic schools were also evident in their strategic plans and institutional symbols throughout the school building such as trophy cases, promotional materials, and marketing gimmicks – cell phone PopSockets, maze pens, and 3D glasses – available in the admissions office.

Participants in both institutions stated that marketing materials were normal and necessary because other schools also created and distributed marketing materials. A few participants within both institutions questioned the practice and wondered if marketing materials were as effective as people imagined, especially since the brochures dispersed to prospective families looked similar, if not identical, in content and style to that of the other Catholic high schools. In addition to marketing STEM programs, participants from both institutions explained that they heavily market athletics at Open House events and build relationships with prospective families through their sports program. All twenty participants explained that marketing materials are also used to provide parents with statistical information on student achievement and graduation rates. Both institutions explained that this information is included in their school brochure in response to parental questions about post-graduate, college concerns, primarily about the potential for their children to attend an ivy league school.

Responses from participants in both institutions also evidenced that market values, practices, and discourse – such as competition, individual advantage, return on investment, customer base, and market niche – were used to explain market pressures and

institutional responses to these pressures. Strategic plans and board meeting minutes also reflected a market-based approach. All twenty participants talked about the necessity of donors. Likewise, participants from both institutions explained the importance of charming donors and prioritizing donor-enjoyment. All twenty participants explained that donors – to a large degree – determine the institutional needs and programs that Catholic high schools are able to pursue and fund. Both institutions articulated that they are competing with other Catholic schools and the archdiocese for financial resources, frequently from the same donor pool, which can cause tension. Responses from both high schools also evidenced that alumni are central to their funding strategies and both high schools mentioned modeling their alumni relations and fundraising efforts – capital campaigns, advertisements, and foundations – after universities in order to survive financially. In both institutions, the names of donors are listed on the walls of school buildings and, in High School A, names are ordered and ranked by the amount of money individuals donated from highest to lowest. Additionally, the names of businesses and corporations that donate money are listed throughout each school, particularly on plaques outside classroom doors.

While High School A and High School B both shift their practices and discourse to accommodate the market, their responses were nuanced. Both schools emphasized the importance of business models in a competitive economic market. However, their business (or funding models) were not identical. Both high schools also have a development or advancement department as well as three school boards (board of trustees, board of foundations, and board of alumni), all of which have expanded in

recent years due to market forces. Tensions between market and mission were present in both institutions and all twenty participants expressed that these tensions were experienced in conversations between people on the leadership team as well as other stakeholders. Yet, the degree to which these tensions surfaced between board members, board members and administration, administration and faculty, administration and parents, administration and business departments varied within each institution. Both institutions explained the drastic change in leadership from vowed religious to laity. Field notes from school walkabouts also indicated this change as the pictures of board members in High School A are next to our near pictures of their institution's religious founder. High School B also displays this shift in leadership roles in response to market pressures as the television screen located in the front of their school presents a rotating slideshow of new faculty and staff while also including historical pictures of members from their religious order at the school. These changes in leadership are also reflected in institutional documents like pamphlets and handouts used to educate board members on each institution's religious roots. Most notably, the rectory where religious members used to live in High School A has been converted to business offices and now houses that advancement and development team.

Theme two: Both high schools align and realign with their mission. All twenty participants expressed the importance of remaining true to their Catholic identity and mission within a market context. Efforts to live their mission were evident in their responses to market pressures. Both schools emphasized the importance of being confidently Catholic and communicated this confidence in marketing materials, on school

websites, and in relationships with prospective and current families, faculty, and benefactors. While marketing strategies were deemed absolutely necessary within a competitive economic market, all twenty participants also explained that word of mouth and genuine relationships superseded any marketing or branding campaign. Participants in both institutions were primarily concerned about students' wellbeing and experience. Both institutions resisted certain market pressures and reasoned that student wellbeing and their educational philosophies were at the heart of their decision making. While their means of achieving accessibility varied, both institutions continually referenced their commitment to providing a Catholic education for any and all students who desire such an education. Participants from both schools explained that accessibility was a central theme in their institutional mission and inherent in their Catholic identity. While participants from both schools recognized the financial limitations of their institutions, all participants expressed a desire to educate and provide opportunities for students and families from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. Each institution's website offered information about their tuition assistance program and board meeting minutes also revealed their commitment to becoming more accessible. Mission statements hung on school walls also demonstrated their commitment to accessibility. When certain financial practices were deemed inadequate or preventative of this goal, participants in both institutions explained that these practices were reevaluated and new practices adopted. Likewise, when business solutions were offered that seemed to contradict their mission, both institutions refused to adopt them despite internal and external pressure to consider them as a solution.

Additionally, all twenty participants explained that they resisted certain market forces that challenged their mission albeit each institution resisted different forces differently. Both institutions spent a significant amount of time educating parents and donors about the value of a liberal arts education over a college preparatory education even if their institution heavily marketed their college preparatory status. While High School A advertised and branded themselves as a college preparatory institution, High School B resisted the idea and simply referred to themselves as college preparatory if parents and donors asked. Participants from both institutions discussed their desire to deemphasize grades, standardized tests, and standardized curriculum. All participants explained that the learning process and experience was far more important than measuring the results or the learning products (like grades, awards, or resumes).

Both institutions discussed the counter-cultural nature of their educational approaches and their commitment to helping form good human beings. Participants from both high schools explained that the programs they offered or choose not to offer within a competitive market were centered on their commitment to the learning process and human development. Decisions from both institutions reflected a resistance to programs or educational models that challenged their Catholic ethos or the nature of Catholic education. High School A referred to their model of education which was explained on their website and provided in handouts. Their model of education was contrasted to the typical private school or academy model which, according to High School A's institutional documents, emphasizes exclusion and fosters elitism. Participants explained that their decision to articulate their model on their website and on documents was a

response to external misconceptions about their institutional identity and mission.

Likewise, High School B explained that their decision to resist adopting a 1:1 iPad program was based on research that indicated that the constant use of tablets does not enhance student learning or wellbeing, despite their market popularity. High School B also articulated that they were willing to “take a gamble” (Participant B8, Interview, Fall 2018) in order to remain true to their mission and educational priorities. While High School A differed in this regard and choose to adopt a 1:1 iPad program, they expressed their efforts to integrate this program into their curriculum in order to serve their religious mission.

In both cases, participants expressed a desire for institutional self-reflection and discernment regardless of market forces. Efforts to self-reflect and reevaluate their practices in light of their institutional identity and mission were evident in interview responses, board minutes, and the religious symbols that were intentionally placed throughout the school building which provided a nonverbal faith-based discourse. Likewise, despite intense competition, all participants highlighted their efforts to collaborate with other Catholic high schools in the area. Both institutions referred to regular gatherings with other admissions directors, development directors, and high school principals. Participants explained the mutual respect and collegiately between school leaders despite competitive realities and tensions. Likewise, participants from both institutions expressed a desire for more collaborative opportunities. Both high schools also shared their admiration for public schools and explained that they shared in the mission of the common good. Additionally, participants from High School A and High

School B expressed their resistance to state-funded vouchers, reasoning that this solution would only hurt public schools and public-school students and that, if this was the case, society would not benefit and, therefore, Catholic schools and Catholic school students would not benefit either. However, there were also participants within both institutions that were more open to the idea of vouchers given the financial constraints and uncertainties that Catholic schools experience within a competitive economic market.

While both high schools resisted market forces and prioritized practices that served their Catholic identity and mission, responses from both institutions also revealed a complicated institutional discourse. All twenty participants used language that reflected both market values and Catholic values, oftentimes within the same sentence. The quote below typifies the overarching finding that select Catholic high schools in the United States mix market values and Catholic values together within their institutional discourse to the point where the inherent differences in each domain are almost indistinguishable:

As a Catholic institution, we welcome all students [and] work for the common good.... It is a tough market to be Catholic, Catholic. Or only serve Catholic kids and families. We [have] opened the doors to kids, to all kids. You make your competitive advantage (Participant A1, Administrator, Fall 2019).

The following is a cross-case synthesis connecting the research findings to this study's propositions. The research design of this multiple-case study linked data to the following two research propositions.

While functioning within a market context, Catholic high schools will:

P1. Experience internal and external power struggles.

P2. Own and reject the values, practices, and discourse of market ideologies.

Multiple rival explanations to each proposition were also addressed to strengthen this study's research findings (Yin, 2018).

Proposition one: Catholic high schools experience internal and external power struggles. The findings confirm proposition one in several key areas. Both institutions referenced struggles between the market and their institutional mission. Participants from both high schools indicated that this struggle occurs internally and externally and experienced during board meetings, during conversations with prospective families, and amongst people with different leadership positions (e.g., administrators vs. business managers or administrators vs. board members). Likewise, the tension between market and mission is also felt in relationships with donors and alumni who usually dictate the amount of funding schools receive and the type of programs that are sponsored. Market forces such as college admission requirements and educational norms were also labeled by participants as external pressures which are philosophically at odds with their institutional mission. Additionally, both high schools overwhelmingly mentioned the power struggles that exist between their institutions and the archdiocese, primarily power struggles over school funding and their Catholic identity.

A significant rival explanation is that these internal and external power struggles would occur regardless of the market. Participant responses from both institutions indicated that the power and control issues they experience with the archdiocese are a microcosmic reflection of the power and control issues historically present within the Catholic Church, primarily between the hierarchy and the laity and normalized by canon

law. However, as evidenced by the data, a market context amplifies these power struggles as both the archdiocese and the local Catholic high schools seek donors to fund their operations and educational institutions. Furthermore, as evidenced by the data and the literature, these power struggles exist in part because of the significant paradigm shift in Catholic school leadership from vowed religious to lay people; a shift that has impacted Catholic high schools economically as well as culturally.

While it is likely (and historically evident) that power struggles would exist in Catholic high schools and all schools regardless of market forces, many of the internal and external power struggles Catholic high schools experience are currently linked to market forces as evidenced by the data. Additionally, as documented in the literature, the locus of control in contemporary cultural resides in the business world and within a market-oriented perspective on education. Therefore, the internal and external struggles that Catholic high schools experience are intricately linked to a market culture and can reflect, as evidenced by the data, a struggle to define and determine the purpose of education in the United States.

Proposition two: Catholic high schools will own and reject the values, practices, and discourse of market ideologies. As evidence confirming proposition two, participant responses indicated that market (i.e., business) practices traditionally rooted in market ideologies were both accepted and challenged by participants in both institutions. While some business practices were questioned (e.g., charging full price for tuition), other business practices went unquestioned (e.g., branding). Similarly, market values were espoused (e.g., competitive advantage) as well as impugned (e.g., the common

good). As articulated above in the cross-case analysis, all participants ($N=20$) used language from both the business and marketing fields as well as the Catholic education field to explain their institutional identity within a competitive economic landscape and their institutional responses to market pressures. Notably, an overarching finding was that participants referenced both market values and Catholic values, oftentimes within the same sentence, to such a degree that discourses from each domain were intertwined. While the amount this occurred varied from participant to participant and the extent to which each participant and institution owns and rejects market values, practices, and discourse is immeasurable, data evidenced that both high schools own and reject market values, practices, and discourse rooted in market ideologies.

An important rival explanation to proposition two is that Catholic high schools do not own market values, practices, and discourse but rather leverage – a term and a concept taken from the business field – market values, practices, and discourse to their advantage or in service of their mission. Participants from both institutions mentioned that marketing practices were used to “get people in the door” (Participants A2, Business Director, Fall 2018) so that High School A and High School B could further educate people about their Catholic identity and mission and invite people to experience these school communities for themselves. Similarly, data from both high schools indicated that – while market forces impact some of their institutional practices and decisions – their primary commitment remains rooted in the values, practices, and discourse of their religious charism. While there is an overwhelming commitment to their institutional mission, participants from both high schools also identified their frustrations with

individuals within their institution that seemed more market-driven than mission-driven. Participants also indicated that the line between their mission and the market was “blurry” (Participant A9, Business Director, Fall 2018). Data from both institutions also evidenced that the contemporary challenges they faced were complicated and the majority of participants (90 percent) believed that these challenges required a business mindset and the use of business practices and analogies.

Summary

This chapter discussed findings derived from the data analysis of 20 face-to-face interviews, field notes from four school walkabouts, and 30 institutional documents and artifacts. Within-case findings were reported on the two Catholic high schools that participated in the study and provided an in-depth story of each high school within their unique context. Data revealed integration across deductive themes and inductively identified categories and the data was presented by themes and research questions for a clearer link between questions and findings. A cross-case analysis aggregating all interview responses, field notes, and documents and artifacts indicated similar understandings of their institutional identity and institutional responses to market pressures. Examining the results for each individual case and then observing the pattern of results across the cases provided a stronger analysis and the basis for further discussion in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Recommendations, and Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate how leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand and communicate their institutional identity and how that identity – and an institution’s related practices and discourse – are influenced by market forces and to what extent those forces can be observed. Below are the two research questions addressed in this qualitative multiple-case study:

RQ1. How do leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand their institutional identity within a competitive economic market?

RQ2. How do select Catholic high schools in the United States respond to market pressures?

Key findings conveyed that select Catholic high schools in the United States understand their institutional identity through their religious charism and primarily view themselves as inclusive faith-based communities. Additionally – within a competitive economic market – Catholic high schools shift their practices and discourse to accommodate market forces while also aligning and realigning with their institutional mission.

The research design utilized both deductive and inductive approaches to this multiple-case study. The creation of deductive propositions generated from the literature, in combination with inductively identified categories developed through data analysis, afforded a solid foundation for this study’s design. The following propositions were used to inform data collection and analysis and were addressed in the cross-case findings in Chapter four:

While functioning within a market context, Catholic high schools will:

P1. Experience internal and external power struggles.

P2. Own and reject the values, practices, and discourse of market ideologies.

A cross-case analysis of the findings followed within-case reporting in Chapter Four with a comparison of findings to the research propositions and possible rival explanations.

This study both confirms and extends knowledge in the field of Catholic education, especially in regards to institutional identity of select Catholic high schools in the United States and the influence of market forces on that identity. Below is an interpretation and a discussion of the research findings. Importantly, this section of Chapter 5 includes the researchers' personal and professional interpretation of the findings and addresses potential questions about the findings and their connection to the literature. Additionally, Chapter 5 addresses the limitation of this study, the need for future research, and implications for social change.

Interpretation of Research Findings

As illustrated in Chapter Two, there is a dearth of research on the institutional identity of Catholic high schools in the United States let alone research on the influence of market forces on that identity. However, in regards to the empirical research that does exist, this study confirmed that Catholic high schools are rooted in their religious charism (Cook, 2015) and align with the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* (Ozar & Weitzel-O'Neill, 2012) as demonstrated in Chapter Four. However, it is important to note that the creation of national standards and benchmarks reflects a broader, cultural tendency to standardize

and measure school performance while over-emphasizing high stakes testing and accountability (Heft, 2011; Ravitch, 2016); a tendency and a discourse that the Catholic high schools in this study believe limit their institutional mission.

Additionally, this study's research findings conveyed that language used by other Catholic schools in the United States – as evident in previous studies on the institutional identity of Catholic schools (Convey, 2013) – was also used by both high schools participating in this study. For example, when defining the meaning of 'Catholic identity,' participants in this study also used phrases found in Convey's study like: Jesus Christ (13), Christ-like (9), Church teachings (5), Catholic values (14), Christian values (12), Gospel values (4), Prayer (14), Service (15), Love (Charity) (13), Liturgy (mass) (14), Faith Community (16), and Community (20). This study also found that participants viewed the percentage of Catholic students attending their institution as the least important aspect of their Catholic identity, if at all important.

As referenced in Chapter Two, various monographs (Cook 2001, 2015; Fox & Shimabukuro, 2012) link institutional identity to the quality of Catholic school culture:

Catholic school culture is a 'way of life' rooted in Christ, a Gospel-based creed and code, and a Catholic vision that provides inspiration and identity, is shaped over time, and is passed from one generation to the next through devices that capture and stimulate the Catholic imagination such as symbols and traditions.

(Cook, 2001, p. 16)

Research findings from this study evidenced that both high schools nurture their Catholic culture and identity through shared values, practices, and discourse linked to their

religious charism. Likewise, findings confirmed that religious charisms inspire Catholic high schools and provide a focused institutional identity and help form and sustain an “inspirational ideology” (Bryk et al., 1993, p. 301; Cook, 2015; Hengemuhle, 2015). Catholic symbols and traditions that help communicate institutional identity and cultivate the Catholic imagination within school communities (Hanvey & Carroll, 2005) were also observed during school walkabouts and emerged from institutional documents and artifacts.

This study’s research findings revealed that Catholic schools live the mission of Catholic education espoused in official Church documents, primarily that Catholic schools exist to contribute to the evangelical mission of the Church (The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998), to form good citizens for the benefit of society (Paul VI, 1965), and to provide a faith-based education to all who desire one because education is a human right (Paul VI, 1965). While Catholic schools live this mission, they also experience critical challenges to that mission. Research findings revealed that the market pressures listed in the literature – decline in vowed religious, rising tuition costs, faculty wages, religious disaffiliation, apathy, and lack of faith in the Church as an institution after the sex abuse scandals – were challenges to institutional identity and concerns about these market pressures were commonly experienced and expressed by both institutions participating in this study.

What previous empirical research on the institutional identity of Catholic high schools in the United States does not fully explore are issues related to power and control within the institutional Church and how Catholic high schools must contend with these

hierarchical pressures while simultaneously responding to market pressures. This study revealed that both Catholic high schools experienced power struggles between their Catholic communities and the archdiocese over the meaning of *Catholic identity*. Also, while Church documents invite laity to lead and support Catholic schools, responses from participants evidenced that the laity working for Catholic schools and, thus, the Catholic Church still “do not feel empowered” (Participant A1, Administrators, Fall 2018) due to hierarchical power plays and differing definitions of what it means to be Catholic.

In regards to the two empirical studies outside the United States that also examined the relationship between identity, mission, and markets in Catholic high schools, this study discovered similar findings. First, Grace’s (2002) findings were used to frame the deductive analysis in Chapter 4 and can be reviewed under the summary section for each within-case analysis. Data from both high schools evidenced that the discourse used by pro-marketers, pragmatic survivors, and market regulators were all identified within this study. However, what this study discovered that Grace (2002) does not account for is that one individual can express all three types of perspectives and discourses throughout the course of one conversation, indeed, even within one sentence. This study expands upon Grace’s findings (2002) and reveals how Catholic values and market values which are dichotomous in nature (Pring, 1996) and originate from two separate domains (Bourdieu, 1990a) are oftentimes used interchangeably within both institutions. For example, Participant B6 discussed High School B’s institutional commitment to remain accessible for families from a broad range of socioeconomic backgrounds in one sentence while also discussing the importance of charging

“costumers” full price for tuition in the next sentence. Likewise, Participant A2 emphasized that High School A’s doors are open to everyone but also discussed the importance of market segmentation, a practice from the business world that separates and targets certain segments of the population into smaller, homogeneous groups which causes the deprioritization of other groups within the population.

Additionally, while being welcoming of non-Catholics is inherent in the institutional identity of both high schools and espoused in official Church documents on the purpose of Catholic schooling (Paul VI, 1965), Participant A1 (Administrator) framed their commitment to Catholics, not in mission-oriented terms, but in market-oriented terms, explaining that being welcoming of non-Catholics is High School A’s “competitive advantage” in a competitive economic market. However, other responses from Participant A1 could have been categorized as being a market regulator or even a market resistor. The same is true for Participant B2 (Administrator) who referred to his Catholic school as a “business” while also stating that if parents did not like their institutional practices or decisions, for instance, deciding not to adopt 1:1 iPad programs, that they should “look elsewhere” and attend another school. While all these participants reflect a deep commitment and love for their institutional, Catholic identity and mission, responses from all participants also evidenced that the line between market and mission is easily blurred.

Lastly, the exhaustion that school principals feel within a market context and the reduction of their professional identities to the role of business managers (Davies, 2013) was also evident in this study. However, both high schools tried to resist this exhaustion

and professional identity shift by sharing their administrative duties with CFOs and board members with “business mindset(s)” (Participant A7) and “corporate background(s)” (Participant B5). However, sharing the leadership responsibilities in this way also opened up each high school to an increased emphasis on the market and practices that are viewed as commonplace in market discourse but antithetical to the aims and values of Catholic discourse. Notably, other leaders – like admissions directors, development directors, and alumni coordinators – also expressed the exhaustion, fear, and stress they experience within a competitive economic market. Like participants in Grace’s study (2002), the majority of participants in this study (85 percent) expressed the opinion that within a market-based culture, business and marketing practices are absolutely necessary to ensure institutional survival. Participants from both high schools used phrases like “have to have” (16), “absolutely necessary” (14), “would be nothing without” (8), and the situation is “not going to change” (12) when explaining their business-related or market-oriented practices. While both high schools are clearly Catholic in their institutional identity and mission, phrases like these reflect how business practices and discourse can become normalized overtime (Fairclough, 2015). As the conceptual framework for this study indicates, phrases like these, when they are used in social spaces also reflect what the broader society imagines is normal, possible, or important (Bernstein, 1970, 1981; Fairclough, 2010). The research findings from this study highlight that Catholic high schools do not function within indeterminate contexts. Instead, Catholic high schools are open systems that can be influenced by the imaginations, ideologies, and identities that are prominent within the larger culture.

However, both institutions also reflected a clear resistance to cultural norms. While influenced by market imaginaries, identities, and ideologies in some ways, individual leaders within both high schools also displayed a resistance to them in others. Market resistance was observed in High School A's view that education is primarily about student growth and experience and High School B's efforts to help students and parents resist the AP culture and college preparation pressures. Likewise, both institutions challenged the status quo within American society as well as within the Catholic Church. The degree to which both institutions "owned" the business ideologies connected to the business practices and discourse they adopted is unclear and difficult to observe (Fairclough, 2015, p. 112). Indeed, many Catholic schools might be viewed as subversive, adopting business practices and discourse to attract students while instilling within current students the same Catholic values, practices, and discourse that challenge capitalism and the market imaginary. For Catholic schools, the danger is in leadership whose imagination of what is possible has become limited to the market imaginary; a leadership that does not recognize the clear distinctions between the values, practices, and discourse of the business domain and that of Catholic education as well as public education. Insufficient understanding and recognition of the problem can lead to mission slip overtime (Bernstein, 1990a; Fairclough, 2015). A lack of an alternative to the business model and market discourse might influence individual and institutional identity as Catholic high schools potentially become accustomed to the status quo instead of challenging or opposing that which conflicts with their core values and institutional identity.

Implications for Future Research and Practice

Research findings from this study call for additional research on the institutional identity of Catholic high schools in the United States as they function within a market context. Future research should include the voices of teachers, students, parents, alumni, and donors as this study only focused on the leadership team within both high schools. Since the Catholic school crisis has primarily caused the closing of Catholic elementary schools in urban areas, a subsequent study on how market forces influence their institutional identity and mission would also be beneficial. However, Catholic high schools are especially vulnerable to market pressures related to parental demands for college prep education (Heft, 2011) and the market curricula (Bernstein, 1996). Therefore, it makes sense for future research to concentrate on Catholic high schools and, since there is a dearth of research on Catholic high schools in the United States, there is a need to continue this research endeavor. While the closing of Catholic schools has been directly linked to the opening of charter schools in the United States, the area in which this study was conducted did not have a high percentage of charter schools nearby and, thus, future research should also concentrate on urban areas where there is a higher percentage of charter schools to understand that element of the problem. Additionally, other studies (Davies, 2013; Grace, 2002) evidence that the influence of market forces and, thus, market philosophies on the institutional identity of Catholic schools is also a concern in other countries. Therefore, international research on the impact of globalization and neoliberal, market ideologies on the institutional identity, practices, and discourse of Catholic high schools is needed.

This study also reveals that the primary implication for practice is the need for clarification within Catholic high schools. In other words, research findings evidence that Catholic high schools would benefit from distinguishing between the practices and discourse of market ideologies and Catholic ideologies. Perhaps clear delineation between these two domains would help Catholic high schools more effectively resist, challenge, and discern their responses to market pressures. Knowing the epistemology of the terms and concepts they use in their institutional discourse (i.e., return on investment, competitive advantage, market segmentation, market distinguishers, etc.) might help Catholic high schools imagine a new form of discourse or at least recognize how their discourse is morally conflicting with their Catholic identity and mission.

Greater attention must be paid to the language we employ about the purposes of schooling and the structure of its institutions, processes, and methods. The concepts of contemporary secular discourse shape patterns of meaning and also afford or preclude possibilities for transcending those meanings. What deeper understandings are conveyed, for example, by our common rhetoric of schools as efficient service providers to clients? Does such rhetoric fire the hearts and minds of students and teachers? (Bryk et al., 1993, p. 322)

Similarly, Catholic high schools must ask themselves what deeper understandings are conveyed by our common rhetoric of schools as businesses and students and parents as costumers? Research findings also suggest that archdiocesan officials and local Catholic colleges and universities reexamine their own discourse and practices to see how it aligns with Catholic educational philosophies. Furthermore, Catholic institutions responsible for

Catholic schools at the national level including, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Catholic Educational Association also need to be conscious and aware of their language and practices, especially in regards to their support of promotional discourse and market-based educational policies.

Limitations of Study

For all the strengths of this multiple-case study, there were also inherent limitations. The limitations originally discussed in Chapter Three became apparent throughout the study. For example, the case described particular Catholic high schools each with unique demographics and cultures. The data also represented Catholic high schools in a particular point in time and this study reported on data collected during that time.

It became obvious during data collection that – because each participating school is sponsored by a different religious order and because the degree of that religious order’s involvement in their daily activities varies – nuances will exist amongst each school’s leadership structure. Additionally, because the professional roles and backgrounds of interview participants were diverse – each individual’s understanding of the school’s financial operations and/or Catholic liberal arts background varied. Two participants – one from each institution – were recently hired and, therefore, their personal and professional knowledge on the research topic was limited. Similarly, interview data relies on individual’s understanding of the issues, the unique characteristics of their high school, the extent of their experience working in Catholic schools, and their own personal frame of mind related to the issues and the institution. Because institutional and

individual anonymity was of utmost importance to this study, this study was unable to provide a disaggregation of demographic data. While generalizability was not the goal of this qualitative multiple-case study, it is appropriate to use the concept of transferability as a standard of quality (Patton, 2015). The results of this study can be transferred to other contexts or setting where Catholic high schools are facing similar market pressures.

In addition to limitations, there were inherent threats to validity that must be addressed in this section of the study. What makes the rigor so difficult in qualitative research is that the researcher is an instrument of data collection (Creswell, 2008). The researcher may have personal and professional experience with the research topic but needs to explicitly acknowledge the potential for bias in the collection and analysis of the data. Thus, a primary concern in this study, was researcher bias due to personal and professional experience teaching and attending Catholic schools. Furthermore, frustrations felt due to market-driven decisions and practices at these Catholic schools as well as admiration felt for their mission-oriented decisions and practices, presented a danger of misperceiving information gleaned from the interviews. Past experiences and frustrations with the relationship between another archdiocese and their local Catholic schools could also question the trustworthiness of the study. For these reasons, member checking, triangulation, peer review, and self-reflection through analytic memo writing were pivotal to this research process to ensure that potential bias was noted, and its potential impact minimized (Creswell, 2008; Saldaña, 2016).

To counterbalance these limitations, multiple-case designs are preferred over single-case designs and having more than two cases produced an even stronger design

(Yin, 2018). The four principles that underlie all good social research (Yin, 2018) also reflect the quality of this study and address this study's limitations.

1. *The analysis should show that the research attended to all the evidence.*

Analytic strategies, including the specific wording of propositions, thoroughly covered this study's two research questions.

2. *The analysis should address, if possible, all plausible rival interpretations.*

The cross-case analysis addressed and rejected rival interpretations to propositions one and two.

3. *The analysis should address the most significant aspect of the case.* By using

both inductive and deductive analysis, the research was able to focus on the most important issues pertaining to this study's research questions. Because of copious data, it was important that the researcher avoided the possibility of detours to lesser issues that could have potentially diverted the researcher away from the main purpose of the study.

4. *The researcher should use his/her own prior, expert knowledge in the case*

study. While the researcher's positionality may have cause for bias, their knowledge and awareness of the case study topic positively contributed to the participants willingness to thoroughly share their experiences and opinions with the research because they were aware of a shared professional background, mutual respect for those working in Catholic schools, and an understanding of their unique context (p. 168).

Conclusions

When 49 Catholic schools closed on January 6, 2012 in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, the students, parents, teachers, janitors, secretaries, principals, and presidents of those school communities may or may not have been fully aware of the market forces, cultural values, policy decisions, philosophical orientations, or historical movements contributing to their school's closures. However, the thousands of Catholic schools that have closed since and prior to that date tell a story about imaginaries, ideologies, identities, missions, and markets that warrant the country's and the Church's attention.

The market imaginary is "the dominant imaginary of our time. It has spilled over into every area of life" (Steger, 2008, p. 27; Fairclough, 2010). This includes the domain of education, including Catholic education. In fact, the United States seems trapped in a language of schooling that stresses economics, accountability, competition, and compliance" which "is not a language that inspires" (Rose, 2009, p. 25). Within such contemporary conditions, this multiple-case study investigated how leaders within select Catholic high schools in the United States understand and communicate their institutional identity within a market context and how their institutional identity – and an institution's related practices and discourse – can be observed to be influenced by market forces.

Research findings revealed that select Catholic high schools in the United States rely on their religious charism to inform their institutional identity and mission while also viewing themselves as inclusive faith-based communities. However, both participating institutions shifted their practices and discourse to accommodate market forces such as

parental and donor demands to emphasis STEM programs and athletics. Similarly, both institutions shifted their practices and discourse to align and realign with their mission. For example, new financial practices were evaluated based on each school's mission to serve the poor and marginalized and each institution wants to provide tuition assistance for as many families as possible. This study also found that the line between market and mission is blurry. Both market ideologies and Catholic ideologies were referenced by participants in both institutions even though the values, practices, and discourse within these two domains inherently conflict. Data evidenced that market forces can influence institutional practices and discourse. However, data also evidenced that market forces cannot explain the incredible commitment each school has to their students and the Catholic church. Research findings primarily indicate that there is a need for those who work in and for Catholic schools – at the institutional, local, and national levels – to clarify their discourse and become more aware of the language they use and why and when and how they use it. For example, the use of business analogies to explain Catholic schooling is inappropriate (Pring, 1996) and must be reevaluated as it conflicts with Catholic understandings of education (Catholic Education Service, 1992). More research is needed on this contemporary problem, especially within the United States.

If Catholic schools across the country continue to close, tuition costs continue to rise, and enrollment continues to decrease, a “national treasure” (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, para. 5) will either become extinct or look jarringly different from the contemporary, inclusive faith-based communities recognized and applauded for their educational value and contributions to American society and the Catholic Church.

Additionally, if the attempted colonization of Catholic schools – as well as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Catholic Education Association – by the values, practices, and discourse of market ideologies is not questioned or more critically examined by these institutions or their national leaders, Catholic schools – and the Catholic Church – run the risk of contradicting their own identity and mission while supporting ideologies that help hold up an inequitable educational system and an unjust economic culture. Contemporary conditions in America are beginning to demonstrate that market forces, market values, and the inexorable circumstances for institutional survival and financial solvency are threatening the historical mission and values and, indeed, the identity of Catholic schooling (Grace, 1995). The Catholic voice is essential to usurping the power of market ideologies and market forces over individual and institutional imaginaries (Dougherty & Sostre, 1992) because it offers an inspirational ideology (Bryk et al., 1993) and a Catholic imaginary (Hanvey & Carroll, 2005). Catholic schools with their religious identity and mission have a unique opportunity to offer the field of education, the country, and the Church a different language of schooling, a language that is not rooted in the market or in power and control but rather a language that inspires.

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Appendix A

Interview Consent Form

Fall 2018

Dear,

My name is Danielle Trollinger and I would like to invite you to participate in my research study conducted as part of the University of Portland School of Education doctoral program. You were selected as a participant in this study because you hold a leadership role at [name of institution omitted].

In this study I hope to learn how Catholic high schools conceptualize and communicate their institutional identity in a competitive educational market. Particularly, I hope to learn more about your school and your professional experience and opinion on this topic.

There are no foreseeable risks associated with this study. There are no costs associated with this project either. I cannot guarantee that you will personally receive any benefits from this research. However, I can guarantee that all information will remain confidential. Also, this study will be conducted in the hopes that it contributes to a body of research that helps inform, encourage, and celebrate Catholic high schools.

I will be interviewing multiple people from the leadership team including presidents, principals, board members, development/communication directors, and any mission/identity coordinators. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you or your institution will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Your participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your or your institution's relationship with the University of Portland or myself. If you decide to participate, you and your institution are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue use of your data at any time without penalty. Likewise, you are not required to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering and can communicate this during the interview at any time.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Danielle Trollinger at [contact information omitted], or Dr. Eric Anctil, Associate Professor at the University of Portland at [contact information omitted]. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Portland Institutional Review Board at irb@up.edu. You will be offered a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, that you and/or your institution may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation use of your data without penalty, that you will receive a copy of this form, and that you are not waiving any legal claims.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix B

Interview Guide

Date:
 Beginning and end time:
 Place:
 Participating Institution:
 Interviewee:
 Job Title:

Introduction to the interview

Thank you for taking the time to sit down with me today to discuss this topic. I worked as a teacher in a Catholic high school for six years so I am coming to you as someone with Catholic school experience who greatly appreciates the work that you do and the mission that you serve. I am also coming to you today as a doctoral student and not as a teacher. In trying to be an objective researcher, I want to know your experiences and perceptions without my preconceived ideas of experiences influencing this interview.

Please feel free to be honest, I will not be disclosing personal or institutional information in the final research document. Stop me at any time if you feel that something is unclear or you have a question or if you feel uncomfortable. If I ask a question you are not comfortable answering, please let me know, and we will skip to another question. To ensure that I have captured your perspective fairly, once I have completed my analysis of the interviews, I will send you the final analysis for you to review. Do you have any question before we begin?

Interview questions

1. Can you describe the Catholic character of your school?
 (i.e., What makes your Catholic school Catholic?)
2. What are some practices that an observer might see that demonstrate the Catholic identity of your school?
3. In what ways does your school communicate its Catholic identity?
4. What are some distinctive pressures you face as a Catholic school leader?
5. [*Reference Catholic School Crisis in other markets – Philadelphia, New York, Washington DC, Miami – and how there seems to be a tension there between living out the mission and what it will take to keep school doors open*] How do you perceive and respond to market pressures?
6. On a continuum of “Catholic high schools urgently need financial reforms to assist them in their mission” and “Catholic high schools don’t need financial reforms to assist them” where would you put your opinion?

Conclusion of the interview

Thank you again for taking the time to speak with me today. If you think of anything you would like to add or if you have any questions please contact me.

Appendix C

Field Notes Guide

(Adapted from Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Kruse & Louis, 2009; Strang, 2010)

Numeric Label and Title for Field Notes
Researcher: Place: Purpose: Date/Time:
School Layout
<i>*Insert sketch of building</i>
<div style="text-align: center;">Concrete Description [Bulk of Notes]</div> <p><i>*Reaction and interpretations set a part [placed in italics and bracketed with initials "OC" to indicate that these notes are the observer's comments]</i></p> <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do people see when they first enter the school building? • What evidence do they have that this is a Catholic school? • What type of objects are present throughout the school? • Where are the objects placed? • What physical evidence would an outside see about the value placed on these objects? • Is there any evidence, in the halls or other public places, that mission is valued? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If so, how is this communicated? ○ If not, what is valued? • Is there any evidence, in the halls or other public places, that the school's Catholic identity is valued? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If so, how is this communicated? ○ If not, what is valued? • Is there any evidence, in the halls or other public places, that student work is valued? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If so, what type of student work? ○ If not, what is valued? • Is there any evidence in the halls or other public places, that student activities are valued? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If so, what kind of student activities? ○ If not, what is valued?

- What communication tools are being used to communicate institutional identity?
- How else are these communication tools being used?
- What institutional practices are highlighted or evident symbolically throughout the school?
- What evidence do they have that this is a place where adults and students are learning?
- How do adults treat students in the hallways?
- How do students react to their exchanges with adults?
- How do students react to each other in the hallways?

Appendix D

Index for Documents and Artifacts

[illegible]

Appendix E
Excerpts from Codebook

Code	Description
Market vs. Mission	Referring to cultural trends conflicting with educational goals. Sub-codes include STEM vs. liberal arts and sports vs. academics.
Catholic Schools vs. Public Schools	Negative comparison made or the competition between Catholic and public high schools is referenced.
Catholic Schools vs. Catholic Schools	Negative comparison made or the competition between Catholic high schools is referenced.
Individuals vs. Catholic Schools	Indicates tension between individual agents and the leadership team within the participating high schools. Preliminary codes include: parents vs. schools, donors vs. schools, board vs. administration, business managers vs. administration, bishop vs. students.
Institutions vs. Catholic Schools	Issues of power and control between larger institutions and the participating high schools. Preliminary codes include: Church vs. Catholic Schools, Archdiocese vs. Catholic schools, universities vs. Catholic schools, testing companies vs. Catholic schools, change vs. no change.
Inclusive vs. Exclusive	References made about the inclusive mission of the Catholic Church and Catholic schools. Preliminary codes

	include: Catholics vs. Non-Catholics and Religious vs. Laity.
“have to have”	When participants express the belief that they have to have or follow a certain practice in order to be successful and survive as an institution (e.g., have to have donors, have to have business model, have to follow the Bishop’s curriculum).
Business values	Used when participants express support for or normalize key concepts from the business domain. Sub-codes include: “competitive advantage”, “return on investment”, “business model”, “profit”, and prioritizes market needs.
Catholic values	Used when participants express support for or normalize concepts from the Catholic domain. Sub-codes include: “love”, “respect”, “care and concern”, “educate the whole person”, “hope”, “human dignity”, “social justice”, “faith”, “Jesus/God.”
Business practices	Used when participants express support or normalize key practices from the business domain. Sub-codes include: “market segmentation”, “find our niche”, word of mouth vs. marketing, and “market distinguishers.”
Catholic practices	Used when participants express support or normalize key practices from the Catholic domain. Sub-codes include: “we pray together”, “mass”, “service”, and “retreats.”

“Charism”	Refers to school’s founding religious order and their embodiment of Catholicism.
Supports the common good	Used when participants mention the common good and when they express a desire for collaboration over competition with public and/or other Catholic schools.
Education is an experience	Used when education is identified as an experience. Preliminary codes include: “prepare for life”, experience vs. academic achievement, and moral development vs. academic success.
Community is prioritized	Used when human relationships and interactions are highlighted. Preliminary codes include: “we are a family”, “we are a community”, word of mouth vs. marketing, and emphasizes relationships.

Appendix F

Member Check Email

Dear,

The analysis of your interview has been completed and attached you will find a draft for you to review. My goal in the analysis of each high school was to honor each participants' story and to keep institutional anonymity a priority in my analysis.

Please contact me if you have questions or concerns about the data analysis. Thank you again, for your willingness to be involved in my study.

Sincerely,

Danielle N. Trollinger
University of Portland
Doctoral Fellow and Candidate
[contact information omitted]

Appendix G

Member Check Anonymity Update

Dear,

It has been brought to my attention that some participants may wish to omit their direct job title in addition to their names in my study's research findings. My solution is to place each participant in one of three categories based on the information you shared with me about your professional background as well as your official job description. These categories are as follows:

1. Administrator
2. Business Director
3. Board Member

By being grouped in one of these three categories, your direct job title and name are both omitted while still offering readers insight into a variety of perspectives on institutional identity and the type of leadership roles that were accounted for in this study.

I have included the group you have individually been assigned in this email (see below). If you do not agree with this grouping or are uncomfortable with this solution, please let me know and I will revise the way I present my research findings. Your anonymity is my main priority and concern.

I appreciate the extra effort you are extending by choosing to participate in this step. If you choose to participate and would prefer to discuss this topic via phone conversation, my number is: [contact information omitted].

Sincerely,

Danielle N. Trollinger