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Factors That Influence Latino Parents' Selection of Schools

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Factors That Influence Latino Parents' Selection of Schools

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This study investigated the relationships between Latino American Catholic, societal and educational experiences, and school selection, and how they differ for Latino parents who have their children in a Catholic school, and those who do not. The historical context of the Latino experience places their current Catholic, societal and educational experience within its cultural context.

Data for this study were obtained from 748 Latino parents from the four Diocese of Tucson metropolitan vicariates, with children enrolled in either a parish religious education program, a Catholic school or both. Participants responded anonymously to 57 items on the Parental Selection of Schools. The survey measured Latino American Catholic, societal and educational experiences.

Through examination of 11 predictor variables on school selection, the analysis indicates a positive relationship between Latino American Catholic, societal and educational experience and school selection. The greatest difference between Latino parents with children in Catholic schools, and those with children not in Catholic schools was in income, followed by liturgical cultural sensitivity and Spanish language preference. Compared with Latino parents who did not have children in a Catholic school, the Latino parents with children in a Catholic school were more likely not to have a high preference for the use of Spanish in the Catholic liturgy, nor in everyday speaking, thinking and

praying. On the other hand, Latino parents who did not have children in a Catholic school were more likely to have a higher preference for the use of Spanish in the Catholic liturgy, everyday speaking, thinking and praying.

The importance of the Spanish language in Latinos' experiences of American Catholicism, American society, and American education and its relationship to school selection must be taken into account by Church leadership if it is to continue its educational mission to the Latino community, while ensuring a future for the American Catholic Church. The findings from this study provide information that gives support to Catholic Church leadership in meeting its pressing responsibility to embrace the growing Latino population; a community that has such an important role to play in the future of the Catholic Church in the United States.

This dissertation by Barbara L. Monsegur fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in Catholic Educational Leadership approved by Merylann J. Schuttloffel, Ph.D., as Director, and by John J. Convey, Ph.D., and Leonard DeFiore, Ph.D. as Readers.

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Leonard DeFiore, Ph.D., Reader

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mom whose dream of going on to college was not possible for a young Latina of her time, yet she instilled in her daughters the value of a good education, encouraging both of us and making many sacrifices throughout our educational journeys. This dissertation is also dedicated to my sister Maria, and my Sisters in religious community; resilient Latinas who having reached their educational goals, and continue to ensure that others are given educational opportunities. Their unending love, support, patience and pride in my accomplishments have been a gift.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) affirms that “Catholic schools are often the Church’s most effective contribution to those families who are poor and disadvantaged, especially those in poor inner city neighborhoods and rural areas” (2005, p. 19). The residents of these poor inner city neighborhoods tend to be minorities. In urban school districts, African American and Latino students often make up the majority and in some cases the entirety of the student population (Scott, 2005). One in three Latinos are under the age of 15 and most live in urban areas (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2004). Greene and Forster (2005) found that only 52% of all Hispanic students from the public high school class of 2001 graduated and of those only 16% left high school college-ready.

Between 2000 and 2006 Latinos accounted for one-half of the nation’s growth, at 24.3%; more than three times the growth rate of the total United States population. As of July 6, 2006, 44.3 million of the U.S. population was Latino, reaching 14.8% of the total population (United States Census Bureau, 2009). In 2006, Latinos were about half of all public school students in California, more than 40% of enrollments in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, and between 20% and 40% of all public school students in Nevada, Colorado, Illinois, Florida and New York. “Overall, [Latinos] are the largest minority group in the public schools in 22 states” (Fry & Gonzales, 2008, p. ii). In 2007, 67% of

all Latinos enrolled in K-12 schools lived in just five states, California, Texas, Florida, New York and Arizona (United States Census Bureau, 2007). The American Community Survey (ACS) data reveals that the top ten states with the greatest change in Latino school enrollment in 2007 were California, Texas, Florida, Arizona, Illinois, Nevada, Georgia, North Carolina, Colorado and Washington (United States Census Bureau, 2009).

Latinos in the United States suffer from social, educational and economic disadvantages, and remain the most undereducated major segment of the U.S. population (Aspiazu, Bauer, & Spillett, 1998). Current research finds that Mexican Americans, who constitute the majority of Latinos in the United States, are the most educationally at risk (Ready, 2008; San Miguel & Valencia, 1998; Sikkink & Hernandez, 2003; Telles & Ortiz, 2008). Catholic schools have a history of success in reducing the achievement gap between Black and White students. Catholic schools have yet to do the same for Latino students. Unless progress toward narrowing the achievement gap for Latino students is not greatly accelerated, the enormous potential contribution of Latinos to the United States' economic and cultural life as well as the Catholic Church will not be realized (Ready, 2008). At the beginning of this millennium 40% of the US Catholic population was Latino (USCCB, 2004). Presently 68% of Latinos identify themselves as Roman Catholics (Lugo, 2007); yet Catholic school enrollment for Latinos is only 3% (The Notre Dame Task Force on the Participation of Latino Children and Families in Catholic Schools, 2009).

The median family income for Latino children enrolled in K-12 education has declined slightly over the 1970-2007 period (United States Census Bureau, 2007). However, holding income constant, Latinos have a substantially lower private school enrollment. The Latino private school enrollment rate fell 59% between 1980 and 2007 (United States Census Bureau, 2007). There has been massive enrollment decline among middle class Latino families, falling nearly 60%, and among families with incomes in excess of \$75,000. All other race/ethnic groups have increased in private school enrollment rates except Latinos (United States Census Bureau, 2007). The cost of Catholic school tuition is one of the factors that predicts Latino enrollment, but as noted by this data, it is not the only one. This study examines the relationship between the Latino experience of the American Catholic Church, American society and the American educational system and Latino parental selection of schools.

Unfortunately, “public education has historically failed to deliver the promise of a quality education for Hispanic Students” (USCCB, 2004, p. 62). Despite sixty years of political and legal battles to improve the education of Latinos, they continue to have the lowest average educational levels and the highest high school dropout rates among major ethnic and racial groups (Telles & Ortiz, 2008). Students in religious schools however, continue to outperform their counterparts in nonreligious schools on virtually every measure of academic achievement, and the academic gaps that commonly exist between Latinos and White students are reduced (Jeynes, 2002).

The major impetus for establishing Catholic schools in the nineteenth century was to preserve the faith by evangelizing children and youth (Youniss & McLellan, 1999). In

a report prepared for the USCCB's Committee on Hispanic Affairs, the Bishops were urged to "declare that education attainment level of Hispanics is a significant and important priority in the Church" (USCCB, 2004, p. 6). Population projections, education attainment levels, and the income potential among Latinos are not consistent with a community that is large and will have the responsibility to respond as leaders of both the Church and the country (USCCB, 2004).

Unfortunately, Latinos have chronically low levels of educational achievement comparable to Appalachian residents, whose low levels of educational achievement has hurt the economic competitiveness of states in the Appalachian region for decades (Waits, Campbell, Gau, Jacobs, Rex, & Hess, 2006). The poor record of public education with Latinos makes it increasingly clear that Catholic schools hold an important role in the preparation of Latino Catholic leaders (Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003). However, Latino children are not enrolling in Catholic schools. The Catholic school not only safeguards the Church's presence in the modern world, but it is the best expression of educational ministry to youth (Maher, Jr., 2005). This study proposes to examine parent decision-making that typically leads to the under representation of Latino children in Catholic elementary schools.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Catholic Church in the United States has undergone a profound demographic transformation with Latinos soon comprising the majority of Catholics in the U.S. In spite of this, Latino children in the United States are not attending Catholic schools.

Although Latinos will soon make up the majority of Catholics in the United States, Catholic affiliation among Latinos has been declining over the last few decades, and continues to do so. As noted by Telles and Ortiz, (2008) and Lugo (2007), conversion to other religions, particularly to evangelical Protestantism, has drawn down the number of second, third and fourth generation Latino Catholics. U.S. born Latinos are not identifying with the American Catholic Church. Moreover, the rising numbers of elementary school-aged Latinos within the United States does not correspond with the low numbers of these children enrolled in Catholic schools. These statistics are problematic for both ecclesial and educational reasons.

This dissertation study examines the Latino American Catholic experience, the Latino American societal experience and the Latino American educational experience and their relationship to Latino parents' selection of schools. The Church and its schools face the challenge of attracting, serving and being engaged by the growing Latino population, as charged by the USCCB's statement, *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* (2005). The Catholic Church would benefit from identifying what aspects of Latino parents' experiences influence their Catholic identity. Further, it may be useful to determine if Latino parents who identify closely with the American Catholic Church are more likely to send their children to Catholic elementary schools.

There have been studies on Catholic school choice at the higher education level (Ball, Reay, & David, 2002; Raphael, Pressley, & Kane, 2003) and on family stability and economic stability, as influencing students' academic performance (Tapia, 2004), but

studies have not specifically addressed the question of what influences Latino parental school selection at the Catholic elementary school level. There is no consensus as to what fundamentally motivates, influences and informs Latino parental selection of schools and enrollment (Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of this research is to determine if there is a relationship between the Latino parental experience of the American Catholic Church, society and education and their selection of schools for their elementary school-age children. Therefore, this study focuses on the correlations between Latino parents' experience with the American Catholic Church, their experience with American society and their experience with American education, and the relationship these experiences have with Latino parental selection of Catholic schools for their elementary school-age children.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As stated by Buetow, (1988) "The Catholic school is, in fact, an ecclesial base community. Ecclesial means that the school is the starting point for full participation in the life of the Church" (p. 14). The Catholic Church has an obligation to serve the diverse needs of the ever increasing Latino Catholic community; needs that include education. The Catholic school, because of its very nature, forms future Catholics, while providing an academic education.

By ascertaining what experiences have a relationship with Latino parents' selection of schools, this study provides church leadership with information needed to better address the question of why an ever-growing Latino American Catholic population is not enrolled in Catholic schools. Leadership would also benefit from more sensitive indicators on the degree to which Latinos identify with the American Catholic Church, and why many are leaving the Catholic Church. Additionally, the high concentration of Latino Catholics, who are predominantly of Mexican descent, creates a unique contribution of the study. The findings of this study provide information that will help increase options for parents when selecting schools for their elementary school-age children, and give support to the Church's pressing responsibility to embrace the Latino population; a community that due to its demographic magnitude will have an important role to play in the future of the Church in the United States.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The questions of this study are as follows:

1. Is there a relationship between the Latino American Catholic experience and parents' selection of schools?
2. Is there a relationship between Latino parents' experiences with American society in terms of acculturation and socioeconomic status and their selection of schools?
3. Is there a relationship among school culture, school satisfaction and accessibility of Catholic schools and Latino parents' selection of schools?

4. What is the most important predictor of Latino parents' school selection, and to what extent does income play a role in this?

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The three hypotheses of this study are as follows:

- I. Latino parents who identify with the Catholic Church, as it functions culturally in the United States, are more likely than other Latino parents to select Catholic schools for their children.
- II. Latino parents who report a positive experience of U.S. society are more likely than other Latino parents to select Catholic schools for their children.
- III. Latino parents who have more positive views of the U.S. educational system are more likely than other Latino parents to select Catholic schools for their children.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

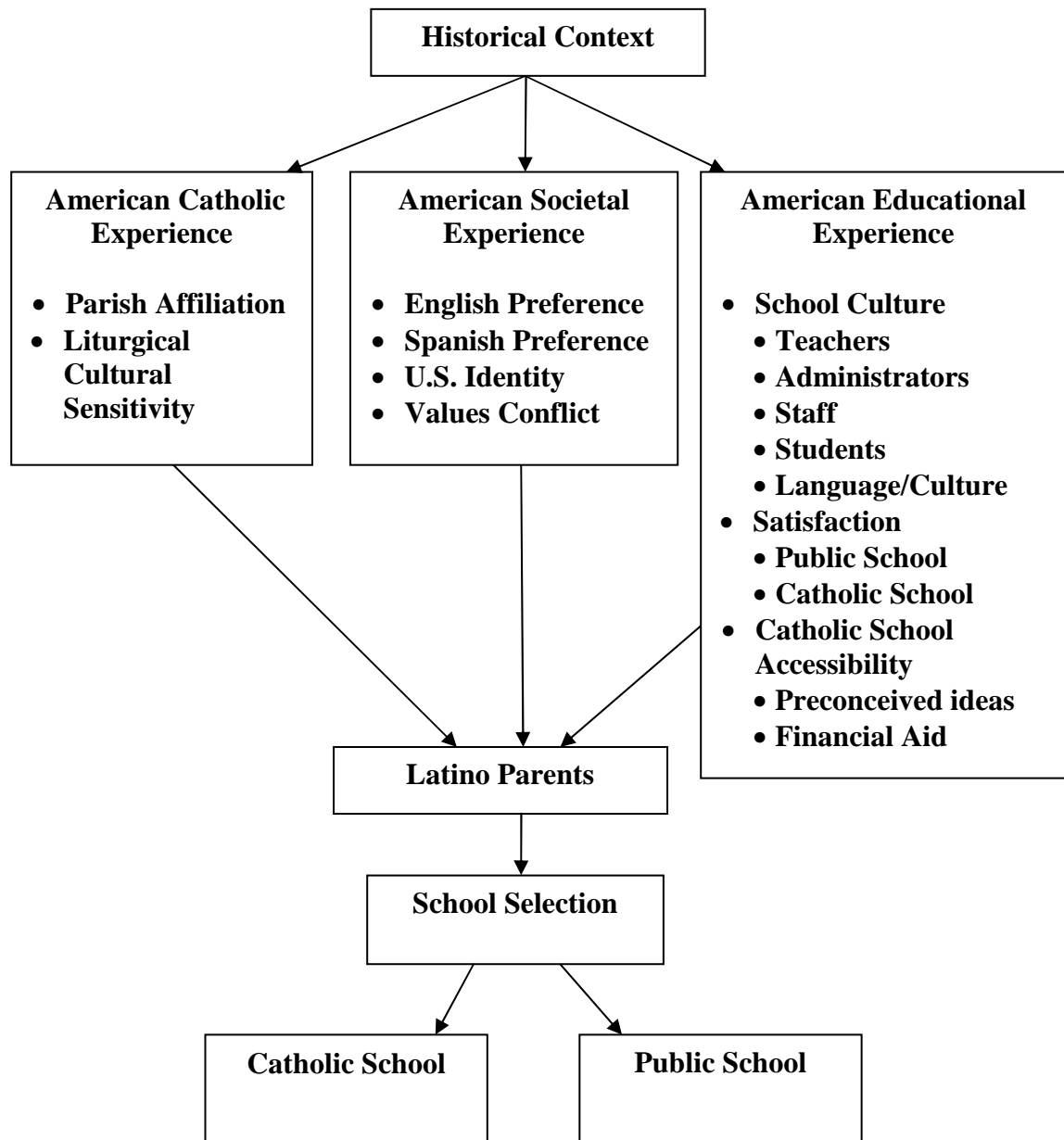
The conceptual framework of this study builds on previous research of factors that influence parental selection of schools and the cultural sociology of Latino Americans. This study focuses on the distinctive factors of Latino American parents' experience of the American Catholic Church, their experiences with American society and with the American educational system. The historical context of the Latino experience places their current Catholic, societal and educational experience within its cultural context (Pantoja, 1998; Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003; Telles & Ortiz, 2008), and impacts how the Latino American Catholic experience, societal experience and educational experience

relates to school selection. The American Catholic experience encompasses religious affiliation and cultural values (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998; Figueroa Deck, 1993). The American societal experience encompasses parents' socioeconomic status, their level of acculturation and parents' level of education (Fitzgerald, 2006; Telles & Ortiz, 2008; Velez-Ibañez, 2004). Finally, the Latino experience with the American educational system encompasses school culture, school satisfaction and the accessibility of Catholic schools (Barajas & Ronnkvist, 2007; Crosnoe, 2005; Watt, 1999a, 1999b).

The literature suggests that Latinos are predominantly Catholic and have consistently been underserved by the public school system. However, low numbers of Latinos are enrolled in Catholic elementary schools. At this time, no empirical evidence exists to substantiate the reasons for this. This study aims to fill the gap in the literature. Figure 1 represents the conceptual framework for this study. The representation shows that Latino parents' experiences of American Catholicism, American society and the American educational system predict Latino parents' selection of schools.

Figure 1

A Conceptual Framework of Latino Parental School Selection Influenced by Parental Experiences of Church, Society and School



Latino American Catholic Experience

Traditionally, Latinos are overwhelmingly Catholic. However, the historical record shows the Mexican ethnic Catholic experience is quite different from the European. Alan Figueroa Deck (1993), a theologian and nationally known expert in Latino culture and ministry, and social scientists, Diaz-Stevens (1987), Pantoja, (2003) and Stevens-Arroyo (1998, 2003) found that in the past, as Latinos began to introduce aspects of their devotions that had few, if any parallels to the European-American experience, Catholicism in the United States became resistant to the Latino Catholic tradition. Religion in the early nineteenth century became a means of Americanization, with the Catholic Church and its newly imported European clergy imposing an ‘immigrant’ paradigm, telling Latinos they should imitate an immigrant’s gratitude for opportunity in a new home (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998). “There has been a historic clash between the style and the spirit of the Spanish-speaking church and the style and spirit of the English-speaking church” (Figueroa Deck, 1993, p. 28). This study examines the existing relationship between these two different styles of church and the influence it has on Latino parental selection of schools.

Latino American Societal Experience

The Latino experience with American society has not always been a positive one. Beginning with the 1830s, when Anglo Americans began to dominate in northern Mexican lands, followed by the 1840s, when a war was launched to occupy these lands, Mexicans were explicitly depicted as an inferior race. Thirty-eight years after the results

of the University of California Los Angeles' (UCLA) Mexican American Study Project were published, Telles and Ortiz (2008), extended the study, tracking the progress of the initial population studied. They found that Mexican Americans clearly received inferior treatment in education and elsewhere compared to other European immigrants in the southwest. "The societal treatment of Mexican Americans has, at least historically, rested on a scientific and popularly accepted idea of race that has legitimized the subordination of nonwhites throughout the Western world, at least since the early nineteenth century" (Telles & Ortiz, 2008, p. 24). This societal treatment is a documented facet of the Latino American societal experience.

Hurtado-Ortiz & Gauvain, (2007) found that "family processes play an important role in the academic achievement, aspirations, and attainment of Mexican American youth, and particular factors, such as parents' educational experiences, family income, and acculturation are critical in this regard" (p. 190). Landale and Oropesa (2007) noted that culture also provides criteria for deciding one's preferences and values, for deciding what to do about things, and how to go about doing things. In other words, culture influences what choices parents make. This dissertation study is consistent with Hurtado-Ortiz and Gauvain's (2007) and Landale and Oropesa's (2007) observations of the role family processes play in parents' selection of schools for their children.

This dissertation study first looks at the Latino experience of American Catholicism. American Catholics vary widely in how central being Catholic is to their personal identities. The more central being Catholic is to one, the more important it will be in influencing life decisions (D'Antonio, Davidson, Hoge, & Meyer, 2001). Today's

American Catholic Church is in competition with secular, civic and political perspectives, as well as other religious perspectives. The Catholic Church is in competition with the following religious perspectives: (a) mainline Protestantism, especially those that resemble Catholicism, (b) evangelical Protestantism, including Pentecostals, and (c) non-Christian worldviews (D'Antonio et al., 2001). Of these religious perspectives, the one having the most influence on the Catholic identity of Latino Americans is evangelical Protestantism (Leal, 2004; Lugo, 2007; Perl, Greely, & Gray, 2006). As a result of this influence, more and more Latino Americans are leaving the Catholic Church to join different evangelical Protestant groups.

Latino American Educational Experience

Latinos, some descendants of the early Spanish-Mexican colonists who occupied positions of real power and prestige, were the original settlers in the Southwest, dating back to the sixteenth century. Traditionally, "Catholic schooling was very much a part of Mexican culture in the southwest before the U.S. conquest. After 1848, it expanded significantly, as the Church proceeded to strengthen its role in the emerging U.S. social order" (San Miguel & Valencia, 1998, p. 355). For the most part, Catholic schools took a stand in favor of Mexican Americans and their cultural heritage, in the process of teaching students U.S. social, economic, and political ideals (San Miguel & Valencia, 1998).

Past Latino experiences with U.S. public schools were not as positive as the Catholic school experience. Latino students have experienced a long history of

educational problems, including segregation, below-grade enrollment, high attrition rates, and high rates of illiteracy (Tapia, 2004). Mexican American education from 1930 to 1960 was characterized by both the rise of school segregation and the inferior nature of such schooling (San Miguel & Valencia, 1998). The historical context continues to impact the Latino American educational experience.

Presently eighty-four percent of Latino public school students were born in the U.S. and over sixty-nine percent of these are of Mexican origin (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). However, Latinos continue to be targets of prejudice, racial stereotyping, and vicious discrimination (Telles & Ortiz, 2008). The percentage of Latino students in American schools has more than tripled since 1972, accounting for nearly one in five students by 2003. In spite of their long history and demographic power, Latino parents are more likely than those of the dominant culture to have a skeptical, ambivalent, and potentially adversarial stance toward public school programs that have historically failed their communities (Auerbach, 2007). “By the year 2030, the number of Latino youth and children will be double that of the population of 1989” (Tapia, H., 2004, p. 1).

The Latino immigrant experience of Catholic schooling in their countries of origin also continues to impact the Latino American educational experience. For most immigrants, Catholic schools in their country of origin are only an option for the wealthy and elite. In Latin American countries, Catholic schools are rarely an option for poorer or even middle class children. More often than not, this perception of Catholic schools continues once Latinos immigrate to the U.S., no matter how many years they have been in this country (Gonzalez Montoya, 2006).

Part of the Latino educational experience with the American school system is also formed by the school culture children and their parents encounter. School culture is composed of the attitudes and beliefs of teachers, administrators and staff, the rules and norms to which school members adhere, and the relationships that exist among its members (Ortega Parra, 2007). Neihart (2006) characterizes welcoming learning environments as places that address identity and learning goals concurrently; normalize conflicts students experience, include cultural brokers and provide direct instruction in social skills for leadership. In order to gain a better understanding of a school's culture, "one must study teachers within schools, rather than isolated teachers, in order to gain a better understanding of the school and its environment" (Watt, 1999a, p. 31).

Students and their families are also an important element in the make-up of the school's culture. Crosnoe's (2005) study of the experiences of Latinos in the American educational system found that these children attend schools with higher percentages of minority students than their peers from other minority populations. In a study on Catholic schools on the Texas-Mexico border, Watt (1999a) found that a reciprocal relationship between the Catholic school and the family exists in schools with a large number of Latino children. Crosnoe (2005) determined that the most successful Latino students attend small, private schools, with high academic expectations, and with at least some Latinos on the teaching staff. However, the percentage of Latino students in such schools is extremely low. Finally, Fairlie (2002) confirmed that White and Latino schoolchildren may differ in their ability to attend private schools because of high tuition costs and proximity. Students in private schools tend to come from families with better-educated

parents who have substantially higher incomes than those in the public schools (Goldhaber, 1997).

In making choices for their higher education, some minority students were influenced by their feeling that at least they would not have to defend or assert the value of their ethnic identity. Students interviewed also took the ethnic mix of the universities they considered applying to into account in their decision-making (Ball et al., 2002). Also at the higher educational level, researchers Raphael, Pressley, and Kane (2003) observed that while at Notre Dame, many Latino students experienced some socio-cultural problems, and a few encountered memorable stereotyping. These researchers concluded that one of the most important implications of their study was noting how “the availability of Hispanic experiences for Latino students at a university can make a huge difference in the quality of their experience” (Raphael et al., 2003, p. 216). This study proposes that these findings can be applied to parental selection of elementary schools.

At present Latinos compose more than 35% of all Catholics in the United States. Latinos have contributed 71% of the growth of the Catholic Church in the United States since 1960, and more than 50% of all Catholics in the United States under age 25 are of Latino descent (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2009). Nationally Latinos comprise 70% of practicing Catholics under the age of 35 in the United States and the U.S. Census Bureau (2009) predicts that Latino populations will continue to grow dramatically. Despite this and data that demonstrates convincingly that Catholic schools are especially effective at closing the achievement gap for minority students, Latino parents are not enrolling their children in Catholic elementary schools.

LIMITATIONS

This study presumes that there is a relationship between the Latino experiences of the American Catholic Church, society and education and parents' decisions, and can be used to examine school selection. The first limitation of this study was the reliance on self-identifying these experiences, and the extent of their influence on school selection through a Likert-type scale. A second limitation is that only Latino parents who have their children enrolled in parish religious education programs or in Catholic elementary schools are surveyed. The researcher chose not to gather data from other individuals who no longer were, or may never have had their children enrolled in either a parish religious education program or a Catholic elementary school. This other population may never have had a vested interest in their children's faith education, or it may be so minimal as to produce different results. A third limitation is that the sample used was not random, making it more difficult to address the hypotheses and questions directly. Due to the unique geographical area of the study, the focus is on Mexican Americans, Due to the fact that there are many other Latino groups in the U.S., a fourth limitation is that the findings of this study may not be generalizable with other groups of Latinos or another region of the country.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The following terms have been defined to clarify their use in this study:

Acculturation: Refers to changes where one group acquires some of the characteristics, values and behaviors of the other without completely giving up its own values and

behaviors. (Fitzgerald, 2006; Monzo & Ruda, 2006; Ortega Parra, 2007). As used in this study, acculturation is assessed in part by Latino parents' Catholic experience in terms of cultural values of language, symbolism and devotion.

Assimilation: (*Assimilation and Deculturation* are used interchangeably), refers to the social process by which immigrants and their descendants may become integrated with and more like members of the host society. It involves losing one's primary culture and becoming similar to those of the target culture, through prolonged exposure and socialization to them and their institutions (Ortega Parra, 2007; Telles & Ortiz, 2008).

Cultural capital: Refers to the language and socialization practices that cultural and language minority families develop (Gonzalez Montoya, 2006).

Ethnic Identity: Refers to a sense of group or collective identity based on a person's perception of a shared common racial heritage with a particular racial group (Bennette, 2006).

Financial capital: Refers to the equivalent of income or wealth (Gonzalez Montoya, 2006).

First generation: Refers to persons born outside The United States, its territories and possessions. These persons can be naturalized U.S. citizens, legal immigrants or undocumented immigrants.

Hispanic: (*Hispanic and Latino* are used interchangeably), refers to a diverse population of individuals and or groups. Under this rubric are people who descend from inhabitants of Mexico, countries of Central and South America, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. Most of the population that the U.S. government considers Hispanic is Mexican

American. Hispanic, Mexican American and Latino are used interchangeably in this study. (Hernandez, 2006; Ortega Parra, 2007).

Household cluster consists of a core household of middle-aged individuals (grandparents) and a number of related but independent households (adult offspring and then children) (Tapia, 2004).

Latina/o: Refers to a person of Hispanic descent. Latino identity is not, however, a hard and fixed reality. Mexican Americans are still the largest component of the Latino population (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998; Ortega Parra, 2007; Telles & Ortiz, 2008).

Language-minority: refers to Latinos whose first language is Spanish, and continue to struggle with the English language.

Latino Homelands: refers to Spanish settlements in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Florida. For the purpose of this study, the *Latino Homelands*, with the exception of Florida, are also referred to as the *Southwest*.

Mexican American: a U.S. citizen either born or naturalized or a permanent resident of Mexican descent (Ortega Parra, 2007).

Mobility: refers to a student transferring from one school to another, within or outside the school system, because of family relocation (Gonzalez Montoya, 2006).

Racial socialization: refers to “the process by which parents shape their children’s attitudes and perceptions of race and how their race fits into the various social contexts that they are a part of and may come in contact with” (Bennette, 2006, p. 109).

Religious affiliation: Refers to a person's identification with specific denominations or churches independently of the strength of the ties to them (Pantoja, 1998).

Religious commitment: Refers to having both an external and an internal component (i.e. actions such as attending church, being involved in religious youth groups) as well as self-perception. (Jeynes, 2002).

School belonging: Refers to how students perceive the social context of schooling and how they view their place in the school structure (Stevens, Hamman, & Olivarez, 2007).

Second generation: Refers to persons born in the United States with at least one foreign-born parent; U.S. citizen by birth.

Social capital: refers to the advantages that some individuals have because of their or their family's location in or relation to social networks.

Third and higher generations: Refers to persons born in the United States with both parents also born in the United States (Fry & Gonzales, 2008; Landale & Oropesa, 2007).

Vicariate: refers to a form of territorial jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic Church.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, literature that is pertinent to the Latino American Catholic experience, societal experience, and educational experience, is reviewed. The literature that describes the Latino situation places their present experiences within their historical-cultural context (Pantoja, 1998; Telles & Ortiz, 2008). Existing literature on the Latino American Catholic experience focuses on demographics and the role religion plays within the Latino culture. The literature on the Latino American societal experience examines how these relate to student motivation and academic achievement. Studies that examine the Latino American educational experience demonstrate how public education fails Latinos, and yet they continue to be satisfied with public education. Finally, research does not address the question of how the Latino American experiences of Catholicism, society and education relate to school selection. That gap in the literature will be addressed by this dissertation.

There are four sections reviewed in the chapter. The first section explores literature on the historical context of Latino experiences in the United States. This not only places the Latino American experiences with church, society and education into context, but is examined as having an ongoing influence with all three conceptual strands of this study. The second section in this chapter reviews literature that examines the Latino American Catholic experience in terms of religious affiliation and the religious cultural values of language and devotions. Literature on the Latino American societal experience relating to parents' level of acculturation, their socioeconomic status and their

level of education (Fitzgerald, 2006; Telles & Ortiz, 2008; Velez-Ibañez, 2004) is reviewed in the third section. The fourth section examines literature on the Latino American educational experience focusing on school culture, school satisfaction and accessibility (Barajas & Ronnkvist, 2007; Crosnoe, 2005, 2004; Watt, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c). Each of the sections in this chapter, Catholic experience, societal experience and educational experience, includes a conceptual framework for its corresponding strand that integrates to form the over-arching conceptual framework for this study. The literature in this chapter situates the study's conceptual framework within the theories of previous research. The critique also presents questions posed by scholars and gaps in the literature addressed by this study.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The literature addressing the Latino historical situation provides a context in which to better examine the Latino American experience within Catholicism, society and education, noting that the Mexican American Catholic experience and the European-American Catholic experience are quite different. When looking at the Latino experience of Catholicism, society and education in the United States, there is the danger of describing Latino misfortunes as 'racism', a term better suited to trace the effects of slavery. The danger is the tendency "to reduce the Latino history as a 'brown' version of the 'black' experience, with the implication that Latinos 'suffer less' because their color is lighter" (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998, p. 83). Similarly, assuming the European American Catholic experience and the Mexican American Catholic experience

is the same can also be dangerous. European Americans left Europe by conscious decision. Mexican Americans became foreigners in their own homeland by force of military might. This condition of conquest is reflected in Latino religion, giving it an identity with a cultural dimension, which includes the maintenance of language and tradition (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998). As previously asserted, Latinos are overwhelmingly Catholic. Historically, as Latinos began to introduce aspects of their devotions that had few if any parallels to the European American experience, Catholicism in the United States became resistant to the Latino Catholic tradition (Figueroa Deck, 1993; Pantoja, 1998; Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003).

Soon after the U.S. conquest of the Southwest, the Catholic Church built schools throughout this region to strengthen the religious tenets promoted prior to U.S. annexation (San Miguel & Valencia, 1998). After annexation however, religion in the early nineteenth century became a means of Americanization. Catholic schools, hospitals, convents and seminaries were built and provided services for English speakers, but Spanish speakers were expected to raise their own funds to build churches, schools and hospitals (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998; Figueroa Deck, 1993; Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003). Additionally, if Latinos complained, “the newly imported Catholic clergy told Latinos that they should imitate an immigrant’s gratitude for opportunity in a new home rather than nurture resentment against an invading U.S. imperialism” (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998, p. 106). The nineteenth century Catholic Church in the United States imposed an immigrant paradigm upon Latino Catholics in the Southwest when in reality Latinos were a conquered people, more like the Irish conquered by the

British or the Poles defeated by Prussians, rather than the Irish immigrants in Boston or Polish immigrants in Chicago (Gutierrez, 2004).

Despite Mexican American distrust of formal church policies and practices, they strongly supported the building of Catholic schools because for the most part, Catholic schools took a stand in favor of Mexican Americans and their cultural heritage in the process of teaching them U.S. social, economic and political ideals. “Although Latinos may have seemed like foreigners who were seeking the same immigrant dream as the Irish, Italians and Poles, they were a new kind of migrant; the conquered peoples of America [born in the U.S., some going back nine generations]” (Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003, p. 263). Unlike European American Catholicism, which was brought with the immigrants, Catholicism in the Southwest was already established in both parishes and dioceses when the Southwest became a U.S. Territory. And, like the Spanish colonialism that strove to subjugate the natives by replacing their religions with Catholicism, the United States used North American religious institutions to also subjugate Latinos during the nineteenth century. This may explain why so many Latinos in the United States have racial attitudes, even about the Catholic Church, that are different from those held in both Latin American and among other U.S. Catholics (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998). “Unlike [European] immigrant groups, Hispanics did not come with a large number of priests” (Figueroa Deck, 1993, p. 28). Those serving Latino communities were overwhelmingly European priests, and “... an Americanizing attitude penalized the church’s effectiveness in preserving the faith” (Gutierrez, 2004, p. 307). The literature in this section clearly outlines the justification for examining the

Latino American Catholic experience, societal experience and educational experience without losing sight of its historical context.

LATINO AMERICAN CATHOLIC EXPERIENCE

The first conceptual strand in this research study is Latino American Catholic experience. “Aside from language, perhaps the cultural trait most associated with Mexican Americans has been Catholicism, which also serves as a marker distinguishing Mexican Americans from most other ethnic groups” (Telles & Ortiz, 2008, p. 199). “Religion among Latinos continues to be the social vehicle that transports the majority of our people through the moments of joy and tragedy that constitute for families and individuals life’s rites of passage” (Gutierrez, 2004, p. 347). The relationship between the Latino American Catholic experience and school selection has not previously been researched. This study fills in the gap in the literature by studying this relationship.

CONCEPTUAL STRAND FOR LATINO AMERICAN CATHOLIC EXPERIENCE

In this study, the first conceptual strand of Latino American Catholic experience is based on theologian Figueroa Deck’s (1993) research and the work of sociologists who study Latinos and the role religion plays in their lives (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998; Gutierrez, 2004; Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003; Telles & Ortiz, 2008). The U.S. Catholic Church is at a pivotal moment in its history. Figueroa Deck (1993) found the following:

The Catholic Church is going through a very profound transition in the United States. One of the most important aspects of that transition is the growth of the Hispanic communities and the way the Church will relate to those communities. (p. 27)

Literature on the Latino American Catholic experience is limited to Latino Americans' historical experience of church, current demographics on Latino religious affiliation and religious cultural values that are very much a part of Latino culture. There is a gap in the literature in regard to the relationship between the Latino American Catholic experience and parents' selection of schools. The factors that form the first major strand of Latino American Catholic experience in this study are: religious affiliation and the religious cultural values of language and devotions. These factors have not been researched previously as having a relationship to Latino parents' selection of schools. As asserted before, the Latino American Catholic experience was and continues to be different from the European American Catholic experience. This study proposes that because of the strong influence religion plays in the Latino community, it also influences parents' selection of schools. For that reason religious affiliation and the religious cultural values of language and devotions will be factors included in this study.

Religious Affiliation

The first factor of the Latino American Catholic experience as described in this study is religious affiliation. A study commissioned by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; *Hispanic Ministry at the Turn of the Millennium* (2003) found that

approximately 39% of the nation's 65 million Catholics were Hispanic. The same study also found that more than 68% of Latino Catholics are foreign-born, and over 42% did not graduate from high school, while only 55% of Latino Evangelicals are foreign-born and approximately only 37% do not have a high school diploma (Greene & Forster, 2005; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2003). The Latino foreign-born population, particularly from Mexico, has added steadily to the number of Latino American Catholics. However, conversion to other religions, particularly to evangelical Protestantism has drawn down the number of second, third and fourth generation Latino Catholics (Lugo, 2007; Perl et al., 2006; Telles & Ortiz, 2008). Though it is impossible to determine the precise extent to which conversion is a product of assimilation, it does seem that once in the U.S., learning English and undergoing the other changes that occur with exposure to American customs seem to be somewhat associated with changes in religious affiliation (Lugo, 2007). Hunt (2000), however, poses the following observation:

Viewing changing religious patterns as a response to broader processes in society suggests the possibility that in the U.S. today, the growth of Protestantism among Hispanics may not be leading to assimilation, but may be providing a new form of reaffirming latent ethnic traditions. (p. 360)

Most literature focuses on Latino demographics and religious affiliation. Literature examining religious affiliation and how it relates to other aspects of Latinos' situation in the U.S. is limited. Religion is noticeably intertwined with Latino culture; it has complex effects on parental involvement and attitudes on discipline, as well as on

attitudes toward public and religious schools. For minorities, participating in religious classes outside of school was significantly linked to graduating from high school (Fitzgerald, 2006; Pantoja, 1998). What existing literature does not examine is the role religion plays in parental selection of schools. As previously asserted, second and third generation Latinos are not identifying with the European American Catholic experience. This study builds on previous research to examine the relationship religious affiliation has with Latino parents' selection of schools.

Cultural Values

The second factor of Latino American Catholic experience as delineated in this study is cultural values. Religiosity is emphasized in more Latino homes than any other ethnic group (Fitzgerald, 2006), and Latino religious identity has a sharply cultural dimension, including a need to maintain language and tradition (Figueroa Deck, 1993). The Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs for the USCCB (2003) concluded that certain aspects of religious symbolism are especially important to Hispanics in that they establish a connection with their experience of the Catholic Church in their country of origin. Familiar music is also an important element of Latino American Catholic devotion. Traditional expressions of their Catholic faith include reenactments of biblical passages that follow the liturgical year, like the Posadas in Advent, the three kings in the Epiphany procession and the December 12th feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998). This cultural dimension of Latino Catholicity is not readily appreciated in many American Catholic parishes. Although cultural elements such as

language and traditions are quasi-religious, they, along with the historic clash between the style and spirit of the Spanish-speaking and English-speaking church, have made it very difficult for the American Catholic Church leadership to rally respect and nurture Latino Catholicism (Figueroa Deck, 1993). Part of what continues to trouble the outreach to Latinos is the assumption that the structures the Catholic Church has, including its schools, are fundamentally adequate to meet the needs of the Latino community (Figueroa Deck, 1993). Research notes that this assumption is erroneous. Latino families are larger; they are younger, have more children, and are growing at a dramatically faster rate (53 percent) than the non-Latino Catholic population (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998). For many Catholic parishes in the United States however, parishioners are older, families are smaller, language of worship and devotions are different, and many times unfamiliar to Latino American Catholics.

After examining data collected in the Rockford Diocese, Cieslak (2005) cited the following three factors as influencing parents when choosing a Catholic elementary school: (a) frequency of mass attendance; (b) parish involvement; and (c) attachment to the parish. The very strong home-centered aspects of Latino Catholicism however, assume a primacy over clerically dominated and institutionally based traditions including attendance at Sunday mass, affiliation to a parish, and obedience to the clergy (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998). Latino children growing up in a family where the parents attend church more frequently did have more years of schooling (Telles & Ortiz, 2008), and at the higher education level Catholicism played an important role in the experiences of Latino students at Notre Dame (Raphael et al., 2003). Cultural values

emphasized in the Latino population, such as religiosity, collectivism, and *simpatía* may also influence decisions that Latino parents make about the activities of their children (Fitzgerald, 2006), activities that may include schools these children attend.

Diaz-Stevens and Stevens-Arroyo (1998) noted the following:

The study by the State Department of education in New York (1993) for the governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Catholic Schools found that Hispanics who attend Catholic schools had significantly higher proficiency than public school Hispanics in each academic category. (p. 224)

Despite this, Catholic schools established in the 19th and early 20th centuries to help immigrants retain their religious faith in urban areas such as New York have struggled to maintain their inner city presence over the past three decades (Archer, 1996). Latinos, who have long been U.S. citizens and Catholic, but whose rural origins prevent wholesale Americanization, now populate these same urban areas, but are not enrolling their children in Catholic schools (Gutierrez, 2004). This study proposes that there is a relationship between the cultural values of language and devotions and Latino parents' selection of schools.

Conclusion of Conceptual Strand for Latino American Catholic Experience

Research literature has looked at the high numbers of Latinos converting to evangelical Protestantism. Studies have also examined how Latino American Catholic cultural values are experienced in and out of the institutional church. Finally, literature has researched the success Catholic schools have in closing the achievement gap for

minorities, both Latinos and Blacks. However, research has not looked at the relationship between the Latino American Catholic experience and parents' selection of schools. This study will fill in gaps in the literature. This study builds on the precepts set forth by Figueroa Deck (1993) to form the basis for the framework for Latino American Catholic experience, the first major strand of this study's conceptual framework and its two factors of religious affiliation and cultural values. This study proposes that as traditional cultural values change or are not accepted in American Catholic parishes, so does the value Latino parents place on Catholic faith formation; the primary reason for the existence of Catholic schools and one of the reasons parents have for sending their children to Catholic schools (Cieslak, 2005).

LATINO AMERICAN SOCIETAL EXPERIENCE

Latino American societal experience is the second conceptual strand in this study's review of literature. Although culture provides criteria for deciding what to do about things and how to go about doing these, explanations cannot ignore the social systems within which persons are ensconced (Landale & Oropesa, 2007). Roschell (as cited in Landale & Oropesa, 2007) observed that scholars miss an important opportunity by constructing simplistic tests of cultural versus structural explanations because of the interdependence between culture and social-structural constraints. Greater attention to how culture and social-structural conditions interact is needed. Attention to how social-structural conditions influence decisions is also needed. Ogbu and Simons, (1994) looked at how differences among groups' cultural models, educational orientations and strategies

help explain the differences in school performance. They concluded that involuntary minorities who were incorporated into U.S. society against their will through conquest or slavery, and who had experienced a history of discrimination are ambivalent about schooling, consciously or unconsciously resist adopting some school standard behaviors equated with White ways, and do not seem to work hard in school. Involuntary minorities do poorly in school when compared to the voluntary minorities. Literature has examined student motivation and academic success, but has not examined how dimensions of societal experience relate to Latino parents' school selection for elementary school-age children. This study fills in the gap in the literature by examining the relationships between the Latino American societal experience and parents' selection of schools. The factors of Latino American societal experience, the second conceptual strand of this study are: acculturation, socioeconomic status and parents' level of education.

CONCEPTUAL STRAND FOR LATINO AMERICAN SOCIETAL EXPERIENCE

Latino American societal experience encompasses parents' level of acculturation, their socioeconomic status and their level of education (Hurtado-Ortiz & Gauvain, 2007; Velez-Ibañez, 2004). Hurtado-Ortiz and Gauvain's, (2007) study at the postsecondary level found "family processes play an important role in academic achievement, aspirations, and attainment of Mexican American youth, and particular factors such as parents' educational experiences, family income, and acculturation are critical in this regard" (p. 190). Existing literature does not examine possible relationships between

societal experiences and parents' selection of elementary schools for their children.

Research findings of Hurtado-Ortiz and Gauvain (2007), and Velez-Ibañez (2004) are used to operationalize the Latino American societal experience, as delineated in this dissertation's conceptual framework. This study hypothesizes that there is a relationship between Latino American societal experience and school selection.

Level of Acculturation

The first factor of the Latino American societal experience as proposed in this study is parents' level of acculturation. A person's level of acculturation is dependent on the acquisition of some of the characteristics, values and behaviors of the mainstream culture, without giving up one's own values and behaviors. Acculturation of Latino Americans has a tremendous impact on people's everyday functioning; among these are educational choices. Family processes are affected by level of acculturation, and within any group there is diversity in cultural-identity representations (Raphael et al., 2003).

When examining acculturation, it is important to note that a process of deculturation accompanies the process of that happens as new U.S. values, patterns of behavior and customs are acquired and the more traditional culture is weakened. This process of deculturation brings about a separation from traditional family and cultural values (Tapia, 2004). When Telles and Ortiz (2008) re-interviewed a random sample of the original 1965 respondents of the UCLA's Mexican American Study Project, they found Mexican Americans do not assimilate the same way as European immigrants of the past. Much has to do with the poor education they receive. "Eventually minority groups

come to believe they are so different culturally that their separation becomes normative” (Velez-Ibañez, 2004, p. 2).

This study incorporates existing literature on Latino American’s acculturation, as it relates to decision making and school performance, and fills in existing gaps in the literature. This study proposes that different levels of acculturation exist in the Latino community. Additionally, it also proposes that parents’ level of acculturation influence everyday functions and choices, including selection of schools.

Socioeconomic Status

The second factor of Latino American societal experience as defined in this study is socioeconomic status. Gandara, Portes and Rumbaut (as cited in Gonzalez Montoya, 2006), concluded that across racial and ethnic groups, there is a consensus that socioeconomic status is the single most powerful contributor to students’ educational outcomes. Socioeconomic challenges can include issues relating to socioeconomic status and stability (Ortega Parra, 2007). Ethnic Mexicans’ structural position in American society starkly illustrates the complex ways in which historical patterns of discrimination interacting with the continual circulation of poor migrants and immigrants into the United States keep both groups at low economic levels (Gutierrez, 2004). Geographical effects make a difference as well. Segregated poor areas appear to set up feelings of inferiority and marginality. In some cases, discouragement with school and reduced achievement motivation is a reaction of young Mexican Americans to the low economic status of their

group. Large differences in earnings between Latinos and other groups can best be explained by differences in educational attainment (Allen, 2005).

Considerable evidence suggests that socioeconomic factors can help explain the generally low educational achievement of Latino language-minority students (Gonzalez Montoya, 2006). Catholic schools have a history of successfully educating minority students. This dissertation builds on Gonzalez Montoya's (2006), proposing that because of Latino parents' low socioeconomic status, they may not view Catholic schools as an option for their elementary school-age children. This study builds on existing literature and proposes that the socioeconomic status of Latino families not only influences achievement, motivation and educational outcomes, but also plays a role in the schools Latino parents select for their elementary school-age children.

Level of Education

Parents' level of education is put forth as a third factor of Latino American societal experience as described in this research study. Many Latino parents immigrated to the U.S. with hopes of improving the education of their children; however demographic trends continue to show that Latino youth are gaining less than desirable levels of education (Behnke, Piercy, & Diversi, 2004). Within many Latino families, even parents who are strongly supportive of education have such limited educational backgrounds that they are unable to fully understand their children's situation in schools (Allen, 2005; Bohon & Macpherson, 2005), and the educational options available to them.

Parents' level of education has also been found to be a contributing factor to low levels of Latino high school completion rates and postsecondary education enrollment (Hernandez, 2006). The relationship between social class and attitudes toward education describes the differences in the educational expectations of middle-class and working-class parents as a function of their own previous educational experiences as well (Kaplan, Liu, & Kaplan, 2001). Higher levels of parental education also have a strong positive effect on the probability of Latinos attending private schools (Fairlie, 2002). Several studies (Hurtado-Ortiz & Gauvain, 2007; Telles & Ortiz, 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 2006) found that well educated parents are more likely to have higher incomes and the means to send their children to better schools, whether private, parochial or better public schools. Latino Americans' "young age makes it appropriate to explore research concerning their educational experience, which is the best predictor of their future economic status" (Allen, 2005, p. 17).

In a study examining the historical and intergenerational trends for Mexican Americans in San Antonio, Texas and Los Angeles, California, Telles and Ortiz (2008) found that the degree to which parents transmit their education to their children varies by race and ethnicity. But, Mexican-origin children whose parents did not complete high school are more likely than Whites or Blacks not to complete high school. Researchers (Hurtado-Ortiz & Gauvain, 2007; Velez-Ibañez, 2004) have examined Latino parents' level of education as it relates to educational expectations and school completion rates. Current literature has not addressed the relationship between parents' educational level and their selection of schools for their elementary-age children. This research builds on

the literature by proposing that the educational level of Latino parents, the fourth factor of the second conceptual strand of Latino American societal experience, also influences parents' educational attitudes to include selection of school for their elementary school-age children.

Conclusion of Conceptual Strand for Latino American Societal Experience

Researchers (Hurtado-Ortiz & Gauvain, 2007; Landale & Oropesa, 2007; Velez-Ibañez, 2004) have examined Latino acculturation, the socioeconomic status of parents and their levels of education as they relate to students' academic achievement, motivation, and choices made at the postsecondary levels. This dissertation expands on this literature to fill in gaps by exploring how acculturation, parents' socioeconomic status and their level of education, three factors of Latino American societal experience, relate to parents' selection of schools. This study proposes that there is a relationship between these three factors and Latino parents' selection of schools.

LATINO AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Latino American educational experience is the third conceptual strand in this study. Hernandez (2006) determined that "there are three primary categories which may contribute to the low educational attainment levels of students in the Latino community including (1) family background, (2) parental support, and (3) overall educational experience" (p. 2). The role of overall educational experience, as presented by Hernandez (2006) is expanded on through Latino American educational experience, the third major

conceptual strand of this dissertation's conceptual framework. Three factors of the Latino American educational experience, as delineated in this study are school culture, school satisfaction and accessibility. Education is often seen as a means to achieve the American dream. In order for this to take place, a welcoming learning environment must be part of a school culture. In Neihart's (2006) study on underachievement, he defined welcoming learning environments as schools that did the following: addressed identity and learning goals concurrently, included cultural brokers and provided direct instruction in social skills for leadership. Neihart's (2006) characteristics of a welcoming learning environment are used as a basis for delineating school culture, the first factor of Latino American educational experience, the third major conceptual strand as proposed in this study.

Using data from a 2004 survey of Latino satisfaction with public schools, Fry and Gonzales (2008) found that 84% of Latinos reported that discrimination was a problem in schools. However, despite these concerns, the majority of Latinos were satisfied with public education. "Mexican-origin students have experiences [sic] a long history of educational problems, including below-grade enrollment, high attrition rates, high rates of illiteracy, and under representation in higher education" (Gonzalez Montoya, 2006, p. 3), yet Fry and Gonzalez (2008) noted that Latino respondents were more likely than either White or Black respondents to give public schools high ratings. Children from Mexican immigrant families attend more problematic elementary schools than their peers from other populations (Crosnoe, 2004); nonetheless Latinos seem satisfied with their

schools. Satisfaction is the second factor of Latino American educational experience as delineated in this study.

Current demographic data demonstrates that Latinos are the largest ethnic minority in the United States, and Mexican Americans comprise the largest group of Latinos with the longest history of U.S. settlement (Landale & Oropesa, 2007; Olivos, 2004). Demographic data also demonstrates that Latinos in the West and Southwest are also disproportionately Catholic (Perl et al., 2006). At present nearly 80% of Latinos live in the South and West; however, these areas have fewer Catholic schools than any other part of the country. Arizona, for example, had only 67 Catholic schools in 2005 (Tourkin, Swaim, Guan, Peterson, Abramson, & Zhang, 2009). Building on demographics presented in the literature, accessibility is the third factor of the Latino American educational experience as outlined in this dissertation. Accessibility, as defined in this study includes preconceived ideas Latinos have of U.S. schools, including Catholic schools, the location of schools, and Latino parents' knowledge of available financial aid.

CONCEPTUAL STRAND FOR LATINO AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The third major conceptual strand of this study is Latino American educational experience. The majority of Latino children attend public schools and public education has historically failed to deliver quality education for this segment of the population (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Hispanic Affairs, 2004; Gonzalez Montoya, 2006). Most literature on Latinos' educational experiences speaks

about student motivation and academic achievement (Crosnoe, 2004, 2005; Gonzalez Montoya, 2006; Milner, 2007; Ogbu & Simons, 1994; Perez Carreon, Drake, & Calabrese Barton, 2005; Raphael et al., 2003; Tapia, 2004). Current literature does not answer the question of why Latinos continue to select public schools that either fail them, or are places where students report that discrimination was a problem. Cost is focused on in the literature as the factor influencing parents' selection of schools. This study proposes that Latinos continue to report being satisfied with public schools even with an unwelcoming learning environment because of their limited exposure to other educational options. This study also proposes that there is a relationship between Latino American educational experience and its factors of school culture, satisfaction and accessibility, and parents' selection of schools.

School Culture

United States schools are losing Latino students all along the education continuum. At the national level, one in three Latinos are under the age of 15; most live in urban areas; 47% have low skill levels; 40% dropout before the eighth grade and 54% cannot read adequately in English (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Hispanic Affairs, 2004). This is of great concern to those who recognize the number of Latinos who will potentially be filling not only job posts at all levels, but leadership roles in the American Catholic Church. The third conceptual strand of this study is Latino American educational experience, and its first factor is school culture. Teachers, administrators, staff and students shape school culture. School culture

encompasses the attitudes and beliefs of school personnel, the rules and norms to which school members adhere, and the relationships that exist among its members and the families they serve (Ortega Parra, 2007). Catholic schools with high Latino populations have a reciprocal relationship between the school and the families, and are embedded in the Mexican American Catholic community (Watt, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c). Welcoming learning environments of either public or Catholic schools are places that address identity and learning goals concurrently and include cultural brokers (Neihart, 2006). This study builds on Watt's (1999a, 1999b, 1999c) and Neihart's (2006) work by including school culture as the first factor of Latino American educational experience.

Literature finds that overwhelmingly public schools that serve Latino families have neither a reciprocal relationship with students and families, nor are they places that can be characterized as welcoming learning environments. School cultures, public or Catholic do vary. Some schools have cultures that can be defined as welcoming learning environments; places where students are better educated to meet the needs of both the American Catholic Church and U.S. society, and some do not.

In a study on Latino students' learning and academic performance, Tapia (2004) observed how teachers and school curricula undermine Latino students' culture and language in their efforts to mainstream them into U.S. dominant society. In the U.S. educational system whiteness is built into the school organizational space through both formal and informal practices. White ideologies also dominate through the organizational logic of the school, altering the social space and disregarding the knowledge and experience of children from minority communities (Barajas & Ronnkvist, 2007). This

study builds on Tapia's (2004) and Barajas and Ronnkvist's (2007) studies by examining school culture as a factor of educational experience.

Teachers, administrators and staff are only part of what make up a school's culture. Students are also an important element. Students interviewed in a study (Ball et al., 2002) conducted at the higher education level stated that the ethnic mix of the universities they considered applying to was taken into account in their decision making. While at Notre Dame, many Latino students experienced some socio-cultural problems, and a few encountered memorable stereotyping (Raphael et al., 2003). Higher educational choice, especially for minority students, is about having ethnic identity valued, or at least not having to defend or assert the value of their identity (Ball et al., 2002). "The availability of Hispanic experiences for Latino students at a university can make a huge difference in the quality of their experience" (Raphael et al., 2003, p. 16). This dissertation fills in the gap in literature by examining the relationship between the availability of cultural educational experiences and school selection for elementary school-age children. It is important to note however, that there is diversity in cultural-identity representations within any group; diversity resulting from societal as well as educational experiences. "Thus, among Latino students living in the United States, some identify more strongly with Latino culture and others more strongly with mainstream American culture" (Raphael et al., 2003, p. 200).

This study proposes that there is a relationship between school culture, the first factor of Latino American educational experience, the third conceptual strand of this study, and Latino parents' selection of schools. There is a limited amount of literature on

school culture as it relates to Latino parents' selection of elementary schools. The literature examines higher education in terms of choice and high school education in terms of student achievement. The research literature does not address school culture at the elementary school level, or whether similar factors such as ethnic mix of students or acceptance of Latino students' language and culture are related to parents' selection of schools. The literature that examines some aspects of school culture as it relates to Latinos in elementary Catholic schools is limited to border schools in Texas (Watt, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c). This study will build on the research literature and fill in existing gaps. This study proposes that there is a relationship between school culture and parental selection of schools. The work of Neihart (2006) and Ortega Parra (2007), combined with Watt's (1999a, 1999b, 1999c) research is used to operationalize school culture, the first factor of Latino American educational experience, the third conceptual strand of this research.

School Satisfaction

Historically, Catholic schools are successful with minority students, including Latinos, and public schools are not (Crosnoe, 2005; Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003; The Notre Dame Task Force on the Participation of Latino Children and Families in Catholic Schools, 2009). Ailing schools, the present educational reality for much of the Latino community, impact their income potential, quality of life, and the community's contributions to both church and society. Despite this, Latino families have been found to be strongly supportive of public education. However, it is important to note that in

general Latinos have such limited educational backgrounds that they are unable to make informed decisions regarding school satisfaction (Behnke et al., 2004; Bohon & Macpherson, 2005; Gonzalez Montoya, 2006; Ortega Parra, 2007; Ramirez, 2003). Building on this body of research, school satisfaction is the second factor of Latino American educational experience within the third conceptual strand of this study.

Satisfaction with a school is influenced by more than just academic quality. For Latino families, leaving familiar settings, which may include the neighborhood school for the unknown, creates a tremendous amount of stress in people's lives (Tapia, 2004). In these cases satisfaction can be interpreted to mean absence of stress caused by fear of the unknown. This study proposes that once clearly defined, satisfaction is related to parents' selection of schools.

Accessibility

In mainstream America, families choose where their children will attend school by searching for a residential location with access to good public schools or private schools. Poor and minority families in inner cities and rural areas are not able to do the same. Many times, despite Latino parents' desire for a good education for their children, they are too poor to choose the better neighborhoods with good schools, with housing discrimination being a further barrier to access (Scott, 2005). For new Latinos in Georgia, the six primary barriers to Latino educational attainment are: (a) lack of understanding of the U.S. school system, (b) low parental involvement in the schools, (c) lack of residential stability among the Latino population, (d) little school support for the needs of

Latino students, (e) few incentives for the continuation of Latino education, and (f) barred immigrant access to higher education (Bohon & Macpherson, 2005). In addition to this, parents' vision of schools and education is often based on their experiences in their country of origin if they are immigrants, or on their experiences in their often segregated neighborhoods (Gonzalez Montoya, 2006). Bohon and Macpherson (2005) found the following:

The educational barriers experienced by this [Latino] community are products of both newly emerging social issues and the reproduction of U.S. ethnic stratification. Additionally, the social inequalities present within race and ethnicity, class, and gender categories continually intersect, compounding the disadvantages felt by the Latino population. (p. 56)

An analysis of data provided by the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) for 1987-1988 and 1989-1990, examined the determinants of attending private school at both the 8th and 10th grade levels, and concluded that White and Latino schoolchildren differed in their ability to attend private school because of high tuition costs or proximity (Fairlie, 2002). The National Catholic Educational Association's (NCEA) annual data report shows that for 2008, the average elementary parish school tuition was \$3,159 (McDonald & Schultz, 2008). To better understand the relationship between accessibility and selection of school, this study builds on these findings, to include cost as a component of accessibility, the third factor of the Latino American educational experience.

Along with cost, Latino parents' knowledge of available financial aid is the final component of accessibility, the third factor of Latino American educational experience. In urban school districts, where African American and Latino students often make up the majority and in some cases the entirety, of the student population, some parents have joined with school choice advocates to create options within city boundaries that include privately funded vouchers and tax credits for private and religious schools (Scott, 2005). A qualitative study (Cornman, Stewart, & Wolf, 2007) of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) provided information on experiences of participating families. The study found that families involved in the program had developed school choice consumer skills. They were able to then utilize these skills to make informed decisions on selection of schools for their children. Findings from this study also showed that the high level of satisfaction for Latino parents stemmed from the religious orientation of the schools most of their children attended (Cornman et al., 2007). This study's conceptual framework concurs with these findings and proposes that Latino parents' lack of knowledge of available financial aid reduces the educational options they view as accessible for their children. This study also proposes that this is related to parents' selection of schools.

Conclusion of Conceptual Strand for Latino American Educational Experience

To better understand the relationship between educational experience and school selection decisions made by Latino parents, the third conceptual strand of this study is

Latino American educational experience. The Latino American educational experience is multi-dimensional, and includes school culture, satisfaction and accessibility.

Collectively, each of these three factors and their defined components depict the Latino American educational experience. Research literature examines school culture, and notes the unacceptable learning environments of many of the public schools attended by Latinos. Research (Fry & Gonzales, 2008; Olivos, 2004; Scott, 2005; Watt, 1999a) also examines Latino satisfaction with public schools. Finally, the literature examines tuition costs, a component of accessibility, as a reason for many Latinos not viewing Catholic schools as an option for their children. What current literature does not address is how school culture, satisfaction, and the three components of accessibility, preconceived ideas, location and knowledge of financial aid, influence school selection. This study proposes that Latino satisfaction with public schools is a result of having limited knowledge of the U.S. educational system and of other available educational options. This study will add to the research by examining school culture as experienced by Latino parents, and the relationship it has with school selection. This study will also examine what constitutes school satisfaction for Latino parents, and whether or not they are aware of the accessibility of other educational options for their elementary school-age children.

SUMMARY

Regardless of the number of schools first established in the Spanish settlements in the Southwest, the fact remains that the Catholic Church has invested heavily in providing schools over the past 150 years to ensure a Catholic education was available

for those who wanted it, yet very few Latino Catholic parents take advantage of the Church's educational investment (Morris, 2005). In order to ensure more Latino children are able to reap the benefits of the Catholic Church's educational investment, it is important to determine what influences Latino parents' selection of schools. The past treatment of Latinos by American religious institutions and the historic clash between the style and spirit of Spanish-speaking and English-speaking Catholicism may explain why it has been difficult to nurture Latino Catholicism and rally respect for it (Figueroa Deck, 1993), and why so many Latinos in the United States have racial attitudes, even about the Catholic Church that are different from those held in both Latin America and among other U.S. Catholics (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998). Added to Diaz-Stevens and Stevens-Arroyo's (1998) work on the important role historical context plays on all of the Latino American experiences, and Figueroa Deck's (1993) work on Latino American Catholicism, Hunt's, (2000) observation that changing Latino religious affiliation and the growth of Protestantism may be providing a new form of reaffirming latent ethnic traditions complete the conceptual framework for Latino American Catholic experience, the first conceptual strand of this study.

In *To Teach as Jesus Did* (1973) the American Bishops emphasized that of the educational programs available to the Catholic community, Catholic schools afford the fullest and best opportunity to provide a Christian education to children and young people. Catholic schools have a history of providing a good education to children of disenfranchised communities; however, the Latino community is not taking advantage of this educational option. In order to ensure Latino families take advantage of the

opportunity being afforded by Catholic schools, societal experiences and how they influence Latino parents' decisions regarding school selection must be examined. Hurtado-Ortiz and Gauvain's (2007) work on family processes such as parents' educational level, family income and acculturation complete the framework for Latino American societal experience, the second conceptual strand in this study.

As so clearly stated in the Church's Declaration on Christian Education (1965) on the importance of its educational mission:

Education is, in a very special way, the concern of the church, not only because the church must be recognized as a human society capable of imparting education, but especially because it has the duty of proclaiming the way of salvation to all, of revealing the life of Christ to those who believe, and of assisting them with unrelenting care so that they may be able to attain to the fullness of that life.

(Flannery, 1996, p. 579)

In order for the Catholic Church to fulfill its educational mission, Latino Americans, the fastest growing Catholic population in the United States, must be given the opportunity of selecting quality Catholic education for their children. Latino American educational experience has been operationalized using Ortega Parra's (2007) work on the elements of a school culture, and Cornman, Stewart and Wolf's (2007) work on school satisfaction. Added to these is Scott's (2005) work on the differences between school selection for mainstream American families and poor and minority families to complete the conceptual framework for Latino American educational experience, the third conceptual strand in this study.

The Catholic Church and its schools face the pressing responsibility of embracing the growing Latino population that has such an important role to play in the future of the Church in the United States (Ready, 2008). In order to meet this responsibility, the framework for this study is based on the research literature that examines the overall historical experience of Latinos in the United States, and the contemporary Latino American Catholic experience, Latino American societal experience and Latino American educational experience. The purpose of this research study is to determine if there is a relationship between the Latino experience of American Catholicism, society and education and parents' selection of schools for their elementary school-age children. The findings of this study provide information that will help increase options for Latino parents when selecting schools for their elementary school-age children, and give support to Catholic Church leadership in meeting its pressing responsibility to embrace the growing Latino population; a community that has such an important role to play in the future of the Catholic Church in the United States.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a relationship between Latino parental experiences of the American Catholic Church, society and education and their selection of schools for their elementary school-age children. The methodology of this study is presented in this chapter. The participants are identified and described, the instruments are introduced and explained, and data from the pilot study is examined. The general method of analysis is outlined, and the theoretical constructs and variables are identified.

Participants

All parents of elementary school-age children in the Diocese of Tucson metropolitan area who have their children enrolled in either a parish religious education program and or a Catholic elementary school were eligible to participate in this study. However, parents who self-identified as Latino were the primary focus of this research study. The Bishop of the Diocese of Tucson was contacted in person in order to be informed about this study and enlist his support. He gave his complete support and then the Superintendent of Catholic Schools and the Director of the Office of Catechesis were contacted in person to also be informed about this study, its significance to the diocese, and enlist their support. They gave permission to contact parish directors of religious education and Catholic elementary school principals. Eighteen parishes with religious

education programs were identified by the Director of Catechesis. Urban and suburban parishes from each of the five vicariates in the Tucson metropolitan area were selected because of the predominantly Latino families served. Eight Catholic elementary schools in the Tucson metropolitan area were selected to participate in the study.

The pastors, directors of religious education and principals of the selected parishes and schools were initially contacted by electronic mail, informed about the study, and asked to participate. Prior to the researcher's initial contact with pastors, principals and directors of religious education the Bishop of Tucson sent each pastor a letter of support for the research study. (See Appendix B) A follow-up phone call was made to all directors of religious education and principals one week after the initial electronic mail was sent to clarify any questions and confirm participation. A meeting with more detailed information of this study, including a copy of the Parental Selection of Schools instrument, and the logistics of parish and school participation was held at each location if requested by the director of religious education or Catholic school principal, or done via electronic mail. Parish and school demographics on size, location, number of registered families, and numbers of children enrolled in the parish religious education program and the Catholic school were obtained from each director of religious education and Catholic school principal via electronic mail or at these follow-up meetings. Two Word documents were created to facilitate second and third requests for participation in this research study and distribution and language of the survey.

The collection of data occurred beginning the second week of November and continued through the second week of December. The electronic link to the survey

instrument was activated at the time of the initial contact with directors of religious education and Catholic school principals and remained active through December 12, 2010. Hard copies of the Parental Selection of Schools survey instrument were delivered after the first phone contact, with the last being delivered on November 19, 2010.

Completed surveys were collected weekly throughout the month of November and the first two weeks of December. The researcher contracted a number of persons to submit data from the hard copies of the survey into the electronic link to the survey instrument.

Parents from the eight Catholic elementary schools and 18 parish religious education programs were asked to complete an attitude and opinion survey about their experiences in their parishes, their neighborhoods and their children's schools. The final number of schools and parishes that participated was 17 (62.9%).

Table 1 depicts the number of parishes in the five vicariates in the Tucson metropolitan area. Table 2 depicts the number of Catholic schools in the five vicariates in the Tucson metropolitan area. This information was obtained from the Diocese of Tucson Directory 2009-2010.

Table 1

Number of Catholic Parishes in the five metropolitan vicariates of the Diocese of Tucson

Vicariate	Number of Parishes	Parish Selected	Parish Responded
Pima-Central	7	5	2
Pima-East	7	4	3
Pima-South	8	8	3
Pima-North	6	1	1
Pima-West	6	0	0

Table 2

Number of Catholic Elementary Schools in the five metropolitan vicariates of the Diocese of Tucson

Vicariate	Number of Schools	Schools Selected	Schools Responded
Pima-Central	2	2	2
Pima-East	3	3	3
Pima-South	2	2	2
Pima-North	2	1	1
Pima-West	1	0	0

Instrumentation

As a measure of the Latino American Catholic experience, societal experience and educational experience, parents from the Diocese of Phoenix, with elementary school-age children enrolled in Catholic schools or parish religious education programs completed a pilot test of the Parental Selection of Schools (PSS) instrument created by the researcher (Appendix E), the results of which provide validity and reliability for the study. Parent demographics on ethnicity, socioeconomic status, level of education and experience of Catholic schooling were obtained from Part I of the PSS instrument. Information on parents' opinions and attitudes regarding their American Catholic experience, societal experience and educational experience were obtained from Part II, Part III and Part IV of the instrument.

Questions were taken and modified from four different instruments to develop the PSS instrument. The questions assessed the extent to which the Latino American Catholic experience, societal experience and educational experience relate to parents' selection of schools. With permission of the authors, 23 questions were taken and reworded from the Convey and DeFiore survey (2009) used as part of a strategic planning study for the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Atlanta. The questions were modified to address all four research questions. The questions assessed how Latino parents' Catholic experience in terms of cultural values of language, symbolism and devotion relate to parents' selection of schools; how Latino American societal experience in terms of acculturation, socioeconomic status and level of education relate to parents' selection of schools; and Latino American educational experience in regards to school satisfaction.

Five questions were taken and reworded from the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans II, (ARSMA II) developed by Cuellar, Arnold, and Maldonado (1995). The ARSMA II measures four modes of acculturation: 1) assimilation, 2) integration, 3) separation and 4) marginalization (Cuellar et al., 1995). The five questions were used to assess how Latino parents' level of acculturation and perception of their children's school culture and accessibility of Catholic schools relate to parents' selection of schools. The third and fourth instruments used in developing the PSS instrument were the Cultural Congruity Scale (CCS) and the University Environment Scale (UES), both developed by Gloria and Robison-Kurpius (1996) and modified by Castillo (2002). Thirteen questions were taken and reworded from the CCS and the UES to assess Latino parents' opinions and attitudes in regards to American Catholicism, school culture and parents' ethnic values and how these relate to parents' selection of schools. Part I of the PSS instrument provided parents' demographic data. A four point Likert-type scale with responses of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree was used in Part II and Part III. A four point Likert-type scale with responses of strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree was also used in Part IV of the PSS instrument, with an additional response of "not sure."

Theoretical Constructs

There are three main theoretical constructs in this research study (See Table 3 for the constructs and the corresponding items). The first construct is American Catholic Experience. The variables that define this construct are: Parish Affiliation and Liturgical

Cultural Sensitivity. The second theoretical construct is American Societal Experience. The variables that define it are: English Preference, Spanish Preference, United States Identity, and Values Conflict. The third theoretical construct is American Educational Experience. The variables that define this third construct are: Public School Satisfaction, Catholic School Satisfaction, School Culture Description, and Catholic School Accessibility. The demographic variables for this study are: Catholic, registered in a parish, time in the U.S., time in Arizona, educational level of parents, Catholic education of parents, race/ethnicity, income, child's schooling. Eleven items were developed to obtain parents' demographic data in Part I of the PSS instrument. These items pertained to affiliation with the Catholic Church, socio economic status, level of education and whether or not a family had children enrolled in a Catholic elementary school. The major grouping variable for this study is dichotomous; families who have a child in a Catholic school and families who do not have a child in a Catholic school. The remaining items in Part II, Part III and Part IV of the PSS instrument addressed each one of the three constructs of this research study.

Pilot

A pilot test of the instrument was conducted with two parish religious education programs and two parish Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Phoenix to examine the properties of the items in the PSS instrument. The researcher chose schools and parishes after consultation with the diocesan Director of Education and Evangelization/Superintendent based on the large Latino population being served. The

parish religious education programs ranged from 300 to 550 families. The Catholic schools ranged from 200 to 260 families. Most of the surveys were requested in Spanish, and in hardcopy form. The survey was also available electronically on line. There was a 58% response to the English version of the PSS instrument and a 46% response to the Spanish version of the PSS instrument.

Responses from the surveys in the pilot study were entered into the statistical software program, SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze, classify and summarize the data in the pilot study. A factor analysis was the statistical method used to determine distinct clusters of items. This allowed the researcher to identify the variables that defined each of the three theoretical constructs in this study. Because of the use of Likert-type scales, Cronbach's alpha was calculated to measure the internal consistency reliability for each of the constructs and scales. Table 3 depicts reliability of variable clusters for each of the theoretical constructs as determined by the pilot study.

Table 3*Pilot Study Reliability of the Instrument Scales*

Construct	Scale	No. of Items	Reliability	PSS Items
American Catholic Experience	Parish Affiliation	6	.846	Sec. II. a-f
	Liturgical Cultural Sensitivity	5	.894	Sec. II. g-k
American Societal Experience	English Preference	3	.903	Sec. III. 2,4,6
	Spanish Preference	4	.855	Sec. III. 1,3,5,9
	U.S. Identity	2	.550	Sec. III. 7-8
	Values Conflict	3	.610	Sec. II. 1, m; Sec. III. 10
American Educational Experience	Public School Satisfaction	3	.830	Sec. IV. 8-10
	Catholic School Satisfaction	6	.909	Sec. IV. 11-16
	School Culture Description	5	.742	Sec. IV. 1-5
	Catholic School Accessibility	7	.800	Sec. IV. 17-23

The first theoretical construct, Latino parents' experience with the American Catholic Church, was addressed by two variables and measured by the 11 items in Part II of the PSS instrument. The first variable was Parish Affiliation, defined by the role participants perceived as having in the Catholic Church. It had a reliability of .846. Cronbach's alpha for Liturgical Cultural Sensitivity, defined by the importance participants gave to the use of Spanish in Catholic liturgy, was .894.

The second theoretical construct, Latino parents' experience with American society, was addressed by four variables and measured using two items in Part II and ten items in Part III of the PSS instrument. Participants who showed a preference of either English or Spanish when speaking and thinking defined Language Preference. Cronbach's alpha for English Preference was .903, and .855 for Spanish Preference. Participants identifying more as Mexican American or American as opposed to identifying as Mexican defined U.S. Identity. Cronbach's alpha for U.S. Identity was .550. The third variable, Values Conflict, defined by participants' acceptance or not of attitudes held by American and Mexican Catholics and perceived conflict between ethnic values and the larger society had a reliability of .610.

The third theoretical construct, Latino parents' experience with American education was addressed by Public School Satisfaction, Catholic School Satisfaction, School Culture Description and Catholic School Accessibility, and measured by 21 items in Part IV of the PSS instrument. Cronbach's alpha was .830 for Public School Satisfaction and .91 for Catholic School Satisfaction. School Culture Description was defined by how parents perceive their child's school and teachers. Six items in Part IV of the PSS instrument were initially used to measure this. In the pilot study, Cronbach's alpha was .742 for School Culture Description. Finally, Catholic school accessibility was measured by seven items in Part IV of the PSS instrument. Cronbach's alpha for Catholic School Accessibility was .80.

The responses to the PSS instrument by Latino parents was the unit of analysis since the relationships between the American Catholic experience, American societal

experience, American educational experience and Latino parents' selection of Catholic schools was the subject of this study. The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects for The Catholic University of America reviewed the survey and declared it exempt on March 2, 2010. The exemption certification remains in place through February 23, 2013.

Analysis of Data

The unit of analysis was Latino parents' responses to the PSS instrument. Responses to the online survey instrument were downloaded to an Excel spreadsheet. Data were analyzed through the use of the statistical program Statistics Desktop, version 19.0, created by SPSS, Inc. Data analysis began with relevant descriptive statistics. Inferential statistics were used in this research study to infer from the sample data what the population might think. Because the focus of this study was on the relationship among the ten variables that define American Catholic Experience, American Societal Experience and American Educational Experience, and Catholic school membership (yes-no), regression analysis was used to identify the most important predictors of Latino parents' selection of Catholic schools for their children. The use of a t-test allowed the researcher to compare the two groups of parents (i.e. those with children in Catholic schools and those with children not in Catholic schools) on each of the scales of the PSS instrument. In addition, the correlations among the variables that define the three theoretical constructs of this study were examined. The frequencies for all items in the

PSS instrument pertaining to the sample populations' demographics were calculated as well.

Research questions 1, 2 and 3 were addressed with a t-test that compared the means on each of the ten variables and income for Catholic school families not in Catholic school. Research question 4 was addressed with a regression analysis with the dependent variable of Catholic school membership (yes-no) and the following predictors: Income, Parish Affiliation, Liturgical Cultural Sensitivity, English Preference, Spanish Preference, U.S. Identity, Values Conflict, School Culture Description and Catholic School Accessibility. A stepwise strategy was used to determine the most important predictors of Latino parents' school selection.

MAJOR VARIABLES

The first theoretical construct in this study is American Catholic Experience. The variables that define this construct are: Parish Affiliation and Liturgical Cultural Sensitivity. The second theoretical construct is American Societal Experience. The variables that define it are: English Preference, Spanish Preference, United States Identity, and Values Conflict. The third theoretical construct is American Educational Experience. The variables that define this third construct are: Public School Satisfaction, Catholic School Satisfaction, School Culture Description, and Catholic School Accessibility. The demographic variables for this study are: Catholic, registered in a parish, time in the U.S., time in Arizona, educational level of parents, Catholic education of parents, race/ethnicity, income, child's schooling. The major grouping variable for this

study was dichotomous; families who have a child in a Catholic school and families who do not have a child in a Catholic school.

CONCLUSION

The Catholic school, because of its very nature, forms future Catholics, while providing an academic education. Catholic schools are facing the challenge of attracting the rising number of Latino families with elementary school-aged children to enroll. This study examined the relationship of Latino parents' experiences of the American Catholic Church, society and education with their selection of a Catholic school or other school for their children. By using descriptive statistics, correlations analysis and regression analysis, how Latino parents' selection of schools related to parish affiliation, liturgical cultural sensitivity, English preference, Spanish preference, U.S. identity, values conflict, public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction, school culture description and Catholic school accessibility was ascertained. This study provides church leadership with the research findings necessary to continue its educational mission to the Latino community.

Items in Part I of the Parental Selection of Schools instrument measured data for parent demographics. Data from Part II and Part III measured parish affiliation, liturgical cultural sensitivity, values conflict, English preference, Spanish preference and U.S. identity. Finally, data from Part IV measured public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction, school culture description and Catholic school accessibility.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a relationship between Latino parental experiences of the American Catholic Church, society and education and their selection of schools for their elementary school-age children. A non-random sample of Latino parents with children enrolled in a parish religious education program and or a Catholic elementary school was taken from the four Diocese of Tucson metropolitan vicariates. Of the 20 parishes, a total of nine parishes (47.3%) and eight Catholic schools (100%) participated in the study with 748 surveys answered anonymously.

Descriptive statistics were used in organizing, summarizing, tabulating and describing demographic data. The frequency distributions for all demographic data were calculated and information about their bivariate relationships was generated. Inferential statistics were used to infer from the sample data generated from the responses that were received from survey participants. Means on each of the ten scales of American Catholic, societal and educational experience and school selection was addressed with a t-Test. Mean and variance for the ten scales under American Catholic experience, American societal experience and American educational experience by parent group; those with a child in Catholic school only, in both a religious education program and a Catholic school, in a religious education program only, or in neither program, were calculated using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Correlations among and between the ten scales under American Catholic experience, American societal experience and American educational experience and school selection were calculated using the Pearson

product-moment correlation (two-tailed). Regression analysis was used to determine if there was a relationship between the ten scales under American Catholic, societal and educational experience, income, and school selection. Stepwise regression was used to describe the variation in school selection, and the ten scales under American Catholic, societal and educational experience. Data were analyzed using the software Statistics Desktop, version 19.0, created by SPSS, Inc.

Demographics of the Participants

There were 748 participants who responded to the Parental Selection of Schools survey instrument. Almost all respondents (98.0%) considered themselves Catholic, with only 14 (2.0%) who did not. Over half (57.2%) of respondents had a child enrolled in a parish religious education program, followed by slightly less than one fifth (19.7%) who had a child enrolled in a Catholic elementary school. Less than a fifth (13.5%) had a child enrolled in both a parish religious education program and a Catholic elementary school, and slightly less than one thirteenth (7.4%) did not have a child enrolled in either a parish religious education program or a Catholic elementary school. Over three quarters (77.0%) of respondents were registered in a parish, with slightly less than one fifth (17.9%) of respondents not registered in a parish (See Table 4).

Table 4***Frequency Distributions by Education Programs and Parish Registration***

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Religious Education	428	57.2%
Catholic School	147	19.7%
Both	101	13.5%
Neither	55	7.3%
Missing	17	2.3%
Total	748	100%
Parish	576	77.0%
Not Parish	134	17.9%
Missing	38	5.1%
Total	748	100%

Well over one half (63.1%) of respondents have lived in the United States more than 20 years, and over half (53.2%) have lived in Arizona more than 20 years. Slightly less than one fifth (19.4%) have lived in the United States from 11 to 20 years, and one fifth (20.2%) have lived in Arizona for that length of time as well. The data were similar for respondents living in Arizona (19.9%) and the United States (13.1%) from five to 10 years. The number of respondents living in the United States (2.5%) and Arizona (5.2%) less than five years was minimal (See Table 5).

Table 5***Frequency Distributions by Years in U.S. and Arizona (AZ)***

Response	U.S.		AZ	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
More than 20	472	63.1%	398	53.2%
11 to 20	145	19.4%	151	20.2%
5 to 10	98	13.1%	149	19.9%
Less than 5	19	2.5%	39	5.2%
Missing	14	1.9%	11	1.5%
Total	748	100%	748	100%

Tables 6 and 7 are representative of the demographic data for respondents' educational experience. Well over half (80.9%) of respondents had finished high school and less than one fifth (17.4%) had not. More than half (59.0%) had not completed college, and more than a third (38.1%) had. One fourth (25.1%) had attended Catholic elementary school, slightly less than one fifth (18.2%) had attended Catholic high school, a minimal number (5.5%) had attended a Catholic college (See Table 6 and Table 7). Over half (58.0%) of respondents had not attended Catholic schools at any level.

Table 6***Frequency Distributions by Level of Education***

Response	High School		College	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	605	80.9%	285	38.1%
No	130	17.4%	441	59.0%
Missing	13	1.7%	22	2.9%
Total	748	100%	748	100%

Table 7***Frequency Distributions by Catholic School Attendance***

Response	Catholic Elem.		Catholic H.S.		Catholic College	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	188	25.1%	136	18.2%	41	5.5%
No	560	74.9%	612	81.8%	707	94.5%
Total	748	100%	748	100%	748	100%

Over one half (66.2%) of respondents' annual income was under \$60,000, and over one fifth (20.6%) had an income of \$60,001 to \$100,000. A minimal number (7.9%) had an income over \$100,000 (See Table 8).

Table 8***Frequency Distributions by Income***

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Under \$60,000	495	66.2%
\$60,001 to \$100,000	154	20.6%
Over \$100,000	59	7.9%
Missing	40	5.3%
Total	748	100%

Correlations Among the Variables

Tables 9 through 11 show the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation (two-tailed) calculated between the predictor income, and the predictor variables for each of the theoretical constructs; Latino American Catholic experience, Latino American societal experience and Latino American educational experience and Catholic school membership (yes-no), and group (families with a child enrolled in a parish religious education program only, with a child enrolled in a Catholic elementary school only or in both). Those participants who indicated on the survey that they did not have a child in either Catholic schools or parish religious education programs (N=55) were not included in the analyses. Significant correlations at the .01 level occurred between these two predictor variables, parish affiliation and liturgical cultural sensitivity and group. For correlations involving the group variable only, a negative sign (-) favors those with

children in a Catholic school, and a positive sign (+) favors those with children not in a Catholic school.

In the predictor correlation matrix, the lowest correlations occurred between Catholic school membership and parish affiliation (.142), with $p < .001$ and group and parish affiliation (.165) with $p < .001$. The highest correlations occurred between parish affiliation and liturgical cultural sensitivity (.441) with $p < .001$. The correlations between liturgical cultural sensitivity and Catholic school membership (.374) and liturgical cultural sensitivity and group (.358) were both statistically significant $p < .001$. As operationalized in this study, the American Catholic experience encompasses religious affiliation and cultural values (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998; Figueroa Deck, 1993, Pantoja, 2003; Stevens-Arroyo, 1998, 2003). Theoretically these significant correlations make sense because liturgical cultural sensitivity consists of preferring to pray in Spanish, having Mass available in Spanish, having cultural feasts celebrated in church, having Mass as part of family celebrations and having Spanish music at Mass. As noted by Telles and Ortiz, (2008), language and Catholicism are perhaps the cultural traits most associated with Mexican Americans, which also serve as markers distinguishing Mexican Americans from most other ethnic groups. These results suggest that there is a relationship between the predictor variables of Latino American Catholic experience and the independent variable of school selection.

Table 9***Correlation Matrix for Latino American Catholic Experience***

	Parish Affiliation	Liturgical	School	Group
Parish Affiliation	1.00	.441**	.142**	.165**
Liturgical	.441**	1.00	.374**	.358**
School Membership	.142**	.374**	1.00	.932**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 10 depicts the correlations of predictor variables for Latino American societal experience, income and school membership and group, (i.e. families who had a child enrolled in a parish religious education program only, a Catholic elementary school only or both). Unsurprisingly school membership was highly correlated to Latino American societal experience in all four of the predictor variables, English preference (-.276), Spanish preference (.307), U.S. identity (-.133) values conflict (.185), and income (-.338) at the .01 level of significance. Similarly significant correlations at the .01 level occurred between these four predictor variables of Latino American societal experience, and group (i.e. families who had a child enrolled in a parish religious education program only, a Catholic elementary school only or both). The lowest correlations occurred between English preference and values conflict (-.046). The correlation was not statistically significant ($p = .262$). Of the correlations that were significant, the lowest were group and U.S. identity (-.115) with $p = .004$, and U.S. identity and values conflict (.117) with $p = .005$. As expected, the highest correlations occurred between English preference and U.S. Identity (.484) with $p < .001$. The lowest correlations between school membership and a Latino American societal experience predictor variable was with U.S.

Identity (-.133) with $p < .001$. The highest correlations between school membership and a predictor variable was with income (-.338) with $p < .001$, and school membership and Spanish preference (.307) with $p < .001$. As operationalized in this research study, the American societal experience encompasses parents' socioeconomic status, their level of acculturation and parents' level of education (Fitzgerald, 2006; Telles & Ortiz, 2008; Velez-Ibañez, 2004). Conceptually these significant correlations are to be expected. Hurtado-Ortiz and Gauvain's, (2007) study at the postsecondary level found family processes play an important role in academic achievement and aspirations, and particular factors such as parents' educational experiences, family income, and acculturation are critical in this regard. The correlation matrix suggests a relationship between the predictor variables for American societal experience and selection of schools.

Table 10

Correlation Matrix for Latino American Societal Experience

	Inc.	Eng.	Span.	U.S.	Values	School	Group
Income	1.00	.360**	-.364**	.155**	-.137**	-.338**	-.337**
English	.360**	1.00	-.429**	.484**	-.046	-.276**	-.244**
Spanish	-.364**	-.429**	1.00	-.231**	.193**	.307**	.340**
U.S. Identity	.155**	.484**	-.231**	1.00	.117**	-.133**	-.115**
Values	-.137**	-.046	.193**	.117**	1.00	.185**	.214**
School Member	-.336**	-.260**	.313**	-.137**	.191**	1.00	.932**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 11 depicts the correlations of predictor variables for Latino American educational experience and school membership and group. School membership was highly correlated to Latino American educational experience in three of the predictor variables, public school satisfaction (.484), Catholic school satisfaction (-.177) and

Catholic school accessibility (-.240) at the .01 level of significance. School membership (-.056) was not highly correlated to school culture, and not statistically significant ($p = .215$). Similarly, significant correlations at the .01 level occurred between three of the predictor variables, public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction and Catholic school accessibility and group (i.e. families who had a child enrolled in a parish religious education program only, a Catholic elementary school only or both), but not school culture. The lowest correlations occurred between Catholic school accessibility and public school satisfaction (-.031) and they were not statistically significant ($p = .661$), and school membership and school culture (-.056) with $p = .215$. As expected, correlations between Catholic school satisfaction and public school satisfaction (.073) were not significant ($p = .195$) either. The highest correlations occurred between school membership and group (.932) with $p < .001$, and Catholic school satisfaction and Catholic school accessibility (.537) with $p < .001$, which was to be expected. The correlation between public school satisfaction and school membership was also high (.484) with $p < .001$ and school membership and Catholic school access (-.240) with $p < .001$. As operationalized in this research study, the American educational experience encompasses school culture, school satisfaction and Catholic school accessibility. Theoretically these significant correlations were expected because, although children from Mexican immigrant families attend more problematic elementary schools than their peers from other populations (Crosnoe, 2004), they are more likely than either White or Black respondents to give public schools high ratings (Fry & Gonzalez, 2008). It is important to note, however, that in general Latinos have such limited educational

backgrounds that they are unable to make informed decisions regarding school satisfaction (Behnke et al., 2004; Bohon & Macpherson, 2005; Gonzalez Montoya, 2006; Ortega Parra, 2007; Ramirez, 2003). These results suggest that how Latino parents perceive their child's school culture is not highly correlated with their selection of schools, however there is a high correlation between the other three predictor variables, public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction and Catholic school accessibility and school membership, suggesting a relationship between these variables and school selection.

Table 11

Correlation Matrix for Latino American Educational Experience

	Public	Catholic	Culture	Access	School	Group
Public Satisfaction	1.00	.073	.259**	-.031	.484**	.443**
Catholic Satisfaction	.073	1.00	.384**	-.537	-.177**	-.160**
School Culture	.259**	.384**	1.00	.352**	-.056**	-.068
Accessibility	-.031	.537**	.352**	1.00	-.240**	-.141*
School Membership	.484**	-.177**	-.056	-.240**	1.00	.932**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Research Questions 1, 2 and 3 and Hypotheses I, II and III

Analyses for the first three research questions, the existence of a relationship between Latino American Catholic experience, Latino American societal experience, Latino American educational experience and school selection are presented next. Those participants who indicated on the PSS instrument that they did not have a child in either Catholic schools or parish religious education programs (N=55) were not included in the

analyses. The first research question of this study investigated if there was a relationship between the Latino American Catholic experience and parents' selection of schools. Table 12 depicts the number of respondents, means and the significance level for the two variables that define American Catholic experience, parish affiliation and liturgical cultural sensitivity, represented by the importance participants gave to the use of Spanish in Catholic liturgy, and Catholic school membership (yes-no). Participants with a child not enrolled in a Catholic school had a slightly higher mean (3.28) in parish affiliation, than those with a child enrolled in a Catholic school (3.13). Participants with a child not enrolled in a Catholic school also had a higher mean (3.29) in liturgical cultural sensitivity than those with a child enrolled in a Catholic school, (2.67). There was a significant difference at $< .01$ level between the means of participants with a child in a Catholic school and those with a child not in a Catholic school as it related to both scales of Latino American Catholic experience. Table 9, which presented the predictor correlation matrix for these same two variables illustrated similar findings; the correlation between parish affiliation (.165) and group and liturgical cultural sensitivity (.358) and group were both significant. Question 1 asks if there is a relationship between the Latino American Catholic experience and parents' selection of schools. The data suggests the answer to question 1 is that a positive relationship between Latino American Catholic experience and school selection exists.

Table 12***Means of Catholic School Membership and American Catholic Experience Variables***

Response	Catholic School		Not Catholic School		Sig. (2-tailed)
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
Parish Affiliation	225	3.13	377	3.28	.001
Liturgical	240	2.67	415	3.29	.000

The second research question of this study investigated if there was a relationship between Latino parents' experiences with American society in terms of acculturation, socioeconomic status and their selection of schools. Table 13 depicts the number, means and the significance level for income, and the four variables that define American societal experience, English preference, Spanish preference, U.S. identity and values conflict, and Catholic school membership (yes-no). Participants with a child enrolled in a Catholic school had a higher mean (3.53) for English preference than those with a child not enrolled in a Catholic school (3.10). Participants with a child not enrolled in a Catholic school had a higher mean (3.31) for Spanish preference than those with a child enrolled in a Catholic school (2.72). Participants with a child enrolled in a Catholic school had a higher mean (2.90) for U.S. identity, identifying more strongly as a Mexican American or American (2.90) than those with a child not in Catholic school (2.67). Participants with a child not enrolled in a Catholic school had a higher mean (2.36) for values conflict, defined as a conflict between ethnic values and the larger society than those with a child

enrolled in a Catholic school (2.10). Finally, participants with a child enrolled in a Catholic school had a higher income mean (3.51) than parents with a child not enrolled in a Catholic school (2.37). There was a significant difference at $< .01$ level between the means of each group of Catholic school membership (yes-no) as it related to income and each scale of American societal experience. Table 10, which presented the predictor correlation matrix for the same five variables depicted the same; the correlation between income (-.337) and group was significant. The correlations between English preference (-.244), Spanish preference (.340), U.S. identity (-.115) and values conflict (.214) and group were also statistically significant. Question 2 of this research study asks if there is a relationship between Latino parents' experiences with American society in terms of acculturation and socioeconomic status and their selection of schools. The data suggests that a positive relationship between Latino American societal experience and school selection exists.

Table 13

Means of Catholic School Membership and American Societal Experience Variables

Response	Catholic School		Not Catholic School		Sig. (2-tailed)
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
English	228	3.53	367	3.10	.000
Spanish	226	2.72	377	3.31	.000
U.S. Identity	222	2.90	359	2.67	.000
Values	219	2.10	359	2.36	.000
Income	239	3.51	407	2.37	.000

The third research question investigated if there was a relationship among school culture, school satisfaction and accessibility of Catholic schools and Latino parents' selection of schools. Table 14 depicts the number, means and the significance level for the four variables that define Latino American educational experience, public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction, school culture description and Catholic school accessibility, and Catholic school membership (yes-no). As was expected, participants with a child not enrolled in a Catholic school had a higher mean (3.12) for public school satisfaction than those with a child enrolled in a Catholic school, (2.26). The opposite was true for Catholic school satisfaction; participants with a child enrolled in a Catholic school had a higher mean (3.58) than participants with a child not enrolled in a Catholic school (3.41), although both means for Catholic school satisfaction were higher than the highest mean for public school satisfaction. In this study, school culture description was defined by how parents perceived their child's school and teachers. There was a slight difference in the means for this variable between participants with a child enrolled in a Catholic school (3.09) and those with a child not enrolled in a Catholic school (3.05). Finally participants with a child in a Catholic school had a higher mean (2.91) for Catholic school accessibility than participants with a child not enrolled in a Catholic school (2.69). There was a significant difference $< .01$ level between the means of each group as it related to three of the variables that define Latino American educational experience, public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction and Catholic school accessibility. However, the difference between the means of the two groups and the variable school culture description ($p = .215$) was not significant. Table 11, which

presented the predictor correlation matrix for these same variables also showed that the correlation between school culture (-.068) and group was not significant. Question 3 asks if there is a relationship among school culture, school satisfaction and accessibility of Catholic schools and Latino parents' selection of schools. The data suggested the answer to question 3 is that a positive relationship between school selection and public and Catholic school satisfaction and Catholic school accessibility exists, but not between school culture and school selection.

Table 14

Means of Catholic School Membership and American Educational Experience

Variables

Response	Catholic School		Not Catholic School		Sig. (2-tailed)
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
School Culture	180	3.09	308	3.05	.215
Public Satisfaction	140	2.26	346	3.21	.000
Catholic Satisfaction	188	3.58	179	3.41	.001
Accessibility	136	2.91	94	2.69	.000

The relationships between school selection and the three theoretical constructs, Latino American Catholic experience, societal experience and educational experience support hypothesis I; Latino parents who identify with the Catholic Church, as it functions culturally in the United States, are more likely than other Latino parents to select Catholic schools for their children. These relationships also support hypothesis II;

Latino parents who report a positive experience of U.S. society are more likely than other Latino parents to select Catholic schools for their children. Hypothesis III, which states Latino parents who have more positive views of the U.S. educational system are more likely than other Latino parents to select Catholic schools for their children is supported by the data on school satisfaction, Catholic school accessibility and school selection. Findings on school culture and school selection indicate no significant relationship however.

Research Question 4

Multiple Regression Results

An analysis of the data through multiple regression followed the correlation analysis in order to answer question 4, and determine what was the most important predictor of Latino parents' school selection and to what extent income played a role. Hypotheses I, II and III state that Latino parents who identify with the Catholic Church, as it functions culturally in the United States, report a positive experience of U.S. society, and have more positive views of the U.S. educational system are more likely than other Latino parents to select Catholic schools for their children. To answer question 4, and to be able to test these hypotheses, three separate multiple regressions with a method and a stepwise strategy were utilized to determine the predictive strength of income, Latino American Catholic experience, American societal experience and American educational experience on school selection.

Table 15 represents the multiple regression utilized to determine the predictive strength of Latino American Catholic experience on school selection. The predictor variables parish affiliation and liturgical cultural sensitivity were entered in the first block. According to the model, the predictor variables of Latino American Catholic experience accounted for 13.8% of the variability in school selection. The group of independent variables of American Catholic experience reliably predicts the dependent variable, school selection. With an F of 47.858, it was statistically significant ($p < .001$).

The betas of parish affiliation with a standardized beta of $-.020$ and liturgical cultural sensitivity with a standardized beta of $.379$ were not similar in magnitude. Liturgical cultural sensitivity had more of an effect. Liturgical cultural sensitivity was statistically significant ($p < .001$), and parish affiliation ($p = .634$) was not. Therefore, the predictive strength of liturgical cultural sensitivity was significant, that of parish affiliation was not.

Table 15

Summary Regression Results for Latino American Catholic Experience and School Selection^a

Model	R	R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	R ² Adjusted	F	Sig.
1	.371 ^b	.138	.450	.135 ^b	47.858	.000 ^b
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	
1 (Constant)	.992	.121		8.206	.000	
Parish Affiliation	-.019	.040	-.020	-.477	.634	
Liturgical	.228	.025	.379	9.036	.000	

^aDependent Variable: School Selection

^bPredictors: (Constant), Parish Affiliation, Liturgical Cultural Sensitivity

Table 16 illustrates the multiple regression utilized to determine the predictive strength of Latino American societal experience on school selection. The predictor variables, income, English preference, Spanish preference, U.S. identity and values conflict were entered in the first block. According to the model, the predictor variables of Latino American societal experience and income accounted for 16.2% of the variability in school selection. This percentage of variability may be higher than that of the predictor variables of Latino American Catholic experience due to the inclusion of income as a predictor variable. The group of independent variables of American societal experience, English preference, Spanish preference, and U.S. identity and values conflict in addition to income reliably predicts the dependent variable, school selection. With an F of 18.290; it was statistically significant ($p < .001$).

As expected, the beta of income has the highest magnitude with a standardized beta of -.196. For the variables of American societal experience, the standardized betas of English preference (-.147), and Spanish preference (.134) were similar in magnitude. The beta of values conflict had a standardized beta of .116. U.S. identity, with a standardized beta of -.005 had a lesser magnitude. Income ($p < .001$), and three of the variables of Latino American societal experience, English preference ($p = .006$), Spanish preference ($p = .006$), and values conflict ($p = .008$), were statistically significant at $<.01$ level. The fourth variable of Latino American societal experience, U.S. identity had a standardized beta of -.005, and was not statistically significant ($p = .918$). Therefore, the predictive strength of the variable U.S. identity was not significant.

Table 16

Summary Regression Results for Latino American Societal Experience and School Selection^a

Model	R	R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	R ² Adjusted	F	Sig.
1	.402 ^b	.162	.453	.153 ^b	18.290	.000 ^b
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	
1 (Constant)	1.716	.171		10.027	.000	
Income	-.059	.014	-.196	-4.267	.000	
English	-.103	.037	-.147	-2.764	.006	
Spanish	.069	.025	.134	2.747	.006	
U.S. Identity	-.003	.030	-.005	-.103	.918	
Values	.085	.032	.116	2.651	.008	

^aDependent Variable: School Selection

^bPredictors: (Constant), Income, English Preference, Spanish Preference, U.S. Identity, Values Conflict

Table 17 shows the multiple regression utilized to determine the predictive strength of Latino American educational experience and language on school selection. The variable language is defined as the language (English-Spanish) used by the participants when answering the PSS survey. The predictor variables, public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction, school culture and Catholic school accessibility, and language were entered in the first block. According to the model, the variables of Latino American educational experience and language accounted for 31.8% of the variability in school selection. The group variables, public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction, school culture, Catholic school accessibility and language can be used to reliably predict school selection. With an F of 14.180, it was statistically significant ($p < .001$).

The beta of public school satisfaction had the highest magnitude with a standardized beta of .296, followed by Catholic school accessibility with a standardized beta of -.237. The standardized betas for Catholic school satisfaction (-.066) and school culture (-.055) were similar in magnitude. Public school satisfaction ($p < .001$) and Catholic school accessibility ($p = .004$) were statistically significant. Catholic school satisfaction ($p = .433$) and school culture ($p = .482$) were not statistically significant, therefore their predictive strength was not significant.

Table 17

Summary Regression Results for Latino American Educational Experience and School Selection^a

Model	R	R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	R ² Adjusted	F	Sig.
1	.564 ^b	.318	.421	.296 ^b	14.180	.000 ^b
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	
1 (Constant)	1.858	.341		5.456	.000	
Public Satisfaction	.176	.045	.296	3.931	.000	
Catholic Satisfaction	-.062	.079	-.066	-.786	.433	
School Culture	-.081	.115	-.055	-.705	.482	
Accessibility	-.262	.090	-.237	-2.930	.004	

^aDependent Variable: School Selection

^bPredictors: (Constant), Public School Satisfaction, Catholic School Satisfaction, School Culture, Catholic School Accessibility

Table 18 illustrates the stepwise regression used to determine the predictive strength of language, defined as the language participants used to answer the PSS instrument, and the predictor variables of Latino American educational experience, public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction, school culture and Catholic school

accessibility. According to model 1, with public school satisfaction as the predictor, the variables of Latino American educational experience accounted for 17.9% of the variability in school selection. In model 2, with public school satisfaction and Catholic school accessibility as the predictors, the variables of Latino American educational experience accounted for 25.9% of the variability in school selection. Variability in school selection for the variables of Latino American educational experience in model 3 with public school satisfaction, Catholic school accessibility and language, accounted for 31.1%, of variability in school selection. In all three models, language and the group variables of Latino American educational experience can be used to reliably predict school selection. Model 1, with an F of 34.122 was statistically significant ($p < .001$). Model 2, with an F of 27.045 was statistically significant ($p < .001$). Model 3, with an F of 23.146 was statistically significant ($p < .001$).

Public school satisfaction, the predictor in model 1, had the highest magnitude with a standardized beta of .424. In model 2, public school satisfaction had a higher magnitude (.393), than Catholic school accessibility (-.283). When language was added as a predictor in model 3, the magnitude of Catholic school accessibility became higher (-.292) than public school satisfaction (.284). Since language is a dichotomous variable where the higher code represents those who took the survey in Spanish and the lower code represents those who took the survey in English, the positive sign for the beta (.253) indicates that the respondents with children in parish programs were more likely to use the Spanish version of the survey than were those respondents with children in Catholic schools.

Public school satisfaction ($p < .001$) was statistically significant in all three models. Catholic school accessibility ($p < .001$) was statistically significant in the two models it was included. Language ($p = .001$) was statistically significant in model 3. Therefore the predictive strength for all three was significant.

Table 18

Summary Stepwise Results for Latino American Educational Experience and School Selection^a

Model	R	R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	R ² Adjusted	F	Sig.
1	.424 ^b	.179	.456	.174 ^b	34.122	.000 ^b
2	.509 ^c	.259	.435	.249 ^c	27.045	.000 ^c
3	.557 ^d	.311	.420	.297 ^d	23.146	.000 ^d
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	
1(Constant)	.822	.119		6.881	.000	
Public	.252	.043	.424	5.841	.000	
2(Constant)	1.757	.256		6.853	.000	
Public	.234	.041	.393	5.657	.000	
Access	-.314	.077	-.283	-4.070	.000	
3(Constant)	1.597	.252		6.325	.000	
Public	.169	.044	.284	3.806	.000	
Access	-.324	.075	-.292	-4.331	.000	
Language	.278	.082	.253	3.411	.001	

^aDependent Variable: School Selection

^bPredictors: (Constant), Public School Satisfaction

^cPredictors: (Constant), Public School Satisfaction, Catholic School Accessibility

^dPredictors: (Constant), Public School Satisfaction, Catholic School Accessibility, Language

One-Way Analysis of Variance

In Table 19, the result of a one-way analysis of variance and the means for the measures of the scales of Latino American Catholic experience by group; those with a child in Catholic school only, in both a religious education program and a Catholic school, in a religious education program only, or in neither program are represented. The ANOVA on the scales of Latino American Catholic experience suggested that both scales, parish affiliation ($p < .001$) and liturgical cultural sensitivity ($p < .001$) were statistically significant. The ANOVA on the scales of the Latino American Catholic experience suggested group influenced both scales.

Table 19

One-Way Analysis of Variance and Means of Latino American Catholic Experience by Group

Response	Catholic School Only	Religious Education Only	Both	Neither	F	Sig.
Parish Affiliation	3.14	3.28	3.13	3.47	7.302	.000
Liturgical	2.56	3.29	2.82	3.25	39.454	.000

Table 20 depicts the result of a one-way analysis of variance and the means for the measures of the scales of Latino American societal experience by group. The ANOVA on the scales of Latino American societal experience suggested that all of the scales, English preference ($p < .001$), Spanish preference ($p < .001$), U. S. Identity

($p = .003$), and values conflict ($p < .001$) were statistically significant. Group influenced all of the scales.

Table 20

One-Way Analysis of Variance and Means of Latino American Societal Experience by Group

Response	Catholic School Only	Religious Education Only	Both	Neither	F	Sig.
English	3.61	3.10	3.41	3.29	17.893	.000
Spanish	2.53	3.31	2.98	3.47	29.237	.000
U.S. Identity	2.83	2.67	2.98	2.56	4.816	.003
Values	2.03	2.36	2.20	2.52	9.858	.000

Table 21 depicts the result of a one-way analysis of variance and the means for the measures of the scales of Latino American educational experience by group. The ANOVA on the scales of Latino American educational experience suggested that Catholic school satisfaction ($p = .005$) and Catholic school access ($p < .001$) were statistically significant. The group influenced both scales. School culture ($p = .351$) was not statistically significant. These findings are consistent with findings depicted in Table 14; the difference between the means of the two groups and the variable school culture description ($p = .215$) was not significant. Table 11 depicting the correlation matrix of predictor variables for Latino American educational experience showed the correlation between group and school culture ($-.068$) was not significant. The results of the

regression analysis depicted in Table 17 also indicated that school culture ($p = .482$) as a predictor variable was not significant with school selection as the dependent variable.

Perhaps, because Latinos have such limited educational backgrounds (Allen, 2005; Bohon & Macpherson, 2005), they are unable to make informed decisions regarding the culture of their child's school.

Table 21

One-Way Analysis of Variance and Means of Latino American Educational Experience by Group

Response	Catholic School Only	Religious Education Only	Both	Neither	F	Sig.
Public	2.11	3.12	2.43	2.97	53.464	.000
Catholic	3.61	3.41	3.54	3.50	4.287	.005
Culture	3.08	3.05	3.10	2.97	1.095	.351
Accessibility	3.01	2.69	2.89	3.08	6.167	.000

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Of the 748 respondents to the Parental Selection of Schools (PSS) instrument, over one-half (57.2%) had children enrolled in a parish religious education program, only 147 respondents had children enrolled in a Catholic school, and only 101 had children enrolled in both a parish religious education program and a Catholic school. Over two-thirds (77.0%) of the 748 respondents were registered in a parish, and only 134 were not.

Six hundred and five respondents had completed high school with 134 of them having attended a Catholic high school. Only 285 respondents had completed college, with only 41 respondents having attended a Catholic college. Well over half (66.2%) of the respondents earned an annual income under \$60,000.

As theorized in question 1 and hypothesis I, Latino American Catholic experience was correlated at the .01 level of significance to school selection with both of the predictor variables, parish affiliation and liturgical cultural sensitivity. Of the correlations between each predictor variable and school selection, the highest correlation occurred between liturgical cultural sensitivity, defined by the importance participants gave to the use of Spanish in Catholic liturgy and school selection. In answer to question 1, a strong, positive relationship was suggested by the correlation analysis. As theorized in question 2 and hypothesis II, Latino American societal experience was correlated at the .01 level of significance to school selection with income and all four of the predictor variables; English preference, Spanish preference, U.S. identity and values conflict. Of the correlations between each predictor variable and school selection, the highest correlation occurred between income and school selection. The second highest correlation occurred between Spanish preference and school selection. In answer to question 2, a strong, positive relationship was suggested by the correlation analysis. As theorized in question 3 and hypothesis III, Latino American educational experience was correlated at the .01 level of significance to school selection, with three of the four predictor variables, public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction and Catholic school accessibility. Of the correlations between each predictor variable and school selection, the highest correlation

occurred between public school satisfaction and school selection. There was not a significant correlation between the predictor variable school culture and school selection.

The correlations of the predictor and dependent variables suggested a relationship between these variables and school selection, thus further exploration of the relationship was necessary. Three separate regression analysis to determine the predictive strength of Latino American Catholic experience, income, Latino American societal experience and Latino American education experience on school selection were conducted to answer question 4. In the regression on Latino American Catholic experience, liturgical cultural sensitivity would make the greater contribution in predicting school selection. In the regression on income, it was found that it does play a very important role in Latino parents' school selection. In the regression on Latino American societal experience, the predictor variables with the exception of U.S. identity, significantly predicted school selection. In model 1 of the stepwise regression, once income is removed, Spanish preference makes the greater contribution in predicting school selection. In the regression on Latino American educational experience, two of the predictor variables, public school satisfaction and Catholic school accessibility significantly predicted school selection. Catholic school satisfaction and school culture did not significantly predict school selection. In model 1 of the stepwise regression on Latino educational experience, Catholic school accessibility would make the greater contribution in predicting school selection. When Catholic school accessibility was removed in model 2, language defined as the language (English-Spanish) used by the participants when answering the PSS instrument, would make the greater contribution. In answer to question 4, the results of

the analysis suggest that the role of Spanish in liturgical cultural sensitivity and the predictor variables of Latino American societal and educational experience, language preference is the most important predictor of Latino parents' school selection.

CHAPTER 5

OVERVIEW

This study investigated the relationships between Latino parental experiences of the American Catholic Church, society and education, and their selection of schools for their elementary school-age children. The framework for this study is based on a research literature review that explores the overall historical experience of the Latino in the United States, and the contemporary Latino American Catholic experience, Latino American societal experience and Latino American educational experience. In this study, the first theoretical construct of Latino American Catholic experience is based on theologian Figueroa Deck's (1993) research and the work of sociologists who study Latinos and the role religion plays in their lives (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998; Gutierrez, 2004; Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003; Telles & Ortiz, 2008). The framework for Latino American Catholic experience consists of parish affiliation and liturgical cultural sensitivity. The second theoretical construct in this study, Latino American societal experience is based on Hurtado-Ortiz and Gauvain's (2007) and Velez-Ibanez' (2004) research, and encompasses parents' level of acculturation, their socioeconomic status and their level of education. The framework for Latino American societal experience consists of English preference, Spanish preference, U.S. identity and values conflict. The third theoretical construct in this study, Latino American educational experience, is supported by Hernandez' (2006) research on the low educational attainment levels of students in the Latino community including overall educational experience. The framework for Latino

American educational experience, which encompasses school culture, school satisfaction and the accessibility of Catholic schools, has been operationalized using Ortega Parra's (2007) work on the elements of school culture, and Cornman, Stewart and Wolf's (2007) work on school satisfaction. Each of the variables of all three theoretical constructs was assessed through the perceptions of Latino parents about their own American Catholic experience, American societal experience and American educational experience.

The reliability of the scales used to measure Latino American Catholic, societal and educational experiences were confirmed by the pilot study of the Parental Selection of Schools (PSS) survey created by the researcher.

Data for the study were obtained from 748 Latino parents in nine parishes and eight Catholic elementary schools from the four Diocese of Tucson metropolitan vicariates, through the four-part, 57 item PSS. Of the 748 respondents to the PSS survey, 428 had children enrolled in a parish religious education program only. One hundred and forty-seven respondents had children enrolled in a Catholic school only, and 101 had children enrolled in both a parish religious education program and a Catholic school. Those participants who indicated on the survey that they did not have a child in either Catholic schools or parish religious education programs (N=55) were not included in the analyses. Over two-thirds (77.0%) of the 748 respondents were registered in a parish, and almost one-fifth (17.9%) were not. Six hundred and five respondents had completed high school and 134 had attended a Catholic high school. Two hundred and eighty-five respondents had completed college, and only 41 respondents had attended a Catholic

college. Well over half (66.2%) of the respondents earned an annual income under \$60,000.

In this study each theoretical construct had components that can be used to predict the value of a dependent variable. For Latino American Catholic experience, the predictor variables were parish affiliation and liturgical cultural sensitivity and school selection was the dependent variable. Parish affiliation defined by the role participants perceived as having in the Catholic Church was assessed by six items of the PSS instrument.

Liturgical cultural sensitivity defined by the importance participants gave to the use of Spanish in Catholic liturgy was assessed by five items of the PSS instrument. For Latino American societal experience, English preference, Spanish preference, U.S. identity and values conflict were the variables used to predict school selection, the dependent variable.

Language preference was defined by participants who showed a preference for either English or Spanish when speaking and thinking. English preference was assessed by three items of the PSS instrument, and Spanish was assessed by four items of the PSS instrument. U.S. identity was defined by participants identifying more as Mexican American or American as opposed to identifying as Mexican. U.S. identity was assessed by two items of the PSS instrument. Values conflict was defined by participants' acceptance or not of attitudes held by American and Mexican Catholics and perceived conflict between ethnic values and the larger society. Values conflict was assessed by three items of the PSS instrument. For Latino American educational experience, public school satisfaction, Catholic school satisfaction, school culture description and Catholic school accessibility were the predictor variables and school selection was the dependent

variable. Public school satisfaction was assessed by three items of the PSS instrument, and Catholic school satisfaction was assessed by six items of the PSS instrument. School culture description was defined by how parents perceive their child's school and teachers. School culture description was assessed by five items of the PSS instrument. Catholic school accessibility was assessed by seven items of the PSS instrument. The demographic variables for this study are: Catholic, registered in a parish, time in the U.S., time in Arizona, educational level of parents, Catholic education of parents, race/ethnicity, income, Catholic school membership (yes-no). Eleven items were developed to obtain parents' demographic data in Part I of the PSS instrument. These variables were studied in relationship to parish affiliation, parents' level of acculturation, their socioeconomic status, their level of education, and Catholic school membership (yes-no). The language (English-Spanish) participants used to answer the PSS instrument was also examined through multiple regression.

Hypothesis I stated that Latino parents who identified with the Catholic Church, as it functions culturally in the United States, are more likely than other Latino parents to select Catholic schools for their children. The findings of this research support this hypothesis. Question 1 investigated if there is a relationship between the Latino American Catholic experience and parents' selection of schools. The findings of this research indicate that Latino parents' experiences with the American Catholic Church are related to school selection. Hypothesis II stated that Latino parents who report a positive experience of U.S. society are more likely than other Latino parents to have their children in Catholic schools. The findings of this research support this hypothesis. Question 2

investigated if there is a relationship between Latino parents' experiences with American society in terms of acculturation and socioeconomic status and whether or not their children attended a Catholic school. The findings of this research indicate that Latino parents' experiences with American society are related to school selection. Hypothesis III stated that Latino parents who have more positive views of the U.S. educational system are more likely than other Latino parents to select Catholic schools for their children. The findings of this research support this hypothesis. Question 3 investigated if there is a relationship among school culture, school satisfaction and accessibility of Catholic schools and Latino parents' selection of schools. The findings of this research indicate there is a relationship between school satisfaction and accessibility of Catholic schools and Latino parents' selection of schools, but not between school culture and Latino parents' selection of schools. Finally, question 4 investigated what is the most important predictor of Latino parents' school selection, and to what extent income plays a role. Findings of this study indicate income plays an important role, and does language preference.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The most important finding of this research is the predictive relationship between all three theoretical constructs (Latino American Catholic experience, Latino American societal experience and Latino American educational experience) and school selection. Latino parents who responded to the Parental Selection of Schools (PSS) survey in Spanish, who indicated a higher preference for Spanish in the Catholic liturgy, in

everyday praying, speaking, and thinking did not have their children enrolled in a Catholic school. This study found that there is a strong positive relationship between the Latino American Catholic experience and parents' selection of schools, between Latino American societal experience and selection of schools, and between Latino American educational experience and selection of schools. This study also found that the strongest predictor of Latino parents' selection of schools was income. Latino families with children in Catholic schools had higher family incomes than Latino families who did not have their children in Catholic schools. However when income was controlled, the results indicate that liturgical cultural sensitivity, defined by the importance participants gave to the use of Spanish in Catholic liturgy, and the preference for Spanish as indicated in the role language plays in Latino American societal experience, emerged as important predictors of Latino parents' school selection. Finally, this study found that a strong positive relationship exists between public school satisfaction, and Catholic school accessibility, two of the predictor variables of Latino American educational experience, and selection of schools. Catholic school satisfaction and school culture were not significant predictors of whether or not Latino families had their children in Catholic schools. These findings will be elaborated in the next sections.

Question 1 and Hypothesis I

This study examined the question and hypothesis that there is a predictive relationship between Latinos who identify with the Catholic Church, as it functions culturally in the United States, and parents' selection of schools. The data indicates the

answer to question 1 and hypothesis I is that a positive relationship between Latino American Catholic experience and school selection exists. The results of the regression analysis demonstrate that cultural sensitivity, defined by the importance they give to the use of Spanish in Catholic liturgy, and religious affiliation, as the group of independent variables of American Catholic experience reliably predicts school selection. The strength of the relationship between both predictors of Latino American Catholic experience, parish affiliation and liturgical cultural sensitivity, and school selection provides additional support for the above findings. These findings concur with theologian Figueroa Deck's (1993) research and the work sociologists who study Latinos and the role religion plays in their lives (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998; Gutierrez, 2004; Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003; Telles & Ortiz, 2008), and cultural values (Diaz-Stevens & Stevens-Arroyo, 1998; Figueroa Deck, 1993). The strongest relationship among the variables of Latino American Catholic experience is between liturgical cultural sensitivity and school selection. Respondents who had a higher mean in liturgical cultural sensitivity, and answered the PSS in Spanish were those who did not have a child enrolled in a Catholic school. These results agree with the research of Figueroa Deck (1993) that Latino religious identity has a sharply cultural dimension, including a need to maintain language and tradition. Latino parents who prefer to pray in Spanish, and strongly agree that it is important to have Mass available in Spanish including music, are more likely not to have children enrolled in a Catholic school. These parents also strongly agree that cultural feasts like Our Lady of Guadalupe be celebrated in their parishes and that Mass be a part of family celebrations. The findings concerning the role of liturgical

cultural sensitivity within Latino American Catholic experience concur with similar findings in research by Telles and Ortiz (2008), that language and Catholicism are perhaps the cultural traits most associated with Mexican Americans, which also serve as markers distinguishing Mexican Americans from most other ethnic groups. The findings of this study indicate that the strongest predictive relationship between Latino American Catholic experience and selection of school is for parents who perceive the Spanish language as having a very important role in their experience of Catholicism in the United States. These Latino parents do not have their children in Catholic schools. On the other hand, the Latino parents who identify with the Catholic Church, as it functions culturally in the United States are more likely to have their children in Catholic schools. The data indicate that hypothesis I is supported.

Question 2 and Hypothesis II

Question 2 and hypothesis II examined if there is a predictive relationship between Latinos' experiences with American society in terms of parents' level of acculturation, their socioeconomic status and their selection of schools. The data indicates the answer to question 2 and hypothesis II is that a positive relationship between Latino American societal experience and school selection exists. The results of the regression analysis demonstrate that the group of independent variables of American societal experience reliably predicts the dependent variable, school selection. The strength of the relationship between all four predictors of Latino American societal experience, (English preference, Spanish preference, U.S. identity, and values conflict),

and school selection, in addition to the relationship between income and school selection provide additional support for the above findings; a positive relationship between Latino American societal experience and school selection exists. The findings of this research concur with the research by Landale and Oropesa (2007) and Hurtado-Ortiz and Guavain (2007) that for Latinos, culture provides criteria for making decisions and implementing them, and that family processes such as parents' family income, and acculturation are critical in this regard. The strongest relationship was between income and school selection. This study also found that of the four variables that define Latino American societal experience, the strongest relationship was between Spanish preference and school selection. Respondents who perceived speaking and thinking in Spanish as being important on the PSS instrument, and who answered the survey in Spanish did not have children in a Catholic school. This finding concurs with Ogbu and Simons' (1994) research on involuntary minorities who were incorporated into U.S. society against their will through conquest or slavery, and who had experienced a history of discrimination as being ambivalent about schooling, consciously or unconsciously resist adopting some school standard behaviors equated with White ways, including the acquisition of English. Finally, this study found that the variable U.S. identity was not a significant predictor. However, when income was controlled, Spanish preference was found to make the greater contribution in predicting Latino parents' school selection for their children. This affirms hypothesis II; there is a predictive relationship between Latinos' level of acculturation and their selection of schools.

Question 3 and Hypothesis III

This study examined whether there is a predictive relationship between Latino American societal experience in terms of school culture, school satisfaction and accessibility of Catholic schools and Latino parents' selection of schools. The results of the regression analysis demonstrate that two of the predictor variables, public school satisfaction and Catholic school accessibility significantly predicted school selection. Catholic school satisfaction and school culture did not significantly predict school selection. These findings concur with research by Fry and Gonzalez (2008) and Crosnoe (2004) that found Mexican families attend more problematic elementary schools than their peers from other populations, yet are more likely than either White or Black respondents to give public schools high ratings. In the regression analysis public school satisfaction had a higher magnitude than Catholic school accessibility, indicating there is a larger difference between the two groups of Latino parents in their satisfaction with public schools than there is for Catholic school accessibility. It is important to note, however, that in general Latinos have such limited educational backgrounds that they are unable to make informed decisions regarding school satisfaction (Behnke et al., 2004; Bohon & Macpherson, 2005; Gonzalez Montoya, 2006; Ortega Parra, 2007; Ramirez, 2003). However, when language, defined as the language (English-Spanish) used by the respondents when answering the PSS survey, was added as a predictor in the regression analysis, the magnitude of Catholic school accessibility became higher than both public school satisfaction and language. These findings concur with research by Bohon and Macpherson (2005), Gonzalez Montoya (2006), and Scott (2005), that despite Latino

parents' desire for a good education for their children, they are too poor to choose the better neighborhoods with good schools, with housing discrimination being a further barrier to access, as is a lack of understanding of the U.S. school system and the accessibility of Catholic schools. In addition to this, parents' vision of schools and the accessibility of Catholic schools are often based on their experiences in their country of origin if they are immigrants, or on their experiences in their often segregated neighborhoods.

Question 4

This study also examined the predictive strength of the variables that provided the framework for Latino American Catholic experience, Latino American societal experience, Latino American educational experience, and income, with Latino parents' selection of schools. The findings indicate all three theoretical constructs have a predictive relationship with school selection. Multiple regression analysis indicates that on Latino American Catholic experience, liturgical cultural sensitivity makes the greater contribution in predicting school selection. In the regression analysis on Latino American societal experience, income makes the greatest contribution in predicting school selection, followed by preference for Spanish. In the regression on Latino American educational experience public school satisfaction makes the greatest contribution in predicting school selection, followed in turn by Catholic school accessibility and language, defined as the language (English-Spanish) used by the respondents when answering the PSS survey. The findings of this study suggest that the role of Spanish in

liturgical cultural sensitivity, the role it plays in Latinos' level of acculturation, and respondents' language preference when answering the survey, indicate Spanish language preference is an important predictor of Latino parents' school selection.

CONCLUSIONS

Latino parents' experiences of American Catholicism, society and education, have a predictive relationship to their selection of schools. Once income has been accounted for, liturgical cultural sensitivity and Spanish language preference exhibit the strongest relationship to selection of schools for Latino parents in this study. This finding reflects the importance language and culture play in Latino religious identity. For Latinos, culture, including a need to maintain language and tradition, provides criteria for deciding what to do about things such as selection of schools. This finding indicates that for Latinos, family processes such as parents' family income, and acculturation are critical in this regard.

This study has contributed to the literature on Latino American Catholic, societal and educational experiences. The data from this study that convey the perceptions of Latino parents and their experiences with American Catholicism, society and education and school selection have also contributed to the literature on Latinos and educational choices regarding Catholic schools.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) affirms that Catholic schools are often the Church's most effective contribution to those families who are poor and disadvantaged, many who tend to be minorities. In underachieving urban school districts, African American and Latino students often make up the majority and in some cases the entirety of the student population. Current research finds that Mexican Americans, who constitute the majority of Latinos in the United States, are the most educationally at risk (Ready, 2008; San Miguel & Valencia, 1998; Sikkink & Hernandez, 2003; Telles & Ortiz, 2008). Catholic schools have a history of success in reducing the achievement gap between Black and White students; however, they have not had the opportunity to do the same for Latino students because so few attend Catholic schools. Unless progress toward narrowing the achievement gap for Latino students is not greatly accelerated, they will continue to struggle with English proficiency, with acculturation, with breaking the cycle of poverty. The enormous potential contribution of Latinos to the United States' economic and cultural life as well as the Catholic Church will not be realized without making Catholic education an option for them. The findings of this study offer insight to Church leadership into fulfilling the mission of the Catholic school as an ecclesial base community; the school is the starting point for full participation in the life of the Church (Buetow, 1988), and in reducing the achievement gap between Latino and White students.

Though the data and analysis from this study on Latino American Catholic experience, Latino American societal experience and Latino American educational

experience has informed the literature about the relationships between these three theoretical constructs and school selection, the ultimate goal of this study is to provide information that will help increase options for Latino parents when selecting schools for their elementary school-age children, and give support to Catholic Church leadership in meeting its pressing responsibility to embrace the growing Latino population; a community that has such an important role to play in the future of the Catholic Church in the United States. Figure 2 represents an illustration of how the findings can be utilized by Catholic Church leadership, by Catholic educational leaders and by local businesses, by depicting each theoretical construct and the application within these.

Figure 2**Practical Applications of the Study Results**

<p align="center">Latino American Experiences of Church, Society And Education Study Results</p>

<p align="center">Latino American Catholic Experience</p> <p>Diocesan Chancery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clergy Formation • Superintendent Formation <p>Diocesan School Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRE/Principal Formation <p>Parishes/Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic Assessment • Board Formation/ Training • DRE Formation • Teacher Formation 	<p align="center">Latino American Societal Experience</p> <p>Parishes/Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Outreach • Staff Professional Development <p>Businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships • Financial Assistance 	<p align="center">Latino American Educational Experience</p> <p>Parishes/Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing • Partnerships • Financial Assistance • Relationship of Trust
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Latino American Catholic Experience

Catholic Church leadership, members of the parish religious education programs and Catholic school leaders must come to understand and accept that past treatments of Latinos by American religious institutions, including schools, impact today's Latino parents' educational decisions. Catholic Church leadership, members of the parish religious education programs and Catholic school leaders must not continue that historic clash between the style and spirit of Spanish-speaking and English-speaking Catholicism. These ecclesial leaders must seek a community transformed by mutual respect and acceptance. This transformation to respect differences is made possible by a conviction to the truth that we are all the One Body of Christ. In this way, Catholic Church leadership can begin to meet its pressing responsibility of embracing the growing Latino population.

Meeting this challenge is an enormous undertaking, but not an impossible one. In *To Teach as Jesus Did* (1972) the American Bishops emphasized that of the educational programs available to the Catholic community, Catholic schools afford the fullest and best opportunity to provide a Christian education to children and young people. As stated by Buetow, (1988) the Catholic school is, in fact, an ecclesial base community; the starting point for full participation in the life of the Church. This supportive educational role that the Catholic school has within the larger Church is often lost in the priority given to maintaining academic achievement demonstrated through high test scores, concern over parish subsidies and the unhealthy rivalry that exists between Catholic schools and parish religious education programs.

As a starting point, the formation offered by the diocesan chancery to clergy, superintendents, directors of catechesis, principals, and parish directors of religious education, on the primary role of the Catholic school within the larger Church must be made clear. Once this is in place, diocesan mandates to pastors to conduct demographic assessments of their population should follow, to include liturgical cultural sensitivity. A mistaken belief that continues to trouble the outreach to Latino Catholics is the assumption that the structures the Catholic Church has, including its schools, are fundamentally adequate to meet the needs of the Latino community. They are not adequate, and this reality must be examined and also conveyed by Church leadership to parish boards, school boards, and all stakeholders. The information from this study could be used by Church leadership, enabling diocesan chancellors, superintendents and directors of catechesis in preparing ongoing formation programs for clergy, parish boards, and school boards, parish directors of religious education, principals and teachers to rally respect and nurture Latino Catholicism. Pastors, directors of religious education and principals could use the Part II, Catholic Experience section of the Parental Selection of Schools survey as a tool to conduct a demographic assessment of parish families, and to evaluate parents' perceptions about American Catholic cultural values experienced in and out of the institutional church. Survey data would alert each pastor and parish school principal to the need of better embracing cultural sensitivity based on their communities' responses. Information gleaned from survey data is critical not only to parishes, but to entire dioceses. If Latino families do not feel welcomed in their parishes, they may leave

the Church for one in which they do feel welcome, and they will never see the parish Catholic school as an educational option for their children.

If traditional Latino cultural values are not accepted in American Catholic parishes, the value Latino parents place on Catholic faith formation; the primary reason for the existence of Catholic schools, can be lost. Because the data from this study indicate that aside from income, liturgical cultural sensitivity and Spanish language preference are strong predictors of school selection, bishops, chancellors, superintendents, pastors, principals and directors of religious education need to focus on ways to appreciate and nurture the cultural dimension of Latino Catholicity. The U.S. Catholic Church is at a pivotal moment in its history. It is going through a very profound transition in its membership. One of the most important aspects of that transition is the growth of the Latino communities, and the way the Church will relate to those communities could determine the future of the Church in the U.S.A. (Figueroa Deck, 1993).

Latino American Societal Experience

The survey tool used in this study can provide information about Latino parents to the diocesan chancery and Catholic school office on which to base strategic planning and decision making as well. Information from this study indicates that Latino parents who have received less formal education, prefer speaking Spanish, are less acculturated, and earn less income do not consider Catholic schools as an option for their children. Communicating these findings to decision makers at parishes, Catholic schools and

businesses, would enhance strategic planning to include educational outreach programs, offering English, computer skills, GED classes, and other programs that help Latinos develop school choice consumer skills. These could be offered at Catholic school sites, making them more familiar settings to Latino parents. Many Catholic schools are perceived as “outsider” institutions in the Latino community. Once Latinos become familiar with these educational settings, the Catholic school ceases to be such a foreign, unattainable educational option. As Latinos begin to participate in educational outreach programs offered at their local parishes and Catholic schools, they will begin to see Catholic schools as a viable educational option for their children. Parish and school staff must also receive formation on the primary role of the Catholic school as evangelizer, as well as formation on the need to respect and nurture Latino Catholicism within their apostolate. Finally, information from this study can be used to encourage businesses to partner with parishes and schools in offering educational outreach programs to Latino adults, and youth, and more importantly in offering financial assistance to families and students in the form of tax credits, scholarships and work study programs. As noted in this study, despite Mexican American distrust of formal church policies and practices after the U.S. annexation of the Southwest, they strongly supported the building of Catholic schools because for the most part, Catholic schools took a stand in favor of Mexican Americans and their cultural heritage in the process of teaching them U.S. social, economic and political ideals. Information from this study has the potential to aid Church leadership to once again earn Latino trust in Catholic schools, and these schools

can once again stand in favor of Latinos' cultural heritage while helping them participate fully in American society.

Latino American Educational Experience

The findings of this study clearly indicate that Catholic school accessibility is a predictor in Latino parents' selection of schools. Bishops, chancellors, superintendents, pastors, principals and development directors could use the information from this study to develop diocesan marketing campaigns to attract Latino families. The feasibility of this endeavor is supported by the Notre Dame Task Force on the Participation of Latino Children and Families in Catholic Schools (2009) that suggest the implementation of a clear and coherent set of marketing and communication proposals at the school level can yield substantial enrollment gains of Latino students. As part of the proposals developed by individual parishes and Catholic schools the implementation of personalized recruiting efforts, the minimization of paperwork and diminishing of the bureaucratic system of registration many schools have in place are essential. Parishes and Catholic schools should also take advantage of the social networks in place within local Latino communities by inviting trusted members of these communities to participate on boards and committees. Dioceses can aggressively expand and promote tuition assistance by partnering with businesses, encouraging priests to promote Catholic schools from the pulpit and to increase Catholic giving through the offertory collection and other channels.

Finally, Catholic schools and parish groups must develop a relationship of trust and cooperation; a willingness to share resources. The "us versus them" attitude that is so

often perceived between parish religious education programs and parish Catholic schools must cease to exist if Latino families are to more readily see the Catholic school as an option for their children. As stated previously, the school is the starting point for full participation in the life of the Church. Presently, 68% of Latinos identify themselves as Roman Catholics (Lugo, 2007), yet only 3% of Latinos are enrolled in Catholic schools (The Notre Dame Task Force on the Participation of Latino Children and Families in Catholic Schools, 2009). Dioceses with the highest number of empty seats are located around the largest metropolitan areas with large numbers of Latinos. The Catholic Church has an obligation to serve the diverse needs of the ever-increasing Latino community; needs that include education. The Catholic school, because of its very nature, forms future Catholics, while providing an academic education. By ascertaining what experiences have a relationship with Latino parents' selection of schools, this study provides Church leadership with information needed to meet the challenge of helping Latinos see Catholic schools as a viable option for their children. This is an enormous undertaking, but not an impossible one. This study provides information and suggestions to help the American Catholic Church embrace this undertaking.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study presumes that the Latino experience of the American Catholic Church, society and education influence parents decisions, and can be used to examine school selection objectively. Although obtaining data through surveys is an established research method, it relies on self-identifying data from Latino parents who may have biases about

their own parish, society and child's school, who gave answers that they believed the researcher expected, or who misinterpreted the survey questions. Although these general limitations of survey data could be applicable to this study, the use of previously researched measures, the availability of the survey in English and Spanish, parents' awareness that responses would be used to investigate Latino parents as a group, and anonymity, were used to minimize some of these limitations.

A non-random sample of Latino parents with children enrolled in a parish religious education program and or a Catholic elementary school was surveyed. Since data were obtained only from this population, information was not obtained from Latino parents who did not have children enrolled in either program. The researcher chose not to gather data from individuals who no longer had, or may never have had a child enrolled in either a parish religious education program or a Catholic elementary school because this other population may never have had a vested interest in their children's faith education, or it may be so minimal as to produce different results. Due to the unique geographical area of this study, the focus is on Mexican Americans. Since there are many other Latino groups in the U.S., the findings of this study may not be generalizable with another group of Latinos or another region of the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Aside from language, the cultural trait most associated with Mexican Americans has been Catholicism. It would be beneficial to examine the factors of the Latino American Catholic experience as described in this study to answer questions that

emerged from this research. In this study religious affiliation and cultural values are the factors used to describe the Latino American Catholic experience. These factors could be used to develop research questions that examine why, while the Latino foreign-born population, particularly from Mexico, has added steadily to the number of Latino American Catholics, conversion to other religions, particularly to evangelical Protestantism has drawn down the number of second, third and fourth generation Latino Catholics. Also, it would be beneficial to further examine the effect language preference and acculturation has on religious affiliation. Do Latinos' levels of acculturation play a role in the church or religion they choose? What Catholic Church structures need to be examined and modified to meet the needs of the large Latino Catholic population? Is the growth of evangelical Protestantism among Latinos providing a new form of affirmation for latent ethnic traditions? Answers to these questions would enrich the information obtained in this study about the role religious affiliation and cultural values play in the choices made by Latinos and assist Church leaders as they seek to retain Latino Catholics.

Further research should examine Latinos' perception of Catholic school accessibility, as it relates to school choice consumer skills. The analysis of data in this study clearly indicates that Catholic school accessibility is a predictor in school selection. There may be other factors that can be used to further define Catholic school accessibility. A future study that looks specifically at school choice consumer skills Latinos possess, and how these skills might impact school selection would provide invaluable data by asking the following questions: what consumer school choice skills do

parents with a child in a Catholic school have; how do Latinos perceive their school choice options; what role has a Catholic school education had in Latino families over the past three generations? A study like this could answer key questions that will allow Church leadership and Catholic school educators to offer more educational opportunities to Latinos.

Quantitative data were obtained from surveys distributed by classroom teachers, religious education teachers and electronic surveys available in both English and Spanish. Asking directors of religious programs, principals and teachers to also answer the survey may elicit a higher rate of response from parents. This study relied on statistical analysis of survey data. Research making use of data obtained through qualitative research may enhance the interpretation of the findings of this study. Personal experiences, attitudes and relationships were examined in this study, therefore, interviews may enrich these findings and how they impact school selection.

SUMMARY

The major finding in this study supports the predictive nature of the relationship between Latino American Catholic experience, Latino American societal experience, Latino American educational experience and Latino parents' selection of schools. The value Latinos place on liturgical cultural sensitivity, defined by the importance they give to the use of Spanish in Catholic liturgy, was strongly related to the school they selected for their children. Parents who strongly agreed it was important to have Mass available in Spanish, including music, who saw the celebration of cultural feasts like Our Lady of

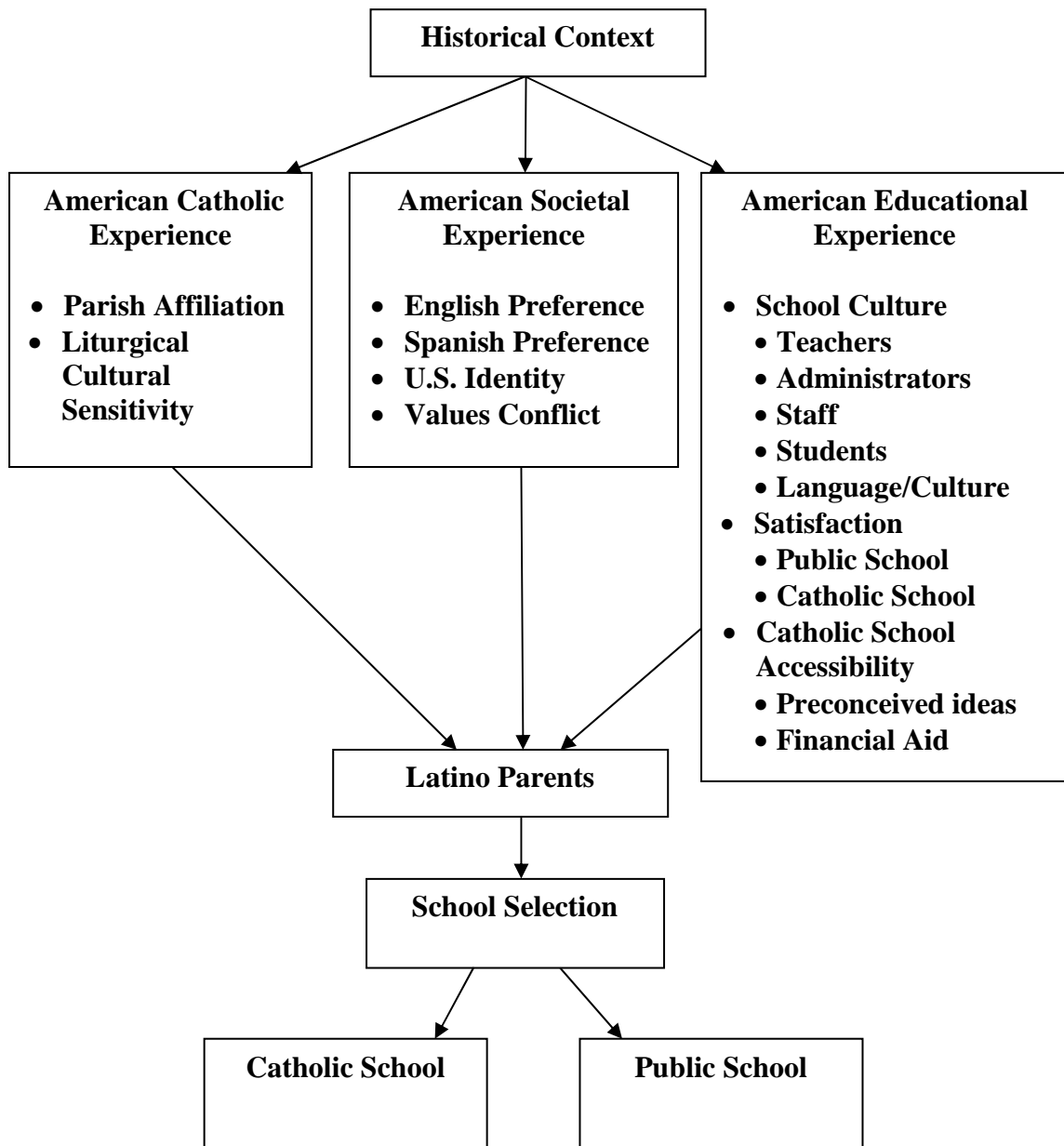
Guadalupe as important to their faith, did not choose Catholic schools for their children.

The importance of the Spanish language in Latinos' experiences of American Catholicism, American society, and American education as a predictor of school selection must be taken into account by Church leadership if it is to continue its educational mission to the Latino community, while ensuring a future for the American Catholic Church.

APPENDIX A

A Conceptual Framework of Latino Parental School Selection Influenced by Parental Experiences of Church, Society and School

A Conceptual Framework of Latino Parental School Selection Influenced by Parental Experiences of Church, Society and School



APPENDICES B, C, D,

Bishop's Letter of Support to Pastors

E-mail to Directors of Religious Education and Principals

Explanation of Research Study to Directors of Religious Education and Principals



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
DIOCESE OF TUCSON

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September 28, 2010

Dear Pastors and Pastoral Administrators:

Sister Barbara Monsegur, Cfrmm, principal of Lourdes Catholic HS in Nogales is conducting a survey as part of her Ph.D. project at the Catholic University of America.

Her research project involves doing a survey of Latino parents of Catholic school students and parish religious education students in order to understand better factors that influence Latino parents' selection of schools for their children.

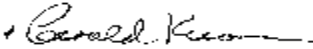
As you may be aware, many Latino parents do not access Catholic schools; in fact, a mere 3% of Latino children attend Catholic schools. This research project will have many benefits for the Church in better understanding what might encourage more Latino families to send their children to Catholic schools.

Sister Barbara has conducted this survey in a number of parishes in the Diocese of Phoenix and the response by Latino families has been very encouraging. I hope our experience in the Diocese of Tucson will be similar.

With my approval, Sister Barbara will be contacting your principal and/or religious education director to obtain lists of their parents in order to survey them. If you would prefer that Sister Barbara not contact your DRE or principal please let me know by contacting Sonya Gutierrez at 838-2523 by Wednesday, October 6th.

I appreciate your support of this important initiative and I look forward to hearing the results.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Rev. Gerald F. Kicanas, D.D.
Bishop of Tucson

Dear Directors of Religious Education and Principals of Catholic Elementary Schools,

My name is Sr. Barbara Monsegur, and I am currently working on my Doctorate degree from the Catholic University of America. I am researching what factors influence Latino parent's selection of schools. To complete my degree I will need your help in surveying parents of children in your religious education or Catholic school program.

I am happy to report that after sharing my pilot study findings from the Diocese of Phoenix with Bishop Kicanas, Sr. Rosa Maria Ruiz, Cfmm, and Mike Berger; all three have given me their complete support as I begin surveying parents in our own Diocese. Recently, Bishop Kicanas sent out a letter to your pastors introducing my survey and noting his approval.

As a Catholic school principal myself, I know what a small commodity time has become for all of us. I have prepared four documents to better explain my research and the help I am requesting from each of you, I have attached four files:

1. Explanation of Research Study
2. Copy of my survey in English: Parental Selection of Schools (available on survey monkey as well)
3. Copy of my survey in Spanish: Elección de Escuela por los Padres de Familia (available on survey monkey as well)
4. Initial Contact Information Sheet (please return to me as soon as possible)

Again, I cannot thank you enough for your help as we seek to find better ways of educating children in our Faith. I will be contacting you individually next week to offer further explanations or answer any questions. If there is a better day and time to reach you please let me know. My cell number is 520-980-0224

May God continue to bless you and all you do in this mission called education.

Peace,

Sr. Barbara Monsegur, Cfmm

Factors That Influence Latino Parents' Selection of Schools

Statement of the Problem

The Catholic Church in the United States has undergone a profound demographic transformation with Latinos soon comprising the majority of Catholics in the U.S. Despite this, few Latino children attend Catholic schools. Currently 68% of Latinos identify themselves as Roman Catholics (Lugo, 2007) yet only 3% of Latino children attend Catholic school. (The Notre Dame Task Force on the Participation of Latino Children and Families in Catholic Schools, 2009). There is no consensus as to what fundamentally influences and informs Latino parents' selection of schools (Stevens-Arroyo & Pantoja, 2003).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which the Latino's experience of American Catholicism, society and education influence their selection of schools for their children. The questions of this study are as follows:

1. What is the extent to which the Latino American Catholic experience influences parents' selection of schools?
2. Do Latino parents' experiences with American society in terms of acculturation and socioeconomic status influence their selection of schools?
3. How do school culture, school satisfaction and accessibility of Catholic schools influence Latino parents' selection of schools?
4. What is the most important predictor of Latino parents' school selection, and to what extent does income play a role in this?

Methodology

This study employs the use of the Parental Selection of Schools (PSS) survey created by the researcher. English and Spanish versions of the survey will be available. A formal pilot test of the survey was conducted in the fall of 2009 in the Diocese of Phoenix. The sample population for my research study consists of Latino parents with children enrolled in one of the twenty parish religious education programs identified by the Director of Catechesis of the Diocese of Tucson or one of the nine Catholic elementary schools in the Tucson metropolitan area. The survey will be distributed to all parents with children in either these schools or religious education programs; however, parents who self-identify as Latino are the primary focus of this dissertation study.

APPENDICES E, F,

Parental Selection of Schools Survey

Elección de Escuela por los Padres de Familia Encuesta

Parental Selection of Schools

Your responses are very important to a study being conducted on Latino parents and why they select the schools they choose for their children. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. You may return the completed survey to your child's Catholic School teacher or Parish Religious Education teacher, or mail directly to Barbara Monsegur, 555 E. Patagonia Hwy. Nogales, AZ, 85621. Thank you very much for your time and input.

I. Demographics

1. Are you Catholic? Yes ☐ No ☐
2. Are you registered at a parish? Yes ☐ No ☐
3. How many years have you lived in the United States?
☐ Less than 5 years ☐ 5-10 years
☐ 11-20 years ☐ more than 20 years
4. How many years have you lived in Arizona?
☐ Less than 5 years ☐ 5-10 years
☐ 11-20 years ☐ more than 20 years
5. Did you finish high school? Yes ☐ No ☐
6. Did you finish college? Yes ☐ No ☐
7. Check the level of Catholic schools that you have attended (check all that apply).
None ☐ Elementary ☐ High School ☐ College/University ☐

8. Please check your race/ethnicity:

American Indian/Alaskan Native ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander ☐ Black, non-Hispanic ☐

Hispanic/Latino ☐ White, non-Hispanic ☐

Other ☐ (please specify) _____

9. Check your annual family income.

Under \$20,000 ☐ \$20,001 - \$40,000 ☐ \$40,001 - \$60,000 ☐

\$60,001 - \$80,000 ☐ \$80,001 - \$100,000 ☐ over \$100,000 ☐

10. Do you currently have a child/children in a parish religious education/CCD program?

Yes ☐ No ☐

11. Do you currently have a child/children in a Catholic elementary school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

II. Catholic Experience

For the following items, indicate the extent to which you have experienced these feelings or situations

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Attending Mass on a weekly basis is important				
b. It is important for me to be involved in parish/church activities				
c. It is important for me to be a member of a parish group/ organization				
d. It is important for me to be involved in a parish ministry (i.e. choir, lector, etc)				
e. I feel part of my parish community				

f. I feel welcomed in my parish				
g. I prefer to pray in Spanish any time I pray				
h. It is important for me to have Mass available in Spanish				
i. It is important for me to have cultural feasts like Our Lady of Guadalupe celebrated in my parish/church				
j. It is important for me to have Mass as part of family celebrations (i.e. quinceañeras, anniversaries, etc.)				
k. It is important for me to have Spanish music at Mass				
l. I have difficulty accepting certain attitudes held by American Catholics				
m. I have difficulty accepting certain attitudes held by Mexican Catholics				

III. Societal Experience

For the following items, indicate the extent to which you have experienced these feelings or situations

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I speak Spanish well				
2. I speak English well				
3. I enjoy speaking Spanish				
4. I enjoy speaking English				
5. My thinking is predominantly done in Spanish				
6. My thinking is predominantly done in English				
7. I like to identify myself as a Mexican				

American				
8. I like to identify myself as an American				
9. I like to identify myself as a Mexican				
10. My ethnic values are in conflict with what is expected by the larger society				

IV. Educational Experience

For the following items, indicate the extent to which you have experienced these feelings or situations

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
1. My child's teachers are available to discuss concerns with me					
2. My child's teachers are available to help him/her					
3. My child's school seems like a cold, uncaring place					
4. I feel welcome at my child's school					
5. My child's school encourages ethnic student activities					
6. I feel I have to change myself to fit in at my child's school					
7. Parish religious education/CCD programs do a good job teaching the faith					
8. Public schools in the area have good reputations					
9. Public schools have a very good academic program					
10. Public schools do a good job teaching English					
11. Catholic schools are very important in educating children in the faith					

12. Catholic schools in the area have a reputation for having a very good academic program					
13. Catholic schools are worth the tuition					
14. Catholic schools do a good job teaching English					
15. Catholic schools have good discipline and safe environments					
16. Catholic schools have a good religious education program					
17. Catholic schools have money available for financial aid					
18. I know what the tuition is for the Catholic schools in the area					
19. Catholic schools have affordable tuition					
20. The location of the Catholic school in the area is convenient					
21. It is a family tradition to have our children in Catholic schools					
22. Most of the students in Catholic schools are from wealthier families					
23. Most of the students in Catholic schools are Anglo/White					

24. Are there any other comments you would like to add?

Elección de Escuela por los Padres de Familia

Sus respuestas son muy importantes para un estudio sobre padres de familia Latinos y las escuelas que escogen para sus hijos. Por favor tome unos minutos para completar esta encuesta. Al terminar la encuesta, por favor regresarlo con su hijo a su maestra de su Escuela Católica, o a su maestra de Educación Religiosa de su Parroquia, o envíalo directamente por correo Barbara Monsegur, 555 E. Patagonia Hwy. Nogales, AZ, 85621. Muchísimas gracias por su tiempo y su aportación.

I. Demográfica

1. Es usted Católico? Sí ☐ No ☐
2. Está registrado en una parroquia? Sí ☐ No ☐
3. Por cuántos años ha vivido en los Estados Unidos?

<input type="checkbox"/> Menos de 5 años	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 años
<input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 años	<input type="checkbox"/> Más de 20 años
4. Cuántos años ha vivido en Arizona?

<input type="checkbox"/> Menos de 5 años	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 años
<input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 años	<input type="checkbox"/> Más de 20 años
5. Terminó preparatoria? Sí ☐ No ☐
6. Terminó la Universidad? Sí ☐ No ☐
7. Marque el nivel que haya cursado en escuelas católicas (todas las que apliquen).

Ninguno	<input type="checkbox"/>	Primaria	<input type="checkbox"/>	Preparatoria	<input type="checkbox"/>	Colegio/Universidad	<input type="checkbox"/>
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8. Por favor marque su raza/etnicidad:

Indio Americano/Nativo de Alaska ☐ Asiático/Islands del Pacífico ☐ Negro, no-Hispano ☐

Hispano/Latino ☐ Blanco, no-Hispano ☐

Otra ☐ (por favor especifica) _____

9. Marque su entrada económica anual.

Menos de \$20,000 ☐ \$20,001 - \$40,000 ☐ \$40,001 - \$60,000 ☐

\$60,001 - \$80,000 ☐ \$80,001 - \$100,000 ☐ Más de \$100,000 ☐

10. Actualmente tiene usted hijos en educación religiosa/Curso de Catecismo?

Sí ☐ No ☐

11. Actualmente tiene usted hijos en escuela primaria católica?

Sí ☐ No ☐

II. Experiencia Católica

Para cada afirmación indique en qué grado está de acuerdo con ellas

Afirmación	Bastante de acuerdo	De acuerdo	En desacuerdo	Bastante en desacuerdo
a. Ir a Misa semanalmente es importante				
b. Es importante para mí involucrarme en actividades de la parroquia o la iglesia				
c. Es importante para mí ser miembro de un grupo u organización parroquial				
d. Es importante para mí involucrarme en un ministerio parroquial (coro, lector, etc.)				

e. Me siento parte de mi comunidad parroquial				
f. Me siento bienvenido en mi parroquia				
g. Prefiero orar en español siempre que rezo				
h. Es importante para mí tener misas en español				
i. Es importante para mí que se celebren fiestas culturales en mi parroquia/iglesia, como la de la Virgen de Guadalupe				
j. Es importante para mí tener misa como parte de celebraciones familiares (quinceañeras, aniversario, etc.)				
k. Es importante para mí tener música en español en misa				
l. Me es difícil aceptar ciertas actitudes de católicos americanos				
m. Me es difícil aceptar ciertas actitudes de católicos mexicanos				

III. Experiencia de la Sociedad Americana

Para cada afirmación indique en qué grado está de acuerdo con ellas

Afirmación	Bastante de acuerdo	De acuerdo	En desacuerdo	Bastante en desacuerdo
1. Hablo bien el español				
2. Hablo bien el inglés				
3. Disfruto hablar en español				
4. Disfruto hablar en inglés				
5. Pienso principalmente en español				
6. Pienso principalmente en inglés				
7. Me gusta identificarme como mexicano-americano				

8. Me gusta identificarme como americano				
9. Me gusta identificarme como mexicano				
10. Mis valores étnicos están en conflicto con las expectativas de la sociedad en general				

IV. Experiencia Educativa

Para cada afirmación indique en qué grado está de acuerdo con ellas

Afirmación	Bastante de acuerdo	De acuerdo	En desacuerdo	Bastante en desacuerdo	No sé
1. Los maestros de mis hijo están disponibles para discutir mis dudas					
2. Los maestros de mi hijo están dispuestos a ayudarlo					
3. La escuela de mi hijo parece ser un lugar frío y falto de interés					
4. Me siento bienvenido en la escuela de mi hijo					
5. La escuela de mi hijo impulsa actividades escolares étnicas					
6. Siento que debo cambiar para ajustarme a la escuela de mi hijo					
7. Los programas de educación religiosa/catecismo en las parroquias hacen un buen trabajo de enseñar la fe					
8. Las escuelas públicas en el área tienen buena reputación					
9. Las escuelas públicas tienen muy buen programa académico					
10. Las escuelas públicas hacen un buen trabajo en la enseñanza del inglés					
11. Las escuelas católicas son muy importantes para educar a los niños en la fe					
12. Las escuelas católicas en el área son reconocidas por tener muy buen programa académico					
13. En las escuelas católicas, vale la pena el pago de colegiatura					
14. Las escuelas católicas hacen un buen trabajo en la enseñanza del inglés					

15. Las escuelas católicas tienen buena disciplina y ambiente seguro					
16. Las escuelas católicas tienen un buen programa de educación religiosa					
17. Las escuelas católicas tienen dinero disponible para ayuda financiera					
18. Conozco cuáles son las colegiaturas de las escuelas católicas en el área					
19. Las escuelas católicas tienen colegiatura accesible					
20. La ubicación de las escuelas católicas en el área es conveniente					
21. Es tradición familiar tener a nuestros hijos en escuelas católicas					
22. La mayoría de los estudiantes en escuelas católicas pertenecen a familias con dinero					
23. La mayoría de los estudiantes en las escuelas católicas son anglos					

24. Le gustaría agregar otros comentarios?

APPENDICES G, H, I

Multiple Regression on Latino American Catholic Experiences

Multiple Regression on Latino American Societal Experiences

Multiple Regression on Latino American Educational Experiences

Regression American Catholic Experience

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.371 ^a	.138	.135	.450

a. Predictors: (Constant), Liturgical, ParishAff

ANOVA^b

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	19.414	2	9.707	47.858	.000 ^a
Residual	121.492	599	.203		
Total	140.905	601			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Liturgical, ParishAff

b. Dependent Variable: SCHOOLNEW

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.992	.121		8.206	.000
	ParishAff	-.019	.040	-.020	-.477	.634
	Liturgical	.228	.025	.379	9.036	.000

a. Dependent Variable: SCHOOLNEW

Regression American Societal Experience

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.402 ^a	.162	.153	.453

a. Predictors: (Constant), ValuesConf, EnglishPref, Income, USIdentity, SpanishPref

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.726	5	3.745	18.290	.000 ^a
	Residual	97.056	474	.205		
	Total	115.781	479			

a. Predictors: (Constant), ValuesConf, EnglishPref, Income, USIdentity, SpanishPref

b. Dependent Variable: SCHOOLNEW

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.716	.171		10.027	.000
	Income	-.059	.014	-.196	-4.267	.000
	EnglishPref	-.103	.037	-.147	-2.764	.006
	SpanishPref	.069	.025	.134	2.747	.006
	USIdentity	-.003	.030	-.005	-.103	.918
	ValuesConf	.085	.032	.116	2.651	.008

a. Dependent Variable: SCHOOLNEW

Regression American Educational Experience

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.564 ^a	.318	.296	.421

a. Predictors: (Constant), Language, CathSchAcces, SchoolCult, PubSchSat, CathSchSat

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.556	5	2.511	14.180	.000 ^a
	Residual	26.918	152	.177		
	Total	39.475	157			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Language, CathSchAcces, SchoolCult, PubSchSat, CathSchSat

b. Dependent Variable: SCHOOLNEW

Coefficients^a

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.858	.341		5.456	.000
	PubSchSat	.176	.045	.296	3.931	.000
	CathSchSat	-.062	.079	-.066	-.786	.433
	SchoolCult	-.081	.115	-.055	-.705	.482
	CathSchAcces	-.262	.090	-.237	-2.930	.004
	Language	.290	.082	.264	3.520	.001

a. Dependent Variable: SCHOOLNEW

APPENDICES J, K, L

Correlations on Latino American Catholic Experiences

Correlations on Latino American Societal Experiences

Correlations on Latino American Educational Experiences

Correlations on American Catholic Experience

Correlations

		SCHOOL	Parish Aff	Liturgical
SCHOOL	Pearson Correlation	1	.142**	.374**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	676	602	655
Parish Aff	Pearson Correlation	.142**	1	.441**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	602	658	658
Liturgical	Pearson Correlation	.374**	.441**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	655	658	723

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations on American Societal Experience

Correlations

		School	Income	EngPref	SpanPref	USIdentity	ValuesConf
School	Pearson Correlation	1	-.338**	-.276**	.307**	-.133**	.185**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.001	.000
	N	676	646	595	603	581	578
Income	Pearson Correlation	-.338**	1	.360**	-.364**	.155**	-.137**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.001
	N	646	708	621	632	606	605
EngPref	Pearson Correlation	-.276**	.360**	1	-.429**	.484**	-.046
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.262
	N	595	621	650	617	603	586
SpanPref	Pearson Correlation	.307**	-.364**	-.429**	1	-.231**	.193**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	603	632	617	664	602	592
US Identity	Pearson Correlation	-.133**	.155**	.484**	-.231**	1	.117**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000	.000		.005
	N	581	606	603	602	634	577
Values Conf	Pearson Correlation	.185**	-.137**	-.046	.193**	.117**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.262	.000	.005	
	N	578	605	586	592	577	630

Correlations

		School	Income	EngPref	SpanPref	USIdentity	ValuesConf
School	Pearson	1	-.338**	-.276**	.307**	-.133**	.185**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.001	.000
	N	676	646	595	603	581	578
Income	Pearson	-.338**	1	.360**	-.364**	.155**	-.137**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.001
	N	646	708	621	632	606	605
EngPref	Pearson	-.276**	.360**	1	-.429**	.484**	-.046
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.262
	N	595	621	650	617	603	586
SpanPref	Pearson	.307**	-.364**	-.429**	1	-.231**	.193**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	603	632	617	664	602	592
US Identity	Pearson	-.133**	.155**	.484**	-.231**	1	.117**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000	.000		.005
	N	581	606	603	602	634	577
Values Conf	Pearson	.185**	-.137**	-.046	.193**	.117**	1
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.262	.000	.005	
	N	578	605	586	592	577	630

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations on American Educational Experience

Correlations

		School	PubSch Sat	CathSch Sat	School Cult	CathSch Acces	Language
School	Pearson	1	.484**	-.177**	-.056	-.240**	.396**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.001	.215	.000	.000
	N	676	486	367	488	230	676
PubSchSat	Pearson	.484**	1	.073	.259**	-.031	.438**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.195	.000	.661	.000
	N	486	531	316	426	202	531
CathSchSat	Pearson	-.177**	.073	1	.384**	.537**	.072
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.195		.000	.000	.151
	N	367	316	400	322	215	400
SchoolCult	Pearson	-.056	.259**	.384**	1	.352**	.129**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.215	.000	.000		.000	.003
	N	488	426	322	528	211	528
CathSchAcces	Pearson	-.240**	-.031	.537**	.352**	1	.030
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.661	.000	.000		.644
	N	230	202	215	211	246	246
Language	Pearson	.396**	.438**	.072	.129**	.030	1
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.151	.003	.644	
	N	676	531	400	528	246	748

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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