

DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL VARIABLES AND
STUDENTS' RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT IN NCR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This study explored the effectiveness of secondary schools, the Catholic schools in particular, in influencing the religious development of students on seven outcome measures. It pursued the findings of Flynn (1985) that school variables rather than home factors have the primary influences in most of the outcome measures and that schools can make the difference regardless of the students' home background.

The respondents consisted of fourth year students, 335 of them from 10 top performing Catholic schools and 185 from five of the better known public schools in the National Capital Region. The students were made to reflect on their experience of schooling and its influence in their lives through a 205 - item survey questionnaire.

As a descriptive - comparative - correlational investigation, the study employed multiple correlation through stepwise regression to determine the separate and collective contributions which a number of predictor variables make to each outcome measure. It also used



multi-variate procedures to find out significant statistical differences between the Catholic schools and the public schools, as well as significant between - school differences among the 10 Catholic schools, on all six predictor variables and seven outcome variables of religious development.

The major findings at the .05 level of significance are as follows:

1. The Catholic schools scored significantly higher than the public schools on the students' home environment and school social climate variables.
2. The Catholic schools also scored significantly higher in the outcome measures of religious knowledge, moral values, and attitudes towards the church.
3. There are significant between - school differences among the 10 Catholic schools on all the school - related variables and on all the outcome measures of religious development.
4. There are significant positive correlations between the home and school variables and the outcome measures of religious development.



5. School variables, rather than the home environment, have more pervading influences on the students' religious development. In particular, the quality of school life variable recurrently appeared as a significant influence in almost all of the outcome measures.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the results of this inquiry. The first is that the values of a religious group can be effectively taught in a religiously-oriented educational system regardless of the level of parental religiousness. Secondly, the results show that Catholic schools can claim school effectiveness but to a moderate extent only as the public school sample scored almost as well in religious practice, justice values, religious commitment and personal faith. Finally, there are clear indications of an alarming level of alienation among the young regarding moral values and the teaching authority of the Church.



In view of the foregoing results and conclusions, it is recommended that school efforts at values education be strengthened; that school structures and processes be reviewed and re-focused towards the desired outcome measures; and that attention be given to the quality of religious education/values education in Catholic secondary schools, in consideration of environmental problems, opportunities and trends which need to be addressed more strongly through catechesis and evangelization.

