Principal in Name Only: A Mixed Methods Study of How Catholic School Governance Models Affect Leadership

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Davis Hughen Bodie

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Dedication

First, I could not have finished this program without the unfailing support of my family and friends. To my wife, Amy, you have been my rock. All you have known of me has been working towards this degree, and you have helped me with unfailing love and support. Without hesitation, you supported this dream of mine. You have sacrificed your time and energy during our young marriage in order for me to work on and finish this dissertation. You are a dedicated and loving mother who I am not deserving of. Being with you has allowed me to truly be motivated to complete this program to not only accomplish my dream, but for the betterment of our family.

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Abstract

Catholic school principal effectiveness has been studied for years, along with the retention and attrition rates of Catholic school principals. Throughout the long history of Catholic education in the United States and around the world, there has not been a meaningful study of how the different governance models available to Catholic schools affect these school leaders. Through this explanatory sequential mixed methods research study, the connection between these governance models and principal retention and attrition will be evaluated. This will allow current and future principals to be more informed concerning the best practices within each model. It will also allow Church authorities, including bishops who place pastors at parishes with schools and pastors who hire new principals, to have the best hiring practices and policies to find and retain long-term candidates, creating stability and student success for years to come.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Without a successful leadership mechanism, schools are unable to succeed (Ozar & Weitzel-O'Neil, 2013). Quality school leadership is key to improving student achievement and is the largest component in student success (Boyle, Haller, & Hunt, 2016). Since the mid-1880s, Catholic bishops in the United States have had kept the spiritual health and academic strength of Catholic schools at the forefront of their minds. With their 1884 pastoral letter, the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore stated that Catholic schools should never be inferior and should hold the highest standard of academic excellence in the country (Fanning, 1907). In order to successfully strive for high standards of academic excellence, Catholic schools need steady and qualified leadership (Belmonte, 2007; Durow & Brock, 2004).

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to evaluate different types of Catholic education governance models in the 18 dioceses of Region V of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) ecclesial regions and their connection to leadership's attitudes towards retention and attrition within schools. Most Catholic schools throughout the United States follow very similar models of governance. While there are differences in who holds the ultimate authority within a school building, the idea of different governance models in Catholic schools is relatively new compared to the long history of Catholic education in the United States. The typical Catholic school in the United States has followed the same model of governance for most of the 20th Century. This governance model is headed by the pastor of the parish, with an advisory board (Haney, 2010). Eventually, different governance models emerged when other religious communities, usually comprised of nuns or contemplative brothers, entered the field of Catholic education in the United States, administering schools with a certain amount of

autonomy (Dallavis & Cisneros, 2013). In all of the traditional models of Catholic education, school boards functioned solely in an advisory capacity, with no authority to enact policy.

According to Brown (2010), parish schools are seen as the normative structure of Catholic schools. Although many believe this model is mandated by canon law, neither the 1917 nor 1983 Codes specifically mention parish schools. Canon law allows for a certain amount of variety in the juridical structures available for the establishment and administration of Catholic schools. This emphasis on the parish school comes from the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884 (Brown, 2010).

Haney (2010) suggests great shifts in governance in Catholic schools in the United States, highlighting five distinct shifts: 1) a shift away from the parish school, 2) a shift in authority, 3) a shift in responsibility, 4) a shift in purpose, and 5) a shift in membership composition in school boards. Governance structures among parish elementary schools in the United States have a history of creating conflict among leadership (Schaffer, 2004). While the pastor has the ultimate authority in spiritual and temporal matters, the principal is the designated leader of the school. Clarity in roles and duties between school leadership and the pastor is a necessity in order to maintain effective Catholic schools (Brown, 2010). Dallavis and Cisneros (2013) argue that the traditional model of a parish school challenges the sustainability and vitality of Catholic schools. The absence of strong communities of vowed religious men and women dedicated to Catholic education has contributed to sustainability problems as well.

Historically, there is no “one size fits all” model for the structure and administration of Catholic schools. The variety of options available under canon law makes it possible to adapt school governance to the particular local circumstance (Brown, 2010). The lack of a specific model for Catholic school structure and administration has brought on many issues, most notably

within the leadership of schools, and in particular, lay leadership within schools (Fincham, 2010).

There has been a major shift in the makeup of Catholic school leaders over the past half century. By shifting away from vowed religious leadership and increasing lay school leadership, there comes a whole new set of relational issues. There is no longer the built-in assumption that the leader has a working knowledge of the Catholic faith, Catholic school governance, or the skills to build a faith community (Boyle et al., 2016). With the dramatic increase of lay leadership in Catholic schools, the traditional model of the parish school is vulnerable and may no longer be viable for a multitude of reasons (Hamilton, 2008; Clarke, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

Catholic schools use several different governance models throughout the world. Most of these models are incorporated out of financial necessity, either because private Catholic schools lose the sponsorship of a religious order or because a parish no longer can financially support a school on their own (Haney, 2010). Each of the governance models also may employ different structures for working with their school boards. These boards can be advisory, consultative, or limited jurisdiction (Sheehan, 1997). The wide variety of governance models and structures within the Catholic educational system makes it impossible for one of these models to become the norm and to serve as the mold for all other Catholic schools. A singular model would be ideal as it brings in a common structure and hierarchy that can easily be defined and replicated in every school.

Durow and Brock (2004) focus their study on the retention and attrition of Catholic school principals. The outcomes of their study reveal many different reasons why Catholic school principals decide to stay or leave their positions. Each of the respondents in their study who left

the Catholic school principalship cited conflicts with school governance as a major factor. Moreover, other researchers have found that principals viewed interfering pastors or school boards as a serious challenge to their roles as effective school leaders (Durow & Brock, 2004; Haney, 2010; Hansen, 2001; Fincham, 2010; Fraser & Brock, 2006).

Researchers have described the importance of retaining and recruiting effective Catholic school principals and have identified governance problems between lay school leaders and their clergy superiors (Durow & Brock, 2004; Fraser & Brock, 2006). Few researchers have focused studies on how different governance models affect leadership retention and attrition, particularly in the Catholic school setting. A closer inspection of the role that specific governance models have on retention and attrition is necessary to inform current school leaders on the climate within their schools, but also to inform future leaders and determine future hiring practices for school leaders. Since fewer qualified leaders are vowed religious, there is a further need to understand how lay principals can operate effectively in this environment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to evaluate different types of Catholic school governance models in the 18 dioceses of Region V of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) ecclesial regions and their connection to leadership's attitudes towards retention, attrition, and job satisfaction within schools. Historical governance models of Catholic Schools were examined as well as major shifts in governance in recent years. Emphasis was on the perceived power dynamics of Catholic school leaders and their superior, as well as the relationship between parish schools, diocesan schools, and private-order Catholic schools with their respective school boards. This study sought to gain an understanding of how different governance models of Catholic schools affected the leadership they rely on to succeed.

Research Questions and Design

The following questions guided the study:

1. What issues do Catholic school leaders encounter within their specific school's governance model?
2. How do the interactions with religious authorities and/or Catholic school boards affect lay Catholic school leaders' retention and attrition?

To address these questions, the study employed an explanatory sequential mixed method design to allow for two distinct and separate phases of data collection. This strong quantitative phase of the study was reinforced and explained by the qualitative phase (Creswell, 2015), consisting of Catholic school leader interviews. Teddlie (2005) noted that explanatory methods are crucial to connecting the relationship between a leader and the context or outcomes of their effective/ineffective leadership.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of person-organization fit (P-O fit), in a broad sense, can be seen as the compatibility between the individualized qualities of the worker and those of the organization he or she works for (Gregory & Albritton, 2009). P-O fit began with the examination of the outcomes of research in person-environment fit (Morely, 2007). Schneider's (1987) Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) is the framework behind P-O fit. Schneider's work laid the foundation that the individual seeks out situations, such as jobs/careers, that are attractive to them. The basic assumption of person-environment fit is that an individual seeks to achieve, sustain, and enhance a connection to their environment. This connection, or "fit," implies that there are conditions that can affect outcomes of the individual and the environment: outcomes that can be both positive and negative (Westerman, 2001). Kristof (1996) defined P-O fit as a compatibility between

people and organizations when either at least one entity provides what the other needs, they share similar basic characteristics, or a combination of both. Person-organization fit is a growing subset of person-environment fit theory. Person-organization fit takes person-environment a step further, saying that an individual seeks to achieve, sustain, and enhance a connection to a specific environmental component, using the organization at their focal point (Westerman, 2001).

Person-environment fit has been advanced in many different areas, including vocational choice (Holland, 1985), job design (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), and climate (Joyce & Slocum, 1984). Pervin (1968) undertakes one of the most comprehensive examples of person-environment research in an academic context. In the study, Pervin found that more sociable students performed better in 'leaderless groups,' while less sociable students performed better in larger lecture sessions. Students with a rigid sense of self-determination dropped out of higher education institutions with a more liberal focus on education, while students with less rigorous views on education dropped out at higher rates from colleges that had policies seen as more repressive (Pervin, 1968). These results suggested that student performance and retention was, in part, a function on the relationship between students and the school, the individual and the environment.

Fit, with this specific environmental component in mind, results from the correspondence between the demands of the organizational setting and the supplies the individual can provide (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). While the organization sets its demands or goals for success, an employee's skills allow him or her to respond to the demands of the work environment. The employee also has preferences for their own work environment, and the organization may be able to respond to these preferences by providing a change in environment or rewards to the individual. Therefore, P-O fit can be viewed as the individual satisfying the requirements of the

organizational environment and the organizational environment satisfying the requirements of the individual (Westerman, 2001). This study utilized this understanding of P-O fit for school leaders regarding their own fit within the different governance models of Catholic schools. A focus was given to data collection instruments identifying good P-O fit as a top reason for job satisfaction and voluntary job retention.

Significance

This study was intended to examine the possible effects differing governance models of Catholic schools can have on the leadership of the school. While the primary audience is current Catholic school leaders (principals, pastors, superintendents, and bishops), this study also bears broader implications for the effects of governance models and decision-making on school performance. This could lead to more purposeful hiring processes for future Catholic school leaders as well as placement of Pastors into parishes with a parish school. Effective school leaders can lead to high parent and student satisfaction and then to higher enrollment within Catholic schools (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004).

Currently, there is little insight in the literature in regard to how the differing governance models of Catholic schools affect leadership retention and attrition. In their 2004 study of retention and attrition of Catholic school principals, Durow and Brock noted in their recommendations that the clash between religious leaders and principals was a critical component in the conflict that lead to many principals participating in the study to leave their position. Previous literature has not taken the various governance models of Catholic schools into account, which will allow this study to fill the gap in the literature.

Terminology

For this research study, a variety of terms, mostly dealing with the religious nature and hierarchy of Catholic education, will be used. Definitions of relevant terms are as follows:

1) **Bishop-** A title of an ecclesiastical dignitary who possesses the fullness of the priesthood to have control over a diocese as its chief pastor (Van Hove, 1907).
2) **Code of Canon Law-** The official body of laws of the Roman Catholic Church. All organizations and individuals within the church must function in accordance with this code (Haney, O'Brien, & Sheehan, 2009).
3) **Diocese-** A limited territory over which a bishop exercises his authority (Van Hove, 1909).
4) **Ecclesiastical-** Religious.
5) **Holy See-** Collectively, the Pope, Papal Secretariat of State, the Council for Public Affairs of the Church, and other institutes of the Roman Curia (Brown, 2010).
6) **Laity (Lay Person)-** The faithful outside of the clergy (Boudinhon, 1910).
7) **Parish-** A portion of a diocese under the authority of a priest legitimately appointed to serve the faithful within, the helps of religion (Boudinhon & Fanning, 1911).
8) **Pastor-** A priest who has the culture of souls, who is bound in virtue of his office to promote the spiritual welfare of the faithful within his assigned parish (Papi, 1911).
9) **Religious Community**- Or religious order, a community within the Catholic Church is an organization of persons, either men or women, who profess vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and live that obedience under a superior within a community structure in accordance with a specific rule of life (Vermeersch, 1911).
10) **Roman Curia**- the ensemble of departments or ministries that assist the sovereign pontiff (Pope) in the government of the Universal Church (Ojetti, 1912).

11) **Second Vatican Council**- an ecumenical council held in Vatican City in the 1960s. This council called for a spiritual renewal of the Church with a focus on increasing the role of the laity in many aspects of the Church, including education (Caruso, 2012).
12) **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)-** An episcopal conference of all active and retired bishops.

Historical Context

Catholic education in the United States traces its roots to early French and Spanish settlements that continued into the colonial era of our nation's history. The increased immigration from predominately Catholic European countries in the 19th Century produced a vast expansion of Catholic schooling in the United States. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is credited with founding the first Catholic School in the United States, also founding the first order of teaching nuns in 1809 (Brinig & Garnett, 2014). There were many more orders of teaching nuns founded with the specific mission of teaching in Catholic schools. Historically, Catholic schools in the United States were built to ensure the Catholic faith was taught and passed along to a new generation of Catholics (Brinig & Garnett, 2014).

While the 1830s saw an increase of the public, common school movement in the United States, by the 1840s Catholics began pushing back against the inculcation of non-denominational "common Christianity" within the common school. Ultimately, the American Bishops of the Second Baltimore Council of 1866 publicly denounced the Protestantism of the common school, committed the Church to create a separate Catholic school system, and required parents to send their children to these institutions (McDonald & Schultz, 1999, 2009, 2016).

Even though the goal of the Third Council of Baltimore of 1884 to open a school at every parish was never fully realized, Catholic education in the United States grew steadily throughout

the 19th Century. Before the American Civil War, approximately 200 Catholic schools operated in the United States. In the decade following the war, there were 1,300 schools, growing to more than 5,000 by the turn of the 20th Century. These schools overwhelmingly followed the parish school model (McDonald & Schultz, 2016).

There have been many times throughout the history of Catholic education in the United States where the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) promoted Catholic education. In *To Teach as Jesus Did: A Pastoral Message on Catholic Education* (1972), the USCCB recommitted to Catholic education, stating that Catholic schools served a specific purpose; to help students grow in their faith. The bishops continued in the document by clarifying this purpose: to lead students to personal salvation and to encourage social reform through a Catholic lens. There is a specific focus on parents as the Church teaches that parents are, first and foremost, the primary educators of their children (*To Teach as Jesus Did: A Pastoral Message on Catholic Education*, 1972).

In 1977, the Catholic Church once again announced its support for Catholic schools in *The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education: The Catholic School.* This document was an addition to the 1965 Encyclical published by Pope Paul VI, and continues to solidify the Catholic school as an essential asset in a child's Catholic education. *The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education: The Catholic School* (1977) states that, "The absence of the Catholic school would be a great loss for civilization [sic] and for the natural and supernatural destiny of man" (p. 4) This document outlines just how important Catholic schools are to the Catholic Church, as well as to the world as a whole.

From Religious to Lay Leaders. With the decline of religious vocations around the world, there is a significant withdrawal of vowed religious men and women from the staff and

governance of Catholic schools. Religious orders are religious communities of men and women who share common solemn vows that include poverty, chastity, and obedience to the Catholic Church and their particular order within the Church (Vermeersch, 1911). Laymen and laywomen have replaced religious principals, but the role of principal has not changed with this shift in demographic. The laity, laymen and laywomen, are members of the Church who are no ordained or have not taken the vows of a religious order. The principalship role of Catholic schools has not changed sufficiently enough to accommodate the growth of the number of lay people in that role (Hansen, 2001).

In 2005, The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) noted that 95% of current Catholic school administrators were members of the laity, and the preparation and ongoing formation of these school leaders was vital for the success of the schools. The authors of this document, *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* (2005), called for an increase in programming, in conjunction with Catholic colleges and universities, for the advancement of these lay administrators. This call was previously unnecessary when a majority of the administrators in Catholic schools were members of a religious community and where the formation and guidance of school leaders could be closely monitored by the Church or the religious order specifically (Caruso, 2012). Since the publication of *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* (2005), NCEA has noted an increase in the percentage of lay principal and school leaders from 95% to closer to 98% (2022).

With a change from principals from a religious order and a focus on having competent lay leaders within a school comes a focus on the future leaders that are not yet in those positions. Now that the religious communities have mostly left Catholic schools, there is a question of

leadership succession. Gallagher (2007) identifies that one of the major challenges of Catholic school leadership is to identify, encourage, and support teachers who aspire to leadership. There is a major need in the further development of the faith, in a theological sense of those laymen and laywomen who have leadership positions in Catholic schools (Gallagher, 2007).

Religious communities leaving Catholic schools had a lasting impact in the life and role of the parish pastor. First, for schools that had only religious communities serve in administration, hiring practices for school leadership had to be developed. Previously, the sole responsibility of the pastor was to approve the candidate that the religious order appointed to the post. Pastors looked to their school boards with their ever-increasing power and influence. Often, pastors relayed the practice of hiring school leadership to the diocesan school's office and the superintendent (Caruso, 2012).

Relationship with the Pastor. The departure of religious communities from Catholic schools also began a new relationship between the pastor and the school. For many years, the pastor would feel comfortable deferring many decisions and responsibilities to the principal if he or she was a member of the religious community. However, with the rise of laity in the principal role, the pastor is now seen as the sole religious figurehead within the school. A principal seen lacking in spiritual understanding would drain the pastor's time and resources much more quickly than a principal hailing from the religious community (Caruso, 2012).

The lay parish principal is often faced with obliging to multiple masters in the operation of their schools. The parish pastor, the local governing board (no matter the composition or amount of authority), and ultimately the regional diocese (Polka, Litchka, Mete, & Ayaga, 2016). These parties are then influenced one way or another by state and federal education mandates as

well as the national and international conversation about education from policymakers (Polka et al., 2016).

Additionally, the parish pastor, the most closely connected to the school of the masters the parish principal serves, may or may not have any formal educational leadership experience or training to adequately run a school. The regional diocese may also be at odds with the school about who has the ultimate authority to lead and manage the school (Polka et al., 2016). “In many dioceses across America this has led to tension and uncertainty for the Catholic school principal, as they wonder who are their ultimate supervisors, and in fact, can they serve multiple masters?” (Polka et. al, 2016, p. 224).

Reverend Thomas Geelan wrote the guide for parish pastors who run parish schools (2000). In this guide to parish pastors, Geelan warns of the priest who has such a tight hold of decision-making within a school that the school will not function as it is intended. This non-exemplar leader will obstruct the work of the school. In Geelan’s observations (2000), this type of pastor has little to no background as a professional educator and has a very limited idea about shared ministries.

Like the pastor who wants total control, a pastor with an indifferent attitude to the running of a parish school can have a negative impact on the school. A pastor who is absent from meetings, hardly ever visits the classrooms, and whose interaction with the school is limited to a small number of occasional liturgies will make the school feel as a rudderless ship at sea, even with a competent principal in place (Geelan, 2000).

Relationship with School Boards. Catholic school boards have assisted in the administration of schools for over a century. The first board was established in the mid-1800s in Philadelphia to manage the diocese’s growing number of Catholic schools (Robey, 2012). This

central board was tasked at creating a centralized plan to instruct children and to assist with fundraising. It was not until the 1960s in the wake of the Second Vatican Council that Catholic school boards radically expanded.

In the time following the Second Vatican Council, the laity, especially parents, was asked to join local school boards. They were seen as having professional and life experiences that would enable Catholic schools to succeed (Robey, 2012). These boards have authority only in a limited sense due to the canonical authority of the bishop (Haney et al., 2009).

In Catholic education, there are three ways to describe boards based on their function: advisory, consultative, and limited jurisdiction. An advisory board works with and advises those who have the final say on educational matters, but they never enact or pass policy. This is the most common board type within parish schools. Consultative boards express and adapt policy. The person with the final say in educational matters establishes those areas in which the board is to be consulted. Finally, a board of limited jurisdiction has the power to enact policies in certain areas of educational concerns. While this board type has final authority on certain matters, it does not have total jurisdiction (Geelan, 2000).

In their study of the retention and attrition of Catholic school principals, Durow and Brock (2004) noted that after conflicts with the pastor or governing religious authority, conflict with school boards and their juristic powers were most common. Respondents mentioned school board members possessing a lack of understanding the extent of their roles, as well power struggles between the principal, the pastor, and the school board, as major reasons for not returning to their position (Durow & Brock, 2004).

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 introduced and placed an emphasis on the different governance models of Catholic schools in the United States, both in a historical and a present-day context. This included the Statement of the Problem, Purpose Statement, Significance of the Study, and the Theoretical Framework. Chapter 2 will review the relevant literature associated with Catholic schools, with a focus on Catholic school leaders and their experiences within governance models. Chapter 3 describes a mixed-methods design study, including the rationale for the particular design, an explanatory sequential design, data collection methods and procedures, as well as the procedures for data analysis. Chapter 4 presents collected data and an analysis from the first, larger quantitative phase of the mixed methods study. The quantitative data determined (a) which of the results required further exploration in the second phase and (b) what questions needed to be asked to the participants in the qualitative phase (Creswell, 2015). Chapter 5 presents the qualitative data collected and analysis in order to help explain the quantitative results. Chapter 6 contains a discussion of how the findings of this study both support and expand what is already known about the roles governance models of Catholic schools have on leadership retention and attrition. Chapter 6 also contains implications of the research, limitations of the study and concludes with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to evaluate different types of Catholic school governance models in the 18 dioceses of Region V of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) ecclesial regions and their connection to leadership's attitudes towards retention, attrition, and job satisfaction within schools. Therefore, this literature review focuses on the historical governance models of Catholic Schools as well as major shifts in governance in recent years, with attention to leadership attrition and retention. Since this study is focusing on governance models of Catholic schools, much of the research is dated and very sparse. No matter the governance model, the success of Catholic schools as a whole hinge on a successful leadership mechanism (Ozar & Weirzel-O'Neil, 2013).

Two articles will dominate this review, as they are the basis on which this study was founded: "Design for Success: New Configurations and Governance Models for Catholic Schools" by Haney (2010) and "The Retention and Attrition of Catholic School Principals" by Durow and Brock (2004). Haney's (2010) article comes from a report from the Selected Programs for Improving Catholic Education (SPICE), which convenes yearly to discuss vital issues in Catholic education. This article sets out to explore alternative governance models for Catholic schools and to explain how these models affect leadership. The 2004 study from Durow and Brock sought to determine the causes of the retention and attrition of Catholic school principals. Durow and Brock's (2004) findings are vital to understanding why Catholic school principals decide to remain or leave their positions. There has yet to be a follow-up to their 2004 published study.

Significance of School Leadership

Researchers consistently have found that school leadership is one the most important school-level factors influencing a student's education (Young, Winn, & Reedy, 2017). In their research into the four critical areas of directing their organization, managing the people within the organization, leading vision and goal development, and improving the instructional agenda, Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) determined that principals are the most important school-level determinant of student achievement.

Catholic school leaders have additional struggles than their public-school counterparts in that they continually face the struggle of increasing/maintaining enrollment levels, keeping tuition affordable, and providing quality education that is competitive with neighboring public as well as other private schools (Polka, Litchka, Mete, & Ayaga, 2016).

In a study conducted by Wolsonovich, Smilaycoff, and Ribera (2018) studying Catholic school systems and leaders, a majority of respondents believed that the leadership capacities and support of principals to be the most important trait possessed, as it is the principals that daily interact with families. Strong leadership is critical to the success of the school, especially the Catholic school. The two primary indicators of Catholic school vitality are strong organizational leadership and Catholic identity (Burnford, 2012; Convey, 2012; Fuller & Johnson, 2014; Manning, 2014).

Governance

Historical Governance Models. Catholic schools inherently receive their governing authority from the Holy See, the head of the Catholic Church governance worldwide. No matter what type of governance a school or school system employs, particular groups are responsible for certain indicators. The religious aspects of the school, including faith formation and

sacramental preparation, are the sole responsibility of the priests or religious communities within the school. Catholic education began operating under the traditional model for governance in 1884 with the Third Plenary Council in Baltimore (Sheehan, 1997). The Third Plenary Council charged every Catholic parish in the United States with creating a parish school. In the 130 years since, this traditional model has remained the same for a majority of Catholic schools in the United States (Haney, 2010). Brown (2010) suggested that this council was the root to the American notion that parish schools are normative, if not mandated, by Canon Law, or the systematic arrangement of laws within the Catholic Church. Catholic Schools, like all other organizations within the Catholic Church, must adhere to these laws in everything they do (Haney, 2010).

The typical Catholic school in the United States has followed the same model of governance for most of the 20th Century; a parish school headed by the pastor of that parish with an advisory board (Haney, 2010). At times, different governance models emerged when religious communities entered the school. These religious communities, usually nuns or contemplative brothers, led the school with a certain amount of autonomy (Dallavis & Cisneros, 2013).

Dallavis and Cisneros (2013) argued that the traditional model of a parish school challenges the sustainability and vitality of Catholic schools. A changing demography in the United States during the second half of the 20th Century added to parish schools' financial troubles. Catholics were involved in the white middle class migration from major cities in the United States and, therefore, left their urban Catholic schools to the suburbs (James, 2007). This population surge was in areas with historically few parishes, usually where one priest served several parishes (James, 2007).

The absence of strong communities of vowed religious men and women dedicated to Catholic education has contributed to sustainability problems as well. James (2007) noted that while these vowed religious men and women did receive a salary, these salaries were meager at best because their vows included a vow of poverty. With influxes of laity as teachers and administrators needing considerably higher salaries than those in religious communities were receiving, parish schools took yet another financial hit. Also, an exit of religious men and women allowed for the introduction of higher numbers of laity with little to no formal faith formation. This made it increasingly difficult for the juristic administrators, bishops or parish pastors, to ensure a Catholic education that was firmly grounded in faith (Dallavis & Cisneros, 2013).

After the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, there was a renewed interest in Catholic school boards. Proponents of the school board movement were convinced that Catholic education needed to be broadened beyond the bishops, priests, and professionals (Sheehan, 1990). One of the major statements regarding education to come out of Vatican II was that parents are the first and foremost educator of their children. Parents, therefore, need to be involved in Catholic school boards just as in public schools (Sheehan, 1990).

As far back as 1972, American bishops agreed that the current model of parish schools would warrant revision in the future. In their 1972 pastoral letter, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) suggested that future Catholic schools would need to look very differently. The bishops fortified the notion of reimagining the relationship between parish and school, suggesting new models of sponsorship and collaboration. The bishops suggested that an open cooperation with public schools needed to be explored and that Catholic schools do not need to be isolated from their public and other non-public

counterparts. Mutually beneficial technology, plans, ideas, and other resources needed to be shared across all schools in an area (USCCB, 1972).

Modern Shifts in Governance. Haney (2010) suggested a set of shifts in governance in Catholic schools in the United States. Five distinct changes were highlighted: (a) a shift away from the parish school, (b) a shift in authority, (c) a shift in responsibility, (d) a shift in purpose, (e) and a shift in membership composition in school boards. While the majority of these shifts focus on schoolboards, there is an overarching theme that governance is changing away from the traditional parish school to schools with shared leadership/power structures. These shifts begin when the traditional parish school is no longer viable (Wolsonovich, Smilaycoff, & Ribera, 2018).

Shift away from parish schools. Reverend Monsignor O'Neil d'Amour, considered the father of the modern school board movement in the United States, began to advocate that Catholic schools move away from the parish model to be more professional and autonomous during the 1960s (Haney, 2010). d'Amour examined the public-school system as a model and predicted that 90% of Catholic schools in the United States would adopt this model by 1970. d'Amour's reform plan kept matters of faith and morals under the guidance of bishops and pastors, while school boards would operate the school from day to day (Haney, 2010). d'Amour wished to move control over educational policy to the laity, modeled after the public-school system (Sheehan, 1997). While d'Amour's prediction of a majority of Catholic schools shifting away from the parish model did not materialize, there is clear evidence of a continual shift away from the parish model (Haney, 2010). Thus, a need for local, regional, and diocesan school boards became a common theme among those contemplating these shifts (Geruson, Healey, Sabatino, Ryan, and Haney, 2013). McDonald and Shultz (1999, 2009, 2016) identified

evidences of this shift over a ten-year period. In the school year 1998-1999, 79.2% of Catholic elementary schools were from the single parish model, while in 2008-2009 that number had dropped to 72.8% (McDonald & Shultz, 1999, 2009, 2016).

Shift in authority. The second shift in governance was a shift in authority. Haney et al. (2009) detailed three distinct types of boards in Catholic schools: advisory, consultative, and limited jurisdiction. Advisory boards participate in the decision-making process, but the authority is not required to accept the board's advice. Consultative boards also participate in the decision-making process, recommending policy to the person with the authority to enact it. This person with authority is required to consult the board but has no requirement to follow the board's advice. Boards with limited jurisdiction, also known as policy-making boards, are delegated as the final authority in certain areas of institutional operation (Geruson et al., 2013; Haney et al., 2009).

A 1993-1994 national survey conducted by the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) to assess the status of Catholic school boards asserted that surveyed elementary and secondary school boards were 43% advisory, 35% were consultative, 20% were boards of limited jurisdiction, and 2% were boards of trustees or limited jurisdiction (Haney, 2010). A 2008 Selected Programs for Improving Catholic Education (SPICE) model showed a significant shift in this historical makeup of board types (Haney, 2010).

While Catholic school boards date as far back as the 19th Century, there has only been an emphasis on strong boards the past few decades. This shift in authority has focused on the infusion of competent members of the laity into policy-making positions. This change in authority shifted pastors and principals from making isolated decisions to involving all members

of the community (Haney, 2010). In the limited jurisdiction model, the pastor no longer has the final authority in policy and operations regarding the school (Haney, 2010).

Shift in responsibilities. Historical functions of boards were quite limited. The earliest boards were created out of the necessity to assist the bishop in the administration of schools in a diocese (Sheehan, 1990). Later, many were created and tasked to offset negative criticism of the Catholic Church during the 1960s, as well as acquire financial support from both the community and government. Recently, there has been a large addition to the school board's responsibilities. Today, school boards focus on maintaining buildings and grounds, attracting alternate sources of funding, recruiting, marketing, and strategic planning (Haney, 2010).

Shift in purpose. A change in the authority of school boards facilitated a shift in the purpose of the boards as well. The infusion of competent laymen and laywomen into school boards gives more responsibility to stakeholders that are committed to Catholic education's mission (Haney, 2010). This infusion gives the opportunity for the clergy, educators, and lay people to respond to the challenges of Catholic schools today. This new model of purpose in school boards required a strict definition of responsibilities for all administrators and representatives.

Shift in membership composition. The multiple shifts in school board functions require a final shift to take place. Membership composition must change to keep up with the different responsibilities, purposes, and authorities in school boards. The first boards in the United States consisted of diocesan priests who merely assisted the bishop (Sheehan, 1990). Haney (2010) suggests the composition of school boards should include both clergy and laity. Effective boards have successful businesspeople, alumni, and those who bring related expertise from the community. Sheehan (1990) argued that, "Boards in Catholic education need and deserve the

most competent and dedicated members" (p. 61). The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) applauded this shift towards the laity's increased involvement with Catholic school boards in their 2005 statement *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* (USCCB, 2005).

In their 2018 study, Wolsonovich, Smilaycoff, and Ribera indicate that school boards were strengthened by having more lay people serving on the boards. The qualitative data in the study by Wolsonovich, Smilaycoff, and Ribera (2018) supported the idea of school systems that implored more authority of school boards with successful lay persons from within the school's community. The greatest benefit of Catholic school systems with boards having more authority was strategic planning and educational leadership (Wolsonovich et. al, 2018). Wolsonovich, Smilaycoff, and Ribera's (2018) conclusion is that in order to provide quality Catholic school education, where the parish model is no longer viable, regional Catholic school systems and boards comprised of competent community members is essential.

Leadership

Diocesan Level Leadership. The ultimate authority of every Catholic school in any diocese is the local bishop. O'Brien (1990) states that, "*The Code of Canon Law* describes the authority of the diocesan bishop [over Catholic schools] as legislative, judicial, and executive in nature. The authority must be exercised by the Bishop himself or by someone with vicarious or delegated power" (p. 9). In most cases, this is a superintendent of schools, who is appointed by the bishop of a diocese and acts on his behalf. The superintendent assists the bishop with his responsibilities and tasks relating to Catholic schools (Canon Law Society, 1983). The superintendent cannot act apart from the will of the bishop and can be removed by the bishop at any time (Schaffer, 2004).

According to Thomas (1996), the superintendent should be a trained and experienced educator who first serves as the bishop's chief advisor on the administration of the schools within the diocese. The superintendent should also be an advisor to the pastor of parish schools in finding a principal, and then work directly with that principal in administering the school (Schaffer, 2004).

The role of the superintendent of Catholic schools is complex and multifaceted that is in a constant state of evolution mirroring the evolution of Catholic school governance models. Catholic school superintendents assume similar roles as their public-school counterparts (academic oversight, visionary and entrepreneurial leadership, and political engagement), but also have additional responsibilities for mission-centered and spiritual leadership (Cattaro & McDonald, 2015). Cook, Fussell, and Simonds note in their 2021 study of former Catholic school superintendents that a majority of former superintendents did not have a job description or felt the job description they had was inadequate. Respondents to this study indicated that accurate superintendent job descriptions would clarify lines of authority and reduce organizational tensions (Cook et al., 2021).

Catholic school superintendents, and their Diocesan Schools' Offices (DSO) vary throughout the United States in scope of the job, responsibilities, training, size of the office staff, and budgets. In their 2015 study, Cattaro and McDonald indicated that most respondents had no training or supports in place at the time they became superintendent. According to Cattaro and McDonald's (2015) respondents, the average DSO operates with less than seven total employees and that almost 52% operate with zero to one additional staff member other than the superintendent.

Leadership and Governance Structures. Governance structures among parish elementary schools in the United States have a history of creating conflict among leadership (Schaffer, 2004). While the pastor has ultimate authority in spiritual and temporal matters, the principal is the designated leader of the school. Clarity in roles and duties between school leadership and the pastor is a necessity to maintain effective Catholic school administration (Brown, 2010).

Schaffer (2004) adds collaboration as an essential element of effective Catholic schools. While the pastor is the ultimate authority of the parish school, he should allow the principal to become the "Pastor of the School" and maintain a supportive role (Schaffer, 2004). This does not mean that the pastor needs to remove himself completely from the running of the school. Geelan (2000) stated that one of the most imperative roles of the parish pastor in regard to the school and its governance is being involved with policy-making decisions. At the same time, there needs to be a balance is the pastor being involved in the decision-making process and not overwhelming him with the minutia of day-to-day operations (Dite, 2020). The greatest concern for a Catholic school is a lack of clergy support with their leadership. A lack of support will kill the mission of a school (Wolsonovich, et al., 2018). Pastor involvement and understanding of schools is essential. Unfortunately, there is no formal preparation program for many seminarians as they study for the priesthood as well as continuing education and preparation for those priests already ordained.

Historically, preparation of priests to serve as pastors of a parish with a school has been woefully inadequate (Simonds, Cook, Engel, Fussell, Hearn & Myer, 2021). Simonds et al.,2021) conducted interviews with national leaders of priest professional development, national leaders of Catholic education, and superintendents from dioceses in the United States. It was

their conclusion that new leadership preparation programs for schools need to be developed for seminarians and priests. Seminarians need to have some introduction to the goals and values of Catholic schools during their seminary years. Calkins and Convey (2019) reported that 40% of responding seminarians had never attended a Catholic school, indicating that they have no basis of Catholic schools and how they operate.

When dealing with advisory boards, the school board's responsibility is to recommend policy, the pastor's responsibility is to enact policy, and the principal's responsibility is to implement that policy (Sheehan, 1990). Collaboration extends to any and all school boards attached to a school. Wolsonovich et al. (2018) reported that collaboration between boards and other leaders within a school, "Created a common, cohesive mission which sent a clear unifying message to the stakeholders regarding the purpose and goals of the school…"

The principal, with delegated responsibilities from the pastor, needs to be the leader of the school. The pastor is responsible for the spiritual formation of the staff and the leader in curriculum development. Catholic schools run effectively with the principal as the managerial leader of the school, who is intimately involved in the schools' instructional program at all levels (Schaffer, 2004).

American bishops recognized that there needed to be an increase in programs to properly recruit and prepare future Catholic school leaders (USCCB, 2005). Bishops recognized the need for leaders who are not only knowledgeable in matters of the Catholic faith, but also grounded in a commitment to the Church. They called for a closer collaboration with Catholic institutes of higher learning to help with this process (USCCB, 2005).

Decline of Vowed Religious. Hansen (2001) noted that with the decline in religious vocations, there has been an exodus of religious persons from the schools they traditionally ran. A report by the USCCB (2005) noted that 95% of current Catholic school leaders were members of the laity and had no experience in religious life. This document, *Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* (2005), called for an increase in programming, in conjunction with Catholic colleges and universities, for the advancement of lay administrators. This call was previously unnecessary when a majority of the administrators in Catholic schools were members of a religious community, where the formation and guidance of school leaders could be closely monitored by the Church or the religious order specifically (Caruso, 2012).

With the decline of the vowed religious within the schools' leadership came the coinciding decline in the number of vowed religious within the classroom. According to Sanders (2005), less than 10% of teachers in Catholic schools are vowed religious, a number that in 1960 was over 75%. This brings a new set of challenges for the traditional parish school model. More lay teachers and administrators means that more financial resources are required to run the school effectively. Competition for teachers and leaders drives up salary and benefits for each school (Cattaro, 2002).

Religious communities leaving Catholic schools had a lasting impact in the life and role of the parish pastor. For schools that had only religious communities serve in administration, hiring practices for school leadership had to be developed. Previously, the sole responsibility of the pastor was to approve candidates the religious order appointed to the post. Now, pastors look to their school boards, which have ever-increasing power and influence. Often, pastors relayed

the practice of hiring school leadership to the diocesan school's office and the superintendent (Caruso, 2012).

With the shift away from religious principals and a focus on having competent lay leaders within a school comes a focus on the future leaders not yet in those positions. Now that the religious communities have mostly left Catholic schools, there is a question of leadership succession. Gallagher (2007) identified that one of the major challenges of Catholic school leadership is to detect, encourage, and support teachers who aspire to leadership. There is a major need to develop the faith of those laymen and laywomen who have leadership positions in Catholic schools (Gallagher, 2007).

This development is crucial because only one out of every five new Catholic school principals complete a preparation-training program at a Catholic college or university. Most receive their leadership preparation at public universities. The majority of Catholic school leaders have little to no theological education since sacramental preparation as a child. Therefore, many lay persons who seek to become leaders within schools need a strong background in Catholic school history and theology in order to become effective spiritual leaders in the school (Cook & Durow, 2008).

Leadership Retention and Attrition. When a principal leaves a school, there is often a negative effect on student achievement, interpersonal trust, and faculty agency (Pendola & Fuller, 2018). Research suggests that the change in a school can take several years of stable leadership to regain the same organizational and social components required to support student growth and achievement (Coelli & Green, 2012; Miller, 2013).

According to Durow and Brock (2004), Catholic school principals are leaving their positions, and the number of qualified candidates to replace them is underwhelming. The

shortage of candidates for the principalship emphasizes the need to promote leadership retention within Catholic schools (Durow and Brock, 2004). Continuity of leadership is vital to school success in both public and non-public education. Large turnover in leadership positions causes success to drop in many categories of student performance (Durow & Brock, 2004).

Conflicts between Catholic school principals and their pastors arise when there is a failure to communicate. Clearly defined roles and expectations must not only be in place for a principal, but also for the pastor and governing board (Durow & Brock, 2004). Clear communication is essential for retaining effective leaders in Catholic schools to minimize the disincentives and assure a good connection between individuals (Durow & Brock, 2004).

To help prevent this conflict, Durow and Brock (2004) suggest that priests "should receive more pastoral formation and supervision in the role they need to play in the administration of the parish school prior to assignment" (p. 203). Also, when conflict does arise, the diocesan office should take an active role and provide mediation services before conflicts become detrimental to the school and its students (Durow & Brock, 2004).

Durow and Brock's (2004) study uncovers several other issues regarding leadership retention and attrition in Catholic schools. Other key attributes included low pay, pursuit of other career opportunities, and changing personal needs (Durow & Brock, 2004). Principals do not leave their positions because of their lack of commitment to Catholic education, nor because they disliked being principals. The conclusion of this study was that talented principals leave Catholic education with an absence of a continuum of leadership opportunities (Durow & Brock, 2004).

When principals leave their position, not only does it disrupt the continuity of leadership within a school, it sends discouraging messages to those who may be future candidates. An

improvement of job quality factors is necessary to encourage retention of current principals as well as inspire future principals to want the job (Durow & Brock, 2004).

Leadership Shortage. Catholic education is not immune to the problems of a shortage of qualified leadership. There is a significant shortage of qualified individuals to take on leadership roles in schools all over the United States (Pijanowski, Hewitt, & Brady, 2009; Hine, 2003; Russell & Sabina, 2014). A report from the Thomas B. Fordham Institute (2003) concluded that too many American schools lack quality leadership. This issue is not from lack of quantity, as a majority of states have more individuals who have attained licenses as school administrators than there are administrative positions available (Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2003). However, these individuals are not aspiring to positions of leadership due to a myriad of requirements that deter their career goals (Fenwick & Pierce, 2001; Moos, 1999, Rayfield & Diamantes, 2003). Teachers are discouraged from attaining the principalship due to their perceptions that principals are overworked, overstressed (Moos, 1999), underpaid, and overloaded with details that have little to do with educating students (Fenwick & Pierce, 2001). A commitment to Catholic education as the sole incentive may no longer be enough motivation to seek the principalship (Fraser & Brock, 2006).

Leadership Satisfaction. Fraser and Brock (2006) concluded in their study that the demands of the Catholic school principal have become less appealing. Veteran principals noted that their commitment to Catholic education kept them in their jobs much longer than any other factor. As noted by Fraser and Brock (2006), principals are overworked and overstressed. These factors are a few of the many disincentives affecting the retention and recruitment of qualified and willing candidates to the principalship of Catholic schools. In a 2001 study, Fenwick and Pierce identified that underpayment, as well as being overloaded with administrative details with

little to do with educating students, were also major factors. These factors seemed to counterbalance the once commonly held commitment to Catholic education as the sole motivation to aspire to leadership roles (Fraser & Brock, 2006).

Durow and Brock (2004) concluded that, although many principals enjoyed their work in Catholic education, they left their positions due to a varied list of reasons. Inadequate compensation, lack of career opportunities, and conflict with governing bodies are just a few (Durow & Brock, 2004). Brock and Fraser (2001) reported that conflict with pastors was a key issue in principal satisfaction and retention. A harmonious working relationship with the pastor or governing body was seen as a critical factor in job satisfaction (Brock & Fraser, 2001).

Several researchers have suggested ways to address the many stressors involved in Catholic school leadership roles. A study of the shortage of Catholic school principals in New South Wales, Australia concluded a shared leadership model would work, dividing appropriate responsibilities among a principal's assistants (d'Arbon, Duignan, Duncan, & Goodwin, 2001).

Chapman (2005) and Viadero (2009) all suggest that the requirements of the job of principal, regardless of governance model, has outgrown the ability of one person to handle the expectations. Hertling (2001) suggested two-person teams. Tasks would be divided up among leaders who could share the load of instruction, curriculum, and professional development.

Durow and Brock (2004) found that conflict with a governing authority as a significant area of principal dissatisfaction. All of the experienced principals who responded in their study reported that conflict in school governances directly caused them dissatisfaction in their positions (Durow & Brock, 2004). Fraser and Brock (2006) found that elementary school principals reported that interference from the pastor was a serious drawback to their role as principal. Several principals reported that the problems working with their pastor stemmed from

disagreements over each other's roles and responsibilities (Fraser & Brock, 2006). Very rarely did Durow and Brock (2004) find that there was much conflict between a school principal and the school board; the conflict that occurred most often was that between the principal and the pastor (Durow & Brock, 2004).

Summary

Catholic schools use many different governance models throughout the world. Traditionally, the parish school model has been used, especially in the United States. Most of the differences in models have been incorporated out of financial necessity, whether it is because private Catholic schools lose the religious order sponsoring them or a parish can no longer feasibly support a school on their own. Each of the governance models may also employ different structures in regard to their school boards. These boards can be advisory, consultative, or limited jurisdiction. The wide variety of governance models and structures within the Catholic educational system makes it impossible for one of these models to become the mold for all other Catholic schools.

Effective governance requires effective leaders. Without the presence of effective principals in schools, the penultimate goal of educating students is nearly impossible. When dealing with principals regarding Catholic school governance, several factors incentivize leadership positions, while other factors create deterrents. Brock and Fraser (2004) concluded that a commitment to the Catholic faith and Catholic education were the overwhelming factors that led Catholic educators to their leadership roles. Low pay, long hours, stressful financial situations, as well as clashes with governing authorities were seen as major disincentives for many principals.

In many cases, conflicts among principals and parish pastors arise. Clearly delineated lines of authority need to be established for any collaborative working relationship to function properly. The same can be said for relationships with principals, pastors, and school board members. Often these three entities clash due to an ineffective delineation of roles. Catholic school principals are not the final authority in their schools. In the case of parish schools, the pastor has mandated authority from Canon Law in certain areas of the school's function. In the case of diocesan or private Catholic schools, it is the bishop with this final juristic authority. Cohesive environments among leadership positions are essential for Catholic education to thrive and grow. In order to create these cohesive environments, there has to be an understanding of how the different governance models affect Catholic school leaders.

Summary of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 provided a review of literature covering the historical context of Catholic schools' governance models in the United States, including the typical Catholic school, religious communities in schools, and the state of schools after the Second Vatican Council. Chapter 2 also provided a review of literature that showed modern shifts in Catholic school governance models and their motivations for those shifts, along with the rise of lay men and women in school leadership roles. Finally, Chapter 2 provided a review of current literature on the Catholic school leaders retention, attrition, and job satisfaction.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Mixed methods research is an approach to social, behavioral, and health sciences in which the researcher gathers both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2015). Many researchers (Johnson & Ongwuebuzie, 2004; Loch & Lester, 2017; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) noted that mixed methods research is not just a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Instead, the mixed methods researcher makes informed choices, deciding which aspects of quantitative and qualitative methods are needed and which are not. Mixed methods research is also not intended to replace either quantitative or qualitative research, but instead, maximize their strengths and minimize their weaknesses in order to gather the most complete data possible (Johnson & Ongwuebuzie, 2004). A key feature of mixed methods research is an integration phase, which allows the researcher to draw conclusions based on the combined strengths of quantitative and qualitative results (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017).

Research Design

The following questions guided the study:

1. What issues do Catholic school leaders encounter within their specific school's governance model?
2. How do the interactions with religious authorities and/or Catholic school boards affect lay Catholic school leaders' retention and attrition?

To address these questions, this study utilized a mixed method, explanatory sequential design. The purpose of explanatory research is to generate theoretical understandings of current practices, processes, and policies. This type of research is useful for explaining the history behind why something is or explaining what it could become in the future (Lochmiller & Lester,

2017). In addition, explanatory designs are useful for helping identify causations and predictions for why certain outcomes occur, along with the relationship between variables (Watkins & Gioia, 2015).

Explanatory sequential design uses qualitative narrative-based results to explain the quantitative statistical-based results. The distinct, sequential phases of this design begin with a quantitative phase that includes data collection and analysis; the results are used to develop and implement a more focused qualitative phase. After the collection of qualitative data, there is an integration of the quantitative and qualitative data to determine the overall results. Lochmiller and Lester (2017) noted that the researcher seeks quantitative data to drive the research in an explanatory sequential design study. The interpretation of this data is to inform how and to what extent the qualitative data are used. Strong quantitative data can drive the direction of the qualitative instrument, research questions, sampling, and data collection (Watkins & Gioia, 2015).

Scholars consider the explanatory sequential design to be the most straightforward of the mixed methods research designs, noted by the visual depiction of the proposed design of this study in *Figure 1*.

The explanatory sequential design provides a quantitative phase, where the results are examined for unexplained differences and a qualitative process that is used to clarify or enrich those unexplained findings (Hayes, Bonner, & Douglas, 2013). This design follows a path from a) quantitative data collection, b) quantitative analysis, c) determining qualitative focus based on quantitative results (also known as integration), d) qualitative data collection and refinement, and e) qualitative analysis. The overall interpretation of results occurs in an f) integration phase at the end of the study (Watkins & Gioia, 2015).

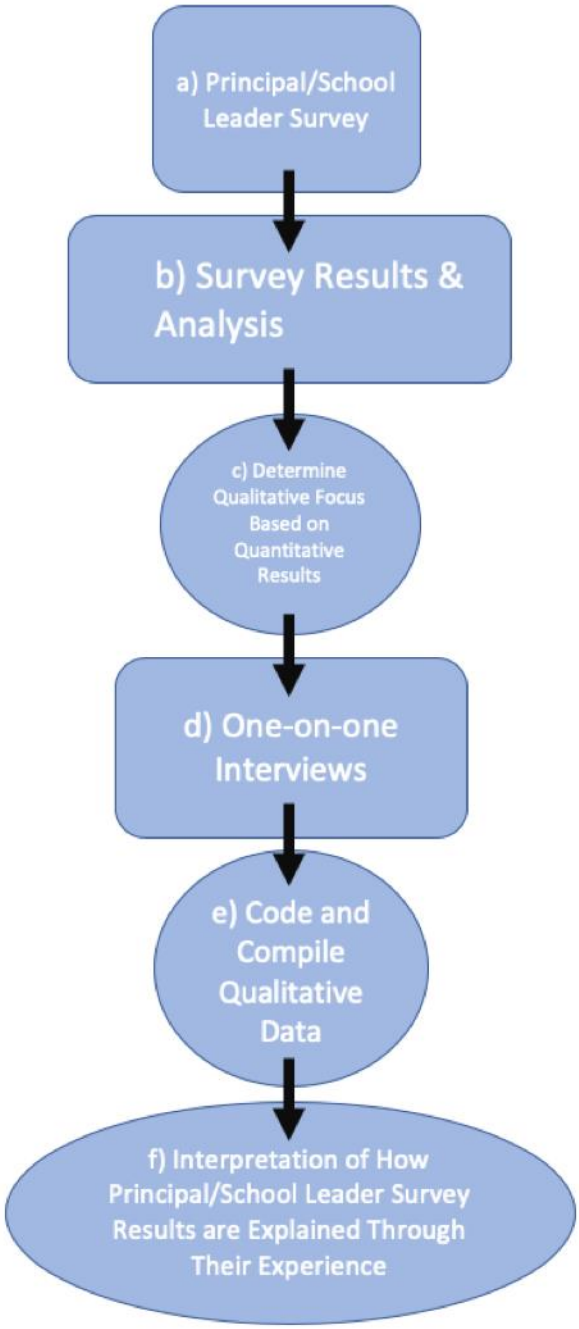


Figure 1: Diagram of Procedures

Rationale for Mixed Methods

The most general rationale for using mixed methods in a study is when the use of quantitative and qualitative research alone will not sufficiently answer the problem faced in the research questions (Creswell, 2015). When used together, quantitative and qualitative methods complement each other and allow for a more robust analysis of the data (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006). According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009), mixed methods research allows for a cooperation and strength to exist between quantitative and qualitative research methods. This allows a specific phenomenon to be more fully understood compared to only utilizing one method.

Specific to this study, the personal interactions and their meanings this investigation sought to uncover cannot be understood through quantitative results alone. Nor would quantitative results deeply probe the individual perspectives of Catholic school principals appropriately. Similarly, qualitative research would not allow the researcher to apply the results to a larger population from just a small number of individual responses.

Benefits for Using Mixed Methods

Creswell (2015) described how the combination of quantitative and qualitative research allows for (a) two different perspectives—one from closed ended data and one from open-ended personal data; (b) a more comprehensive view with more data than either method would provide alone; (c) adding to the instrument data the details of setting, place, and context; and (d) identifying participants to recruit for the qualitative data collection through an exploratory quantitative phase. These reasons lead to a consideration of mixed methods as the optimal design for this study.

The two research questions ask what issues and interactions affect Catholic school leaders with specific governance models. While quantitative research could be used to identify these issues and interactions, to fully understand their effect on the retention, attrition, and job satisfaction of school leaders, a qualitative component was necessary. Therefore, the explanatory sequential design of mixed methods research is ideal to find the connection between the issues Catholic school leaders encounter based on governance models and their desire to continue with or leave their leadership position within the school.

Mixed methods research was ideal for the researcher to answer more holistically the research questions proposed. These questions ask what issues and interactions affect Catholic school leaders. While quantitative research would easily identify these issues and interactions, in order to fully understand their effect on the retention, attrition, and job satisfaction of school leaders, a qualitative component was necessary. Mixed methods research adds value to research studies in different ways, extending the ability to understand important elements of studies that are unable to be understood by quantitative or qualitative methods alone by taking advantage of the strengths of each individual method (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Creswell (2015) noted that mixed methods allows for new types of questions to be asked that can shape a program or yield new variables that may not have occurred to the researcher before the study or were not apparent in the literature.

Challenges for Using Mixed Methods

Due to the nature of mixed methods research, which includes conducting two full and independent studies and integrating results, a major challenge is the investment of time and resources. This is particularly challenging for sequential studies that require the completion of an initial data collection and analysis phase prior to starting the second phase (Creswell, 2015).

Researchers who undertake mixed methods research often are challenged with completing a portion of their study in a field that they are not comfortable in or have very little experience. The misjudging of the researcher's skill level is considered the most common pitfall among novice mixed methods researchers (Watkins & Gioia, 2015).

In order to address these challenges, several basic decisions needed to be made in order to complete a relevant and complete study using this design. First, there was a purposeful decision regarding which quantitative results need to be investigated during the qualitative phase. There was also a relevant determination of what type of interview questions will be used to show that the qualitative results truly explain the quantitative data (Creswell, 2015).

Quantitative Data Collection

The quantitative phase of data collection consisted of a researcher created survey, the Catholic School Leaders Governance Survey (CSLGS) sent to Catholic school leaders. These surveys focused on Catholic school leaders' attitudes and experiences with the governance model of their current school in relation to interactions with different authorities, as well as attrition and retention within their current, and if applicable, former positions.

Sample and Sampling. Criterion sampling was used for the quantitative portion of the study. Criterion sampling is a method of sampling in which individuals are chosen based on their ability to fit the criteria of the study (Polkinghorne, 2005). This population consisted of all Catholic school leaders in Region V of the United States. The Catholic Dioceses of the United States are divided into 14 geographic regions for the purposes of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) proceedings. Region V includes all the Dioceses located in the states of Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee, 18 in total. The total number of Catholic school leaders in Region V of the United States is 425. A portion of the participants in

the initial quantitative portion of the study, those that indicated their willingness, were then contacted to participate in the later qualitative data collection.

From the population of 425, the researcher received 54 survey responses. This met Fowler's (2014) 12% threshold (12.7%) of standardized measurement. This standardized measurement ensures consistency across all respondents. This allows for comparable information gathered from each respondent and for meaningful statistics to be gathered (Fowler, 2014).

Quantitative Instrument. Using questions as measures is the essential part of this process. Specific wording among questions in a survey is important to receive the purposeful data needed in creating meaningful results (Fowler, 2014).

The researcher created the "Catholic School Leaders Governance Survey" (CSLGS) as the quantitative instrument for this study (Appendix C) based on the literature and the theoretical framework of Person-Organization Fit. The creation of this survey focused on the two research questions, as well as the theoretical frame Person-Organization Fit. The survey was divided into three sections: Demographics, Governance, and Authority Interactions. The demographic section included questions on respondent's gender, age range, years in education, years in Catholic education, years in Catholic school administration, current position, former positions, governance model of their school, school board type. The second section, on governance, asked questions regarding their school's current governance models and any issues that might arise specifically within those models. These questions helped provide data for the first research question. The final section of the survey, on authority interactions asked questions regarding Catholic school leaders and their relationships with their governing authority, such as a pastor, governing board, bishop, and/or superintendent. Two of the questions in this final section were open ended questions that asked what types of decisions within the respondent's school have to

be consulted with either a religious leader or the school board before they can be implemented. The two open ended questions were used during the integration portion of the study to help inform the researcher on the make-up of certain questions on the interview protocol for the qualitative portion of the study. This section also asked about the principal's thoughts and attitudes towards retention and attrition and whether their school's governance model affects those beliefs.

To determine reliability of the CSLGS, the survey was shared with several current and former Catholic school leaders in order to establish credibility, which Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness. The Catholic school leaders shared their thoughts, feelings, and questions about the survey with the researcher over a course of several versions of the CSLGS. The research also participated in frequent debriefing with Catholic school leaders as well as experts in survey creation and implementation. Debriefing sessions allowed the researchers to widen the vision of the CSLGS when needed (Shenton, 2004).

Quantitative Data Analysis

Organizing the data results began immediately for the different variables within in the data set. This gave a comprehensive picture of what the initial quantitative data looked like. It was determined that the best way of tabulating the results will be constructing frequency and percent distributions.

Using means and standard deviations was a large part of the initial interpretation of the data. There will then be a further exploration of the data by disaggregating across the different variables and subcategories of variables. Crosstabs was utilized in order to disaggregate the data across multiple categories.

Working the data into moderate and advanced analytical methods was used. Correlations, the statistical calculation that describes the nature, or extent, of the relationship between two variables (Hinkle & Wiersma, 2003), was evaluated. *T*-tests was utilized to compare the means of the Likert-type questions of the instrument by current position, with ANOVA used to determine whether the difference in means for those demographics (governance model and school board type) with more than two categories to determine statistical significance (Hinkle & Wiersma, 2003). The results of the one-way ANOVA revealed data that indicated the need for a Tukey HSD *post hoc* test to identify specific differences. Emerging factors will come out of the quantitative data. These factors will be utilized in the formation of the focus of the qualitative phase of this research study.

Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative data collection phase consisted of eight one-on-one interviews with Catholic school principals and presidents from various different governance models conducted virtually through Zoom. The participants were identified from those who completed the quantitative phase and indicated that they were willing to be selected for the qualitative portion of the study. The interview protocol was finalized after the quantitative analysis was completed.

Sampling. The sampling for the qualitative phase of this research study was criterion sampling. Criterion sampling is a method of sampling in which individuals are chosen based on their ability to fit the criteria of the study (Polkinghorne, 2005). The criterion for the qualitative phase was that participants participated in the quantitative phase and indicated that they would be willing to participate in the qualitative portion of the study. The initial target is to interview between 8-12 participants. This target was reached, as eight participants were interviewed.

Qualitative Instrument. Creswell (2014) notes that interviews elicit views and opinions that can greatly build upon the quantitative survey results. Due to the nature of the research questions (wanting to understand the relationship Catholic school leaders have with their superiors), this qualitative collection procedure provided rich data for review. Lochmiller and Lester (2017) mention interviews as the best method to learn about experiences and relationships. The semi-structured nature of the protocols allowed for data to be gathered from each individual, while exploring broader issues that arose (Ridenour & Newman, 2008).

Semi-structured interviews are versatile and flexible, the rigidity of its structure can change depending on the purpose and research questions (Kelly, 2010). The fluid nature of the semi-structured interview allows for reciprocity between the participant and the interviewer and allows the interviewer to improvise follow-up questions based on the initial responses from the respondent (Galleta, 2012). Kelly (2010) stated that the semi-structured interview technique for data collection requires a certain level of previous study in the topic area. The researcher had previous study experience regarding this topic as well as the research questions and, therefore, had the previous knowledge base that allowed for the improvisation of follow-up questions.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis occurred alongside qualitative data collection. While interviews were occurring, the researcher analyzed previous interviews by writing memos and journaling. Unlike the quantitative phase of data collection, early portions of the qualitative data collection actually impacted later portions. Improvised questions in early interviews were added to later interviews. Interviews are dense and rich, and therefore, not all of the information was able to be used in this study. The researcher “winnowed” the data, a practice that focuses on some parts of the data collected and disregards other parts (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012).

Qualitative data analysis began with organizing and preparing the data. This included transcribing interviews, visually inspecting the material, and typing up and clarifying field notes. Looking through and reading the data will then gave a general sense of the information, as well as an opportunity to reflect on its overall significance. Coding of the data then occurred, organizing the data by breaking it down into smaller, more manageable pieces of information. This lead to creating a word or short phrase that represents a data category. The researcher only developed codes on the basis of emerging information collected rather than predetermined codes. Word and phrase repetitions, the missing information (aspects not mentioned by respondents although they were expected to), and metaphors and analogies influenced code making. Second order analysis occurred by identifying themes, noticing patterns, and identifying respondent clusters.

Data Integration

When trying to determine the effects of the different governance models on Catholic school leaders, there was a need for both determining trends in data as well as individualized views and opinions. Therefore, surveys and one-on-one Zoom interviews were crucial for determining the full scope of the study. This was accomplished during two data integration phases: (1) using the quantitative results to guide participant selection and instrumentation for the qualitative phase and (2) merging the quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research questions.

Surveys provide trends of information from a population and can provide a description of trends, attitudes, and behaviors (Creswell, 2014). Surveys with purposeful questions can lead to bountiful answers (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017); therefore, special consideration was given to provide the most purposeful questions possible in order to provide the most bountiful responses.

Data analysis from the Catholic School Leaders Governance Survey (CSLGS) was used to help inform the researcher on the appropriate questions to include in the qualitative portion of the study's interview protocol. Answers to the two open ended questions located in the section of the CSLGS on authority interaction were also used as influence in the creation of the interview protocol.

Positionality Statement

My professional teaching experience began in a Catholic elementary school. This was a parish school with an advisory school board. I served as a fifth through seventh grade classroom teacher for six school years. While holding no official administrative title, I did serve as a team leader and master scheduler for many years. My experience at a Catholic elementary school that followed the parish governance model allowed me to see the inner workings of this particular governance model of Catholic schools. It is the only governance model of which I have first-hand knowledge, other than the time I spent as a student in a diocesan high school.

To help minimize the potential bias I might have against or for parish Catholic schools, I followed a strict regimen of journaling and member checking. I also had the fortunate ability to be able to practice some expert checking with several members of a national organization focused on Catholic education as well as other experts in the field of Catholic education and governance.

Summary of Chapter 3

Chapter 3 described and supported the methodology and research design that was used for this explanatory sequential mixed methods study. All aspects of the research process were identified and explained, including population, sampling, instrumentation, data collection, data

integration, and data analysis. The researcher's positionality statement was included. Chapter 4 will present detailed quantitative data and analysis of the study.

CHAPTER 4

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to evaluate different types of Catholic school governance models in small to medium dioceses in the southern United States and their connection to leadership's attitudes towards retention, attrition, and job satisfaction within schools.

This chapter incorporated the quantitative results from the survey investigating Catholic school leaders' thoughts and feelings on the governance model of the school in which they serve. The following research questions were addressed:

1. What issues do Catholic school leaders encounter within their specific school's governance model?
2. How do the interactions with religious authorities and/or Catholic school boards affect lay Catholic school leaders' retention and attrition?

Demographics

Demographic characteristics in this study included gender, age range, years in education, years in Catholic education, and years as a Catholic school administrator. There were also questions regarding respondents' current role in Catholic education, the governance model of the school, and the type of school board the school had, if any.

The majority of respondents (57.4%) were female. Most respondents (42.6%) were between 45-59 years old, followed by 37.0 who were 60 or older, and 20.4% who were 31-44. A majority of respondents (66.7%) had over 20 years of experience in education, 25.9% had 11-19 years of experience, 5.6% had 5-10 years of experience, and 1.9% had under five years of experience. Most respondents (51.9%) had over 20 years of experience in Catholic education,

25.9% had 11-19 years of experience, 13% had 5-10 years of experience, and 11.1% had under five years of experience. Respondents with under five years of experience in Catholic school administration had the largest representation of 31.5%, 25.9% had between 11-19 years, 22.2% had over 20 years, and 20.4% had 5-10 years of experience in Catholic school administration. Data is shown on Table 4.1.

As shown in Table 4.2, respondents who identified their current role as principal comprised 83.3% of the sample and those who identified as president were 16.7%. Participants wrote several variations of roles in the open text box of the survey that were similar to the role or title of "Principal." These were recorded into the "Principal" category for further analysis. These variations included: "K-8 principal, "Principal and teacher," and "Principal (Head of School)." Nearly half (44.5%) of the respondents indicated parish school as the type of governance model of their school, 27.8% indicated a diocesan school, 22.2% indicated private, Catholic schools, and 5.6% indicated Other. The majority of respondents (59.3%) indicated the type of school board of their school as Advisory, 14.8% indicated that their school had no school board, 14.8% indicated that their board was Limited Jurisdiction, and 11.1% indicated Consultative.

Catholic School Leaders Governance Survey

Data for this study were collected using a researcher-created survey, the Catholic School Leaders Governance Survey (CSLGS, Appendix C). Following demographic questions, the CSLGS included two distinct sections. The first section, known as the "Governance" section, utilized a Likert-type scale from Strongly Disagree (a score of 1) to Strongly Agree (a score of 7) that focused on issues related to Catholic school governance. This scale allowed respondents to discriminate among options and to respond in a way that indicated a certain statement may have been only somewhat undesirable as indicated by a response of Somewhat Disagree, while

Table 4.1

Sample Demographics

	n	Percent
Gender		
Female	31	57.4
Male	23	42.6
Age Range		
31-44	11	20.4
45-59	23	42.6
60 and over	20	37.0
Years in education		
Under 5 years	1	1.9
5-10 years	3	5.6
11-19 years	14	25.9
Over 20 years	36	66.7
Years in Catholic Education		
Under 5 years	6	11.1
5-10 years	7	13
11-19 years	13	24.1
Over 20 years	28	51.9
Years in Catholic School Administration		
Under 5	17	31.5
5-10	11	20.4
11-19	14	25.9
Over 20	12	22.2

Table 4.2

Leadership, Governance Model, and School Board Type

	n	Percent
Current Role		
Principal	45	83.3
President	9	16.7
Governance Model		
Parish School	24	44.4
Diocesan School	15	27.8
Private, Catholic School	12	22.2
Other	3	5.6
Type of School Board		
Advisory	32	59.3
No Board	8	14.8
Consultative	6	11.1
Limited Jurisdiction	8	14.8

allowing for more distinct answers to statements with responses of Disagree and Totally Disagree.

The second section of the CSLGS, known as the "Authority Interactions" section, focused on interactions with governing authority, retention, and attrition. These questions consisted of nine yes or no scenarios focused on interactions with religious authority, school leader decisions being overridden by religious authority or the school board, leaving a job as a Catholic school administrator because of conflict with a religious authority or school board, and leaving a job or wanting to leave a job as a Catholic school administrator due to the governance model of the school. There were also two-open ended questions giving respondents the opportunity to describe the types of decisions must be consulted with a religious leader and/or school board prior to being implemented.

Governance. The governance section of the CSLGS consisted of six statements regarding the governance models of their current school and the level of which each respondent either agreed or disagreed with a series of statements. Following are the six statements from the CSLGS:

1. The current governance model of my school in which I am an administrator is ideally suited to my leadership style.
2. I am able to lead my students effectively based on the governance model of my school.
3. I am able to lead my faculty effectively based on the governance model of my school.
4. I am able to make appropriate decisions that will affect my school because of the school's governance model.

5. I am able to make timely decisions that will affect my school because of the school's governance model.
6. I feel as if I am the true leader of my school.

Table 4.3 displays descriptive statistics and *t*-test results for the six Likert-type questions for the entire sample (n = 54) of the CSLGS compared to the two types of current positions of respondents, president and principal. *T*-test results compare the mean responses to each question by the two types of current positions.

All respondents agreed with the six statements from this portion of the CSLGS with an overall mean response of 5.89. Presidents were more likely to agree stronger than principals with means of 6.55 and 5.76 respectively. Principals, however, had much higher standard deviations within each of the six individual questions, indicating greater variance in their responses than for the group of presidents.

Several *t*-tests were run to compare the means of each group for each of the questions in this section of the CSLGS. Likewise, a *t*-test was run comparing the overall means of each group.

The *p*-values of each individual question show that, for a majority of questions, there was a significant difference in the means of the two groups, the *p*-values were below the .05 level of significance. Questions four and five, with *p*-values of .140 and .075 respectively, show that there was not a significant difference in the mean scores of presidents and principals. These two questions deal with the ability to make appropriate (Q4) and timely (Q5) decisions at their schools. In total, 12.04% of the total responses (54 respondents multiplied by six questions) of the six Likert-type governance questions were answered with neutral or negative (Neither Agree or Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, or Totally Disagree) responses. Of those neutral or

Table 4.3

Current Role

	Entire Sample		President		Principal		
Question	*n*	M (SD)	*n*	M (SD)	*n*	M (SD)	*t*-test, *p-value*
Q1	54	5.89 (1.22)	9	6.63 (0.52)	45	5.75 (1.30)	-1.83 *p = .036*
Q2	54	6.00 (1.26)	9	6.75 (0.46)	45	5.86 (1.34)	-1.78 *p = .041*
Q3	54	6.04 (1.17)	9	6.63 (0.52)	45	5.91 (1.24)	-1.81 *p = .038*
Q4	54	5.72 (1.51)	9	6.25 (0.71)	45	5.62 (1.61)	-1.09 *p = .140*
Q5	54	5.65 (1.57)	9	6.38 (0.74)	45	5.51 (1.54)	-1.46 *p = .075*
Q6	54	6.04 (1.08)	9	6.63 (0.52)	45	5.91 (1.14)	-1.97 *p = .027*
Total	54	5.89 (1.14)	9	6.52 (0.44)	45	5.76 (1.20)	-3.27 *p = .002*

negative responses, 100% came from principals and 0% from presidents.

Table 4.4 shows descriptive statistics for the six Likert-type questions by the entire sample (n = 54) of the CSLGS compared to three of the types of governance models of respondents. Of the 54 respondents to the survey, only 5.5% (n = 3) responded with a governance model other than diocesan, parish, or private. Therefore, the data from those respondents were set aside. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were run to test the statistical differences between the three most common governance models of the schools of the respondents.

All respondents agreed with each of the six statements in the Governance portion of the CSLGS. Private, Catholic schools had a much higher mean and much lower standard deviation than their counterparts from diocesan and parish schools across each question. Private school leaders most often believed they were the leaders of their schools (Q6 M = 6.71), compared to leaders in both diocesan (Q6 M = 5.87) and parish schools (Q6 M = 5.83).

Means of each question increased across each of the three types of governance models. Diocesan schools had the lowest means, followed by parish schools, and then private. Inversely, standard deviations were lower across each type of governance model. Question six, however, did not follow this trend, with parish schools having the highest standard deviation, followed by diocesan, and then private.

Diocesan school leaders felt the least confident in their abilities to make appropriate and timely decisions that would affect their schools because of their schools' governance models (Q4 and Q5). The means of these two questions are the lowest of all the respondent's (Q4 M = 4.27, Q5 M = 4.33). However, these two questions also had the highest standard deviations (Q4 SD = 1.98, Q5 SD = 2.13) of any of the school leaders in any governance category. These higher

Table 4.4

Governance Model of Current School

	Diocesan		Parish		Private		ANOVA
Question	*n*	M (SD)	*n*	M (SD)	*n*	M (SD)	*p*-value
Q1	15	5.00 (1.65)	24	6.00 (0.89)	12	6.57 (0.52)	.002
Q2	15	5.20 (1.74)	24	6.04 (0.96)	12	6.71 (0.47)	.007
Q3	15	5.47 (1.59)	24	6.00 (0.98)	12	6.71 (0.47)	.035
Q4	15	4.27 (1.98)	24	6.17 (0.87)	12	6.50 (0.52)	<.001
Q5	15	4.33 (2.13)	24	5.96 (0.96)	12	6.50 (0.65)	<.001
Q6	15	5.87 (0.92)	24	5.83 (1.24)	12	6.71 (0.47)	.074
Total	15	5.02 (1.48)	24	5.99 (0.87)	12	6.61 (0.41)	.001

standard deviations indicate that there is a larger spread of answers compared to the means which indicates the answers are less consistent. In total, 12.04% of the total responses (54 respondents multiplied by six questions) of the six Likert-type governance questions were answered with neutral or negative (Neither Agree or Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, or Totally Disagree) responses. Of those neutral or negative responses, 71.79% came from respondents that indicated they led diocesan schools.

According to the ANOVA test results, for the majority of the questions in the Governance section of the CSLGS, governance type of the school made a difference for their responses. The *p*-value for five out of the six questions was <.05. The exception to this was question six, which had a *p*-value of .074, indicating that there was not a statistically significant difference in the type of governance among the respondents. Question six is an outlier in this section of the CSLGS as it asks about the respondents' feeling about being the true leader of their school, while the rest of the questions in this section ask about the respondents' leadership style, the ability to lead effectively the students and faculty of their school, and make appropriate and timely decisions in their school based on the governance model of the school.

When the means for each governance model were totaled for each of the six questions of this section of the survey, a similar *p*-value of .001 result occurs. This indicates that overall, respondents' governance model has a statistically significantly impact on their answers.

The results of the one-way ANOVA tests revealed statistically significant differences in five of the responses by governance model. To identify specific differences, Tukey's HSD *post hoc* tests were computed for questions one through five (Table 4.5).

Post hoc test revealed the mean value of the overall averages was significantly different between parish and diocesan schools (p =.024), as well as significantly different between

Table 4.5

Tukey Post Hoc Results of Significant Differences

Question	Comparison	Mean Difference	*p*-value
Q1			
	Parish→Dio	1.000	.037
	Dio→Private	-1.583	.003
Q2			
	Dio→Private	-1.467	.009
Q3			
	Dio→Private	-1.283	0.21
Q4			
	Parish→Dio	1.900	<.001
	Dio→Private	-2.233	<.001
Q5			
	Parish→Dio	1.625	.003
	Dio→Private	-2.083	.001
	Dio→Other	-2.333	.040
LSAvg.			
	Parish→Dio	.977	.024
	Dio→Private	-1.589	<.001

diocesan and private schools (p = <.001). There was no statistically significant difference between any other groupings based on the overall average of the Likert-type questions.

Table 4.6 shows descriptive statistics for the six Likert-type questions by the entire sample (n = 54) of the CSLGS compared to the type of school board indicated by respondents. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was run to test the statistical differences between the three most common types of school boards of the respondents' schools as well as respondents who indicated that their school had no school board. Of the 54 respondents to the survey, 5.5% (n = 3) responded with their school board type being Limited Jurisdiction. In all three responses, the means and standard deviations for all six questions were identical (M = 7.00; SD = 0.00). This indicated that all three respondents chose Strongly Agree for all six questions and therefore the data from those respondents were set aside.

All respondents on average, no matter the school board type agreed with each of the six statements in the governance portion of the CSLGS. All means and standard deviations were similar with the largest mean being from leaders with consultative boards (m = 5.94), and the lowest mean being from leaders with no board (m = 5.79). The means of individual questions repeated this pattern ranging from a low of 5.00 (Q4 and Q5 from leaders with no school board) to a high of 6.75 (Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q6 from leaders with boards of limited jurisdiction).

Standard deviations for individual questions ranged from 0.46 (Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q6 from leaders with boards of limited jurisdiction) to 1.93 (Q4 and Q5 from leaders with no school board). The overall highest individual means were coupled with the overall lowest standard deviations and conversely, the lowest individual means were coupled with the overall highest standard deviation. This indicates that the means of leaders with boards of limited jurisdiction were clustered close together, while the means of leaders with no school boards were spread out

Table 4.6

Type of School Board

	Entire Sample		Advisory		Consultative		Ltd. Juris.		No Board		ANOVA
Question	*n*	M (SD)	*n*	M (SD)	*n*	M (SD)	*n*	M (SD)	*n*	M (SD)	*p-value*
Q1	54	5.89 (1.22)	32	5.81 (1.23)	6	6.00 (1.10)	8	6.75 (0.46)	8	5.25 (1.49)	.744
Q2	54	6.00 (1.26)	32	6.03 (1.12)	6	6.00 (1.55)	8	6.75 (0.46)	8	5.13 (1.73)	.965
Q3	54	6.04 (1.17)	32	6.06 (0.95)	6	6.17 (1.60)	8	6.75 (0.46)	8	5.13 (1.64)	.753
Q4	54	5.72 (1.51)	32	5.72 (1.53)	6	5.50 (1.38)	8	6.63 (0.52)	8	5.00 (1.93)	.873
Q5	54	5.65 (1.57)	32	5.59 (1.60)	6	5.67 (1.37)	8	6.50 (0.76)	8	5.00 (1.93)	.780
Q6	54	6.04 (1.08)	32	5.88 (1.21)	6	6.67 (0.52)	8	6.75 (0.46)	8	5.50 (0.76)	.653
Total	54	5.89 (1.09)	32	5.84 (1.09)	6	6.00 (1.14)	8	6.69 (0.49)	8	5.17 (1.47)	.156

more. In total, 12.04% of the total responses (54 respondents multiplied by six questions) of the six Likert-type governance questions were answered with neutral or negative (Neither Agree or Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, or Totally Disagree) responses. Of those neutral or negative responses, 61.53% came from respondents that indicated their school had advisory boards, while 25.64% came from schools without boards, and 12.82% came from schools with consultative boards.

ANOVA test results showed no significant differences between the different types of boards. With such a small sample size, it is more likely that an outlier exists within the leaders with no school boards for those specific questions.

Table 4.7 shows a Pearson Correlation table for the six questions Likert-type about governance on the CSLGS.

While all six of the Likert-type questions of the CSLGS were positively correlated and statistically significant at the 0.01 level, question six had much lower positive correlation when compared to the other five questions, especially question four, regarding making appropriate decisions.

While all six of the Likert-type questions of the CSLGS were positively correlated and statistically significant at the 0.01 level, question six had much lower positive correlation when compared to the other five questions, especially question four, regarding making appropriate decisions. Questions four and five had an $r = .92$, indicating a very strong positive correlation. These two questions were also the most often exception when looking at overall mean scores based on each of the demographic data reported.

Question six can be considered a different type of question when compared to the others. It asks if the respondents *feel* if they are the true leader of their school, while the previous five

Table 4.7

Correlation of Governance Questions

Variable	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Q1					
Q2	.75*				
Q3	.62*	.88*			
Q4	.76*	.84*	.79*		
Q5	.77*	.87*	.80*	.92*	
Q6	.56*	.57*	.63*	.39*	.52*

Note. *indicates *correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), p* < .001.

questions ask if they are *able* to accomplish a task such as leading students and faculty and make appropriate and timely decisions in their school. Further discussion on question six of the Governance section of the CSLGS will be further explored in Chapter 6.

While there is a positive correlation between all questions, the ability of a school leader to accomplish a task is not as strongly correlated to their perception of their feelings of being the leader of their school. Overall, most fall into a range that considers them to have moderate relationships, indicating there are no true connections between how individual questions relate to one another.

Authority Interactions. The final section of the CSLGS consisted of nine questions that were answered "yes" or no." These questions consisted scenarios a Catholic school leader might experience regarding interactions with religious authority, school leader decisions being overridden by religious authority or the school board, leaving a job as a Catholic school administrator because of conflict with a religious authority or school board, and leaving a job or wanting to leave a job as a Catholic school administrator due to the governance model of the school. There also were two open-ended questions giving the respondent the opportunity to describe the types of decisions must be consulted with a religious leader and/or school board prior to being implemented. The two open ended questions were used to help inform a portion of the interview questions during the qualitative portion of the study described in Chapter 5. These questions were:

1. Have you ever had a negative interaction with a religious leader of your school?
2. Have you ever had a decision overridden by a religious or lay leader of your school?
3. Have you ever come in direct opposition with a religious or lay leader in your school?
4. Have you ever had a decision overridden by the School Board of your school?

5. Have you ever come in direct opposition with the School Board at your school?
6. Do you feel that you are more likely to remain in your position ***directly because*** (emphasis included in CSLGS) of your school's governance structure?
7. Have you ever left a job as a Catholic school administrator due to, or in part because of the governance structure of the school?
8. Has your school's governance model ever given you the idea that you should leave your current (or any former) position?
9. Have you ever left, or wanted to leave, a position as a Catholic School administrator because of the religious leader whom you worked with?
10. What types of decisions in your school have to be consulted with a religious leader before they can be implemented?
11. What types of decisions in your school have to be consulted with the School Board before they can be implemented? Please answer N/A if there is no school board at your school.

These nine binary questions were divided into three major categories related to research question two: leadership interaction, attrition, and retention. Questions one, two, three, four, and five falls under leadership interaction. Question six related to retention of their current position. Finally, questions seven, eight, and nine under attrition. Table 4.8 shows the frequencies and percentages for all nine of these questions, divided by category.

Percentages per each category show that retention is the most indicated category of having negative experiences or interactions (37.00%). Followed by authority interactions (28.89%), with issues dealing with attrition being the lowest at 24.07% of the responses. The total negative response rate of respondents was 28.19%.

Table 4.8
Negative Response Rate by Category

Category	# of Qs per Category	Percent
Authority	5	28.89
Retention	1	37.00
Attrition	3	24.07
Overall Total	9	28.19

Table 4.9 shows total negative response rates by current role, governance model, and school board type.

Overall, principals (30.12%), leaders of diocesan schools (40.74%), and leaders of schools with advisory boards (32.64) had the highest negative response rates. Respondents who indicated a governance model of other had the lowest overall negative response rate of 7.40%.

Table 4.10, 4.11, and 4.12 show negative response rates of each category divided by respondents' current role, governance model, and school board type respectively.

Throughout all three categories, principals had higher negative response rates than presidents, which indicated that principals have higher instances of negative interactions or experiences than do presidents. Diocesan school leaders indicated the highest percentages of negative interactions or experiences in all three categories of this section of the CSLGS and were mostly followed by parish schools.

Diocesan school leaders had the highest negative response rate (44%) under the "Authority" category, while Catholic school leaders who indicated "Other" for their school's governance model had the lowest rate at 6.67%.

Diocesan school leaders had the highest negative response rate (46.67%) under the "Retention" category, while Catholic school leaders who indicated "Other" for their school's governance model had the lowest rate at 0%, meaning that no respondent that indicated "Other for their school's governance model had a negative interaction or experience that had them question their ability to stay in their current position.

Diocesan school leaders had the highest negative response rate (33.33%) under the "Attrition" category, while Catholic school leaders with a school board of limited jurisdiction had the lowest rate at 4.17%.

Table 4.9

Negative Response Rate by Current Role, Governance Model, and School Board

Demographic	*n*	Percent
President	9	18.52
Principal	45	30.12
Diocesan	15	40.74
Parish	24	27.78
Private	12	18.52
Other	3	7.40
Advisory	32	32.64
Consultative	6	14.81
Ltd. Juris.	8	18.05
No Board	8	30.56

Table 4.10

Negative Response Rate of Categories by Current Role

	Authority	Retention	Attrition
Principal	24.44	22.22	7.41
President	29.78	40.00	27.41

Table 4.11

Negative Response Rate of Categories by Governance Model

	Authority	Retention	Attrition
Diocesan	44.00	46.67	33.33
Parish	24.17	45.83	27.78
Private	25.00	16.67	8.33
Other	6.67	0.00	11.11

Table 4.12

Negative Response Rate of Categories by School Board Type

	Authority	Retention	Attrition
Advisory	33.13	37.50	30.21
Consultative	16.67	33.33	5.56
Limited Jurisdiction	27.50	12.50	4.17
No Board	15.00	12.50	33.33

These results do not give a full picture of the negative interactions and experiences indicated by Catholic school leaders in the CSLGS. Some respondents' schools did not have school boards, and some were purely advisory in nature, meaning that they did not have the power to override a Catholic school leader. Others had boards of limited jurisdiction, meaning that the boards have authority to make and enact policy and other decisions for the school.

This fact gave prime opportunity for the leader to come in opposition of the school board. The nine questions of this section of the CSLGS all dealt with interaction of some kind with either a religious or lay authority figure, the school board, or interactions with the governance model of the school.

Therefore, the nine questions were further divided into three new subcategories for further analysis: leadership, school board, and governance model. Questions one, two, three, and nine all fall under leadership. Questions four and five ask about interactions with school boards. Questions six, seven, and eight regarded the respondents' current school's governance model. Table 4.13 shows the total negative response rates by each of the subcategories or leadership, governance, and school board.

Percentages per each subcategory show that leadership was the most indicated subcategory of having negative experiences or interactions (38.43%). Followed by issues with governance models (26.54%), with issues with school boards being the lowest at 10.19% of the responses.

Table 4.14 shows the percent of negative responses to this section of the CSLGS divided by respondents' current role in Catholic schools.

For two of the three subcategories of questions, the total percentage of negative interactions and experiences were higher among principals than their president counterparts. The

Table 4.13

Negative Response Rate by Leadership, Governance, and School Board

Subcategory	# of Qs per subcategory	Percent
Leadership	4	38.43
Governance Model	3	26.54
School Board	2	10.19
Overall Total	9	28.19

Table 4.14

Negative Response Rate by Current Role

	Leadership	School Board	Governance
President	19.44	22.22	33.33
Principal	42.78	7.78	34.81

largest difference in negative response rate occurs in the leadership subcategory. Principals had an overall 42.78% negative response rate to questions, while presidents had only a 19.44% rate. Issues with the governance were fairly consistent amongst both presidents (33.33%) and principals (34.81%), higher than either leadership or school board interactions.

Table 4.15 shows the percent of negative responses to this section of the CSLGS divided by respondents' current school governance model.

In the leadership subcategory, diocesan schools had higher negative response rate (55%) than the other three types of governance models, with parish schools next at 41.67%, private schools with a 20.83% negative response rate, and an 8.3% negative response rate for those who designated their school governance model as "Other." This pattern continued for the governance subcategory and the overall totals as well.

The interactions with school board category shows the only difference being the only category where diocesan schools does not have the highest negative interactions rate (16.67%). For this subcategory, private schools have the highest negative rate of 20.83%, while both parish schools and those designated as "Other" did not have any instances of negative interactions or experiences when it came to their school boards.

Interactions with the governance model of schools was spread fairly evenly with diocesan schools having the highest negative rate at 37.78%, private schools having a 36.11% rate, 33.33% rate for those designated "Other," and a 30.56% negative interactions rate for parish schools.

Table 4.16 shows the percent of negative responses to this section of the CSLGS divided by respondents' school board type. As with the other categories, the total negative response rate by school board type was fairly even amongst all categories. School board was the only

Table 4.15

Negative Response Rate by Governance Model

	Leadership	School Board	Governance
Diocesan	55.00	16.67	37.78
Parish	41.67	0.00	30.56
Private	20.83	20.83	36.11
Other	8.30	0.00	33.33

Table 4.16

Negative Response Rate by School Board Type

	Leadership	School Board	Governance
Advisory	41.67	10.60	27.27
Consultative	37.50	8.33	44.44
Limited Jurisdiction	35.71	0.0	23.81
No Board	28.13	-	12.50

subcategory that was different. Leaders of schools with advisory boards had the highest negative response rate for two of the three subcategories (leadership and school board, 41.67% and 10.60% respectively).

Leaders of schools with a board of limited jurisdiction and leaders with no school board indicated that there were no negative interactions or experiences with their school boards. Boards of limited jurisdiction have decision-making power within schools, yet zero respondents of schools with those types of boards indicated a negative interaction or experience, while those with advisory boards (with no decision-making capability) had a 10.60% negative response rate.

Summary of Quantitative Analysis

The CSLGS had three sections. First was demographics that asked for gender, age range, years in education, years in Catholic education, years as a Catholic school administrator, current role in Catholic education, the governance model of the school, and the type of school board the school had, if any. The second section, known as "Governance," of the CSLGS consisted of six Likert-type questions focused on Catholic school leaders' relationship with their current schools' governance model. The third section, known as "Interaction, Retention, and Attrition," consisted of nine yes or no questions focused on leadership interaction, retention, and attrition.

Results from the Governance section of the CSLGS indicated that there was an overall agreement to the six Likert-type questions from Catholic school leaders. Those who serve Catholic schools as principals had an overall lower mean score than their president counterparts, while also having a higher standard deviation as well indicating that principal responses were spread out more. For a majority of the questions, *t*-tests showed a significant difference in means of principals and presidents. The only exceptions were questions regarding making appropriate and timely decisions.

Private, Catholic schools had a much higher mean and much lower standard deviation than their counterparts from diocesan and parish schools across each question. A majority of negative or neutral responses in this section of the survey (answers of "Strongly Disagree," Disagree," "Somewhat Disagree," and "Neither Agree nor Disagree") came from leaders of diocesan schools. Total means of the questions in this section of the CSLGS indicated that there was a statistical significant impact in responses in relation to the governance model of the school of the respondent.

In terms of school board types, there was not a significant difference in responses. The highest mean scores came from schools with consultative boards, while the lowest came from schools with no school board type indicated.

Results from the "Interaction, Retention, and Attrition" section of the survey indicated that overall, leaders of diocesan schools and principals had the highest instances of negative interactions and experiences with authority. Diocesan and parish schools have very similar, and the two highest negative response rates when it came to the CSLGS questions regarding retention. Almost half of the leaders of schools with these governance models that responded to the survey have had negative interactions or experiences that caused them to question their ability to stay in their current position. Conversely, leaders of private schools had the lowest negative response rates of the different governance models in terms of retention. These leaders have had far fewer instances of negative interactions or experiences that caused them to question their ability to stay in their current position.

Once the nine questions of the "Authority, Retention, and Attrition" section of the CSLGS were divided into different subcategories referring to interactions with leaders, school boards, and their governance model, new conclusions could be made about the data. Overall,

there are very few instances of negative interaction or experiences with school boards. In the cases where the negative response rate was elevated in the school board category, it was most often with a governance model most often associated with a school board with actual decision-making power. Otherwise, since consultative and advisory boards have *very* limited, if any, capacity to make decisions on behalf of the school, leaders with those types of boards did not have negative interactions or experiences with their school board.

Summary of Chapter 4

Chapter 4 detailed data reporting and analysis for the quantitative portion of this explanatory sequential mixed methods study. Demographic data was reported. Data from the qualitative instrument (CSLGS) was reported in two sections and analyzed in two sections. Data from governance section of the CSLGS, that included six Likert-type questions, were reported and analyzed using means, standard deviations, *t*-tests, and ANOVA tests to determine statistical significance by the demographics of current role, governance model, and school board type. Tukey HSD *post hoc* tests were run to test significance between groups. A Pearson correlation was run to determine the correlation between the six questions. Data from the final section of the CSLGS on authority interactions included nine questions that were answered “yes” or no” to scenarios regarding authority interactions. This data was reported and analyzed using percentages of negative responses by current role, governance model, and school board type. Chapter 5 will present data from the qualitative portion of the study through interviews with eight Catholic school leaders that represent the two roles, three governance models, and three school board types.

CHAPTER 5

QUALITATIVE RESULTS AND MAIN FINDINGS

The qualitative portion of this study sought to discover the issues Catholic school leaders' face with the governance model of their current school as well as their interactions with religious leaders and other authority figures that could affect their retention and attrition of their current role. The research questions that framed the study were:

1. What issues do Catholic school leaders encounter within their specific school's governance model?
2. How do the interactions with religious authorities and/or Catholic school boards affect lay Catholic school leaders' retention and attrition?

This study took place in Region V of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's (USCCB) ecclesiastical divisions. Within Region V there are 18 Dioceses that encompass the states of Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee with 425 total schools. Each diocese has its own Catholic Schools Office with a superintendent, often with Assistant Superintendents and various support staff, that has a direct report to the local Bishop.

Method and Analysis

The qualitative data for this study were collected from eight interviews with Catholic school leaders from within Region V of the United States. Five of these leaders were from parish schools and one leader from each of the governance models of independent, regional, and Diocesan schools. Each of the participants had previously participated in the initial quantitative survey and indicated at the end of the survey that they would participate in a follow-up interview for the qualitative phase of this study.

A total of 15 Catholic school leaders were contacted via email; eight responded and were interviewed. The eight Catholic school leaders were interviewed using the videoconferencing platform Zoom. Interviews were then transcribed and analyzed by the researcher. Information that would identify the participants was removed from the transcripts. This included names of people, places, schools, parishes, locations, Dioceses, etc. The transcripts were then coded according to emerging common themes identified in the interviews (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). Representative quotations are provided with the themes to add voices to the themes present in each section.

Participants

The eight participants ranged in years of experience in their current role from those who were completing their first year to those who were completing their twentieth. Five were principals of parish schools. Three participants were presidents from each of the governance models of independent, regional, and Diocesan schools. All were once students of Catholic schools, and seven of the eight had held previous administrative positions in Catholic schools, with one having only worked in non-Catholic private schools prior to their current position as a parish school principal. All participants said they had sent, currently send, or would send their children and/or grandchildren to Catholic schools. Several of the respondents had experiences in multiple Catholic schools in multiple states and Dioceses, while one president had spent the entirety of his 40 plus year career at the same school, serving as a teacher, coach, academic dean, assistant principal, principal, and president.

Key demographic characteristics of interview participants include, the diocese in which their school is located, their current role in the school, years in that role, the governance model of their current school, their school's board type, the name of their school, and the grade levels of

students of their school. As shown in Table 5.1 which displays an overview of the interview participants.

Themes

Three themes emerged from this research concerning the two research questions. First, there was a preference of Catholic school leaders to have and maintain good relationships with authority figures, whether they were Pastors of the parish, Superintendents of the Diocesan Schools' Office, school boards, or others they work with closely. Second, there was a strong theme of authority, including who has it, who doesn't, who exercises it, and who doesn't. Lastly, there was a common theme of discussing the issues that exist, whether actual or potential, of staying or leaving their current position.

Relationships

The Catholic school leaders interviewed frequently mentioned the relationship they had with various members of the Catholic Church hierarchy. Principals of parish schools most often discussed the relationships their pastor, while the presidents more often mentioned their relationships with the diocese's superintendent, Diocesan Schools' Office, or their school board. Clayton, who served as president of an independent Catholic school, summarized that, "Good, trusting relationships are how we learn to work together to promote and grow Catholic education." The relationships discussed were not always positive. Tracy, a principal of a parish school quite some distance away from the main office of the diocese stated that not all relationships within her dioceses are equal:

> I have a vastly different relationship with my superintendent than most of the other schools in my diocese. I never seen them. Not once have they come to mass at my school, and they have been invited. I do not trust them to back me up during

Table 5.1

School Leader Information

Catholic School Leader	Diocese	Current Role	Years in Current Role	Governance Model	School Board Type	School	Grade Levels
Karen	Emory	Principal	4	Parish	Advisory	St. Thomas Beckett	PK-8
Margaret	Richlands	Principal	6	Parish	Advisory	St. Andrew	PK-12
Tracy	Glade Springs	Principal	10	Parish	Advisory	Peter the Rock	PK-8
Bill	Clintwood	Principal	1	Parish	Advisory	Queen of Heaven	PK-8
Ellen	Stony Creek	Principal	4	Parish	Advisory	St. Clement	PK-7
Clayton	Kenbridge	President	3	Private	Limited Jurisdiction	John the Revelator	PK-12
Larry	Grundy	President	21	Diocesan	Other	Sts. Cosmas & Damian	9-12
Molly	Centreville	President	2.5	Regional	Consultative	Windsor Catholic School System	PK-12

a crisis like other principals do.

This lack of presence of the superintendent caused Tracy to feel disconnected by more than geographic distance, but a disconnection of a relationship that could provide mutual benefits to her school, the superintendent, and the rest of the schools in her diocese.

Pastor Relationship. Only the principals of parish schools interviewed had Pastors that they reported to in their school. All of the principals interviewed believed that the relationship that they had with their school's pastor, as well as the pastor's relationship with the parish school as a whole, was essential to the success of the school. Most of the principals also indicated that they had a good working relationship with their pastor. None said that there was an antagonistic or hostile relationship. Where the working relationship was not ideal, it was more of a nonexistent relationship. Most of the principals not only mentioned their relationship with their current pastor, but also gave insights, both positive and negative, about former pastors that they had worked with in the past. Ellen, who had served as principal at two different parish schools in the Diocese of Stony Creek said of her former pastor compared to her current one, "He was much more involved in the school than my pastor now. It seems that [current pastor] doesn't want anything to do with us and therefore we don't have as deep of a relationship as I would like."

Other principals interviewed, such as Margaret indicated that her pastor was not only involved in her school, but invested in it and the surrounding community. She said, "He trusts me because he sees that the community trusts me. He is from here, an alum of the school, and is constantly trying to rebuild the community's trust of our school since the former, more heavy-handed pastor left." Margaret indicated this relationship with the pastor has led to a trusting

relationship where the two of them can work together to help promote and sustain a school that was on the brink of closure less than a decade ago.

The principals of parish schools all had a good working relationships with their pastor. Many of the principals indicated that their pastor leaves a majority of the day to day running of the school to them. In some cases, this was seen as a positive for the principal. They believed they had the support of the pastor in their decision-making, and the pastor removes himself from the day to day running of the school. Other principals saw this as concerning. For example, Tracy believed that the pastor not often present was worrisome. When recalling about a recent conversation with her pastor about space usage of the school building, she said, "It made me realize that we are not on the same page. To me, it's sad. But it is also a little concerning. We are definitely not walking together towards a common goal."

Karen, a parish school principal from the Diocese of Emory, intentionally tried to build a relationship with her new pastor after he arrived at the parish after the school year had started. Drawing from her previous experience in private, non-Catholic education, as well as consulting research she had done during her time in graduate school, she created an onboarding binder for her pastor for when he arrived on campus. This binder, contained a general structure of the school's schedule, how often religion classes were taught, what was being covered in religion classes, a very broad view of the school's curriculum, major dates in the school's calendar, a list of traditions the school had, as well some of her hopes for how often they could meet and the topics they could discuss. Karen stated that creating an onboarding binder for the pastor and principal to review together is something that she believes sets a marker for the relationship from the beginning. She noted, "Having that time to go over specifics of our school with him [the

pastor] was invaluable. I believe that it showed him how invested I was going to be in this relationship and set the tone going forward."

Diocesan Schools' Office Relationship. Diocesan Schools' Offices (DSO) are structured differently all across Region V of the United States. Some DSOs have a wealth of people, resources, and materials to help the Catholic schools within their Dioceses. Others have only superintendent and maybe a part time secretary. The different relationships between the DSO, as well as the superintendent, and Catholic school leaders is important as this relationship has the potential to provide a place of instruction, stability, and continuity between schools within a diocese. The relationships between parish school principals and the DSOs in this study were different than the relationships between non-parish school principals and the DSO and superintendent.

The relationships between Catholic school leaders and the DSO and the superintendent were difficult to navigate for both parties. Catholic school leaders reported that they did not report to the DSO or superintendent, but some noted that the superintendent was responsible for their performance evaluations. For parish school principals, their direct report will always be the parish pastor. This can cause strife in the relationships between the DSO, the superintendent, and the parish school principal. Karen gave a representative example, noting, "There are technicalities of who reports to who. I know that I report to my pastor, but there are often times that I feel like I need to loop my superintendent in on decisions." The interviewed in this study echoed this sentiment. Larry Wilson, president of Sts. Cosmas & Damian High School, a Diocesan school said, "Honestly, it's unclear of what supervisory role the superintendent has for my school, but we obviously work together towards the common goal of increasing the effectiveness of our school's mission."

Each believed that the DSO and superintendent were great resources that were available to them. Those resources included professional development opportunities, help during time of accreditation, strategic planning, marketing, and help with the catechesis (religious education) for their teachers.

Most leaders mentioned that they had a good working relationship with either their superintendent directly, or in the cases of some of the larger dioceses, an associate superintendent assigned to them based on geographic region, grade level, or another qualifier. Many said that they truly believed that the listened to their concerns, and were very knowledgeable on best practices in Catholic education.

However, the entirety of the group of leaders interviewed indicated that each of their DSOs were reactive rather than proactive. Ellen, of the Diocese of Stony Creek said that several schools closed in her diocese over the past few years and that the DSO did not help until it was too late. She recalled, "I was able to see that several of these schools were overstaffed based on their numbers. Where was the Schools' Office then? It is almost as if the schools are all on their own until it hits the fan." She indicated further that this did not give her very much trust in the DSO or superintendent to be able to help her when or if the time came.

Three parish school principals and one regional school president were leaders of schools that were, as Tracy considered, "Outside the circle," of their diocese. Four of the participants' (Tracy, Margaret, Karen, and Molly) schools were geographically separated from their DSO. The school Tracy led is just under an hour away from the DSO. Likewise, Margaret's school is over an hour drive for anyone from the DSO to visit, Karen's school is located more than an hour and a half drive from the Chancery of her diocese, while Molly's school are over two hours away from the city where the DSO is located.

Apart from infrequent visits from anyone in the DSO, these principals felt, along with the other leaders of schools outside these "hubs," disconnected from the rest of the diocese. Tracy believed that there is a bias towards the schools that are in the same city as the DSO, "It probably comes just from proximity, but I definitely noticed a difference of how those schools are portrayed and treated at times, those of us here are almost seen as secondary."

This disconnectedness led to feelings of inequity and lack of no cohesion between schools in the same diocese. Margaret noted that the same resources, the same procedures, or the same professional development opportunities for teachers were not always appropriate for her school as they were for the schools over an hour away. She stated, "There are times that I jump on the opportunities the superintendent's office sends us, other times I just leave them alone because I know that it is not something that our school/community needs." All three of the parish principals that saw themselves as removed from most of the rest of the Dioceses noted that this hurt their relationship with the DSO and lowered their ability to trust the office staff or to lead them effectively. Tracy said of her school's relationship with the superintendent:

> My school is considered 'outside of the circle.' We have Glade Springs, there are a lot of Catholic schools there, and then outside of Glade Springs, that's the circle, we have lots of little schools spread out sporadically. So, I don't know if it's the drive from Glade Springs where the main office is that causes us to be what I think is an afterthought. Because if the superintendent ever comes to see me, he is also going to be visiting the Catholic school that is 20 minutes from me ... It's never just to see me, or to support something that I have going on, whether it is an issue or even to celebrate something with us ... I have never had a superintendent celebrate mass with us at all, not once, in 10 years. And they have been invited.

This lack of interaction from the DSO, and with the superintendent specifically, left Catholic school leaders feeling isolated and "less than" in the eyes of their home diocese and its leadership.

Many of the parish school principals interviewed indicated that the DSO often led in way that bred competition between schools. Whether that competition was with students and families, or with faculty and staff, there was a strong sense from the principals interviewed that the DSO ran not as a school system, but rather a system of individual schools. While many indicated that all of the Catholic school leaders within their respective Dioceses met regularly, often times these meetings were not seen as informational or relational building, but rather were done as a way to save time and resources.

All of the school leaders concurred that their relationships with their DSO was not as strong as other relationships they had within their diocese, with many saying that they met more regularly with other principals in their diocese than with anyone from the DSO. Many leaders interviewed wanted to see the DSO fostering a cohesion between school leaders that was not currently in practice. Clayton said that his diocese is, "…more of a loose confederation of schools rather than a true school system," indicating that without their own intentionality, Catholic school leaders in his diocese would not be connected. His DSO did not do much to facilitate this sense of connection. Many also believe that more support from the DSO could be there, but their DSO was being prevented from providing that support for one reason or another. Karen, believed there was inefficiency within the DSO of her diocese, mentioning that there was just not enough people working in the office. She observed, "With such a small staff in the [Diocesan] Schools' Office, it makes it abundantly clear that there are some technological deficiencies, among other issues among the small support staff." She further discussed that this

caused unclear and untimely communication to occur. “There is no doubt that they want to be helpful, but there is some serious room to improve in many areas, and because of this, our relationship is not as strong as it could be,” she concluded.

School Board Relationship. The five parish school principals and the three presidents from Diocesan, independent, and regional schools had different types of school boards in terms of their function, authority, and composition. All of the parish school principals had school boards that were purely advisory in nature, while the three presidents had either consultative boards or boards of limited jurisdiction. Advisory boards serve purely in an advisory capacity, meaning that while there may be voting taking place during meetings, these boards cannot take any action on their own. Consultative boards are similar to advisory boards in that they cannot enact policy on their own, the main difference being that school leaders are required to consult on decision-making, seeking recommendations, but no requirement to follow the board’s advice. Boards of limited jurisdiction are delegated as the final authority in certain areas of institutional operation.

Advisory boards can be an incredible asset in helping administer parish school, according to most principals who participated in an interview. All of the advisory boards of the parish school principals interviewed were comprised of school leadership, teachers, parents, and non-parent members of the parish. Tracy mentioned that by-laws of the advisory board of her school even required that a non-Catholic parent of a student sit on the board. All advisory board members were either by applications, were appointed (most often by the pastor), or were, according to Ellen, “Volun-told” due to their business or professional expertise.

All of the advisory boards of the principals interviewed were intended to be run by someone other than the principal or pastor to prevent either party from establishing their own

agenda. In many cases, however, the either the principal or pastor became the facilitator of board meetings because of a lack of desire to serve in this role among the board members, or as several interviewees notes, an "overly heavy-handed pastor".

Karen utilized the board at her school as a way to hone the time, talent, and treasure of as many stakeholders, both within the school and the parish, as possible. She said of her board meetings, "I wanted to make sure the board has something to do." Adding, "…we have working meetings that involve looking over documents and communications from the school, as well as walking the grounds if necessary to see if any improvements need to be made." Karen also wanted to utilize "the eyes and ears" of her school's board to make the school better.

Ellen, who acted as the facilitator of her school board actively, "…seeds them [the board] with good news. I want them to know all of the great things that they help accomplish. Several of those interviewed believed that gathering input from the school community was a great asset in growing their school. The relationships they formed with community members, business owners, and other experts also was invaluable in ensuring continual stakeholder support for their schools.

A few principals experienced pushback from their advisory boards, especially near the beginning of their time in their current role. Bill mentioned that he needed to ensure that the advisory board at his school understood completely that they were just advisory in nature, and that they were not able to enact or change policy on their own. He recalled, "This was a tightrope I needed to walk. I needed to communicate to the board their purpose, while maintaining a good working relationship with some of the more influential members of my school's community."

A lack of communication seemed to be the most common way a Catholic School leader's relationship with their school board would strain. Larry, whose school board was limited jurisdiction, said that the most common issue arose from a lack of communication was when,

"The board gets a sense of inaction on the part of the school." Larry attempted to remedy these situations by addressing the board when those instances arise and to make sure the members are almost "over informed at times."

Molly, president of the Windsor Catholic School System noted that her regional school has a consultative board. Being a regional school, her system included students from the surrounding parishes, as opposed to just a single parish as a typical parish school does, and because of this, her school board consisted of members from all of the surrounding parishes. This consultative board was very similar to parish school advisory boards in its makeup of membership. Molly reiterated what other Catholic school leaders said in regard to school boards, "Keeping them up to date, in the loop, and always on the same page is critical."

Those leaders who served schools with boards of limited jurisdiction, Clayton and Larry, both cited their boards as helpful in members were able to make some of the major, long-lasting decisions. Both leaders indicated that they trusted the members of their boards, and often were a part of the selection process for membership. Similar to advisory boards of parish schools, boards of limited jurisdiction typically are comprised of stakeholders with strong business acumen, ties to the schools' communities, and expertise in their respective fields. Also like the parish school advisory boards members, since the board members are also members of the school community, both Clayton and Larry indicated that they feel appreciated and listened to when it comes to the administration of the school.

Authority

Pastor Authority. Canonically, the pastor of a parish school has the ultimate authority within that school. All of the principals interviewed accepted that fact. However, for some principals, this was frustrating, especially those who currently had, or experienced in the past, a

pastor who chose to be more hands off when it comes to running the school. Bill, a first-year principal at Queen of Heaven Catholic School who had previously worked in the same school as an assistant principal stated that the pastor needs "to be on campus more to have the decision-making authority that he does, or give up that decision-making authority with the amount of time he spends on campus," which Bill indicated was not very often. Bill went on to say that his pastor did not "shed the same blood" as he did and described the pastor as "present, but not involved."

Ellen also had a pastor that was not involved often within her school. She usually keeps him abreast of what is going on and keeps him informed of any issues that may arise but, "Most of the day to day operation of the school fall on me and my core leadership team." Ellen believed that having a pastor who is not present within the school was far better than one that becomes a micromanager. Bill described his pastor as an "absent micromanager" that wanted to exercise the authority his position gives him within the school, but did not want to be present for it. Tracy shared a similar sentiment when describing her former pastor:

> The priest that was here before … I was micromanaged. I did not make any decisions on my own. From the smallest change in a schedule for a special occasion, to any and all communication sent home to families. Everything had to run through his [The pastor] office, and when you have someone who is not present all the time, that does not truly understand the daily goings on of the school, you can see how that can be a problem, not only for timing purposes, but also for clarity and understanding the nuisances of each situation. 'Why is this schedule for today?' 'Why are you doing it this way?' These are the questions that

> you get back. It was frustrating. It was demoralizing at times … It was if I was the principal in name only, because he made all of the decisions.

Several of the parish school principals repeated this response, indicating that pastor authority was often times abused or taken advantage of, especially in situations where the pastor was not greatly invested in the day to day running of the school.

Margaret believed that her current pastor exercised his authority over the parish school in a manner that was appropriate to his skillset. She noted that, "If you have a pastor that is heavy-handed in areas that they are either not informed on, or not fully invested in, the school tends to slump in terms of enrollment, donations, and so on." Margaret came into a situation similar to what she described where the former pastor wanted to exercise the authority, but did not spend the necessary time in the school to exercise that authority in a constructive and positive way.

Margaret and her current pastor, who was an alum of the school and was invested in the small-town community where the school is located, see the authority of the school as the pastor being the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and her as principal being the Chief Operating Officer (COO). She noted:

> In the business world, the CEO is the first in command, is usually responsible for the company management, is involved in long-term planning, and policy-making. The COO acts as the CEO's right hand, handling all of the operations of the company, and that is how we see our current set up here.

This comparison made sense for Margaret as she spent several years in the business world in between different jobs in both K-12 and Higher Education.

Amongst the parish school principals interviewed, there was a wide variety of roles they took on in dealing with the budgets of their schools. Some principals had a great understanding

of their operating budget. They were able to create salary scales for their teachers and staff, as well as have a strong grasp of their budget over the course of the school year. Other principals had no actual understanding of their budgets. Margaret said that she has no idea what the total budget of the school is, “I don’t handle it, he [pastor] and the parish business office do the budget.” While this seemed to be acceptable to Margaret, she did indicate that, if given the choice, she would much rather be more involved than she currently is.

Karen shared a similar desire to be more involved in the budget process of her school. This stemmed from her lack of confidence in the parish business office staff. She believed that a financial knowledge gap exists in the office and was detrimental to the school. While she did not have formal business training, she does hold two advanced degrees in Educational Leadership, in which both programs of study required school finance courses.

There was also a wide breath of pastor involvement in staffing decisions across the different schools. Some principals were given free rein to make hires necessary for staffing their school, while others were not given that option. Bill indicated that his pastor, while absent most of the time, was required to be invited to all interviews of upper level hires such as school counselors, development directors, advancement personnel, etc. The pastor also, while not involved in every interview, was a part of the conversation of who to interview and reads every resume.

More than one principal noted that, as a leader in a parish school, as Ellen noted, they are “at the mercy of the pastor.” Meaning that since the pastor was the leader of the school, he decided on how much authority to exercise and when to exercise it. Many of the schools in this study have seen pastors revitalize a school with intentional exercising of authority, while others

have seen a school fall into a slump (and almost close) due to the micromanagement and overreach of a pastor, especially when coupled with not being present.

Diocesan Schools' Office Authority. The authority of the DSO was limited in many ways in most of the Dioceses of those interviewed. Most of the Catholic school leaders interviewed were principals of parish schools, meaning that the ultimate authority within their school was the parish pastor. Even those presidents of the independent, regional, and Diocesan schools interviewed mentioned that the DSO and superintendent had very little authority to require them to do anything inside of their school.

Some saw this as an important and valuable aspect. Bill enjoys the fact there are not many directives from the DSO and that he can run his school with more autonomy. While Margaret would want more coming from the DSO. "Our diocese does not have its own curriculum. When I asked for one when I took this position, they told me to use the Diocese of [sic] curriculum!" She would go on to say that she believed this came from a lack of people in the office itself, "They just do not have the manpower to create something like that currently." Several other school leaders indicated that their DSO did not provide curriculum nor assist in textbook selection for any of the schools within their dioceses. Some leaders enjoyed the extra autonomy, while others, most often from smaller schools where they were most likely the only administrator, did not appreciate the extra work that was added to their already heavy workload.

Conversely, some school leaders believed that their DSO was overstaffed, and according to Ellen, "[When talking about the members of the DSO] Some people have a lot of work to do there, and I haven't quite figured out what some other people's jobs are yet."

Many of the school leaders interviewed hoped their DSO that could be more effective, more communicative, and more helpful in the future. Karen stated, "I would love to see the

Diocesan Schools' Office be a hub for professional development, for sharing policy and procedures, for anything that could help." Tracy said that within the Diocese of Glade Springs the Bishop has stressed many times that, "…the schools will eventually need to make their own decisions on these items," when talking about curriculum, textbooks, policies, procedures, handbooks, etc.

School Board Authority. The parish school principals interviewed had rarely had to deal with any issues with advisory school boards and their authority. Since these boards were advisory in nature, and have no actual authority to enact policy or make decisions, there was never any issue in regards to school boards overreaching or overstepping their authority. Some of the parish school principals indicated that there were occasional times in which their boards would try to overstep their power and authority, but all of those instances came from situations where there was miscommunication of an action or inaction on the part of school leadership, or from a misunderstanding of the advisory nature of the board itself.

The consultative board of the Windsor Catholic School System was very similar to parish school advisory boards in its makeup of membership and duties, but differed in that it must be consulted when it comes to making certain decisions. These decisions included, but are not limited to, tuition increases, major renovation or construction projects, and capital campaigns. Overall though, Molly believed that the board of her school board was, "…well stocked with the best her community had to offer," and relied heavily on their expertise, especially in the realms of fundraising.

The authority of Clayton and Larry's boards of limited jurisdiction were, in their nature, limited. Clayton said that while this level of authority was sometimes useful, often times he felt as if his "…hands are tied in certain aspects of running the school." Both Clayton and Larry

repeated Molly's assertion that their boards were filled with, according to Clayton, "…righteous and well-meaning men and women that have their hearts 100% in the right place when dealing with our school."

Job Satisfaction

Catholic school leaders mentioned many positive and negative factors that directly corresponded with their current job satisfaction. Parish school principals mentioned their relationship with their pastor as both a potential positive or negative. All mentioned the community in which they served, as well as the personal connections they had to their school and/or parish communities as major positive factors. The three presidents of the independent, diocesan, and regional schools also mentioned their connection with the Catholic faith as well as their ability to lead their schools effectively with more freedom than schools of differing governance models.

There were far more instances of those interviewed referencing issues and/or problems that they encountered or envision encountering in the future that would cause them to begin thinking about leaving their current positions, as well as leaving Catholic education altogether. These included negative interactions with religious leaders (pastors, or bishops) the lack of upward job growth, the lack of competitive compensation for the duties they perform, paying their own child(ren)'s tuition, and the recent scandals involving the Catholic Church covering up priests abusing minors.

All eight of the Catholic school leaders interviewed for this study shared three common traits outside of being educators and leaders in Catholic education. They all were:

1. Practicing Catholics
2. Products of Catholic schooling themselves

3. Send, or would send, their children or grandchildren to Catholic schools.

Karen believed that she was paying homage to all of those who helped her along her own educational journey through Catholic schools. She recalled that once she started her current position (her first head principal job) she immediately called her old Catholic high school principal, "I said, 'Guess what? I am in the principal's office again, but this time it's because that's where my desk is!'" All participants responded positively that the school culture that they have built during their time in their current position makes them proud to be where they were and to help grow their school and community. Many attributed their success of building school culture not only to the smaller sizes of their schools, but to the relative autonomy they had within their buildings. Bill emphasized that building his staff of like-minded teachers was important as well as, "…having more control over what is taught and when."

Tracy and Ellen believed that they were able to get to know, not only their entire study body, but also all of the parents and grandparents of their students. Ellen believed that she had been successful in growing her parish schools' community in part because she was a member of the parish her school is connected to, which was different than her previous position in a different parish school across town, saying:

> My grandchildren attend here, they make me want to make this the great school it can be … This is my parish, this is my home … I feel like the principal needs to be a part of the parish life, not just the school life.

Ellen also commented that during her time at her previous school, a parish school in which she was not a member, she would spend more time in the car traveling between home and school. Trying to engage herself in the parish life of two different parishes was very difficult, and she did not believe she was able to accomplish it successfully.

Vocation of Leadership. All participants also referred to their work in Catholic education as a "calling." Many said it was their vocation, to teach and lead in an environment that helps fulfill Jesus Christ's mission to the Church. Clayton revealed that after he converted to Catholicism and after a career in the military, along with experience in several private schools in another state, he felt called to exercise his faith in a way that was more public, noting, "It [faith] is such more a part of my life as I mature and I just want to help young people get off on that start." He sought out, through a national search firm, to find, apply, and accept his current position as president of John the Revelator Schools in the Diocese of Kenbridge. This involved moving his wife and family several states away.

All eight of the Catholic school leaders interviewed specified the Catholic nature of their schools as being an important reason to stay in their current role. Many of the participants do not have many options to leave their current role and school for another without relocating several hundred miles away. Karen believed that it was unlikely that she will remain in her current position for not much longer than five years, saying, "I have two advanced degrees in different fields of education. There just aren't enough opportunities for professional growth in Catholic education where I am."

Each Catholic school leaders interviewed believed in the mission of their school, as well as Catholic education as a whole. All enjoyed weekly masses at their school, opportunities to pray throughout the day, as well as knowing that they were, according to Margaret, "…developing good humans with strong morals in the Catholic faith."

Karen and Molly believed that they were not only called to their profession of leading Catholic schools, but that they were invested in the growth of each of their schools' due to it being their vocation. Karen believed that while she has done a lot of good work, "Organizing our

foundational documents, creating that administrator Google Drive, building a 'playbook' so that the school can live on in perpetuity." she still had great work left to do, noting:

> We've experienced such high turnover, teachers who have been here 20 years have had nine principals. It is significant, and it is hard for anybody to have any kind of traction of change or progress without something stable. So, I am motivated by that work in trying to complete a job well done for these teachers, the school community, and for whoever takes this place next.

While Karen did not see herself in the same position five years from now, she was still committed to spending her time in her current role growing her school and community in policy, procedures, and faith so that future generations of leaders, faculty, staff, students, and parents would greatly benefit.

Similarly, Molly believed that she was called to be in a Catholic school. Molly went to Catholic schools for 12 years, received her graduate degree from a Catholic university, her children attended Catholic schools, and when she decided to change careers, she would only do it if she could teach in a Catholic school explaining, "I always believed that it was my vocation to work in a Catholic school." Larry also indicated that while he was happy in his current role as a president of a diocesan school, he knows that conflict could always be around the corner, stating, "There is a potential for quite a bit of conflict that could arise with parents, donors, students, faculty, the bishop, and so on." Larry continued, "I have seen principals and presidents burn out of this position because of those conflicts. While I am lucky to have avoided such… I do not think that, at my age, those headaches would be worth it."

Working with the Pastor. Parish school principals said overwhelmingly that their schools could not only grow, but could thrive with an invested pastor. Tracy believes that even absent pastors could become more involved if they wanted to, "If I saw him more, we would be able to talk about things at a deeper level. As of now, we only talk about non-important things, because it is in passing and not a regular meeting." She saw other schools within her diocese doing much better because she had yet to be "blessed with an involved pastor." She knew what it would take from a pastor, she saw it coming from other schools, she just has not experienced it yet.

Issues with a parish school's pastor was the most often discussed reason for why a parish school principal would leave their job. Ellen said that she wanted a true partner in leading the school, "Our school needs a pastor that will be active with students, appreciate staff, and help at all costs, without that, it is difficult for me to do my job effectively." Ellen continued with a time her pastor had the school change pickup procedure so as to not block his driveway between 3:30 and 4:00 pm. She made it known that this type of request was coming more often from her pastor in recent months.

All five of the parish principals interviewed agreed that doing their job would be very difficult if their pastor got in their way unearned or unnecessarily. An extremely poor relationship with their pastor would cause 100% of parish school principals interviewed to look for alternate positions outside their current role. Tracy said:

> When you don't have a good working relationship with your pastor, it makes it difficult when there is ... Schools are the largest ministry of the parish they are connected to, and when that is not appreciated, or the comingling of funds is not

> going in ways tuition paying parents are ... basically, a detrimental relationship could give me consideration to leave.

Many parish school principals echoed this sentiment. Margaret believed that while she would want to "weather the storm" of a non-ideal pastor, a poor working relationship and environment with no end in sight would lead her to consider leaving her current position.

Bill saw a lack of consistency between schools as a problem for, not only growth and development of Catholic schools in his diocese, but his own professional career moving forward. He said, "There are some schools where the pastor wants little to no interaction with the school. Others, they want full control." Bill believed that the lack of clearly defined set roles for pastors and principals in parish schools frustrated him with the parish school governance model more than any other aspect. Adding, "There seems to be little thought, at least in my diocese, in placing a pastor who is 'pro-school' and would do anything to see the school succeed."

Clayton supposed that the current governance model of the school in which he serves suited him over most all other governance types saying, "I love the independent school model, I love what I am able to do here. I don't think I would be as good in a parish school," adding, "I feel like my board here gives me a lot of freedom to implement the formation of our students in the way we see fit."

Challenges of Catholic School Leadership. Several recent controversies surrounding not only Catholic education, but the Catholic Church as a whole factored heavily on several of those interviewed. Larry and Molly, presidents of diocesan and regional schools respectively, mentioned the ongoing threat of the local bishop taking away the "Catholic" label of their school. These types of governance models do not often have a religious authority present on campus like parish schools do, and it is up to the diocese, and more accurately, the Bishop to designate them

as “Catholic.” Larry cited ongoing litigation between a school outside of his diocese, where the local Bishop took away the school’s “Catholic” label because of their refusal to non-renew a teacher’s contract that was living their personal life in a way contrary to Catholic teaching. Molly noted that while it was not a constant threat, it was still something she had to be mindful of when setting curriculum, hiring faculty and staff, as well as many other decisions she made regularly. Some of the leaders interviewed cited low compensation for the work that they were doing as a potential factor in them considering leaving their current positions. Larry mentioned that he knew what his contemporaries at similar non-Catholic schools, as well as other Catholic schools, earn in their positions. Compensation was not a major factor for most of those interviewed, however. While many mentioned low compensation, they mostly noted that this was information they had well before taking, not only their current position, but getting into education in general, Catholic, secular private, or otherwise.

Molly, Karen, Tracy, and Larry all mentioned low compensation as an issue they faced, but it was not the low compensation for their positions. They all mentioned worry about the low compensation for their faculty and staff compared to other schools and other school systems in their areas. So much lower in their schools compared to other systems that they are often worried about losing good teachers to those systems, especially their non-Catholic teachers who may not share the same calling or vocation to work in Catholic education as their Catholic peers.

Karen, while not under threat of losing her school’s “Catholic” label from the Bishop, noted that it was increasingly more difficult to hire new faculty and staff from an applicant pool that was not strong. “Hiring in a more secularized world has become increasingly difficult,” she noted. “I know that even local public schools have difficulty filling all of their positions, now we add an additional qualifier on top of that? I’m not saying it’s wrong, just more difficult.”

Over the past two decades, the Catholic Church in the United States has dealt with instance after instance of Church officials covering up abuse scandals. Bill said that many times during his career, he had contemplated leaving Catholic education because he had heard, "…over and over again, they [The Church] sweep these things [priests abusing kids] under the rug. I struggled with my faith in spiritual life because it was leaders of my faith doing these things."

Discussion of Findings

The research questions of this study sought to understand what issues Catholic school leaders encounter within their specific governance models, as well as how interactions with religious authorities and/or school boards affect the retention and attrition of Catholic school leaders. Three themes developed from the qualitative phase concerning the two research questions.

First, there was a preference of Catholic school leaders to have and maintain good relationships with authority figures, whether they were pastors of the parish, superintendents of the DSO, school boards, or others they work with closely. Parish principals interviewed indicated that the relationship they had with the pastor was one of the most important relationship in their school. A poor relationship with a pastor could cause extra burdens on the principal. All Catholic school leaders interviewed believed that their relationship with the Diocesan Schools' Office, while important, only affected their school when there was a lack of resources offered or perceived favoritism or exclusion of their school and others. No matter the school board type of a school, Catholic school leaders believed that the board was a gateway to the community. Having stakeholders involved in consensus-building and on the decision-making conversation, even if there was no actual authority, built lasting and trusting relationships between school leadership and the community.

The second theme was of authority. Who has the authority, and who does not? Who exercises their authority, and who does not? Parish school principals indicated the issue was not with the canonical authority of their pastor, but rather the manner in which the pastor chose to use his authority. Many principals indicated that a balance was needed between a pastor that was not present and one that was a micromanager. Often stating that the pastor that acts as a micromanager was often also not present within the school or school community.

The last theme was the issues that exist, whether actual or potential, that affect staying or leaving their current position. The Catholic school leaders interviewed overwhelmingly described aspects of their faith, including their ability to pray, go to mass regularly, and lead students and staff in spiritual growth consistent to their Catholic faith as a major reason for staying in their current position. Many of the parish school principals also indicated that the fact that their schools were often smaller than other types of schools allowed them to become invested in both the parish and school life of the community and therefore, raising their level of job satisfaction. Interactions with religious leaders, as well as the lack of professional growth and advancement were substantial barriers for Catholic school leaders to stay in their current positions.

Summary of Chapter 5

This chapter presented and discussed the qualitative results of interviews seeking to build on the findings of the quantitative results of Chapter 4 to answer the two research questions. The findings demonstrated that relationships matter between Catholic school leaders, their religious superiors, their local Diocesan Schools' Office, and their school boards. Clear separation of roles and duties amongst different leadership entities is essential for a Catholic school leader to be able to effectively lead their school. The majority of issues that Catholic school leaders face in their

current positions involve a lack of a meaningful and connected partnership with religious authorities and offices, a lack of clearly defined roles and duties, as well as miscommunication and misunderstandings of the essential functions of school boards. Chapter 6 includes the implications of these results and offers suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 6 includes discussion, implications, and recommendations for future research. This study's purpose was to identify issues Catholic school leaders encounter within their specific governance models and to describe how the interactions with religious authorities and/or school boards affect Catholic school leaders' thoughts on retention and attrition of their current positions.

Summary of the Study

Chapter 1 introduced the problem, purpose, research questions, and the significance of the study. Chapter 2 reviewed the pertinent literature regarding the general topic of Catholic school governance models including the significance of school leadership, historical background of Catholic schools and their governance models, as well as emerging governance models made necessary in recent decades. After the completion of the literature review, it was determined that little research had been conducted on effects of differing governance models had on Catholic school leaders had been conducted. Therefore, this study has the possibility of making contributions, not only to the literature of Catholic education, but practical applications of the placement of pastors in parish schools, but also the involvement of Diocesan Schools' Offices (DSO) and superintendents across the country. Chapter 3 provided the methodology of the study including the rationale for and challenges of the design, population, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, and role of the researcher.

Chapter 4 described the quantitative results of the study that emerged from the survey of Catholic school leaders in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Region V designation. The survey was sent to 425 Catholic school leaders from 435 schools in Region V

that included all of the Roman Catholic Dioceses in the states of Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee in the spring of 2022. The survey results included 54 responses for a response rate of 12.7%. Participants completed a researcher-created survey instrument, the Catholic School Leaders Governance Survey (CSLGS) found in Appendix C. The instrument was comprised of three sections with a total of 36 questions, with an additional optional question asking if the respondent would like to participate in the qualitative portion of the study. Demographic characteristics included gender, age range, years in education, years in Catholic education, and years as a Catholic school administrator. There were also questions regarding respondents' current role in Catholic education, the governance model of the school, and the type of school board the school had, if any. Most of the respondents were female (57.4%), between the ages of 45-59 years old (42.6%), over 20 years of experience in education (66.7%), over 20 years of experience in Catholic education (51.9%), under five years of experience in Catholic school administration (31.5%), their current role is principal (83.3%), serve in a parish school (44.5%), and have an advisory school board (59.3%).

Chapter 5 provided the qualitative results of the study obtained from eight one-to-one interviews of Catholic school leaders who indicated on the initial qualitative survey that they were willing to participate in a follow-up interview. A total of 15 Catholic school leaders were contacted via email; eight responded that they still would like to participate, and were interviewed. These eight interviews included five parish school principals and one president from each of the diocesan, independent, and regional governance models.

Catholic school leaders identified three main areas of focus when discussing their school and its governance model. These include relationships, authority, and job satisfaction. Relationships mattered a great deal, whether it was the relationship between a parish school

principal and their pastor, an independent, private, or regional school president and their school board, or either principal or president and the DSO. Detrimental relationships with these groups prevented Catholic school leaders from accomplishing their jobs effectively. Secondly, differing views of authority, at all levels and governance models of Catholic education, hindered leaders from knowing who had what authority and how it could and should be exercised. Lastly, Catholic school leaders indicated the aspects of their schools' governance model contributed to their satisfaction in their current positions. These included the ability to effectively lead their school and the support they might receive from a religious authority figure or the DSO.

Data Integration

The methodology used in this study was an explanatory sequential mixed methods design. The initial phase was a quantitative survey sent to 425 Catholic school leaders in Region V of the USCCB's ecclesial divisions of the United States, followed by a qualitative phase where eight participants from the quantitative phase were interviewed. The nature of the research questions drove this choice of method. According to Fetters, Curry, and Creswell (2013), the integration of qualitative and quantitative data can enhance the value of mixed methods research. A key feature of mixed methods research is an integration phase, which allows the researcher to draw conclusions based on the combined strengths of quantitative and qualitative results (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017). In this explanatory sequential research study, the qualitative data was used to explain the quantitative findings.

For this research study, a data integration phase took place after quantitative data was collected and analyzed. These findings then informed the researcher on data collection and analysis (Fetters et al., 2013). Integration occurred through linking the methods of data collection and analysis through connecting (Creswell, et al., 2011; Fetters et al., 2013). This connecting

occurred through the sampling frame (Fetters et al., 2013) where the participants for the interview phase of this study were selected from the population of participants who completed the survey from the quantitative phase. In this study, data from the quantitative phase of this study provided the researcher a basis for developing the qualitative interview protocol.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to evaluate different Catholic school governance models and their connections to leadership attitudes towards retention, attrition, and job satisfaction. The research questions explored issues do Catholic school leaders encountered within their specific schools' governance model and how interactions with religious authorities and/or school boards affected lay Catholic school leaders' retention and attrition.

Both the quantitative and qualitative phases of this study were guided by these two research questions. The quantitative phase provided respondents with both generalized and specific scenarios searching to answer the first research question. It also asked respondents about how those scenarios potentially lead them to leave, or consider leaving, their current positions. Data from the qualitative interviews built on the initial quantitative portion by providing those interviewed the ability to expand on their answers in the original survey.

The issues that Catholic school leaders encounter within their specific governance models as well as how interactions with religious authorities and/or school boards affect leadership retention and attrition are included in this discussion. Individual issues involving specific governance models as well as the impact relationships and the exercising of actual or perceived authority are identified. Interactions with religious authority and/or school boards are shown to be vital in terms of the job satisfaction of Catholic school leaders, and cause them to weigh those interactions heavily when determining their future in their current positions.

Prior research of Catholic school governance models showed that one of the primary indicators of Catholic school vitality was strong organizational leadership (Wolsonovich, Smilaycoff, & Ribera, 2018). Individualized issues identified in the quantitative portion of this study revealed a lack of strong organizational leadership. Those issues included, the ability to make timely and appropriate decisions in their school, the school's governance model being ideally suited to the respondent's leadership style, and the ability to lead students and faculty effectively. Following is a discussion of each finding.

Finding 1: Diocesan School Leaders Have Difficulty Leading Their Schools Effectively

Two of the most evident issues that diocesan school leaders struggle with were making appropriate and timely decisions within their school. This finding revealed a lack of shared leadership and/or decision-making within diocesan schools. d'Arbon, Duignan, Duncan, and Goodwin (2001) as well as Schaffer (2004) specified that shared leadership and decision-making were vital to the success of Catholic schools. The quantitative phase of this study showed that the diocesan school leaders were not experiencing adequate shared leadership and decision-making. Diocesan school leaders scored lower overall means than leaders in the other governance model in all questions in the governance portion of the CSLGS. Additionally, diocesan school leaders' mean scores for the two questions regarding their ability to make appropriate (4.27) and timely (4.33) decisions for their school were the only means below five in the entire dataset.

The finding that Catholic school leaders were unable to make appropriate and timely decisions in their school mirrored Brown's (2010) assertion that many Catholic schools do not have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. This can lead to a breakdown in important relationships and an overall lower effective leadership group.

Two additional issues identified in the quantitative phase of this study included diocesan school leaders unable to lead students and faculty effectively due to their governance models. The lower agreement means from diocesan school leaders corroborated Fraser and Brock's (2006) research that indicated that Catholic school principals believed that their school governance model often removed them further than they wanted to from making decisions regarding the students and faculty of their schools.

Diocesan school leaders scored higher negative response rates than leaders of any other governance model on the section of the CSLGS on authority interactions. One third of diocesan school leaders indicated the diocesan school governance model was a major factor in either causing them to leave a position or giving them the idea to leave. This study supported the results of previous studies that indicated that it was not a lack of commitment to Catholic education, or a lack of compensation that caused Catholic school leaders to leave their positions (Durow & Brock, 2004), but breakdowns of governance, leadership, or communication (Schaffer, 2004). Diocesan school leaders interviewed reiterated this belief, as well as the results from Fraser and Brock (2006), that commitment to Catholic education was not enough to keep Catholic school leaders in their positions.

Diocesan school leaders' negative responses in the category of authority almost doubled their counterparts in other governance models (44%). Diocesan school leaders had more negative authority interactions and experiences with religious leaders and their school boards than leaders in other governance models. This finding was counter to Haney (2010), Sheehan (1990), and the USCCB's (2005) recommendation that moving away from a parish school with advisory boards to alternate governance models (including diocesan schools), would infuse more of the community into schools (Haney), broaden the scope of the school board's power (Sheehan, 1990,

Sheehan, 1997), and highlight the need for business experts, alumni, and community members with expertise outside of the educational field to be on boards (USCCB), all of which would make the administration of the school easier for Catholic school leaders.

Foundational research on Catholic school governance models, with a focus on the modern shifts away from parish schools, noted that new governance models provided more shared leadership rather than the traditional pastor-led parish school and therefore would lead to higher job satisfaction rates from school leaders (Haney, 2010, Haney et al., 2009; Sheehan, 1990). However, this study indicated that a large gap exists between diocesan and parish school leaders' beliefs that they can more effectively lead their faculty and students, and make timely and appropriate decisions for their school.

Finding 2: Largest Indicator of Attrition is Struggles with Authority

Prior research suggested that conflict and failures to communicate effectively were the top indicators of principal attrition within Catholic Schools. For example, Fraser and Brock (2006) cited interference from their pastor as being the number reason why parish school principals left their positions. This study supported these findings and expanded to include diocesan school leaders as well.

Results from the quantitative phase of this study showed that diocesan and parish school leaders had the most instances of negative interactions and experiences with those who had any type of authority over their school, including pastors, bishops, superintendents, and school boards. Brown (2010) noted that clarity in roles and responsibilities of all those involved in administering Catholic schools, as well as collaboration, was necessary to maintain effective schools. Fraser and Brock (2006) found that disagreement of roles and responsibilities were an indicator of a lack of leadership job satisfaction. This study supported some of these beliefs with

most parish school principals interviewed having asserted that the roles and responsibilities of the pastor and principal while clear, there were not always instances of collaboration and effective communication.

Durow and Brock (2004) noted that an improvement in job quality was necessary to encourage the retention of effective Catholic school leaders. Polka, Litchka, Mete, and Ayaga (2016) expanded on this finding to include effective ways to lower Catholic school leaders' struggle with maintaining enrollment, keeping tuition cost-effective for families, and providing quality educational programs. Negative interactions with authority, most notably authority that provides barriers combating to these struggles, would not be effective in retaining effective Catholic school leaders. This study found that interfering pastors of parish schools, as well as overreaching school boards, were examples of authority barring Catholic school leaders from being successful in contending with these struggles.

Schaffer (2004) and Geelan (2000) indicated that pastors must be willing to delegate most of the daily operations of the school to the principal without removing himself completely. While the pastor leads the parish community, he must allow the principal to become the "Pastor of the School," (Schaffer, 2004) while maintaining a supportive role. There must be a balance between the parish school principal and the pastor (Dite, 2020). This study confirmed this research with parish school principals indicating that their ideal relationship with their pastor would be a one of collaboration, communication, and balance.

When a principal leaves their position, there is a negative effect on student achievement, faculty agency, and trust among the school community (Pendola & Fuller, 2018). This study added to this finding with several leaders experiencing this first hand, having come into their

position recently. Those leaders specified that they had to regain the trust of their students, faculty, and school communities.

Finding 3: Catholic School Leaders Indicate a Need for a More Robust School System

Historically, the DSO had little role in the administration of Catholic schools in each diocese (Caruso, 2012). Prior to the recent major shifts in governance models (Haney, 2010), before new and alternative governance models began to be more prevalent and the parish school model dominated Catholic schools (Wolsonovich, et al., 2018), there was little need for a centralized authority for Catholic schools; the parish pastor was all the authority needed.

With more alternative governance models being utilized, a more centralized authority was sought after by Catholic school leaders. Even those who lead parish schools look more and more to DSOs for guidance. With more lay men and women in Catholic school leadership positions in recent decades (USCCB, 2005), and with a continuing focus on communication and collaboration in amongst Catholic school leaders (Brown, 2010), a more robust DSO in scope, authority, and leadership is needed by Catholic school leaders to effectively continue to grow their schools. Similarly, leaders in all types of schools in this study wanted more support from their current DSO and superintendent.

Prior research on Catholic school superintendents and DSOs indicated a lack of consistency across dioceses in terms of budget, staffing, and preparation and training for superintendents. For example, Cattaro and McDonald (2015) found that most of the dioceses and superintendents they surveyed (50.8%) operated a DSO with zero to one additional support staff member. Comparatively, a majority of the respondents in this study indicated that their DSO was understaffed and could not provide the support they would have preferred.

Recent literature suggested that the tasks Catholic school superintendents spend a majority of their time on did not align with what their schools needed. As an example, Cattaro and McDonald (2015) gave 17 options to Catholic school superintendents to rank how much time they spent on each item each day. When comparing this list to the top area of need/support identified by Nuzzi, Frabutt, and Holter's 2008 study of over 1,000 parish pastors and their perceptions on Catholic schools, there was very little overlap. Nuzzi et al. (2008) noted that pastors called for "effective and proactive diocesan leadership" (p. 43). Respondents from this study echoed these results, asking for more cohesion and connectedness from their superintendent and DSO. Respondents were clear on their want for academic, professional development, curriculum, policy, and procedural support from the DSO and the superintendent.

Finding 4: The Advisory Board Serves as a Gateway to the Parish School Community

Prior research has suggested that advisory school boards work within parish schools with open and clear communication between school leadership and the board. For example, Geelan (2000) found that collaboration and empowerment are the measures of an effective advisory school board. Additionally, Geruson, Healy, Sabatino, Ryan, and Haney (2013) acknowledged that clear and purposeful roles for board members is essential for partnership and collaboration within advisory school boards. This study identified similar findings as parish school respondents reported zero negative interactions with their advisory school boards.

Likewise, parish school principals interviewed indicated that issues that may have arisen with their advisory school boards were not common, and often completely avoidable with direction, guidance, and communication. This study reinforced these findings that clear and purposeful roles for school board members were essential for the success of the board (Geruson et al., 2013).

The literature also noted that effective advisory school boards have purposeful and intentional selection of members from the school community (Geruson et al., 2013, Haney, 2010). This study extended these findings with practical examples. Parish school principals from the study sought out, and often recruit successful business owners, alumni, and members of the school community with relevant expertise, as suggested by Haney (2010). These non-school experts provide insight to strategic planning, long-term goal setting, fundraising, etc. for a parish school (Wolsonovich, Smilaycoff, & Ribera, 2018).

Parish school principals in this study supported prior research on advisory school board. They specified that advisory boards were the best way to involve their school community. Purposeful selection and appointment of board members from the entire community, including parish members without children/grandchildren in the school, non-Catholics, alumni, business owners, etc. was the best way to engage, communicate, and involve all stakeholders. This study adds to the research with the method of which parish school principals utilize their advisory boards. Rather than planting experts, alumni, and community members on an advisory board and take a step back, most of the parish school principals in this study took a larger role in the running of school board meetings. These principals did not take control, but instead allowed for school board members to become more invested in some areas of the school. Working meetings, differing committees, and time for input and collaboration were key in allowing for school board members to feel that their time, talent, and treasure were being utilized effectively. This gave an overall sense of accomplishment and worth to advisory board members.

Implications

This study sought to define issues that Catholic school leaders faced within the specific governance model of their schools. Additionally, this study sought to identify how interactions

with authority influenced Catholic school leader's thoughts on retention and attrition within their current position. This study was able to add to the body of literature regarding Catholic school leadership and how governance models affect their ability to stay in their current role and provide effective school leadership. While researchers previously have examined different aspects of Catholic school governance models (Durow & Brock, 2004; Haney, 2010; Hansen, 2001; Fincham, 2010; Fraser & Brock, 2006), this prior research focused mostly on parish school principals, little research has focused on Catholic school leaders from across governance models and their current ability to lead their schools effectively.

Statistically significant findings from this study suggested there is a relationship between types of leaders (presidents and principals) and their perception that the idea that the governance model of their school gives them ability to lead effectively. Diocesan school leaders indicated through their survey responses that they struggled more with leading their school effectively based on their governance model. This implied that the current shift away from parish schools to alternate governance models (including diocesan models) as described in Haney (2010), must be implemented with the intentionality of leadership effectiveness in mind. Strong organizational leadership is key to Catholic school vitality (Fuller and Johnson, 2014). In order to achieve strong organizational leadership within Catholic schools, leadership must be able to lead their schools effectively. It is noteworthy that there was no statistically significant difference between type of leaders when it came to their ability to make timely and appropriate decisions for their school based on their governance model. This suggests that all leaders struggle with these issues regularly. If Catholic school leaders do not feel that they can make timely and appropriate decisions in their school

Catholic school principals' negative response rate was the highest in categories related to retention and attrition in the quantitative phase of the study, meaning that they are the most likely Catholic school leaders to leave their current positions based on issues with their governance model. This was reinforced in the qualitative phase of the study as well. Catholic school principals indicated that a poor relationship with religious authorities (pastors) was the main factor that would cause them to consider leaving their position. This suggests that the pastor of the parish school has a strong influence on the retention or attrition of a Catholic school principal.

Poor relationships between principals and pastors usually manifested in areas of presence and authority. Principals indicated that a pastor who was not involved in the school and not invested in the mission, but still wanted to wield power and decision-making authority, caused strife and a lack of job satisfaction in parish school principals. Since there is an overall lack of formation in the administration of schools for priests (Durow & Brock, 2004; Simonds, Cook, Engel, Fussell, Hearn & Myer, 2021) in the administration of parish schools, this implication is concerning. Pastors placed in parishes with schools often have no background in education, possibly without even foundational knowledge of Catholic schools (Calkins and Convey, 2019). While the pastor is the final authority within the parish school according to Canon Law (Canon Law Society, 1983), a leader without basic understanding of effective educational leadership could lead to ineffective administering of schools.

Carefully planned authority distribution is crucial when establishing a relationship between a Catholic school leader and the religious authority. Focused and intentional delineation of roles and responsibilities inside of the school is necessary to provide a clear set of duties and expectations for all those involved in leadership within Catholic schools. There needs to be

careful attention given to the pastor and principal's relationship, president and/or principals' relationship with the school board to give ownership and understanding to the school's community. Further, there must be an importance given to the want and desire of all Catholic school leaders of a more connected system of schools through individual DSOs.

A need for a robust, purposeful, and proactive Diocesan Schools' Office (DSO) and superintendent across all Catholic schools is prevalent in the literature (Cattaro & McDonald, 2015; Cook et al., 2021; Schaffer, 2004; Thomas, 1996). Thomas (1996) called for the superintendent of Catholic schools to be an advisor to parish pastor, filling in any educational leadership knowledge gaps that may exist. This study reiterated these findings with most respondents calling for more support and guidance from their DSO and superintendent.

The finding that the school board type made no significant difference in respondents' answers indicated that there is not an ideal school board type for Catholic schools. Across all types of boards, conflict with school leaders was at a minimum, no matter the board's level of authority. School boards also do not seem to affect Catholic school leaders' perceptions of how they run their schools. This contradicts Durow and Brock's (2004) study citing conflicts with school boards being one of the top issues when it comes to Catholic school principals' desire to leave their positions.

The results of this study suggested that no specific governance model is best suited for leadership within Catholic schools. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the different governance models of Catholic schools in Region V of the United States and their connections with leaders' attitudes towards retention, attrition, and job satisfaction. This study accomplished its purpose by identifying issues within the different governance models of the schools studied. Purposeful implementation of leadership structures, roles and duties, as well as fostering good

relationships at all levels of leadership within all governance models are the most important elements in retaining Catholic school leaders in their current positions.

Limitations

Limitations to this research study largely relate to data collection challenges. From the 425 email invitations to complete the survey that were distributed, the total sample response rate was calculated to be 12.7% (n = 54). All survey questions self-reports of personal understanding and perceptions. Non-respondents could have potentially added a different perspective, through quantitative survey results or follow-up qualitative interviews, to the results of the study. In addition, no school board members or religious authorities were included in the study, which may have provided valuable counter perspectives. This study was administered late during the school year and respondents were asked to complete the survey instrument during the last few weeks of the school year. While much consideration was given to keeping the length of the survey relatively short, it is likely that many Catholic school leaders did not have the available time to commit to completing the survey. This could have been a reason for the lower total number of responses.

An additional limitation of the study was the number and geographic location (a portion of the southeast United States) of the dioceses that participated in the research. Additional dioceses from other ecclesial regions of the USCCB may have provided additional data and perspectives to enrich the findings of the study. With 14 additional regions that include 177 additional dioceses, the number of participating dioceses was a limitation of the study.

Finally, the study was limited by the perspective of the researcher in the manner in which the literature was reviewed, the survey and interview protocol was created, and the interpretation of the data. As the sole researcher of this study, I brought a lifetime of observation of Catholic

schools. I also brought six years of practical, first-hand experience knowledge of the parish school governance model while being employed as a teacher in a parish school, as well as four years as a parent of parish school students. To minimize this potential bias, I had a reader without this experience review those aspects of the study for areas where my personal opinion may have surfaced.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should seek to continue to increase the literature of Catholic school governance models and how they affect Catholic school leaders. Durow and Brock (2004) sought to determine the causes of the retention and attrition of Catholic school principals. Their findings were vital to understanding why Catholic school principals decide to remain or leave their positions; however, until this study there has not been a follow-up. This highlights the need for additional research in several areas in the effort to better understand how Catholic school governance models affect leadership retention, attrition, and job satisfaction. The vast majority of research conducted on Catholic school governance models focused solely on parish schools. With the increase of alternate governance models in recent decades, future research should also include these alternate governance models that are being implemented.

Future Use of the CSLGS. Future researchers using the instrument developed for this study, the Catholic School Leaders Governance Survey (CSLGS), should revise some questions to elicit more specific feedback from respondents. In the governance section of the CSLGS, there were six statements which respondents answered using a Likert-type scale to determine the degree in which the agreed or disagreed with the statements. While all six questions were positively correlated with each other, question six was an outlier and the only question with a very low positive correlation. Since question six was the only part of this section of the CSLGS

that dealt with a respondent's feeling about the statement, while the other five concerns the respondent's ability, a change to the instrument regarding question six should either need to be completely removed from that section or added to a newly created section of the survey that dealt with feelings or perceptions of respondents.

The final section of the CSLGS concerning authority interaction consisted of nine questions that could only be answered yes or no, making them binary in nature. Future research might want to change these options to a Likert-type scale to explore the means and standard deviations of Catholic school leaders' answers for further interpretation. In the current CSLGS, where the authority interaction section only allowed for binary answers, only the presence of an action could be determined and there was no option to interpret to what extent that action took place.

As mentioned in the Limitations section above, the low response rates could have been due to the timing of the survey. Catholic school leaders were finishing up their school years at the time the study was completed. The timing of the study could have also affected the overall agreement rate of Catholic school leaders in the "Governance" portion of the CSLGS. Future studies should be more deliberate of the timing of sending the CSLGS to Catholic school leaders. Additionally, future researchers should increase the response window as well as follow-up with non-respondents several more times to ensure a larger response rate.

Additional Research. First, future research could include more regions and dioceses. This research was conducted within Region V of the USCCB's ecclesial regions that divide the United States which limited the study population at 425 possible Catholic school leaders. Additional regions and dioceses would provide additional data and perspectives to deepen the study.

Further exploration of the pastor/principal relationship of parish schools would be beneficial to understanding the impact of this relationship on Catholic school administration. In addition, further examination of the role of the superintendent and the DSO would be valuable to understanding the impact these offices have on the school leaders. This study included only data from parish school principals, and did not allow for an understanding of other's perspectives. Examining the voices of pastors, superintendents, and members of the DSO would be beneficial in completing the narrative of the relationships Catholic school leaders have with those interact with.

Additional Future Research Topics. Exploring openness to different or alternative Catholic school governance models and their effective implementation would greatly enhance the literature. While discussing different or alternative governance models was beyond the scope of this study, many Catholic school leaders, when interviewed, expressed strong feelings on governance models different from their own and their potential for success. Much of the current literature on shifting governance models of Catholic schools focuses heavily on the diocesan model (Haney, 2010; Schaffer, 2004). The results of this study indicated that shifting to a diocesan model without intentional organizational leadership development, would not necessarily prevent leadership struggles.

In addition, longitudinal studies that explore retention and attrition rates among Catholic school leaders would be beneficial to determine, with more accuracy, the motivations Catholic school leaders have in deciding to stay or leave their current positions. Longitudinal data would provide the real sequence of events as they are occurring, allowing for insight into the cause-and-effect relationship different governance models might have on Catholic school leaders.

Additional examination of the role and scope of authority of the DSO provides an opportunity for new research on how the DSO can support schools and school leaders with differing governance models within their dioceses. This could include relationship building, aligning similar governance models to common expectations, and more clearly defined role of the DSO in terms of support, training, and authority.

Research in defining the roles of the parish school pastor and principal is needed to help determine best practices. Since the role of the parish principal varies often from school to school, it is difficult for DSOs, schools of education, or Catholic School leadership preparation programs to adequately train current and future Catholic school leaders to fill this largely undefined role.

Further research in these final two topics could include cases studies of interactions the DSO with different governance models or pastor/principal relationships in order to provide a collection of best practices to be considered throughout Catholic education in the United States.

Conclusion

Catholic schools in the United States have a long and treasured past spanning from early Spanish and French settlements of the 17th Century to today. For most of that history, the parish school with a member of a vowed religious community as principal, was the default governance and leadership structure. In recent decades, with the decline of members of vowed religious orders in leadership positions in schools, an increase in the participation of the laity in Church and school leadership, and the decline of Catholic School enrollment, that historical model has shifted. With lay persons constituting a vast majority of leadership positions in Catholic schools, especially parish schools, the relational dynamic between leaders and their religious superiors needs to change. Gone are the days of Catholic School leaders being members of communities that took vows of obedience to their religious superior. Gone are the days where it could be

trusted and understood that the Catholic school leader was versed in faith-based manners and would be given the leeway to run a school on their own.

Hopefully, the findings from this study will provide insight into the issues, conflicts, deterioration of relationships Catholic school leaders encounter related to their governance model, as well as opportunities for growth through clearly defined roles at all levels of Catholic school leadership, from principals to DSOs. Individual schools, dioceses, or even from action by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the entire United States may consider addressing the concerns of Catholic school leaders by calling for clearly defined roles and procedures at all level. This study sought to fill a gap in the literature by indicating the issues that Catholic school leaders encounter within their school's governance model and how those issues and interactions with religious superiors affect their retention and attrition. The goal is to strengthen Catholic schools, their enrollment, retention of great leaders, and to continue to promote the Catholic faith. With his powerful testament to servant leadership, Pope Francis pleaded newly appointed cardinals on February 23, 2014, "Be good servants, not good bosses of God's people." (D'Emilio, 2014).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INITIAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL LEADER RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear Catholic School Administrator,

I would like to invite you to complete a survey examining the impact of Catholic school governance models on Catholic school leaders. The research is being conducted by myself, Davis Bodie, a Ph.D. candidate from the University of Tennessee, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department.

Your participation is completely voluntary and any information you provide will be kept confidential and held by only me. There is an opportunity at the end of the survey to enter your email address if you would like to be contacted to complete a one-to-one Zoom interview in the near future to go into more detail regarding your answers. The information collected in this interview will also be kept anonymous. Your email address will go to a separate database not connected to your survey responses.

The survey questions should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. Questions asked include information on your background as a Catholic school leader, as well as your feelings on the current governance model of your school.

All identifiable information will be kept confidential throughout the duration of this project and no one except me will have access to any of your responses.

The window for survey responses will be seven [7] days, beginning today**, [INSERT DATE]** and ending on **[INSERT DATE]** Two days before the window closing, I will send a follow up email reminding of the deadline.

If you agree to participate in this research, simply click the survey link below.

I appreciate all that you do for your school and school communities. Not only am I researching Catholic schools, but I am also a product of Catholic Schools, and a parent of 4 Catholic school students.

If you have any questions or would like more information about this project, please contact Davis Bodie (dbodie1@vols.utk.edu) or 865-207-5713. If you have any question about your rights as a participant, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer at the University of Tennessee at 865-974-3466.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Davis H. Bodie

Ph.D. Candidate

The University of Tennessee

[SURVEY LINK]

APPENDIX B

SURVEY INFORMED CONSTENT

Consent for Research Participation

Research Study Title: How Catholic School Governance Models Affect Leadership Retention, Attrition, & Job Satisfaction

Researcher(s): Davis H. Bodie, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Dr. J. Patrick Biddix, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

We are asking you to be in this research study because you currently are a Catholic School administrator in a diocese in Region V of the United States (all dioceses in Alabama, Louisiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee). You must be age 18 or older to participate in the study. The information in this consent form is to help you decide if you want to be in this research study. Please take your time reading this form and contact the researcher(s) to ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

Why is the research being done?

The purpose of the research study is to collect survey and interview data that connect the ideas and feelings of Catholic School leaders to the specific governance models of their school(s).

What will I do in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, you will complete an online survey. The survey includes questions about your history in Catholic education, the governance model of your school, and your interactions with leadership and should take you about 15 minutes to complete. You can skip questions that you do not want to answer.

There will be an option at the end of the survey that will allow you to sign up for a one-to-one interview with the researcher at a later date.

Can I say "No"?

Being in this study is up to you. You can stop up until you submit the survey. After you submit the survey, we cannot remove your responses because we will not know which responses came from you.

Are there any risks to me?

We don't know of any risks to you from being in the study that are greater than the risks you encounter in everyday life.

Are there any benefits to me?

We do not expect you to benefit from being in this study. Your participation may help us to learn more about the relationship Catholic school governance models have on their leaders. We hope the knowledge gained from this study will benefit others in the future.

What will happen with the information collected for this study?

The survey is anonymous, and no one will be able to link your responses back to you. Your responses to the survey will not be linked to your computer, email address or other electronic identifiers. Please do not include your name or other information that could be used to identify you in your survey responses. Information provided in this survey can only be kept as secure as any other online communication.

Information collected for this study will be published and possibly presented at scientific meetings.

Will I be paid for being in this research study?

You will not be paid for being in this study.

Who can answer my questions about this research study?

If you have questions or concerns about this study, or have experienced a research related problem or injury, contact the researchers,

Davis H. Bodie

dbodie1@vols.utk.edu

865-207-5713

J. Patrick Biddix

pbiddix@utk.edu

865-974-6457

For questions or concerns about your rights or to speak with someone other than the research team about the study, please contact:

Institutional Review Board

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

1534 White Avenue

Blount Hall, Room 408

Knoxville, TN 37996-1529

Phone: 865-974-7697

Email: utkirb@utk.edu

Statement of Consent

I have read this form, been given the chance to ask questions and have my questions answered. If I have more questions, I have been told who to contact. By clicking the "I Agree" button below, I am agreeing to be in this study. I can print or save a copy of this consent information for future reference. If I do not want to be in this study, I can close my internet browser.

APPENDIX C

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Part One: Demographics

a) What is your gender?

   i) Male

   ii) Female

b) What is your age range?

   i) Under 30

   ii) 31-44

   iii) 45-59

   iv) 60 and over

c) Are you a member of a religious community?

   i) Yes

   ii) No

d) If yes to #3, please specify.

e) If yes to #3, what authority does your religious community have over the running of your school?

f) How many years have you been in education?

   i) Under 5 years

   ii) 5-10 years

   iii) 11-19 years

   iv) Over 20 years

g) How many years have you worked in Catholic Education?

i) Under 5 years

ii) 5-10 years

iii) 11-19 years

iv) Over 20 years

h) What roles have you held in education?

i) What is your current position in a Catholic school?

j) How long have you held this position?

i) Under 5 years

ii) 5-10 years

iii) 11-19 years

iv) Over 20 years

k) How long have you held an administrative role in Catholic schools?

i) Under 5 years

ii) 5-10 years

iii) 11-19 years

iv) Over 20 years

l) Have you served as an administrator in a non-Catholic school?

i) Yes

ii) No

m) If yes to #12, please specify.

n) What is the governance model of the school in which you currently serve as an administrator?

i) Parish School

ii) Regional School

iii) Diocesan School

iv) Private, Catholic School

v) Other

o) If you answered "Other" to #14, please specify

p) Who do you directly report to within your diocese?

q) Does your school have a School Board?

i) Yes

ii) No

r) If yes to #17, which type of School Board does your schools have?

i) Advisory

ii) Consultative

iii) Limited Jurisdiction

iv) Other

s) If you answered "Other" to #18, please specify

Part Two: Governance

Part Two will utilized a Likert scale of 1-7 with "1" being TOTALLY DISAGREE and "7" being TOTALLY AGREE.

b) The current governance model of my school in which I am an administrator is ideally suited to my leadership style.

c) I am able to lead my students effectively based on the governance model of my school.

d) I am able to lead my faculty effectively based on the governance model of my school.

e) I am able to make appropriate decisions that will affect my school because of the school's governance model.

f) I am able to make timely decisions that will affect my school because of the school's governance model.

g) I feel as if I am the true leader of my school.

Part Three: Authority Interactions/Retention & Attrition

12. Have you ever had a negative interaction with a religious leader of your school?
    a) Yes
    b) No
13. What types of decisions in your school have to be consulted with a religious leader before they can be implemented?
14. What types of decisions in your school have to be consulted with the School Board before they can be implemented? Please answer N/A if there is no school board at your school.
15. Have you ever had a decision overridden by a religious or lay leader of your school?
    a) Yes
    b) No
16. Have you ever had a decision overridden by the School Board of your school?
    a) Yes
    b) No
17. Have you ever come in direct opposition with a religious or lay leader in your school?
    a) Yes

b) No

18. Have you ever come in direct opposition with the School Board at your school?
    a) Yes
    b) No
19. Have you ever left a job as a Catholic school administrator due to, or in part because of the governance structure of the school?
    a) Yes
    b) No
20. Do you feel that you are more likely to remain in your position ***directly because*** of your school's governance structure?
    a) Yes
    b) No
21. Has your school's governance model ever given you the idea that you should leave your current (or any former) position?
    a) Yes
    b) No
22. Have you ever left, or wanted to leave, a position as a Catholic School administrator because of the religious leader whom you worked with?
    a) Yes
    b) No

Part Four: Optional "Op-In" for One-to-One Zoom Interview with Researcher

a) Do you wish to be considered for a follow-up one-to-one Zoom interview with the Researcher? If yes, you will be taken to a different survey where you can enter your name and email address. This is to ensure your answers to the previous questions will remain 100% anonymous. If chosen for an interview, the researcher will reach out to you via the email address you provide.

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW INFORMED CONSENT

Consent for Research Participation

Research Study Title: How Catholic School Governance Models Affect Leadership Retention, Attrition, & Job Satisfaction

Researcher(s): Davis H. Bodie, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Dr. J. Patrick Biddix, University of Tennessee, Knoxville [Dissertation Chair]

We are asking you to be in this research study because you currently are a Catholic School administrator in a diocese in Region V of the United States (all dioceses in Alabama, Louisiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee). You must be age 18 or older to participate in the study. The information in this consent form is to help you decide if you want to be in this research study. Please take your time reading this form and contact the researcher(s) to ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

Why is the research being done?

The purpose of the research study is to collect survey and interview data that connect the ideas and feelings of Catholic School leaders to the specific governance models of their school(s).

What will I do in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, you will participate in a one-to-one interview with the researcher. The interview will include questions about your history in Catholic education, the governance model of your school, and your interactions with leadership and could take 60 to 120 minutes to complete. You can refuse any questions that you do not want to answer.

Can I say "No"?

Being in this study is up to you. You can stop the interview at any time. After the interview is transcribed and the recording destroyed, we cannot remove your responses because we will not know which responses came from you. Transcription of the interview will not be completed for up to 10 days after the interview is completed.

Are there any risks to me?

We don't know of any risks to you from being in the study that are greater than the risks you encounter in everyday life.

Are there any benefits to me?

We do not expect you to benefit from being in this study. Your participation may help us to learn more about the relationship Catholic school governance models have on their leaders. We hope the knowledge gained from this study will benefit others in the future.

What will happen with the information collected for this study?

The interview is anonymous, and no one will be able to link your responses back to you. Your responses to the questions in the interview will be void of all identifiers. Information provided in this interview can only be kept as secure as any other online communication. Information collected for this study will be published and possibly presented at scientific meetings.

Will I be paid for being in this research study?

You will not be paid for being in this study.

Who can answer my questions about this research study?

If you have questions or concerns about this study, or have experienced a research related problem or injury, contact the researchers,

Davis H. Bodie

dbodie1@vols.utk.edu

865-207-5713

J. Patrick Biddix

pbiddix@utk.edu

865-974-6457

For questions or concerns about your rights or to speak with someone other than the research team about the study, please contact:

Institutional Review Board

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

1534 White Avenue

Blount Hall, Room 408

Knoxville, TN 37996-1529

Phone : 865-974-7697

Email : utkirb@utk.edu

Statement of Consent

I have read this form, been given the chance to ask questions and have my questions answered. If I have more questions, I have been told who to contact. By clicking the "I Agree" button

below, I am agreeing to be in this study. I can print or save a copy of this consent information for future reference. If I do not want to be in this study, I can close my internet browser.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you for meeting with me today. And again, thank you for participating in my survey about Catholic school governance as well as participating in this interview. Please know that this interview is confidential and your answers will remain anonymous to everyone except me. Are you comfortable beginning? Thank you and let us begin:

Note: *Some questions will be omitted depending on the governance structure of the school the administrator works in.*

Part I: Leadership Structure

- What governance model does your school follow?
- Who makes the final decisions in your school?
- ***Questions for a parish/regional school leader:***
    - What is the pastor's role in your school?
        - Are there clear separations of duties between the pastor and the school administration?
            - In what ways would you shift or change these responsibilities?
    - What challenges do you face you as an administrator when having to answer to the parish pastor?
- ***Questions for a Diocesan school leader:***
    - What challenges face an administrator when there is no parish pastor at your school?
    - What type of decisions might you consult the Superintendent/local bishop?
        - Have you ever done this and what were the results?

- What is the relationship between the Diocesan School's Office and your school?
    - What regular support do you receive from the office?

Part II: The School Board

- Tell me about the school board at your school?
    - How are the members chosen?
    - What are their decision-making powers?
    - What areas of the school does the school board tend to focus on?
        - Is there a focus on facilities/grounds?
        - Are there any curriculum discussions?
        - Are there any discussions of school personnel?
- How often does your school board meet?
- Describe a typical school board meeting?
- What is your role at school board meetings?
    - Has this always been the case?

Part III : Satisfaction/Retention/Attrition

- Have you ever worked in education that was not part of a Catholic Schools system?
    - How was the experience different?
    - How was the experience the same?
- Would you ever leave Catholic education and enter public education?
    - What factors motivate you to continue in Catholic education?
    - What factors would motivate you to leave Catholic education?
- Have you ever worked at a Catholic school with a different governance model (different school board type, parish/diocesan, etc.)?

    - How was that experience different for you?
    - How did that experience help or hurt you in your current role as an administrator?
- How does the makeup of the school board at your school affect your ability to do your job effectively?
    - Would you change or shift the way the school board operates?
        - Why or why not?
- How does your relationship with the school's pastor affect how you are able to do your job effectively?
- How does your relationship with the Diocesan School's Office affect how you are able to do your job effectively?
    - Would you shift or change your relationship with the Diocesan School's Office in any way?
        - Why or why not?
- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience?

VITA

Davis Hughen Bodie was born in Knoxville, Tennessee and also currently resides there. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in American History and his Master's in Education in 2011 from Emory & Henry College. After graduating in 2011, he immediately began a job as a middle school teacher. During his decade of experience in the classroom, Davis taught grades five through eight. During most of that time, Davis taught History, Geography, and Religion for a Catholic school within the Diocese of Knoxville, Tennessee. After 3+ years of teaching eighth grade United States history in Knox County, Tennessee, he has moved into an administrative role within the Knox County district. In 2022, Davis completed his Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education with a concentration in Leadership Studies from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.