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ABSTRACT

It is sometimes thought that the innovations needed to make urban schools effective may be somewhat easier to bring about, on the average, in a parochial school than a public school, because it is hypothesized that schools which are not part of a large public school bureaucracy are relatively more free to innovate. If this is true, it is particularly important to scrutinize educational programs in parochial schools in looking for examples of innovative approaches that might be of value in the public schools. The present study was initiated after it was learned that the pupils in an inner city parochial elementary school in Kansas City, Missouri were achieving at a much higher level than normally is attained in inner city schools in big city school districts. In addition to learning something about the particular instructional approaches being implemented in this highly rated inner city parochial school, the purpose of the present study was to determine whether the apparent success of the school could be unequivocally attributed to its educational program as compared with other possible factors that might help to account for the ourstanding performance of its students. These factors include the social class of the family from which the students come, and the degree to which the parents of the students have attitudes supportive of education. (Author/JM)

The Home Environment of Students in a Highly Praised Inner City Parochial School and a Nearby Public School

by

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Except in the case of a few large cities such as Chicago, urban parochial schools generally are not part of large school district bureaucracies. At the same time, resistance to innovation in large-scale bureaucracies is frequently thought to be a major factor impeding desirable innovation in urban schools.[1] In addition, because parochial elementary schools are financed largely by local parishioners, their principals are thought to be much freer of hierarchical control than are administrators of public schools in most cities. For these reasons, it is sometimes thought that the innovations needed to make urban schools effective may be somewhat easier to bring about, on the average, in a parochial school than a public school. The hypothesized relative freedom of schools which are not part of a large public school bureaucracy is a major argument made in favor of recent plans to initiate voucher arrangements wherein parents would be given funds to send their children to "alternative" schools outside regular public school systems.[2]

If it is true that parochial schools are less likely to be hampered by centralized bureaucratic control than public schools, it is particularly important to scrutinize educational programs in parochial schools in looking for examples of innovative approaches that might be of value in the public schools. In the case of working class youngsters in predominantly low-income "inner city" core areas in big cities, the level of academic retardation in public schools typically is so severe that educators are searching desperately to find instructional approaches that might result in better educational performance than do the methods used in existing inner city schools. Inner city parochial schools are a logical place to look for such approaches.

The present study was initiated after we learned that the pupils in an inner city parochial elementary school in Kansas City, Missouri were achieving at a much higher level than normally is attained in inner city schools in big city school districts. The school is highly praised by many who visit it, and some interested parties who know about it have argued that the public schools need only do whatever is being done there to vastly improve the academic performance of students in inner city public schools in Kansas City. In addition to learning something about the particular instructional approaches being implemented in this highly rated inner city parochial school, the purpose of the present study was to determine whether the apparent success of the school could be unequivocally attributed to its educational program as compared with other possible factors that might help to account for the outstanding performance of its students.

Among the major reasons why students at an inner-city parochial school may achieve more than students in nearby public schools might be that they come from homes

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[1] David Rogers, 110 Livingston Street (New York: Random House, 1968).

[2] Theodore Sizer and Philip Whitten, "A Proposal for a Poor Children's Bill of Rights," Psychology Today, v. 2, no. 3 (August 1968), 59-63.

which are higher in social class or are more supportive of education than the homes of students in the public schools. It is known that social class of the family, supportiveness of the home, and other aspects of students' social background are related to academic success in school. Correlations between socioeconomic class and achievement, for example, frequently run as high as .4 among samples of students from a range of social backgrounds.[3] Studying a sample of high and low achieving students in an inner city neighborhood in Harlem, Greenberg and Davidson reported that family environment variables such as orderliness of the home and parents' aspirations for a child's educational attainment are correlated with achievement in the public schools. Using classrooms as the unit of analysis, Garms and Smith recently reported that global social class indicators such as father's education and less global indicators such as percentage of broken homes in a neighborhood accounted for approximately 70 percent of the variance in achievement among a sample of schools in New York State.[4]

In addition, parochial schools generally require that students purchase uniforms and other equipment. Parents who enroll their children in a parochial school often do so after carefully weighing the respective advantages of public and parochial education; thus they may tend to be more actively concerned with education, other things being equal, than their neighbors - particularly in inner city neighborhoods where achievement in the public schools is dismally low and parents deeply concerned with their children's schooling must give special thought to the possibility of finding a more effective institution to educate their sons and daughters. Being able or willing to pay for parochial schooling and being more actively concerned with the education of one's children, in turn, may be indicative of social class or related differences between the parents of students in parochial and public schools.

Description of St. X School

St. X is a parochial elementary school located in the inner city in Kansas City, Missouri. Because of its location, it is one of three parochial elementary schools and thirteen public elementary schools which have been receiving federal funds for economically disadvantaged students under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Unlike most other schools receiving Title I assistance, however, achievement is reported to be substantially above rather than below average levels on nationally standardized achievement tests. In 1967, for example, mean achievement of eighth graders at St. X was at the 66th percentile on the reading section of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, as compared with the 23rd percentile for eighth graders in Title I schools in the public school district. In 1969, similarly, mean grade level achievement of seventh graders at St. X was 8.9 in vocabulary and 8.2 in reading, as compared with grade level equivalents of 6.1 and 5.9 for seventh graders in Title I public schools.

St. X is an old two-story building that is in need of paint and some repair on the outside. The inside, however, does not match this impression: it is freshly

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[3] Lavin, D. E., The Prediction of Academic Performance (New York: Science Editions, 1967).

[4] Walter I. Garms and Mark C. Smith, "Educational Need and Its Application to State School Finance," The Journal of Human Resources, v. 5, no. 3 (Summer 1970), 304-317.

painted and cheerfully decorated. The sisters have carpeted the entire upstairs and one room downstairs with cast-off pieces of carpeting from various carpet companies in the city. This gives a rather unusual effect with its rather unusual combinations of colors. The downstairs provides classrooms for the kindergarten, first, second, third, and fourth grades. Upstairs, there are two classrooms housing the fifth and sixth grades together, and the seventh and eighth grades together. There is also a resource center for the younger children downstairs, and a library for the more advanced readers upstairs.

During the 1969-70 school year, St. X had an enrollment of 272 students. Of these 44% were not Catholic. In the 1970-71 school year, St. X will have to use a room in the Rectory as a classroom due to lack of space. After 1971, St. X will have outgrown its facilities. There are tentative plans for a new school, but no definite action had been taken as of the end of the 1969-1970 school year.

During the 1969-70 school year and for several years previously, there have been no lay teachers at St. X. The sisters are available to the students before classes begin in the morning as well as to 5:00 p.m. Because Father A, head of the school and parish, does not believe his teachers should take time from planning to participate in community groups, the sisters spend most evenings planning their classes and grading papers. Thus the sisters probably spend more time in preparation than do most public school teachers. The sisters and the father have a great deal of personal contact with the students and their families. Father A and the teachers would like to keep the school small in order to maintain this individualization.

At present, St. X serves 56 Catholic families within its parish. There are two other Catholic families within the parish that took their children out of the school after an argument with the former priest. It is the policy of the school to give first preference to Catholic families within the parish boundary lines, but after that anyone may apply that wishes to do so. Children are accepted on a first come, first serve basis. Non-Catholic families come both from within the parish boundaries and outside them. Father A estimates that of the 272 students enrolled for the 1969-70 school year, approximately 100 live outside the inner city. There was no room for another 200 applicants.

Reading is greatly emphasized at St. X. Children attend kindergarten both morning and afternoon, and efforts are made to teach them to read there. Use of the resource center is encouraged. In the more advanced library, books are marked according to three different reading levels. Students are allowed to select the books they want, and there is no time limit as to how long they may keep the books. There is no librarian; the children check out the books themselves, and Fahter A reports that no more books are lost this way than under the traditional method. Each classroom has a chart with the students' names and reading level. Each child is expected to know where he is at, and how far he must progress to better his achievement.

In sum, St. X appears to provide an excellent educational program for its students. Like other visitors to the school, we were favorably impressed with the dedication of its principal and teachers and with their efforts to provide individual attention and enriching experiences for their students.

We could not be certain, however, whether the relatively high level of achievement at St. X could or should be attributed primarily to the quality of its

educational programming. We had learned, for one thing, that more than a third of its students probably lived outside the most poverty-ridden part of the inner city. Further investigation also showed that a substantial number of students at St. X were drawn from a nearby low-rise housing development for middle class and upward-mobile working class families. Could it be that St. X was not fundamentally an inner city school at all in the sense of serving a predominantly lower working class student population, and that the social background of its students might account for their academic success?

Procedures

Our first step in determining whether (or how) students at St. X might differ in social background from students at typical inner city public schools was to administer a brief questionnaire to the fifth-sixth grade class at St. X and to fifth and sixth grade classes at a nearby public elementary school which we shall call P.S. 1.

Like St. X, P.S. 1 is a Title I school which enrolls some students from the low-rise housing development mentioned above. Unlike St. X, however, P.S. 1 is not particularly known for outstanding achievement on the part of its students. As shown in Table 1, which presents 1969 achievement scores by grade level for St. X, for P.S. 1, and for the entire group of 13 Title I public schools, achievement levels for students at P.S. 1 generally are closer to those found at other inner city public schools in Kansas City, Missouri than to those at St. X. At the third grade, for example, achievement at P.S. 1 is only slightly higher than it is for the entire group of 13 schools participating in Title I. At the sixth grade, achievement scores range from grade level equivalents of 5.3 to 5.6 on various sub-tests of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, whereas St. X sixth graders are achieving near or above grade level expectancy on every sub-test.

Table 1 also shows that achievement levels at P.S. 1 are slightly higher than at other inner city schools in Kansas City. This difference may reflect the fact that P.S. 1 draws some of its students from the low-rise housing development mentioned above - an issue to which we will return in a later section of this paper.

The questionnaire administered to fifth and sixth graders at St. X and P.S. 1 asked them to indicate the occupation and education of the head of their household and whether they were expecting to travel out of town and were planning to attend school during the forthcoming summer. Respondents were asked to omit their names or other identifying information. Hollingshead's Two-Factor Index of Social Position[5] was used to determine the social class of students who filled out the questionnaire.

Using 17 questionnaires which were completely filled out by students at St. X, twenty-four percent were classified as Social Class I to III (middle class) in family background, forty-seven percent were classified as Social Class IV (working class), and twenty-nine percent were classified as Social Class V (lower working class). The mean raw score on Hollingshead's Index for this group was 50.6. Eighty-five percent of the heads of households had at least finished high school. Seventy-three percent of the 37 fifth and sixth graders at St. X said they expected to go out of town during the summer, and sixty percent said they planned to attend summer school.

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TABLE 1

1969 Achievement Scores at St. X, P. S. 1, and All Title I Public Elementary Schools in Kansas City, Missouri by Grade Level

	Kindergarten						Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3			Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6				
	HSRRP Symbols	HSRRP[a] Visual Discrimination	HSSRP Visual Discrimination[b]	HSRRP Context	HSSRP Auditory Discrimination	HSSRP Context and Auditory Clues	G-M[b] Reading Vocabulary	G-M Reading Comprehension	G-M Reading Vocabulary	G-M Reading Comprehension	ITBS[c] Arithmetic	ITBS Vocabulary	ITBS Reading	ITBS Vocabulary	ITBS Reading	ITBS Vocabulary	ITBS Reading	ITBS Vocabulary	ITBS Reading	ITBS Arithmetic	ITBS Language Skills	ITBS Work Study
	1968						1966		1966		1966			1966		1966		1966				
St. X	19.0	11.8	12.8	14.5	13.5	12.1	42.6	27.1	40.9	27.5	3.6	4.0	4.0	4.9	4.9	6.3	6.2	6.5	6.8	6.6	7.5	6.4
P.S. 1	18.3	10.7	11.9	14.8	12.4	13.2	32.8	22.6	25.5	19.0	3.1	2.9	3.1	3.7	3.7	5.3	4.9	5.3	5.6	5.3	5.6	5.4
13 Title I Public Schools	16.6	9.6	10.8	13.3	10.9	10.6	26.6	15.3	22.8	15.1	2.9	2.8	2.8	3.4	3.5	4.5	4.4	5.0	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.5

a = Harrison Stroud Reading Readiness Profiles Reported in Mean Raw Scores
b = Gates-Macginitie Reading Test in Raw Scores
c = Iowa Tests of Basic Skills in Grade Equivalents

These preliminary data suggested that neither St. X nor P.S. 1 served relatively homogeneous lower working class populations of the kind found in many inner city schools in Kansas City. With the possible exception only of the information on summer travel plans, these data also did not suggest that students at St. X and P.S. 1 differed in social background.

These global measures of social class, however, are not as revealing of home influence on school achievement as are more direct measures of parental support for learning. Particularly in the case of parents who send their children to a parochial school as compared with those whose children go to a public school in the inner city, home environment might be very different between the two groups even though global indicators of social status might be very similar. For this reason we decided to interview the mothers of kindergarten students at St. X and P.S. 1 to determine whether differences in home environment might be associated with differential academic achievement between the two schools. The kindergarten level was chosen in order to minimize school influence under the supposition that readiness scores at the end of the kindergarten year might be more clearly reflective of home influences on learning than would achievement scores in later grades.

The sample of students selected for study from P.S. 1 included seven who lived within the low-rise housing development and seven randomly selected students who lived elsewhere in the regular attendance area surrounding this inner city school. For simplicity, the first sub-group will be referred to as P.S. 1 WHD and the second as P.S. 1 OHD. Seven students from St. X who were matched by sex and who lived within the housing development no more than one block from their P.S. 1 matches and 13 additional students from outside the housing development constituted the two sub-groups in our St. X sample (St. X WHD and St. X OHD). Among the latter sub-group of thirteen, four students were matched by sex and block with students in the P.S. 1 OHD sub-group.

The measure of home environment chosen for this study was an interview schedule developed by Dave and Wolf to assess home influences on achievement and intelligence.[6] Validation studies conducted by Dave and Wolf showed that home environment scores obtained with their interview schedule correlated approximately .8 with achievement and .7 with I.Q. scores. For the present study, the instrument was modified by the deletion of several items and the addition of several others, leaving basically intact the following eight sub-scales from the original schedule:

A1. Nature of Intellectual Expectations of the Child.
A2. Nature of Intellectual Aspirations for the Child.
A3. Information /possessed by parent/ About Child's Intellectual Development.
A4. Nature of Rewards for Intellectual Accomplishment.
B1. Emphasis on the Use of Language in a Variety of Situations.
B3. Emphasis on Correctness of Language Usage.
C2. Opportunities provided for Learning Outside the Home (Excluding School).
C5. Nature and Amount of Assistance Provided to Facilitate Learning in a Variety of Situations.

[6] Robin H. Farquhar, "Home Influences on Achievement and Intelligence: An Essay Review," Administrator's Notebook, v. 13 no. 5 (January 1965).

Ratings on each sub-scale are from 1 (low) to 7 (high). For example, Sub-scale A1 scores on the low end are characterized as,"It is not expected that the child will definitely complete high school. No expectations about grades, or expectations of less than C's," and scores on the high end are characterized as, "Clear cut expectations that the child will complete high school and attend and graduate from college . . . Expects the child to receive the highest grades."

All interviews were held in the home of the mother. Most required between an hour and an hour-and-a-half to conduct. In many cases arrangements could not be made to conduct an interview except in the evening hours or on a weekend. A number of interviews had to be re-scheduled when a respondent was not home for a scheduled appointment. For these reasons, it required several months for the interviewer to obtain data from the samples described above.

Findings

The first step in the analysis was to compute mean Home Environment (HE) Scores for students in the samples from St. X and P.S. 1. Mean scores for the two samples and the sub-samples are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Mean Home Environment Scores (HE) from the Samples and Sub-Samples from St. X and P.S. 1

	$\overline{HE}$		$\overline{HE}$	t	p
St. X (N = 20)	5.14	P.S. 1 (N = 14)	3.33	5.19	<.001
St. X WHD* (N = 7)	5.34	P.S. 1 WHD (N = 7)	4.11	2.91	<.02
St. X OHD** (N=13)	5.04	P.S. 1 OHD (N = 7)	2.56	6.69	<.001

*WHD = Within Housing Development
**OHD = Outside Housing Development

As shown in Table 2, students at St. X come from homes which are more supportive of education as measured by the modified Dave-Wolf interview schedule than do students from P.S. 1. Whether one considers students who live inside or outside the low-rise housing development or the two samples as a whole, HE scores for St. X students are significantly higher at or above the .05 level than are HE scores for P.S. 1 students. Since it was already known that many St. X students outside the housing development did not even live in the inner city and hence were not likely to resemble students in the P.S. 1 OHD sub-sample, an additional comparison was made betwen the four pairs of St. X and P.S. 1 who lived on the same inner city blocks within the P.S. 1 attendance area. The mean HE score for these four St. X students was 5.27, and the mean HE score for the four P.S. 1 students was 3.07. Even though the number of respondents in this comparison was very small, the difference was statistically significant at the .01 level (t = 3.74).

Thus it was concluded that St. X students have more educationally supportive home environments than P.S. 1 students, even in the case of families which live in the same inner city neighborhood.

The next step in our analysis was to determine whether HE scores for students in our sample were correlated with achievement scores in school, as had been the case in the original HE validation studies conducted by Dave and Wolf. The achievement scores available on the students whose mothers had been interviewed were from the Harrison-Stroud Reading Readiness Profile administered toward the end of the kindergarten year in the spring of 1969 and the Gates-Macginitte Reading Test administered toward the end of the first grade in 1970.

Before proceeding, we should point out that we had no control over the classroom administration of these tests[7] and that in any case there is a real question of how well these and other tests measure the achievement of young students attending inner city schools. In general, for one thing, such tests are not highly discriminating in the sense of yielding a wide range of scores among the students who take them. In addition, such tests may not tap achievement-related abstract skills which become more prominent in the middle and upper grades, which may be one factor responsible for the fact that disadvantaged students do not begin to lag greatly behind standardized norms on some tests until the third or fourth grade in the case of males and the fifth or sixth grade in the case of females.[8]

Achievement profiles for the four sub-samples from St. X and P.S. 1 as well as for all students in comparable grades in P.S. 1 and in the 13 Title I schools are shown in Table 3. On the Harrison-Stroud Readiness Test, the St. X WHD and St. X OHD groups had higher mean scores than did the P.S. 1 WHD and P.S. 1 OHD groups, respectively. On the Gates-Macginitte Vocabulary and Comprehension sections, the St. X OHD group had higher means than the St. X WHD group.[9] Comparing all the profiles in Table 3, it was found that except for the Harrison-Stroud mean for the P.S. 1 OHD group, the two St. X groups and the P.S. 1 WHD group have higher achievement scores than do students in the P.S. 1 OHD group, in P.S. 1 as a whole, and in the entire group of thirteen Title I schools. This pattern supports the supposition that the former three groups (St. X WHD, St. X OHD, and P.S. 1 WHD) are not made up of entirely "typical" inner city students. It also suggests that the reason P.S. 1 achievement means are slightly above achievement means for the 13 Title I schools as a whole (Table 1) may be because P.S. 1 draws a substantial number of students from the low-rise housing development.

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[7]We wish to thank Dr. Clyde Baer and Edward Downey of the Research Office of the Kansas City, Missouri Public Schools for helping us gain permission to utilize school district test data and for their general cooperation and support in conducting the study.

[8]Lavin, op. cit.

[9]First-grade Gates-Macginitte scores were not available for several students from each sample, but inspection of the home environment and readiness scores of these students indicated that their inclusion probably would not have changed these patterns.

TABLE 3

Achievement Scores for St. X and Public School Samples

Test	Group					
	St.X OHD	St.X WHD	P.S.1 WHD	P.S.1 OHD	P.S.1	13 Title I Schools
	$\bar{X}$ (N)	$\bar{X}$ (N)	$\bar{X}$ (N)	$\bar{X}$ (N)	$\bar{X}$ (N)	$\bar{X}$ (N)
Harrison-Stroud Reading Readiness, Average for 6 subtests (kindergarten in raw scores)	13.9*(13)	15.6* (7)	12.6* (7)	12.4* (7)	11.6*(48)	10.2*(709)
Gates-Maginette Vocabulary (first graders in raw scores)	44.5**(10)	39.8** (6)	48** (5)	34** (5)	32.8*(74)	26.6*(903)
Gates-Maginette Comprehension (first graders in raw scores)	29.7**(10)	26.3** (6)	34** (5)	18.4**(5)	22.6*(71)	15.4*(893)

* = 1969 Scores
** = 1970 Scores

Proceeding to correlation analysis of the relationship between home environment and achievement, Pearson product-moment correlations (r) were computed between HE scores and achievement scores of students in our samples at St. X and P.S. 1. The results are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Correlations Between Home Environment and Achievement of Students at St. X and P.S. 1

Sample	r HE and Harrison-Stroud Reading Readiness Average for Six Sub-tests	r HE and Gates-Macginitte Vocabulary	r HE and Gates-Macginitte Comprehension
St. X + P.S. 1	.32 (N = 34)	.26 (N = 26)	.46** (N = 26)
St. X	.23 (N = 20)	.03 (N = 16)	.06 (N = 16)
P.S. 1	.33 (N = 14)	.77*(N = 10)	.76* (N = 10)

* = p <.01
** = p <.02

Table 4 shows that for the two-school sample combined, home environment score and first grade achievement on the Gates-Macginitte Comprehension test are significantly related. The correlation between HE and Harrison-Stroud scores is just short of statistical significance at the .05 level. These data indicate that supportive home environment as measured by the modified Dave-Wolf interview schedule tends to be associated with high achievement in the school.

Additional inspection of the data in Table 4 indicates that the association between HE and achievement in the sample as a whole is produced primarily by the correlation between these variables within the P.S. 1 sample. For the St. X sample, HE is uncorrelated with Vocabulary and Comprehension scores on the Gates-Macginitte test, and the relationship, if any, between HE and the Harrison-Stroud Reading Readiness Average Score is slight and non-significant. At the inner city public school, on the other hand, home environment is significantly associated with achievement on both sections of the Gates-Macginitte Reading Test.

There are a number of possible explanations for this difference within the two schools. One possibility is that the educational program at St. X may be so excellent that it effectively compensates for or overrides the social disadvantages of students from less supportive homes. A second possibility is that the absence of association between HE and achievement at St. X may be due primarily to the narrow range of HE scores among St. X students in our sample.[10] Another

[10] The mean HE score for the St. X sample is 5.14 - well toward the upper end of the HE scale - and the standard deviation is only .87. The range was from 3.88 to 6.88. Not a single student at St. X had an HE score below the 3.5 midpoint on the scale. The P.S. 1 sample, by way of contrast, had a standard deviation of 1.09 and the scores ranged from 1.38 to 5.00.

possibility is that educators at St. X may be more effective than educators at P.S. 1 simply because the former do not have to contend with the special classroom possibles generated by very disadvantaged pupils such as the 10 P.S. 1 pupils (out of 14) who had HE scores below the HE mid-point of 3.5.[11] A fourth possibility is that the small size of St. X (272 pupils) may make it easier to provide a more effective education than can be provided in most inner city public schools which tend to be much larger and more bureaucratic. Still another possibility is that home environment simply is less closely associated with achievement in the case of students who are above some minimum threshold value in home supportiveness as tapped by our interview schedule. A sixth possibility is that either the variable (achievement) may not be as accurately measured for students at St. X as for students at P.S. 1 because the kindergarten and first grade tests used in this study are not highly discriminating and may not be reflecting achievement gains being made by higher achieving students in our sample.

We do not have data to systematically test each of these possibilities, but we can explore the issue further by comparing the achievement scores of St. X students who are very high and low in HE. To do this, means on the Harrison-Stroud test were calculated for the five St. X students who had HE scores above 6 and the six St. X students who had HE scores below 4.5. (Because two students from each group were not present for first-grade testing, the remaining sample was too small to justify using the two Gates-Macginitte scores.) The overall Harrison-Stroud score for the former group was 14.7; for the latter it was 13. Although this difference was not significant at the .05 level ($t = 1.065$, $p > .10$, one-tailed test), the trend favoring the high HE group encouraged us to look more closely at the relationship between HE sub-scale scores and scores on the Harrison-Stroud test.

Examining these relationships, we found that for the combined sample HE sub-scales 1, 2, 5, and 6 each correlated at or above .30 with Harrison-Stroud composite means. These four sub-scales deal with intellectual expectations and aspirations for the child, emphasis on use of language in a variety of situations, and emphasis on correctness of language. The four sub-scales which did not correlate with Harrison-Stroud means were information about child's intellectual development, nature of rewards for intellectual accomplishment, opportunities provided for learning outside the home and school, and assistance provided to facilitate learning in a variety of situations. It is interesting to speculate that these latter four sub-scales may be less salient in terms of home support for learning on the part of young children than of children in the later primary or middle grades. It is also possible that these four sub-scales may present more problems of reliability in the case of young children than of older respondents. In any case, the trends found with regard to the four sub-scales dealing with intellectual expectations and aspirations and language usage led us to combine these four scores

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[11] All four of the P.S. 1 pupils who were at or above the mid-point came from the low-rise housing development. Since our sample from P.S. 1 was picked to overrepresent the housing development, and since most inner city schools draw few if any students from such a development, it is obvious that St. X teachers do not face the same kind of problem encountered by inner city teachers working with large concentrations of lower working class pupils whose performance in existing school programs is very poor.

into a new HE scale and examine its relationship with Harrison-Stroud scores for students in the St. X sample. This procedure yielded a Pearson product-moment correlation of .55 ($p < .02$), thus indicating that at least some aspects of home environment as measured by a modified Dave-Wolf interview schedule are associated with the academic performance of students at St. X.

Although other possibilities are not thereby ruled out, this evidence that St. X students who have highly supportive home environments do tend to have higher achievement scores than St. X students from less supportive homes suggests that the relatively narrow range of HE scores found in the St. X sample may be the major reason why overall HE scores fail to correlate with achievement for this group of students. Given the mere finding that the HE mean for St. X students was twice as high as the mean for P. S. 1 OHD students (the most typical inner city subsample in our study), it is difficult to believe that the highly supportive home environment in which most St. X students apparently grow up is unrelated to the fact that by the time they reach the eighth grade, students at St. X are twice as high in percentile achievement rank as students in inner city public schools (Table 1).

On the one hand our data leave room for speculation that the educational program at St. X, its small size, and/or the fact that St. X does not appear to have a relatively homogeneous population of students from low supportive homes (as do many inner city public schools) may be indispensable factors in accounting for the academic success of its students. On the other hand, our data also allow for the conclusion that the relatively high achievement levels for which St. X has been praised are fundamentally predictable given the information we collected on the home environment of a sample of 20 students in the 1968-1969 kindergarten. The issue involved here cannot be finally resolved without longitudinal as well as cross-sectional data on students attending St. X and other schools located in the inner city.

Conclusion and Implications

The results of this study raise several issues regarding the role of parochial schools in a big city. In view of the finding that students at St. X came from more supportive home environments than did students at a nearby public school, there is a real question whether St. X may not be "siphoning off" students, both Catholic and non-Catholic, who otherwise might be providing academic leadership in inner city public schools. Although not presented in this paper, data on the two other parochial elementary schools which are located in the inner city area of Kansas City, Missouri show that achievement there also is substantially higher than in the public schools, thus raising the possibility that St. X is not unique among inner city parochial schools in drawing disproportionately from families which are not educationally disadvantaged. Since the average level of educational disadvantagement among classmates almost certainly is a major determinant affecting the achievement of pupils from low-status homes, any tendency for parochial schools to draw off pupils from relatively supportive homes could have a major detrimental impact on achievement in the public schools.

On the other hand, one might also consider the possibility that inner city parochial schools which enrolled relatively advantaged students might be providing a desirable public service by enhancing the achievement of capable students whose achievement otherwise might well suffer if they were placed in the dysfunctional

educational environment typical of inner city public schools or by making it possible for supportive families unwilling to send their children to public schools to continue living in or near the inner city. This latter consideration may be particularly important in view of the great need for competent leadership among residents of inner city neighborhoods and the growing emphasis on retaining effective black families to help provide leadership in predominantly black neighborhoods. Similarly, it is probable that parochial schools in or near integrated neighborhoods sometimes tend to undercut public policy objectives by providing a haven for white and/or middle-class students fleeing from the public schools, but in at least some other cases the overall effects may be desirable in that families which otherwise might leave a changing neighborhood may be more likely to remain and provide a basis for a socially-mixed residential population.

Probably the most defensible point to be drawn from these considerations is that one cannot make blanket generalizations about the role of parochial schools in large urban areas in general or in inner city neighborhoods in particular. Whether parochial schools may be doing more harm than good by disproportionately enrolling relatively advantaged, high achieving students in the inner city is an issue that warrants much additional study in the light of local circumstances in differing neighborhoods and the variety of positive as well as negative purposes that a parochial school may be serving in each neighborhood. Hopefully, officials and supporters of parochial schools in the big cities will pay close attention to such considerations and will make an explicit and sustained effort to ensure that their policies and programs on balance are compatible with the long-range interests of both Catholic and non-Catholic citizens in metropolitan areas with substantial inner city poverty areas.

This investigation of the home environment of students at a highly rated inner city parochial school demonstrated that the school does not enroll a predominantly lower working class population of the type found in many public inner city schools. While the parochial school's students did not appear to differ on global social class measures from students at a nearby public school, interviews with mothers of kindergarten students in the parochial school indicated that the parochial students have more supportive home environments than the student body at the public school, which in turn probably is a good deal more advantaged, on the average, than are student populations at most other public inner city schools.

Although these results do not negate the possibility that the academic success of students at the parochial school is due primarily to the excellent educational program conducted there or to the school's mixture of students from high and moderately low supportive home environments, or to an interaction between these two factors, neither do they negate the possibility that academic performance at the parochial school is any higher than one would expect of other groups of students from similar home environments. These findings thus suggest that given the apparent difference in home environment between students in the parochial school and students in a nearby inner city public school, replicating the parochial school's educational program in public or parochial school classrooms made up primarily of students from low supportive homes might not in and of itself result in substantial gains in academic achievement.