Byrne, R. and Devine, D. 2017 'Theorising Catholic Education: the relevance of Bourdieu and Bernstein for empirical research', *International Studies in Catholic Education,* **Vol 9, Issue 1**

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Theorising Catholic Education: how the work of Bourdieu and Bernstein can help empirical research

The broader theoretical frameworks of both Bourdieu (and his concepts of habitus, field, doxa, collusio and capital) and Bernstein (and his concepts of classification, framing, and ritual) provide a deeper understanding of the distinctiveness of Catholic schooling. This article presents a model for theorising Catholic schooling in which levels of action can be seen to be at work in Catholic schools whereby the habitus of the participants can be closely aligned with the framing of a school's values through consensual rituals and other leadership practices. The stronger the alignment between these levels generates an experience of collusio and the greater the extent that agents within a Catholic school generates practices towards preserving Catholic spiritual capital the more strongly that school is classified from other types of schools its own distinct voice and identity. We conclude by demonstrating how this model was applied in researching Catholic schooling in Ireland.

Keywords: Catholic education; typology; habitus, framing

Introduction

Catholic schooling is probably the largest faith based system internationally, yet relatively little attention has been paid to it in mainstream educational research (Grace, 2004). While interest has grown in research in Catholic education and a body of knowledge has been developed regarding the distinctive nature of Catholic schooling, the field still remains underdeveloped. Any such research needs to be systematic and objective (Grace, 2009), located within a strong theoretical and conceptual framework (O'Donoghue, 2007).

In this paper, we wish to present an outline analysis of the theoretical concepts of Bourdieu and Bernstein among others that we consider helpful in building a theoretical framework for empirical research in Catholic education. Both theorists provide important 'thinking' tools around the analysis of power in education, and how

this permeates practice at all levels of schooling. Drawing on core concepts of their work, we present a model for theorising Catholic schooling and demonstrate its use in researching Catholic Schooling in Ireland.

Schools: culture, ethos, & habitus – the work of Bourdieu

The concept of culture is one which is consistently used in research literature on the practices of leading, teaching and learning that arise in different types of schools. While difficult to define, concepts of 'ethos' and 'culture' focus on the values, assumptions and behaviours that are both implicit and explicit in the actions of members of the school community (Smith, 2003). The work of Bourdieu is especially useful in deepening insights into how 'action' takes place in schools, shaping and being shaped by the dispositions of dominant actors. The concept of ethos and culture can be linked with Bourdieu's notion of habitus (Smith, 2003). He understands this as 'systems of durable, transposable dispositions' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72), which 'integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 83).

Although the dispositions (tendencies or inclinations) generated by habitus structure the practices of agents in a regulated manner as a 'way of being' (Bourdieu, 1977), the ensuing practices are not necessarily consciously chosen. Habitus creates a 'practical sense of things … gained through experience' (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986, p. 111). And so, although not mechanically, habitus tends to reproduce the conditions of the past (the 'objective structures') of which it is itself the product, whether agents are aware of it or not (Bourdieu, 1977, 2000). The dispositions which make up habitus are lasting, difficult to change, being constantly reinforced in a world that appears to them to be commonsensical, reasonable and natural (Bourdieu, 1977). They are also

transposable from their field of origin to many other fields. Yet they are not completely deterministic—in that while they predispose actors to think and act in certain ways, practices are produced in the meeting between habitus and the structure of the field in which it operates (Jenkins, 1992). Sets of dispositions are learned by the child from an early age in their family structures subsequently structuring all their following experiences (Bourdieu, 1977). Indeed, the family aims to durably institutionalise and integrate each member into itself through the continual reinforcing of 'inaugural acts of creation' (for example, their family name) in both ordinary and extraordinary occasions of family life. This leads family members to feelings of 'affective obligations' and 'obliged affections'.

Reay (1998) argues that the concept of habitus is useful as it allows us 'to understand individuals as a complex amalgam of their past and present … that is always in the process of completion' (Reay, 1998, p. 521). A group habitus can arise which objectively harmonises and mutually adjusts the practices of its member-agents, without any conscious or deliberate co-ordination. The unity and regularity in the practices of the group is similar to a 'conductorless orchestration' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 80). Different (social) class groups are agents who have a (partially) common system of dispositions from being products of the same objective structures. Consequently, the habitus of the individual can be seen as 'a structural variant of all the other group or class habitus' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 86). Similar analysis can be applied to gender and ethnicity (Devine, 2011).

Bourdieu's concept of habitus is especially fruitful when applied to religion. Rey (2007, p. 92) defines a religious habitus as 'the specifically religious dimension of an individual agent's habitus that manifests itself most apparently, though not exclusively, in the religious field'. An agent's religious habitus determines in large part that agent's

dispositions towards religious symbols, rituals, leaders and which religious capital is worth pursuing. It would be a mistake to conceive of habitus in a unitary fashion, as following Grace (2002, p. 38) there is 'no simple unitary habitus of Catholic socialisation despite the institutional Church's claim to be one and universal'.

Rey (2007) also suggests that Bourdieu's concept of 'collusio' might be useful for thinking about religion. Bourdieu defines collusio as 'an immediate agreement in ways of judging and acting which does not presuppose either the communication of consciousness, still less a contractual decision, is the basis of practical mutual understanding, the paradigm of which might be the one established between members of the same team' (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 145). Collusio operates like a collective habitus for the members of a group, grounding each agent into the group's doxa (Rey, 2007). Operating out of the same religious collusio, members of the Catholic church will share a common habitus with each other and will be able to relate at a common basic level 'having had their religious habitus formed by the same 'catholic' religious institution that features a very centralised and unifying liturgical spine' (Rey, 2007, p. 88).

When there is a near perfect fit between the objective and subjective (internalised) structures the world is not thought of as arbitrary but as one that is self-evident. Such an experience Bourdieu calls 'doxa' and the more that is taken for granted, the larger the field of doxa (Bourdieu, 1977). Doxa is the 'absolute form of recognition of legitimacy through misrecognition of arbitrariness' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 168) and is accepted tacitly by every agent who acts according to social convention. Doxa can only be questioned when there is both a crisis which destroys the self-evidence of natural order, and when the dominated have resources (material and symbolic) to reject it. When a crisis occurs, the language of the establishment is disputed and the language of discourse becomes an 'authorised language', commanding

attention. The dominant classes will seek to maintain the limits and integrity of doxa, but will establish orthodoxy as an imperfect substitute if necessary. Orthodoxy is a system of official ways of thinking and speaking which are acceptable censoring the ways the world can be thought or spoken of. Although it aims ultimately to restore the self-evidence of doxa, it never completely succeeds (Bourdieu, 1977). As we will see some of these ideas are currently at play in the Irish educational system – characterised by 'doxic' quality (where over ninety percent of schools are classified as Catholic) that is increasingly open to question.

Two other Bourdieusian concepts relevant to our analysis are capital and field. Capital can be observed in three fundamental ways: cultural, social and economic. Cultural capital can be further subdivided into three forms: the embodied state (those 'long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243) such as pronunciation or the means of appreciating cultural goods); the objectified state (cultural goods such as paintings, writings, machines acquired through economic capital) and the institutionalised state (academic qualifications which confer a legally guaranteed recognition of cultural competence upon the bearer (Bourdieu, 1986)). Bourdieu was particularly concerned with how cultural capital was transmitted so that social inequalities were perpetuated (Reay, 2004).

Social capital is the total collection of resources that are actually (or potentially) available through membership in a group, that is, a network of durable and even institutionalised relationships of 'mutual acquaintance and recognition' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248). Some groups can be socially instituted through a family name, social class, or through attending a particular school. Not being permanently created, conscious or unconscious 'exchanges' through words or gifts take place to maintain the group which is 'the product of an endless effort at institution' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249).

Exchanges become mutual 'signs of recognition', setting limits on the group beyond which legitimate exchanges (for example trade or marriage) cannot take place. The parallels with school cultures are evident. Groups have forms of 'delegation' whereby the 'totality of the social capital' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 251) of the group is concentrated in an agent (for example the 'head' of a family), or in a small group of agents, invested with the authority to act and speak on behalf of the entire group. These also protect the group by 'expelling or excommunicating' members who embarrass or discredit the group by their lapses.

For Bourdieu, both cultural and social capitals have their roots in economic capital. Under certain conditions, the first two forms of capital can be convertible into economic capital – especially through a 'solid investment of time and effort' (Devine, 2011, p. 45). Economic capital can face its own difficulties in transmission as the arbitrariness of its ownership can be questioned. The educational system plays an important role in such reproduction (Bourdieu, 1986).

Bourdieu argues that religious capital can include knowledge of the religious language and 'access to the tools of worship, sacred texts, and, above all, sacraments' (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 26). It depends on the relationship between the demand for religion by the laity and the supply of religious services. Maintaining a monopoly on religious capital, the church authorises only its agents as legitimate producers while excluding its rivals as 'heretics' (Bourdieu, 1991). Verter (2003, p. 157) suggests that there are two forms of religious capital: 'religious symbolic systems (myths and ideologies) ... and religious competences (mastery of specific practices and knowledge)'. In contrast to Bourdieu's concept (produced only within an institutional framework), Verter (2003) prefers the term 'spiritual capital', a more widely spread commodity, existing in three forms: embodied in an agent's dispositions (tastes); objectified through material and

symbolic goods (theologies); and institutionalised through qualifications given to legitimate producers of religious goods. As lay people, as well as religious specialists, have the ability to value spiritual capital, Verter (2003, p. 170) argues that his concept of spiritual capital 'grants an agency to the layperson that Bourdieu denied'.

Casson (2013) distinguishes religious capital (connected with an institutional religious tradition) and spiritual capital (a fluid resource linked to a religious tradition but used individually). Spiritual capital can also be distinguished from theological literacy (theological knowledge) and charism (individual gifts of the Holy Spirit) (Grace, 2010). Grace (2010, p. 125) understands spiritual capital as being the 'resources of faith and values derived from a vocational commitment to a religious tradition', guiding judgements and actions so that those who have acquired it act not only as professionals but also as witnesses who consciously have a relationship with God. Such spiritual capital has been found crucial in the past for preserving the distinctiveness of Catholic schooling (Grace, 2002, 2010).

Another important concept from Bourdieu is that of field, a social space in which agents are positioned according to the power or resources (capital) or lack of power they possess, rather than because of any geographical proximity (Bourdieu, 1989). An agent's position within a field depends on both the overall volume of capital they hold and also on the relative weighting (structure) of their different types of capital (Bourdieu, 1989, 1998). Agents are considered 'close' or 'remote' depending on the extent they have in common with each other. Consequently, social space is 'a set of distinct and coexisting positions which are exterior to one another and which are defined in relation to one another through their mutual exteriority' (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 6). Many different fields exist (for example, the artistic, religious or school system fields) which follow their own specific logic (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Individually (or collectively) agents seek to either preserve the current distribution of capital, or to improve their own position by transforming it (Bourdieu, 1998; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). The dynamics of a field can be compared to a game in which the participants, although not explicitly or deliberately, follow its particular 'rules' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Players do not mechanically follow juridical laws, but rather have a 'practical sense of things … a feel for the game' (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986, p. 111).

The capital of a particular field 'tends to determine' the stances taken by agents through a conditioning of dispositions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 114) and thus habitus, by incorporating the structures of a field, structures how agents perceive and act in that field (Bourdieu, 1998). However, agents are not merely 'particles' automatically pushed about by the forces of a particular field but are 'bearers of capitals and ... have a propensity to orient themselves actively either toward the preservation of the distribution of capital or toward the subversion of this distribution. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 109)

Bourdieu (1991) argues that religious specialists (exclusive producers of the goods of salvation) exist alongside the laity (dispossessed of religious capital) within the field of religion. The church, monopolising the production of religious capital, places a large emphasis on its power alone to consecrate (Bourdieu, 1991; Rey, 2007). Historically, the church did this by claiming that there was no salvation possible outside of itself – 'extra ecclesiam nulla salus'. In addition, religion exists to legitimate the social order giving it the appearance of being natural (Bourdieu, 1991). However, with the demand for new types of professionals (for example life counsellors) the religious field's border has shifted with the traditional cleric's power being reduced as other 'competitors' struggle to dominate the field (Bourdieu, 1987; Rey, 2007).

Bourdieu's concept of field can be applied usefully to Catholic education which is traditionally portrayed in an idealised manner implying that no tensions exist (Grace, 2002). In Bourdieu's terms, the religious field is like any other field, 'in which religious agents and institutions vie for control of ... forms of religious capital' (Rey, 2007, p. 86). These ideas can be further developed drawing on the work of Bernstein.

The importance of framing practices – the work of Bernstein

Using both the concepts of classification and frame, Bernstein focuses on control and power in the pedagogic relationship (Bernstein, 1996, p. 29). He uses the concept of framing to explain the nature of 'control' pedagogic relationships, that is, who has control over the selection, sequencing, criteria and pacing within pedagogic practice. Where the transmitter has explicit control then framing can be said to be 'strong'; where the acquirer appears to have control, then framing is 'weak'.

> Classification establishes voice, and framing establishes the message …
> Classification refers to what, framing is concerned with how meanings are to be
> put together. (Bernstein, 1996, p. 26-27)

Framing regulates two distinct systems: the rules of the more dominant social order ('regulative discourse') dealing with conduct and character, and, the rules of the discursive order ('instructional discourse') dealing with the control over the selection of knowledge. Framing can also be used to explore the variations in the strength of the relationship between the educational knowledge ('uncommonsense knowledge') that is found in the pedagogical relationship and a teacher's (or a student's) 'non-school everyday community knowledge' (Bernstein, 1975, p. 89).

Pedagogic practices can be visible or invisible. Visible pedagogic practices occur when the regulative and discursive order rules are explicit, known to the student.

The emphasis is on how children perform and on the particular 'text' they create, that is, the 'external product of the child' (Bernstein, 1990, p. 70). Invisible pedagogic practices occur when the discursive rules are known only to the transmitter. It is unclear that the teacher is in control, and it may appear that the student is in control of the pedagogic practice (Bernstein, 1996). Generally speaking, 'invisible pedagogy is designed to be person-forming whereas visible pedagogy is designed to be product-forming' (Grace, 2002, p. 49).

Two opposing modalities of visible pedagogies can be considered: autonomous pedagogies (built on the 'intrinsic possibilities of knowledge itself') and market-oriented pedagogies (built on their 'market relevance') (Bernstein, 1990). Both can act to reproduce inequalities in society. An autonomous pedagogy, independent of economic considerations, stresses the inherent value of the particular knowledge it transmits (Bernstein, 1990). Bernstein (1996) argues that market relevance has already taken on a primary significance in educational discourse. Indeed, the policy practices of market, managerialism and performativity are being increasingly applied to education (Ball, 2008).

Both visible and invisible pedagogies exist within Catholic schools through direct religious teaching and the 'hidden curriculum of Catholic personal formation in faith shaped by the whole-school environment' (Grace, 2002, p. 50). Yet the invisible pedagogies are difficult to measure; and so, a number of 'proxy' measures have historically been used (for example, mass attendance). Catholic schools may be tempted to concentrate their efforts in market-oriented pedagogies with their very visible performance measures, rather than in relatively invisible performance measures of the more spiritual and moral outcomes of Catholic education (Grace, 2002).

A stress on 'trainability' allows agents to be shaped and re-shaped as the needs of organisations and markets change (Bernstein, 1996). An agent's meaning is not built upon having a specialised identity within a social order but is defined through consumption and by how the goods of society are distributed (or absent) from individual agents (Bernstein, 1996). This has a profound implication for Catholic education which seeks to both understand God and the design of the world. Yet, Catholic education is also 'caught up in the working of the secular, market curriculum, a performance-based pedagogic regime and a system of accountability and evaluation where measurable and visible outcomes are dominant' (Grace, 2002, p. 46). Contemporary Catholic education has to attempt to resolve this contradiction.

Secondary schools' culture is combined of two distinct but inter-related 'complexes of behaviour' they wishes to transmit to their students: the instrumental order (the formal learning aspect) concerned with the transmission of measurable and examinable facts and skills, and the expressive order (the character training aspect) concerned with the transmission of certain images of conduct and manners, including the transmission of beliefs and morals, not usually objectively measurable (Bernstein, 1975). Bernstein (1975, p. 55) states that

> the expressive order can be considered as a source of the school's shared values and is therefore potentially cohesive in function, whilst the instrumental order, on the other hand, is potentially divisive. It is the expressive order which ... under certain conditions is prone to extensive ritualization.

There are two types of expressive order rituals: consensual and differentiating. Consensual rituals (for example, assemblies, signs) bind all a school's members into a moral community with a specific identity. They recreate the past in the present and project it into the future; and help to integrate the different goals of a school 'within a coherent set of shared values, so that the values of the school can become internalized

and experienced as a unity' (Bernstein, 1975, p. 55). Differentiating rituals are used to 'mark off' different groups within schools on some basis (for example, gender or different 'houses') serving to deepen attachment within certain groups. Deepening respect for authority, they help a school to order, integrate and control a varied population by means of the different subsets the school creates. Together both consensual and differentiating rituals lead to the internalising of the social order.

In Bourdieu's terms, such use of ritual helps reinforce in a circular manner the dispositions of all the agents within a school community thus creating and maintaining a group habitus which reproduces the objective structure in which agents find themselves (Bourdieu, 1977). A school's rituals seeks to create a sense of cohesion among its members; whereby, just as in a family, even ordinary practices (as well as more solemn occasions) can unconsciously take on a significant meaning. This can lead to a situation where all the school's members will have homologous worldviews (collusio) which may appear to be self-evident or doxic.

A key additional concept for Bernstein is 'classification', that is, the relationship between categories 'whether these categories are between agencies, between agents, between discourses, between practices' (Bernstein, 1996, p. 20) through which power can be seen. Categories can be strongly classified, with unique identities, voices and specialised internal rules, having a strong insulation from other categories. Alternatively, they can be weakly classified with less specialised identities and discourses. Yet categories can lose their unique identity if the insulation between them and other categories breaks down. Indeed, as discourses move, new power relations can develop (Bernstein, 1996). Consequently, what is crucial is the space ('the silence') between one category and another, and not what is internal to each category.

It is silence which carries the message of power; it is the full stop between one category of discourse and another. (Bernstein, 1996, p. 20)

The classifications between categories hide the arbitrary nature of the force of power keeping them separate so that the boundaries appear to be natural and authentic. Insulation suppresses contradictions in the relationships between individuals, creating within individuals psychic defences (not necessarily conscious) against the contradictions that would otherwise appear. Bernstein (1990) argues that the values (strong or weak) of classification and framing will increase in times of economic crisis and weaken in times of economic boom.

There are obvious parallels between Bernstein's use of classification and Bourdieu's description of the positions that agents take up within fields. Bernstein's understanding of classification is a more general theoretical structure allowing for an understanding of how power can be legitimated through the strength of insulation between different discourses, practices and agents. Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing are particularly relevant to the field of Catholic education (Grace, 2002). Since Vatican II, the strong classification between Catholic education and the secular world (Grace, 2002) has been weakened, as has the traditionally strong framing of Catholic curricula, pedagogy and evaluation by the institutional Catholic church. As the state exerts more control over the pedagogic process, Arthur (1995) suggests that the more traditional 'holistic' model of Catholic schools wavers between being either dualistic (religious aspect is bolted on to the secular curriculum) or pluralistic (explicit welcome of all Christian denominations and faiths).

A framework for theorising Catholic Schooling

Drawing on the concepts from Bourdieu and Bernstein, we argue that Catholic schooling can be understood through levels of action, as represented in Figure 1. At the

centre of our model is the agent whose dispositions (habitus) towards what they consider worth preserving (capital) generates practices (seen in visible artefacts and values). The school's framing practices (rituals) attempts to reinforce all agents' dispositions and if successful an experience of collusio arises. The stronger the collusio, the greater is the potential for strong classification of the school from other types of schooling.
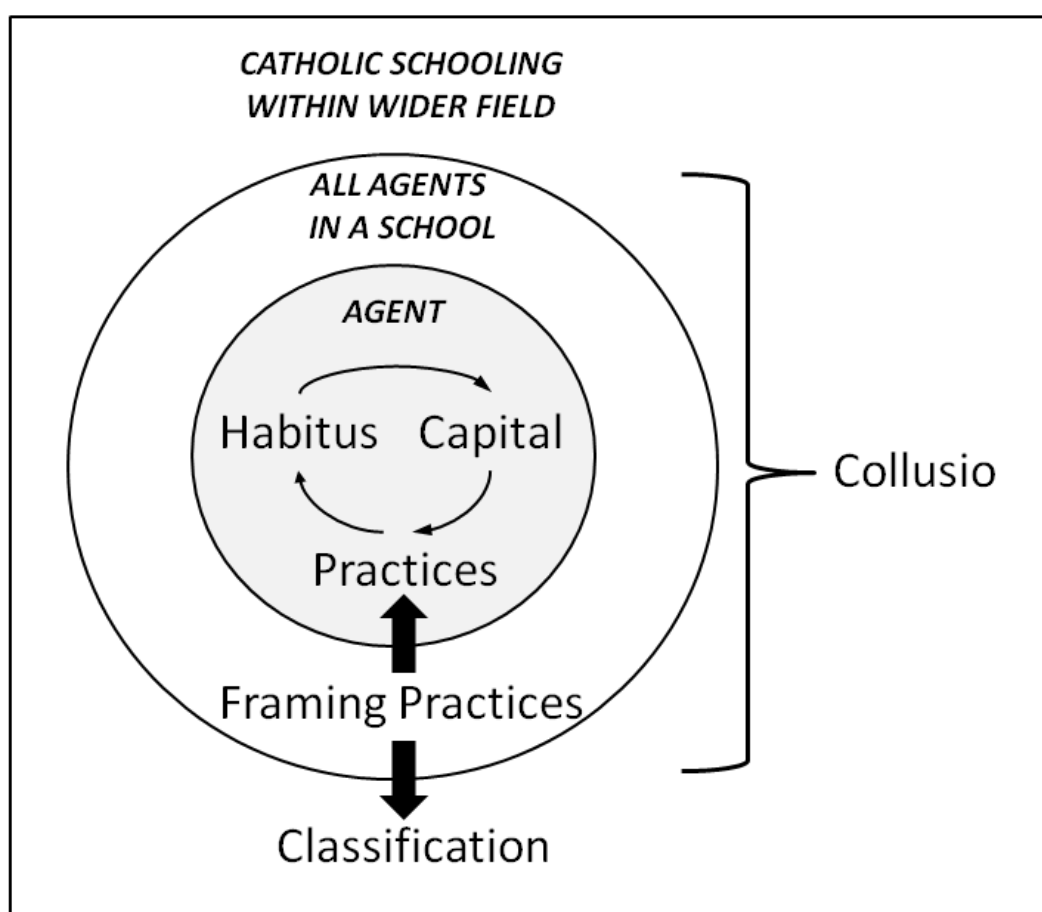
Within the field of Catholic schooling 'spiritual capital' (Grace, 2010) is considered valuable by various agents. Catholic schooling attempts to frame and communicate spiritual capital through various practices, especially through 'consensual rituals' designed to bind the actors within a school into one homogeneous group. However, the habitus of parents, teachers and students may consider other forms of capital (economic, cultural, or social) to be of greater importance. The greater the extent

that agents within a Catholic school generate practices towards preserving Catholic spiritual capital in line with their school's framing practices, the more strongly that Catholic school is classified from other types of schools with its own distinct voice and identity.

Methodology

Our study adopted a parallel mixed methods design (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously and then integrated together.

Figure 2 provides an overview of the study design which was divided into two phases. Semi-structured interviews took place with a representative sample of thirty-seven principals out of the 110 'Catholic' designated schools within the Archdiocese of Dublin. These interviews focused on issues related to principals' professional and faith background, their role, perception of the distinctiveness of Catholic schools, religious and social formation, and building community. This more general overview of practice (in our wider interview of thirty-seven principals) was concurrently supplemented in Phase 2 with intensive case study analysis in five second level schools involving focus group interviews with thirty-five students, seventeen parents and eighteen teachers (see Table 1). In addition, questionnaires with a subsample of three hundred and forty-two students were collected in these case study schools which explored their views of school life and their attitudes towards faith and learning. The study adhered to all ethical guidelines, secured through the University Human Research Ethics Committee.

This larger research identified a typology of Catholic schooling which we divided into three 'types': Faith-Visible schools, Faith-Residual schools, Faith-Transition schools[2]. For the purposes of this paper, we take as our exemplar the Faith-

Visible schools (representing thirteen schools – including three intensively researched case study schools – out of the total sample in the larger study) in order to exemplify these   theoretical   concepts.
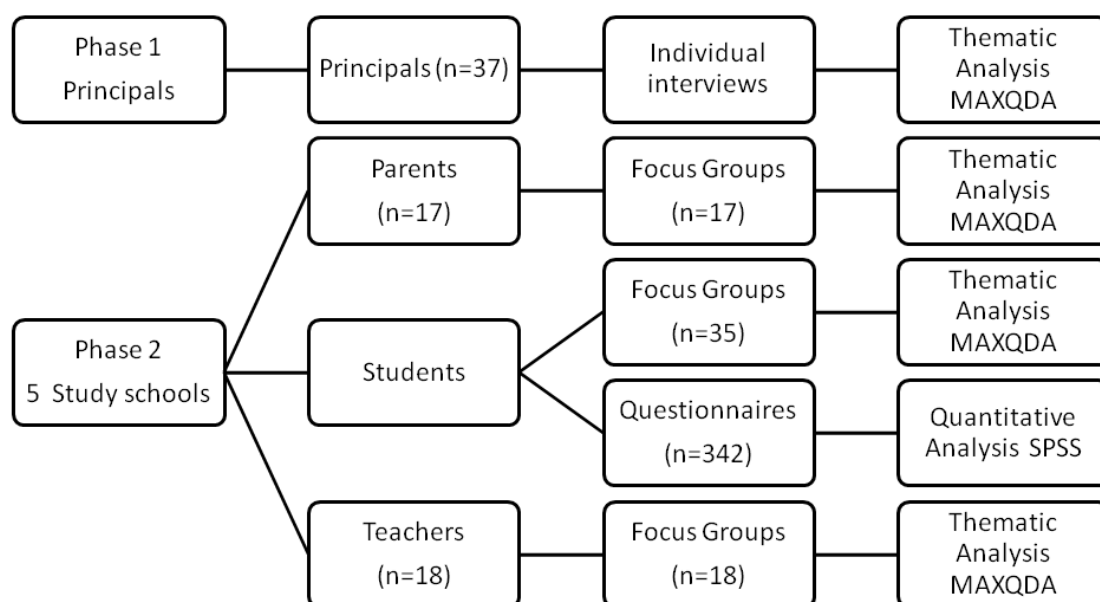

Table 1. Case Study schools

School	Fota Island	Rathlin Island	Garinish Island	Lambay Island	Clare Island	Totals
DEIS[1] or Fee paying?	DEIS	DEIS	DEIS	Fee paying	Fee paying	
Student gender	single sex boy	single sex girl	co-educational	single sex boy	single sex girl	
Student Questionnaires	22	59	74	134	53	**342**
Student interviews	5	9	6	7	8	**35**
Parent interviews	2	3	4	3	5	**17**
Teacher interviews	0*	5	4	4	5	**18**

No teacher focus group took place in this school due to school-based issues.

Findings

Across our entire sample, one third of the principals (thirteen) perceived there to be a distinctiveness in their schools arising out of its catholicity. These were the Faith-Visible schools. Our study suggests that Faith-Visible Schools were largely majority ethnic (white/traditional Irish) Catholic middle class schools.

Table 2 shows a summary integration of the data from principals, students, teachers and parents in these schools. The left column draws on the central theoretical concepts of our model: habitus, framing, and field.

In the next sections several of the key concepts from Bourdieu, Bernstein among others will be outlined and shown how they were useful in our research project.

Table 2. Faith-Visible Schools (summary integration of datasets)

Levels of Action	Principals (General study)	Students Questionnaire	Students Focus Groups	Teachers Focus Groups	Parents Focus Groups
Level 1 *Habitus*	Distinctive religious ideology & Catholic pedagogy. Emphasised R.E. classes & religious services. Positively regarded student faith, parental faith-formation (although declining), teachers commitment to Catholic ethos.	Majority ethnic & middle class. Attend sacraments more frequently outside school. Viewed helpful religious beliefs & attending Catholic school. Less likely to view certain actions wrong.	Positive experiences of religion.		Value of learning about other religions.
Level 2 *Framing practices*	Emphasised religious aims of school retreats. Perceived Catholic schools distinctively built community, Distinctive religious order founding charism. Emphasised holistic development. Promoted schools as 'Catholic'. Perceived disciplinary decisions taken differently. Fewer expulsions. Key personnel in place. Role of principal different.	Greater occurrence of religious activities & retreat satisfaction. Schools most welcoming & stronger sense of community.	Fee paying students spoke favourably of in-school religious experiences Mostly perceived discipline as fair.	Graduation night positive. Some queried relevance of religious services. Deliberate increase in Catholic symbols. Management support for religious activities good.	Emphasis on various religious activities in two schools. Likely to view discipline as fair & efficient.
Level 3 *Classification & Field*	Frustrated at lack of training. New parishes for young.				

Level 1: dispositions towards catholic capital (habitus, capital, collusio)

In our study of Faith-Visible schools, the religious habitus of various agents (principals, students, parents, teachers) was relatively more disposed towards religious capital than in the other types of schooling we had identified (Faith-Residual and Faith-Transition). Faith-Visible principals had strong dispositions towards their own religious faith and were likely to speak positively about both their students' faith and their teachers' commitment to their schools' Catholic ethos. This corresponds to our questionnaire analysis of students in Faith-Visible Schools who were more likely to state they go to mass more than once a month. Students in the focus group interviews also spoke positively about their experiences of religion. Faith-Visible principals were less tolerant of non-Catholic students not participating in R.E. classes or religious liturgies suggesting that these principals wished preserve their schools' boundaries. In the focus group interviews, parents emphasised the value of their children learning more about other religions. Nonetheless, our 'Faith-Visible' principals seemed to be anxious about the decline in parental interest in faith formation.

> I think the retreat ... made me think more about my faith and stuff. Kind of how lucky I am to be brought up in such a nice environment to learn about religion and Christianity. (Female student, fee-paying, ssg, Clare Island)

> That you have members of staff who are committed to their faith, who are committed to exploring issues of faith and religion with the boys. (Male principal, fee-paying, ssb, Lambay Island)

> If I have a student coming into school who is Muslim or who is of a different faith I specifically tell their parents, 'you know you are sending your son to a Catholic school? ... We will have your son participating in the religion class.' (Male principal, DEIS, ssb)

Our previous overview of habitus highlighted its doxic potential when a collective habitus emerges which Bourdieu defined as 'collusio'. Overall, in our study, there appears to be a greater harmony or collusio across the religious dispositions of the actors in Faith-Visible Schools. While they are not immune to the general decline of religious practice that is evident throughout Ireland (Smyth, Lyons, & Darmody, 2013) they appear to be relatively more committed to their faith and to view its practice as important.

Level 2: framing practices

As detailed, Bernstein's (1996) emphasis on framing is useful for considering not only the strength of classification of 'Catholicity' in our Faith-Visible schools but also how this is visibly manifest in the pedagogic, curricular and other aspects of school life. Studies have confirmed that Catholic schools use a number of framing activities seeking to bind their participants into a cohesive Catholic school culture typically identified as having a strong liturgical life, a distinctly visible physical environment and a strong communal aspect (Casson, 2013). In our study, we found that Faith-Visible principals (dovetailing with our student and teacher findings) placed an emphasis on religious activities and rituals (allocating them time) and emphasised a Catholic pedagogy educating the whole person. They also tended to emphasis the distinctiveness of the religious order/congregation. Faith-Visible principals were more likely to have suitably qualified teachers of R.E. than other schools in our research. Students and teachers in our Faith-Visible schools perceived a distinctiveness arising out of the religious visual elements within their schools. Faith-Visible principals were more likely to perceive that Catholic schools built community differently to other schools than principals in our

other schools. Students in Faith-Visible Schools were more likely to say that their schools were welcoming and to experience a stronger sense of community in them.

> We do have a different view because I think we are about the whole person, and academics is a part of that. (Male principal, DEIS, ssg)

> There is definitely more liturgy and there are more opportunities for worship. (Female principal, ssg, fee-paying)

> The emphasis on it being a Catholic school via outward symbols is very recent. Crucifixes went into every classroom. (Female teacher, DEIS, coed, Garinish Island)

> Students I think are much more attached to the school ... There is a community element. It's almost like their club ... There is a pride in the place. (Male teacher, fee-paying, ssb, Lambay Island)

Faith-Visible principals were more likely to promote the catholicity of their schools to parents prior to the admission of their children into these schools. In addition, these principals were more likely to perceive that Catholic schools took disciplinary decisions differently than other schools, and were less likely to have permanently excluded students. Students and parents in the focus groups in Faith-Visible schools perceived discipline was mostly administered fairly and efficiently. Overall, Faith-Visible principals were more likely to perceive that their role was different in a Catholic school, and ensured that their personal actions were in harmony with Catholic values. Taken together, there seems to a consistency across the different leadership practices in how principals use their authority to frame the boundaries of Catholic schools and allocate resources to further its religious ethos (Bernstein, 1996; Bourdieu, 1986). All of these contextual elements help to bind the Faith-Visible schools into moral communities with specific Catholic identities (Bernstein, 1975). Evident is a strong framing of a Catholic

spiritual capital (Grace, 2002, 2010).

Level 3: the social space (field and classification)

Faith-Visible Schools cannot be separated from the wider social context in which Catholic schooling – especially through their trustees – have begun to emphasise the Catholic dimension of leadership in their schools. In Ireland, over recent years, religious orders have been placing their governance of schools into various lay trusts (Darmody & Smyth, 2013). Against this background of policy changes, Faith-Visible principals were more likely to express a frustration at the lack of training they had received to be principals of Catholic schools. Principals, formerly professional teachers in the classroom, were now suddenly faced with previously unspoken expectations of being Catholic heads of schools, not matched with discussion, training or even (they perceived) with their own consent. Evident was a disjoint between the perception of being a 'principal' in general, as opposed to being a faith leader in a school. This was all the more significant as Faith-Visible principals were more likely to view their schools as the new parishes for young people.

> And all of a sudden it's out there that we are the Catholic heads of these schools. ...
> I believe it to be grossly unfair; that it arrives without appropriate discussion,
> preparation, training, consent. (Male principal, DEIS, ssb)

Discussion

Across our entire sample, one third of the research schools could be classified as being Faith-Visible Schools: strongly classified Catholic schools having a distinct Catholic voice and identity. Actors in Faith-Visible Schools have a common unified habitus, a greater emphasis on binding consensual rituals, and principals make leadership decisions which sustain and strengthen the catholicity of their schools. The three Levels

of Action are closely aligned and in harmony with each other. A 'collusio' among the actors appears to exist. In particular, the school leaders seem to possess significant spiritual capital considered crucial to the mission success of Catholic schooling (Grace, 2002).

Faith-Visible Schools seem to be deliberately repositioning themselves as being distinctly Catholic with a greater effort being expended to generate and sustain spiritual capital. This momentum may be occurring because of two reasons. Firstly, Catholic schooling exists in a changing Irish society in a state of transition. A pluralism of educational provision, reflecting a more religiously diverse population, is increasingly becoming available (Devine, 2011). The 'confessional based identity' of schools (more closely aligned to a theocentric paradigm in the past) no longer appears 'doxic' (Boeve, 2006; O'Sullivan, 2005). Our Faith-Visible Schools appear closer however to Boeve's (2006) 'institutionally reconfessionalised' schools which operate on the assumption that the substantial proportions of the actors in these schools are practicing Catholics. These schools do not engage in dialogue with religious plurality. This seems akin to research which finds that the values and perspectives of children from minority ethnic backgrounds in schools such as these can be overlooked (Devine, 2011).

Secondly, these schools are not immune from the mercantile paradigm and new managerialism that exists in Irish education (Lynch, Grummell, & Devine, 2012; O'Sullivan, 2005) and the intersection with social class and positioning in Irish society. The emergence of a more overt competitive ethos among schools through media publication of school league tables, together with lower state funding support for fee paying schools (resulting in a lower pupil:teacher ratio for these schools) has led to increased competition among fee-paying schools for students (Darmody & Smyth, 2013). Given that fee-paying schools are overrepresented among Faith-Visible Schools,

these schools may be repositioning themselves within the field as having a Catholic unique selling point or 'brand' in order to provide a competitive advantage.

In any case, it is clear that Faith-Visible Schools neither fit easily into the theocentric nor the mercantile paradigm noted by O'Sullivan (2005). Instead, they appear to be taking the positive ritualistic aspects from a previous 'confessional based identity' in the theocentric paradigm, while positioning themselves as distinct from the mercantile paradigm as 'institutionally reconfessionalised' schools (Boeve, 2006). This suggests that Faith-Visible Schools may be attempting to accentuate the spiritual capital that has value for most actors from both paradigms.

Finally, a further dynamic may be at work within Faith-Visible Schools, whose students are significantly more likely to be from middle class and majority ethnic (traditional white Irish) backgrounds; and, among which fee paying schools – who have reputations as providing better facilities and opportunities – are overrepresented. Our findings confirmed previous research (Smyth, 1999) showing the active pursual of choice by parents for these schools, in that for students these schools were not the nearest school to their home. This suggests that these parents, as agents 'in the know' and with access to economic capital (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), may be positioning themselves at times of social and economic transition or 'flux' in Faith-Visible Schools as a way of preserving their capital (economic, cultural and social). Such choices serve to maintain class and ethnic boundaries (Hatcher, 1998) in a context of increasing ethnic and social diversification in schools in Ireland (Devine, 2011). All of this can potentially result in a tension between the mission of Catholic schooling, and what is necessary to survive in a market culture.

1. Of the 723 second level schools in Ireland, the vast majority are state funded and non fee-paying. Those receiving additional state subvention arising from poverty and marginalisation are referred to as DEIS schools – Delivering Equality of Opportunity in

Schools. A minority of schools (fifty-one) remained in the fee paying scheme – abolished in 1966 – of which two-thirds are Catholic.

2. For further information see forthcoming article: *Catholic schooling with a twist? A typology of faith schooling in Ireland during a period of detraditionalisation*.

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